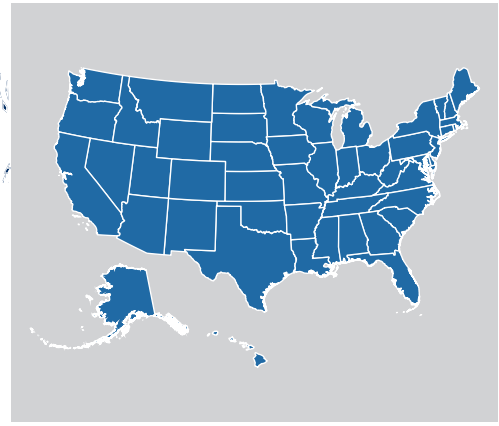
ASIA MATTERS FOR AMERICA

PUBLIC & ELITE OPINION



EAST-WEST CENTER

NORC at the University of Chicago

AsiaMattersforAmerica.org

FOREWORD

The **East-West Center** is pleased to present this illuminating analysis comparing US public and elite opinion at the state and local levels regarding America's interactions with the Indo-Pacific region. Questions addressed in this survey include issues pertaining to economy, security, politics, people-to-people connections as well as to what extent Americans believe Asia matters to the United States.

The objective of this project is to gain insights both on American public opinion of US-Indo-Pacific relations but also on comparative differences between US voters and those of elite US decision makers in the private and public sectors. By taking the pulse of these two groups, at the state and local levels, this report serves to shed light on areas in which US domestic attention can be drawn to the importance of the Indo-Pacific in US policy and public diplomacy.

This project is part of the **East-West Center's** flagship *Asia Matters for America* initiative, which maps the trade, investment, employment, business, diplomacy, security, education, tourism, and people-to-people connections between the United States and the Indo-Pacific at the national, state, and local levels. This public opinion component of the initiative complements the data and analytical findings of our various *Asia Matters* publications.

We thank the National Opinion Research Center of the University of Chicago for conducting this excellent survey and for providing their expert analysis of the results, and we are grateful to the more than one thousand respondents who took part from all 50 states and the District of Columbia. I particularly wish to thank **East-West Center in Washington** staff Mr. Spencer Gross for coordinating this project and Ms. Jeanette Simmons for providing the design for this published report.

Sincerely,

Satu P. Limaye, PhD
Vice President, East-West Center
Director, East-West Center in Washington

ASIA MATTERS FOR AMERICA PUBLIC & ELITE OPINION

This initiative maps the trade, investment, employment, business, diplomacy, security, education, tourism, and people-to-people connections between the United States and the Indo-Pacific at the national, state, and local levels. This publication, the one-page connections summaries for states and Congressional districts, and the AsiaMattersforAmerica.org website are resources for understanding the robust and dynamic US-Indo-Pacific relationship.

The **East-West Center** promotes better relations and understanding among the people and nations of the United States, Asia, and the Pacific through cooperative study, research, and dialogue. Established by the US Congress in 1960, the Center serves as a resource for information and analysis on critical issues of common concern, bringing people together to exchange views, build expertise, and develop policy options. The **East-West Center in Washington** provides US and Indo-Pacific government stakeholders and program partners with innovative training, analytical, dialogue, exchange, and public diplomacy initiatives to meet policy priorities.

AsiaMattersforAmerica.org

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ASIA MATTERS FOR AMERICA: PUBLIC & ELITE OPINION

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Executive Summary

A recent survey by the East-West Center and conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago finds about half of Americans see a connection between their own state and what is happening with the economy or politics in Asia. Similarly, a parallel survey conducted among state and local elected and appointed officials, bureaucrats, and business leaders, hereafter referred to as elites, found that two-thirds believe the state of the economy and politics in Asia matters to their state at least somewhat.

Economy, Trade, Jobs, and Investment

- Just 18% of Americans believe the Asian economy matters a lot or a great deal to their state, compared to 43% of elites who say the same. Another 34% of Americans and 28% of elites say it has a moderate impact on their state. Among both populations, those living in the Western United States are more likely to believe the Asian economy matters to their state.
- While only a quarter of Americans find trade with China and other countries in Asia extremely or very beneficial, 48% of elites feel the same. When it comes to agricultural trade with China specifically, 38% of elites find it very beneficial and 39% of elites say the same for Asian countries excluding China.
- About half of elites believe trade with Asian countries, as well as trade with China specifically, is a good source of job creation in their state, but only about 3 in 10 Americans overall feel the same.
- Fifty-nine percent of elites feel investment by Asian countries other than China has been at least somewhat beneficial and 55% feel the same about China.
- Fifty-eight percent of elites report their state benefits from US investment in Asian infrastructure.
- Sixty-nine percent of Americans and 78% of elites are at least somewhat concerned about losing competitiveness due to trade with China. And while competitiveness is a concern, a majority of elites support both new bilateral (59%) and multilateral (52%) trade agreements with Asian countries.
- Among all Americans and elites, Democrats are more likely than Republicans to see a trade relationship with China as beneficial, whereas Republicans are more likely to be concerned about losing competitiveness due to trade with China.

Politics, Good Governance, and National Security

- Forty-nine percent of Americans believe the state of politics in Asia matters at least a bit to their state, though 67% of elites say the same. Among elites and all Americans, those living in the Western United States are more likely to feel Asian politics matters a lot or a great deal to their state.

Executive Summary (cont'd)

- A majority of elites feel it is important to promote human rights, good governance, religious freedom, and democratic values in Asia. Fifty-six percent of Americans overall find it extremely or very important to promote human rights in Asia, though fewer support the other measures.
- Elites also feel more strongly about national security measures like strengthening diplomatic ties, militarily protecting allies, and economically protecting allies compared to Americans overall.

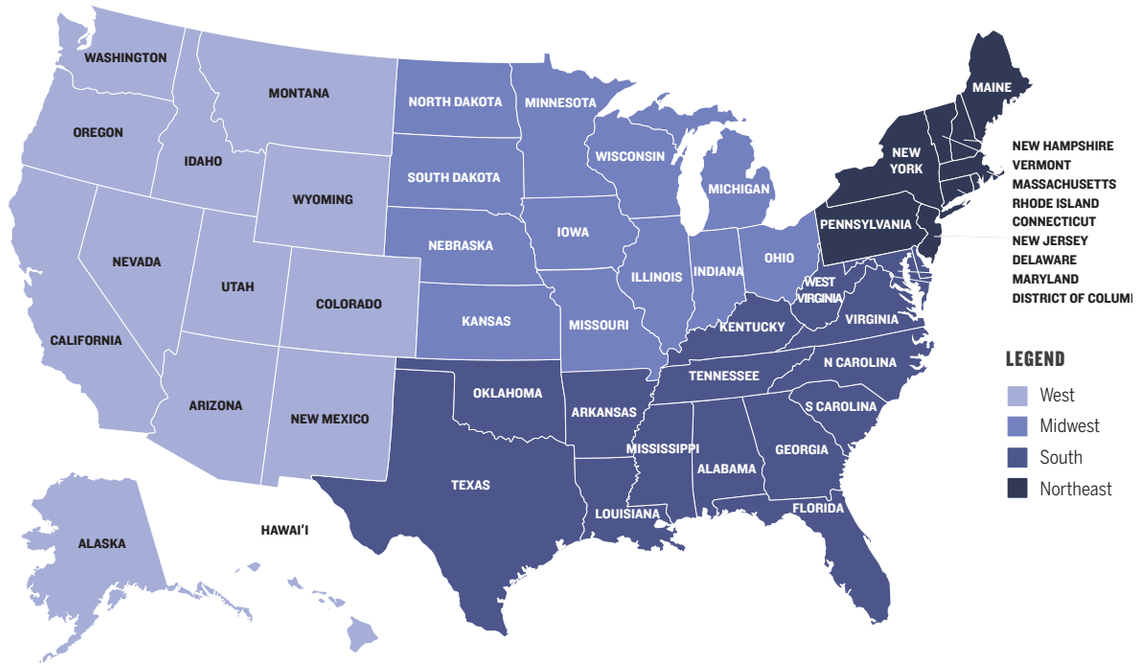
Climate Change and the Environment

- When it comes to the environment, the local connections with Asia are less clear for many.
- Four in ten elites believe the environmental conditions in Asia impact their state a lot or a great deal, compared to just 21% of Americans who say the same.
- About half of elites favor increased cooperation with Asian countries to combat climate change, as well as with China specifically. Forty percent of Americans say the same regarding Asian countries and 38% regarding China.
- Among all Americans and elites, Democrats are more likely to support increased cooperation to combat climate change.

People-to-People Connections

- Thirty percent of elites report their region has a sister city or partnership with countries in Asia and 85% find them beneficial.
- While half of elites say the presence of Asian students at local universities is very or extremely beneficial to the local culture and economy, less than a quarter of the public says the same. Elites who have a local partnership with an Asian country are more likely to find these programs beneficial, as well as Democrats among elites and all Americans.
- Similarly, 62% of elites support programs that encourage American students to study abroad in Asia, while only 41% of Americans feel the same. Democrats are more likely to favor these programs among both populations.
- Most elites consider tourism from Asia beneficial to the economy of their state, though less than half of Americans feel the same.
- A similar dynamic is also present with immigration from Asian countries – only 37% of Americans find it at least somewhat beneficial compared to 62% of elites. Democrats are more likely to find immigration beneficial among both populations.

Definitions & Notes



General Population:

General population data was collected using the AmeriSpeak Omnibus®, a monthly multi-client survey using NORC's probability-based panel designed to be representative of the US household population. 1,055 panel members completed the survey—992 via the internet and 63 over the phone. The panel provides sample coverage of approximately 97% of the US household population.

Elites:

For the purposes of this survey "Elites" is defined as elected and appointed officials, bureaucrats, and business leaders. 1,446 people representing these three sub-categories answered the survey.

Rounding & Omissions:

Many sections of the general population survey do not total 100% due to respondents choosing not to answer every question in some instances. Some responses in the elected and appointed officials, bureaucrats, and business leaders sections do not total 100% due to rounding.

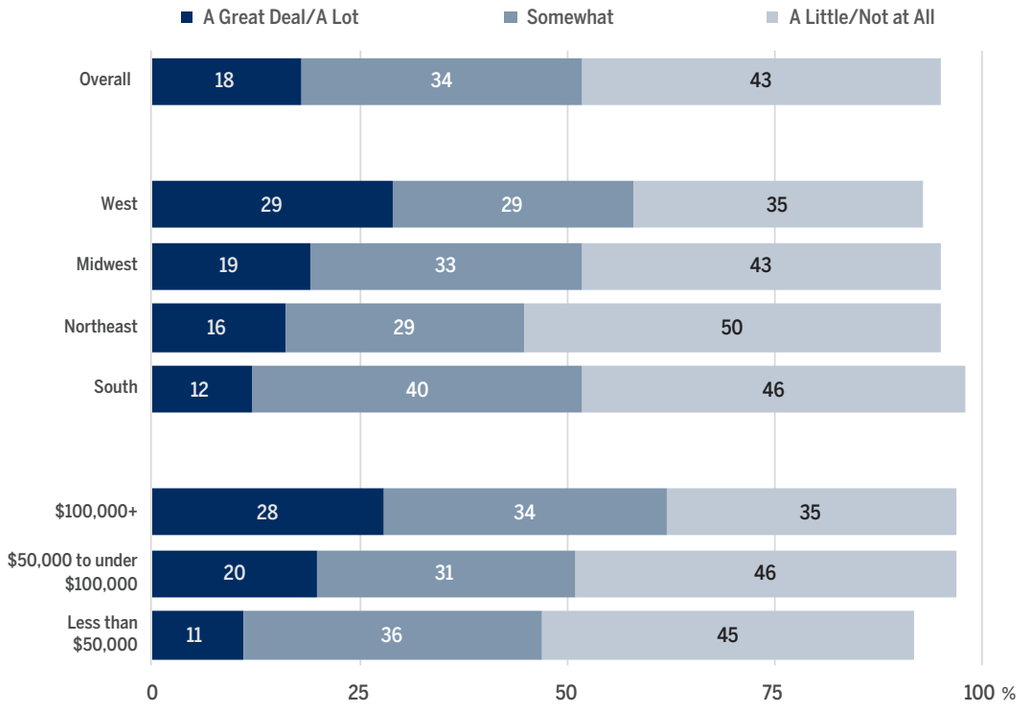
Economy, Trade, Jobs, and Investment

Trade with Asian partners is seen as beneficial to states as it has created jobs and investment, however there is concern that the United States is losing its competitiveness because of that trade. Cyber threats from Asia are also seen as a serious concern.

How much does the state of the economy in Asia matter to your state?

GENERAL PUBLIC

Percent of adults



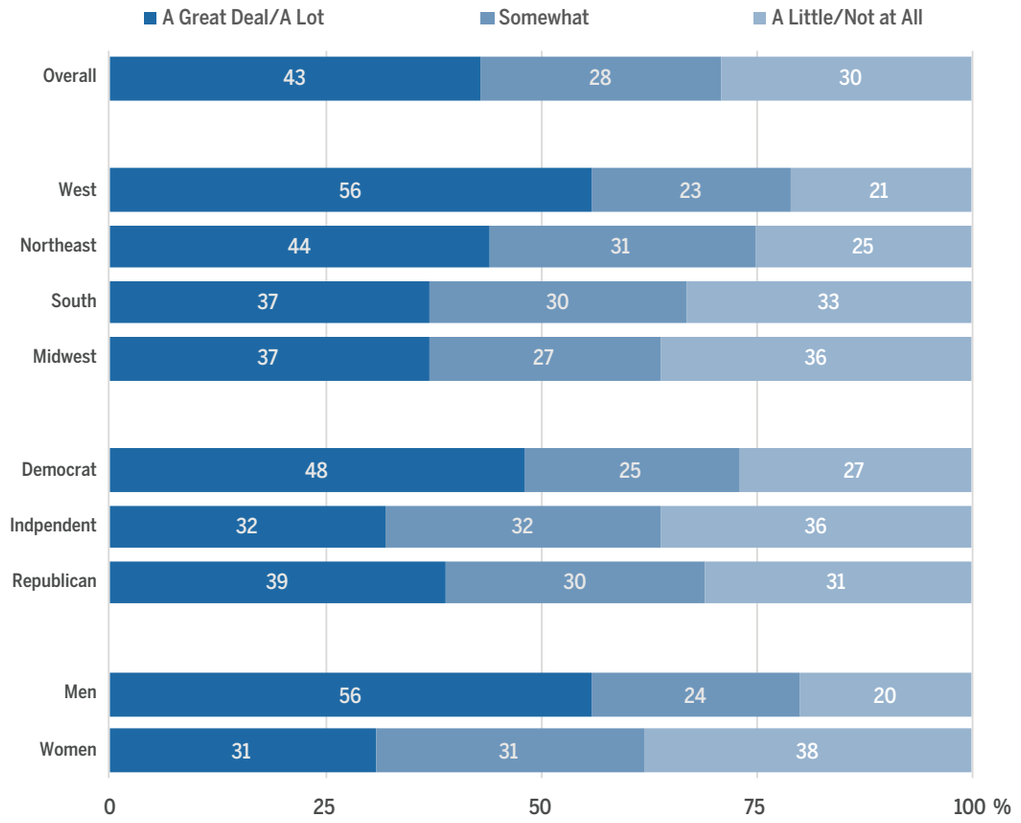
Question: [The state of the economy in Asia] How much do each of the following matter to your state?
Source: Asia Matters for the States Survey conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago September 23–27, 2021, with 1,055 adults age 18 and older nationwide.

The general public does recognize some benefit to trade with Asia but does not feel its effects in terms of jobs created in their state.

Nearly half of Americans (43%) think the Asian economy only affects their state a little or not at all. Eighteen percent think it matters a lot or a great deal and 34% believe it matters somewhat. Americans with incomes above $50,000 are more likely to think the Asian economy matters a lot or a great deal to their state, as well as those living in the West.

ELECTED AND APPOINTED OFFICIALS, BUREAUCRATS, AND BUSINESS LEADERS

Percent of elites



Question: [The state of the economy in Asia] How much do each of the following matter to your state?
Source: Asia Matters for the States Survey conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago September 21–October 13, 2021, with 1,446 state and local elected and appointed officials, bureaucrats, and business leaders.

Forty-three percent of state and local elected and appointed officials, bureaucrats, and business leaders say the state of the Asian economy matters a lot to their state, and another 28% say it matters somewhat. Thirty percent say it doesn't matter.

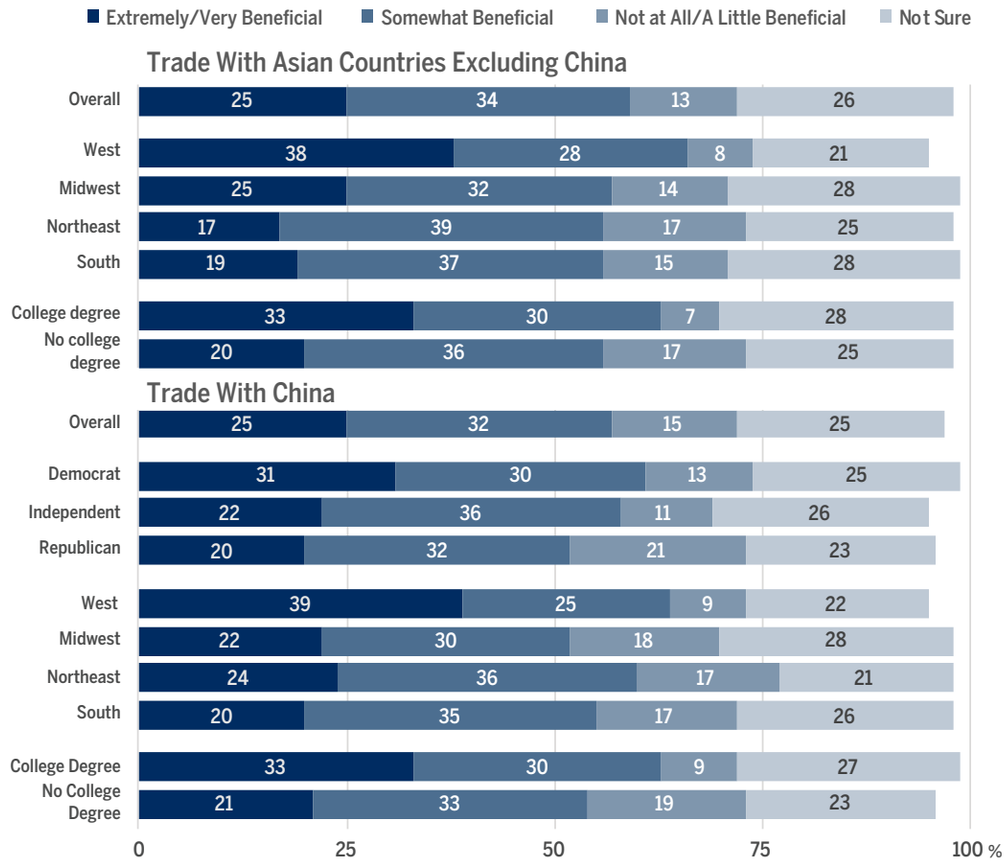
However, bureaucrats were much more likely to be skeptical that the state of the of the Asian economy mattered to their state, with 40% saying it mattered not at all or a little compared with 8% of elected and appointed officials and 19% of business leader who shared this sentiment. Conversely, 60% of business leaders, and 64% of elected and appointed officials stated that the state of the Economy in Asia mattered a great deal or a lot to their state, with only 27% of bureaucrats agreeing.

Among these elites, those living in the Western and Northeastern United States are more likely to say the Asian economy is important to their state, as are men and Democrats.

How beneficial has trade with Asian countries been for your state?

GENERAL PUBLIC

Percent of adults



Question: How beneficial has trade with each of the following been for your state?
Source: Asia Matters for the States Survey conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago September 23–27, 2021, with 1,055 adults age 18 and older nationwide.

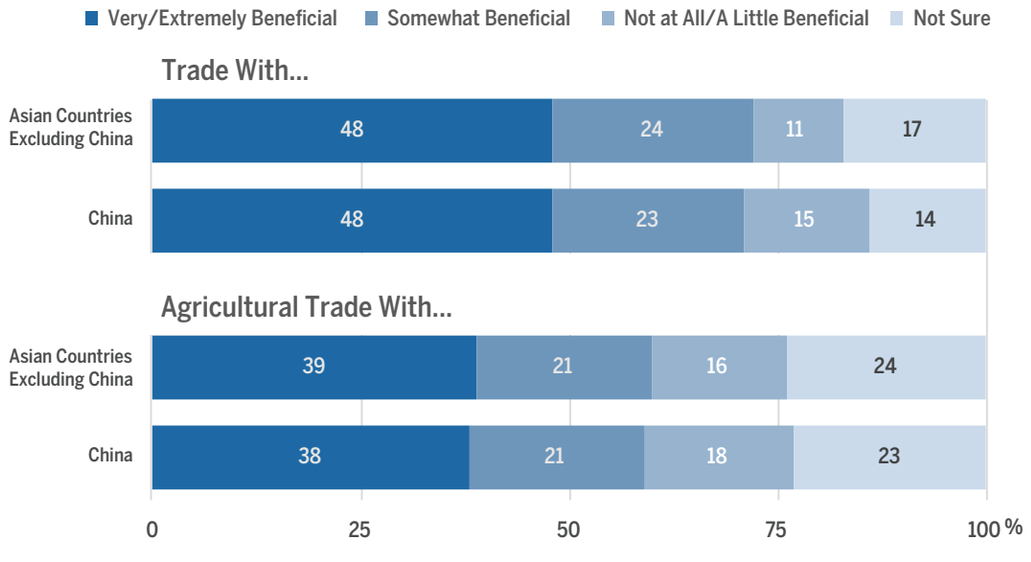
Most believe trade with Asia has some benefit, but only a quarter see trade with countries in Asia and China as very or extremely beneficial. Twenty-six percent are unsure about the benefits of trade with countries in Asia and 25% are unsure about China.

Regarding trade with Asian countries excluding China, those with a college degree (33%) and those living in the West (38%) are more likely to view trade with other countries as extremely or very important.

As for trade with China, Americans with college degrees (33%) and those living in the West (39%) are more likely to believe trade with China is extremely or very important. Just 20% of Republicans view trade with China as extremely or very important, compared to 31% of Democrats.

ELECTED AND APPOINTED OFFICIALS, BUREAUCRATS, AND BUSINESS LEADERS

Percent of elites



Question: How beneficial for your state is trade from each of the following? How beneficial for your state is agricultural trade from each of the following?
Source: Asia Matters for the States Survey conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago September 21–October 13, 2021, with 1,446 state and local elected and appointed officials, bureaucrats, and business leaders.

Forty-eight percent of elites say that trade with Asian countries, excluding China, is very beneficial to their state, while 24% say it is somewhat beneficial and 11% say it is not very beneficial. Seventeen percent say they are not sure.

When it comes to agricultural trade specifically, 39% say it is very beneficial, while 21% say it is somewhat beneficial and 16% say it is not too beneficial. Nearly a quarter of elites, however, are not sure.

Perceived benefits of trade are the same for China as the rest of the region. Forty-eight percent say trade with China is very beneficial, and 38% say the same about agricultural trade.

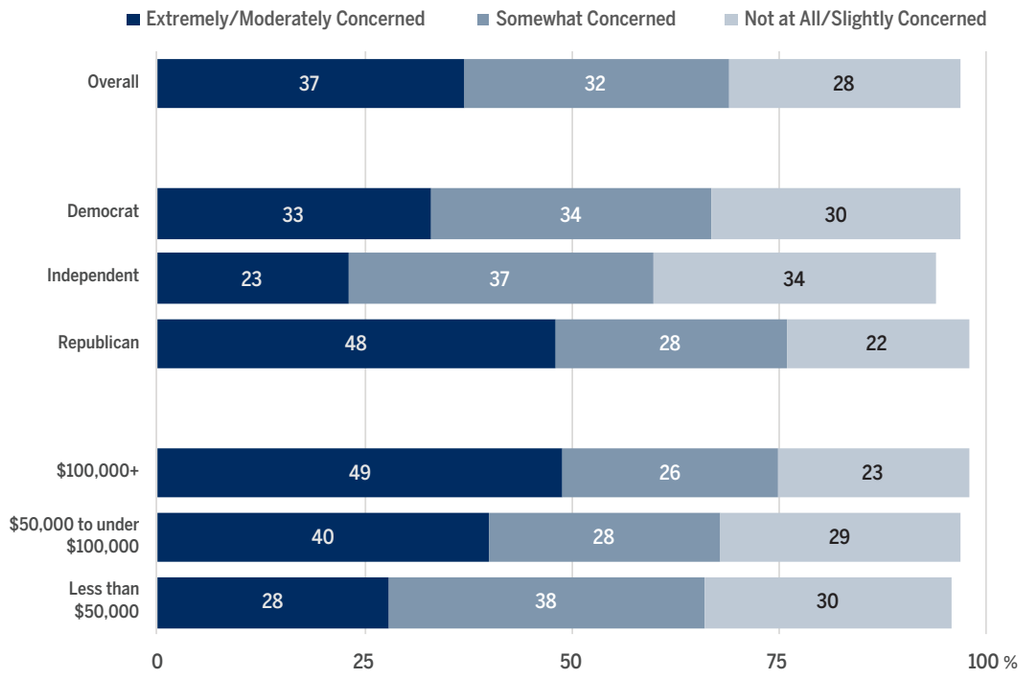
Sixty-four percent of Democrats say agricultural trade is at least somewhat beneficial, compared to 55% of Republicans.

Democrats also see a relationship with China as more beneficial than Republicans, with 76% of Democrats saying trade with China is beneficial compared to 65% of Republicans. Sixty-four percent and 55%, respectively, say the same about agricultural trade.

How concerned are you that the United States is losing its competitiveness because of trade with China?

GENERAL PUBLIC

Percent of adults



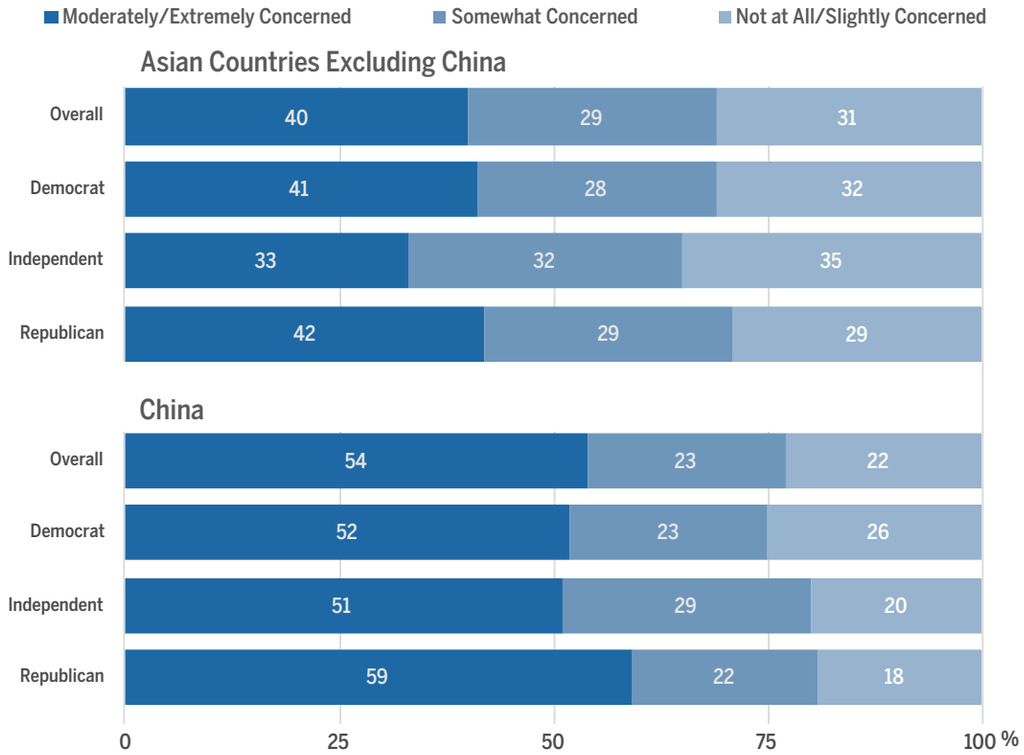
Question: [China] How concerned are you that the United States is losing its competitiveness because of trade with each of the following?
Source: Asia Matters for the States Survey conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago September 23–27, 2021, with 1,055 adults age 18 and older nationwide.

Americans are more concerned that the United States is losing its competitiveness because of trade with China than with other Asian countries. Thirty-seven percent are moderately or extremely concerned that the United States is losing its competitiveness due to trade with China, compared to 21% with the same concern regarding trade with other countries in Asia.

Republicans are more likely to express concern that the United States is losing its competitiveness due to trade with China. Those with incomes below $50,000 are less likely to share this concern.

ELECTED AND APPOINTED OFFICIALS, BUREAUCRATS, AND BUSINESS LEADERS

Percent of elites



Question: How concerned are you that the United States is losing its competitiveness because of trade with each of the following?
Source: Asia Matters for the States Survey conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago September 21–October 13, 2021, with 1,446 state and local elected and appointed officials, bureaucrats, and business leaders.

Losing competitiveness due to trade with China is at least somewhat concerning for 78% of elites, including 30% who are extremely concerned. Just 69%, meanwhile, are concerned due to trade with other Asian countries, and just 17% are extremely concerned.

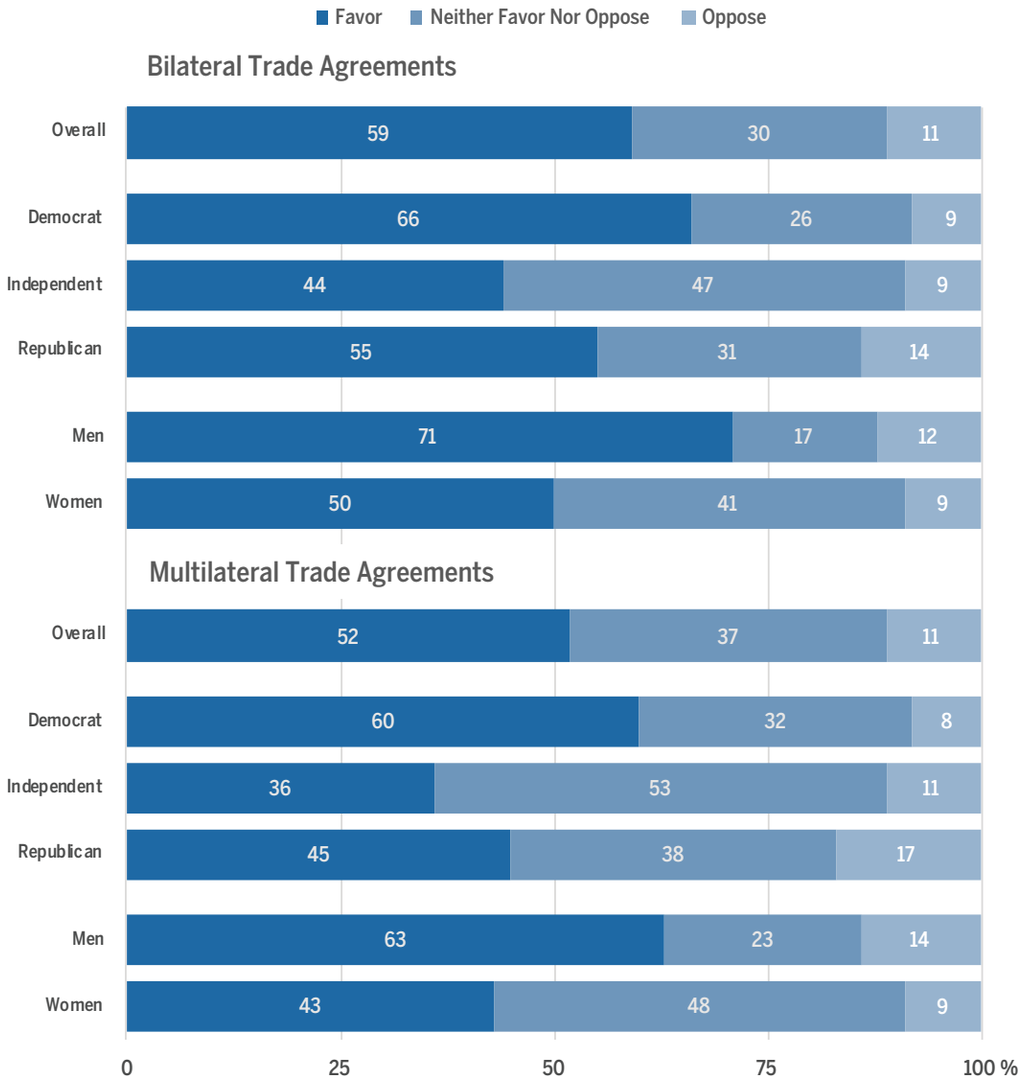
Republican and Democratic elites are equally concerned about losing competitiveness due to trade with Asian countries excluding China, but Republicans are more concerned than Democrats about trade with China.

Do you favor or oppose new trade deals and agreements?

While competitiveness is a concern, a majority of elites support both new bilateral (59%) and multilateral (52%) trade agreements with Asian countries. Democrats and men are more likely than Republicans and women to support such agreements.

ELECTED AND APPOINTED OFFICIALS, BUREAUCRATS, AND BUSINESS LEADERS

Percent of elites

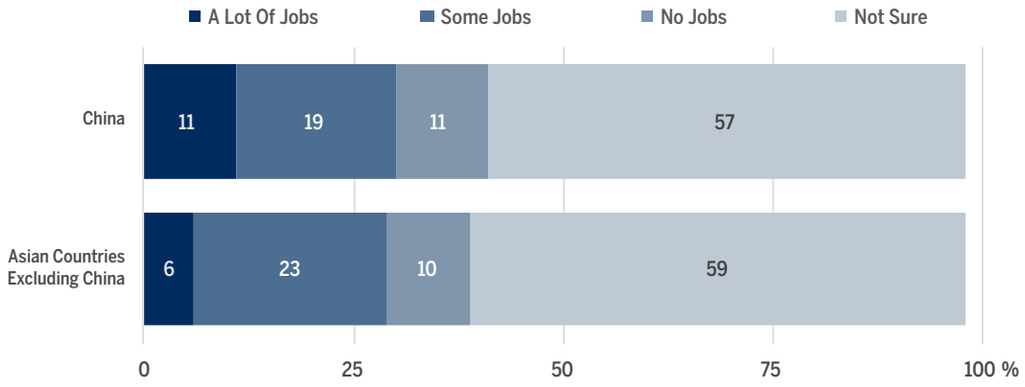


Question: Do you favor, oppose, or neither favor nor oppose the United States taking the following actions with Asia?
Source: Asia Matters for the States Survey conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago September 21–October 13, 2021, with 1,446 state and local elected and appointed officials, bureaucrats, and business leaders.

How many jobs has trade with each of the following created in your state?

GENERAL PUBLIC

Percent of adults

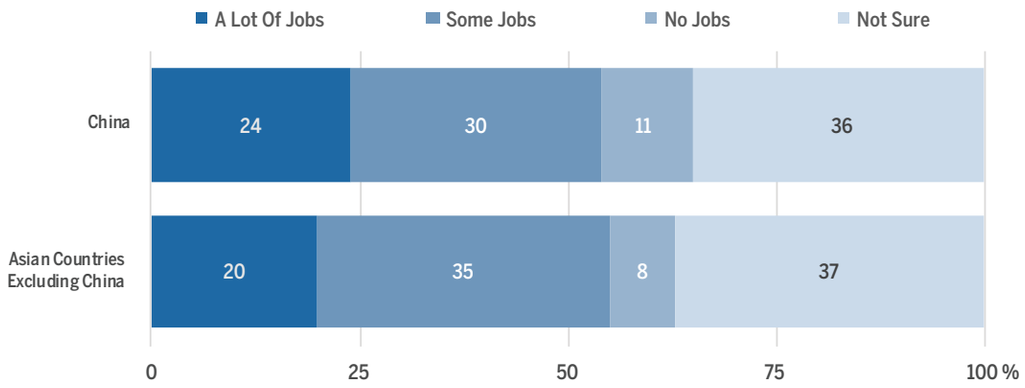


Question: How many jobs has trade with each of the following created in your state?
Source: Asia Matters for the States Survey conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago September 23–27, 2021, with 1,055 adults age 18 and older nationwide.

Over half of Americans could not be certain if trade with Asian countries (59%) or China (57%) has created jobs in their state. Twenty-nine percent believe trade with Asian countries has created a lot or some jobs and 30% say the same for trade with China.

ELECTED AND APPOINTED OFFICIALS, BUREAUCRATS, AND BUSINESS LEADERS

Percent of elites



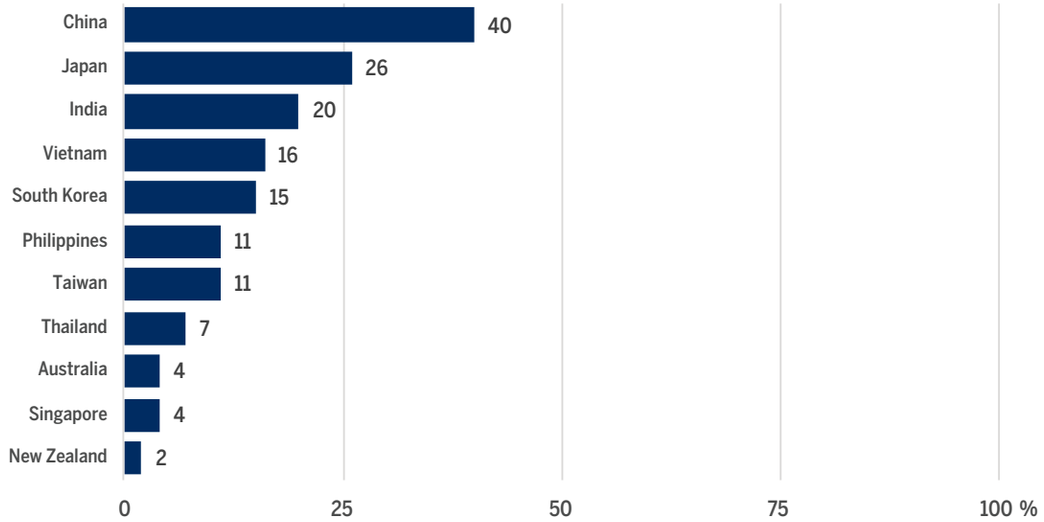
Question: How many jobs has trade with each of the following created in your state?
Source: Asia Matters for the States Survey conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago September 21–October 13, 2021, with 1,446 state and local elected and appointed officials, bureaucrats, and business leaders.

While about half of elites say that trade with Asian countries, as well as trade with China specifically, is a good source of job creation in their state, more than a third are not sure.

Which countries in Asia have created the most jobs in your state or locality?

GENERAL PUBLIC

Percent of adults who said countries in Asia created a lot of or some jobs



Question: Which countries in Asia have created the most jobs in your state or locality? [Check all that apply.]
Source: Asia Matters for the States Survey conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago September 23–27, 2021, with 1,055 adults age 18 and older nationwide.

Among those who believe trade with countries in Asia have created jobs in their state, 46% are uncertain which countries have created the most jobs. Forty percent think China has created the most jobs, 26% cite Japan, and 20% cite India.

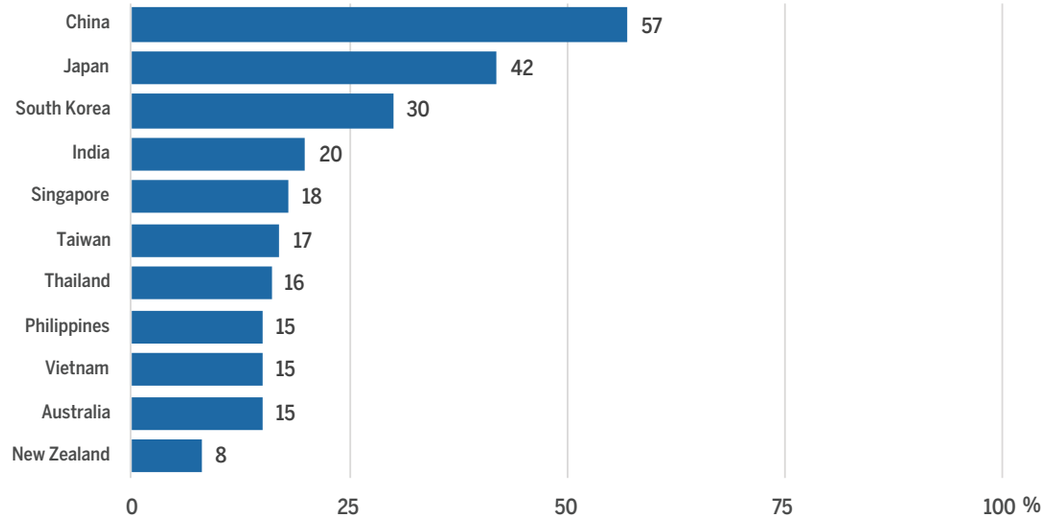
Respondents in the West were the more likely to respond that China had created the most jobs in their state, and were also more likely to hold similar views towards South Korea than other parts of the United States. However, respondents held similar views about Japan and job creation across geogrpahic regions, with the exception of the Northeast where fewer respondents shared this view.

Democrats were more likely to believe that Japan and India had created jobs in their states than Republicans and Independents.

In general, respondents earning more than $100,000 were more likelt than other income groups to believe that countries in Asia had created jobs in their states.

ELECTED AND APPOINTED OFFICIALS, BUREAUCRATS, AND BUSINESS LEADERS

Percent of elites who said countries in Asia created a lot of or some jobs



Question: Which countries in Asia have created the most jobs in your state or locality?
Source: Asia Matters for the States Survey conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago September 21–October 13, 2021, with 1,446 state and local elected and appointed officials, bureaucrats, and business leaders.

Among those who say trade has created jobs in their state, Japan and China are seen as the most responsible for the job growth. Sixteen percent are uncertain which countries have created the most jobs.

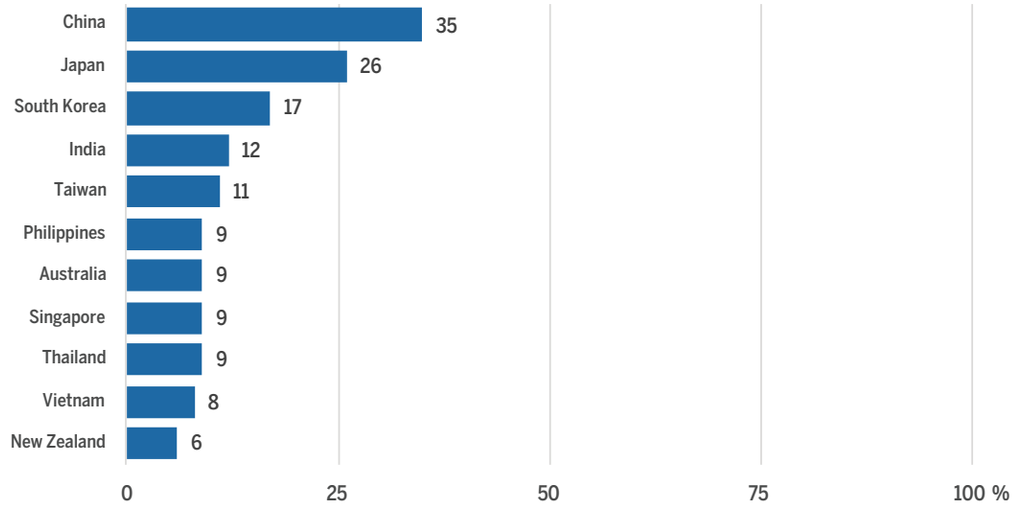
Both Democrat and Republican elites were more likely than Independents to respond that Asian countries had created the most jobs in thier state, regardless of the country.

Elected and appointed officials were more likely than bureaucrats and business leaders to say that Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan had created the most jobs in their state.

Which countries in Asia have invested the most in your state?

ELECTED AND APPOINTED OFFICIALS, BUREAUCRATS, AND BUSINESS LEADERS

Percent of elites



Question: Which countries in Asia have invested the most in your state? [Check all that apply.]
Source: Asia Matters for the States Survey conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago September 21–October 13, 2021, with 1,446 state and local elected and appointed officials, bureaucrats, and business leaders.

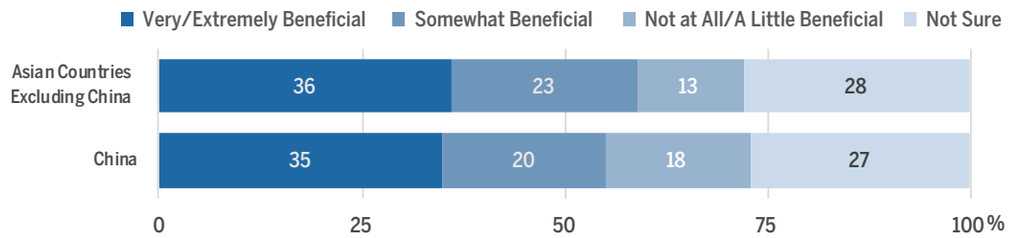
Investment by Asian countries is also seen as beneficial to a majority of elites, although about a quarter are unsure. Fifty-nine percent say investment by Asian countries other than China has been at least somewhat beneficial and 55% say the same about China, including about a third who say each has been very or extremely beneficial.

Similar to trade, elites say China and Japan are the Asian countries who have invested most in their state. However, 41% of elites are unsure which countries in Asia have invested the most.

How beneficial has investment from each of the following been for your state?

ELECTED AND APPOINTED OFFICIALS, BUREAUCRATS, AND BUSINESS LEADERS

Percent of elites

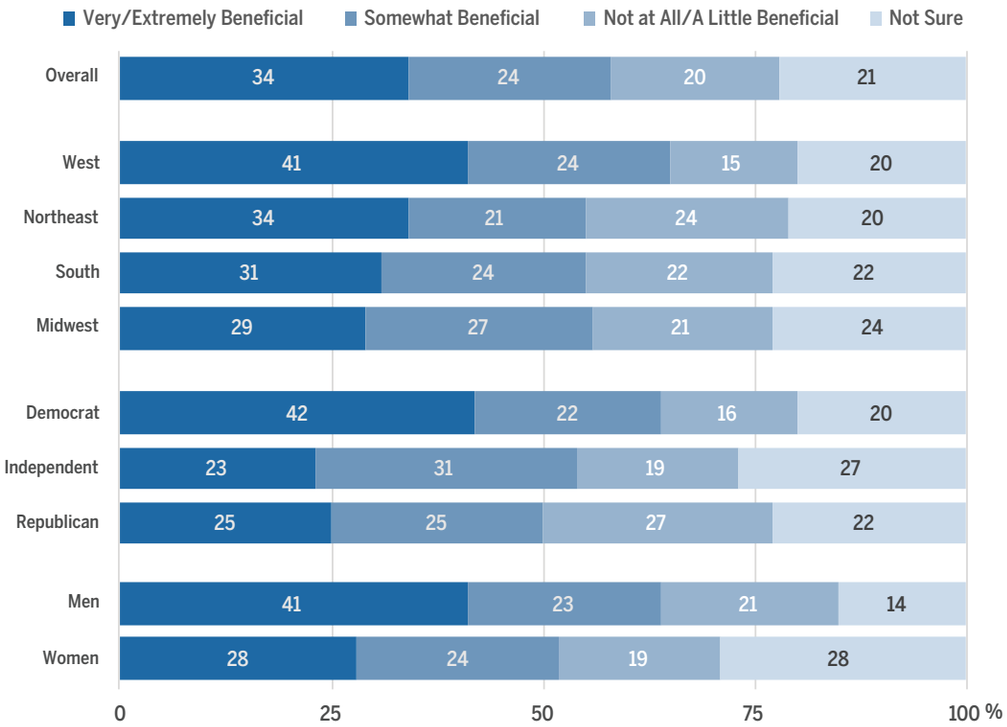


Question: How beneficial has investment from each of the following been for your state? [Check all that apply.]
Source: Asia Matters for the States Survey conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago September 21–October 13, 2021, with 1,446 state and local elected and appointed officials, bureaucrats, and business leaders.

How beneficial is United States investment in infrastructure in Asia for your state?

ELECTED AND APPOINTED OFFICIALS, BUREAUCRATS, AND BUSINESS LEADERS

Percent of elites



Question: How beneficial is United States investment in quality infrastructure in Asia for your state?
Source: Asia Matters for the States Survey conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago September 21–October 13, 2021, with 1,446 state and local elected and appointed officials, bureaucrats, and business leaders.

When it comes to the local benefits of the United States investing in the infrastructure of Asian countries, 58% report their state benefits from US investment in Asian infrastructure, including a third who say it is very or extremely beneficial. Twenty percent of elites say investment in infrastructure is not beneficial, and 21% are not sure.

Elites living in the Western United States are more likely to say investing in Asian infrastructure is beneficial, as are Democrats and men.

Although many say there are economic benefits to trade and investment with Asian countries, a large majority are also concerned about cyber threats. Eighty-eight percent consider cyber threats from Asia a serious concern to businesses and infrastructure, including 56% who feel it's a very or extremely serious concern.

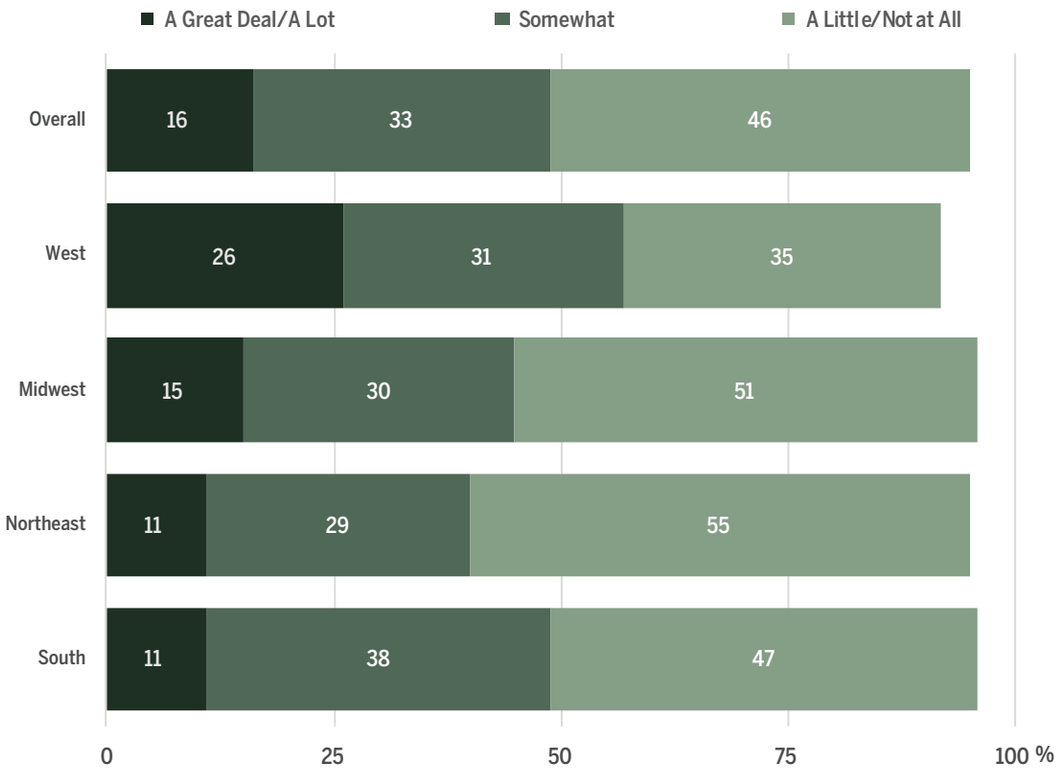
Politics, Good Governance, and National Security

Most Americans see a role for the country to promote human rights in Asia and think the United States should maintain its current military presence there. Elites place equal priority on protecting national security through diplomatic, military, and economic approaches.

How much does the state of politics in Asia matter to your state?

GENERAL PUBLIC

Percent of adults

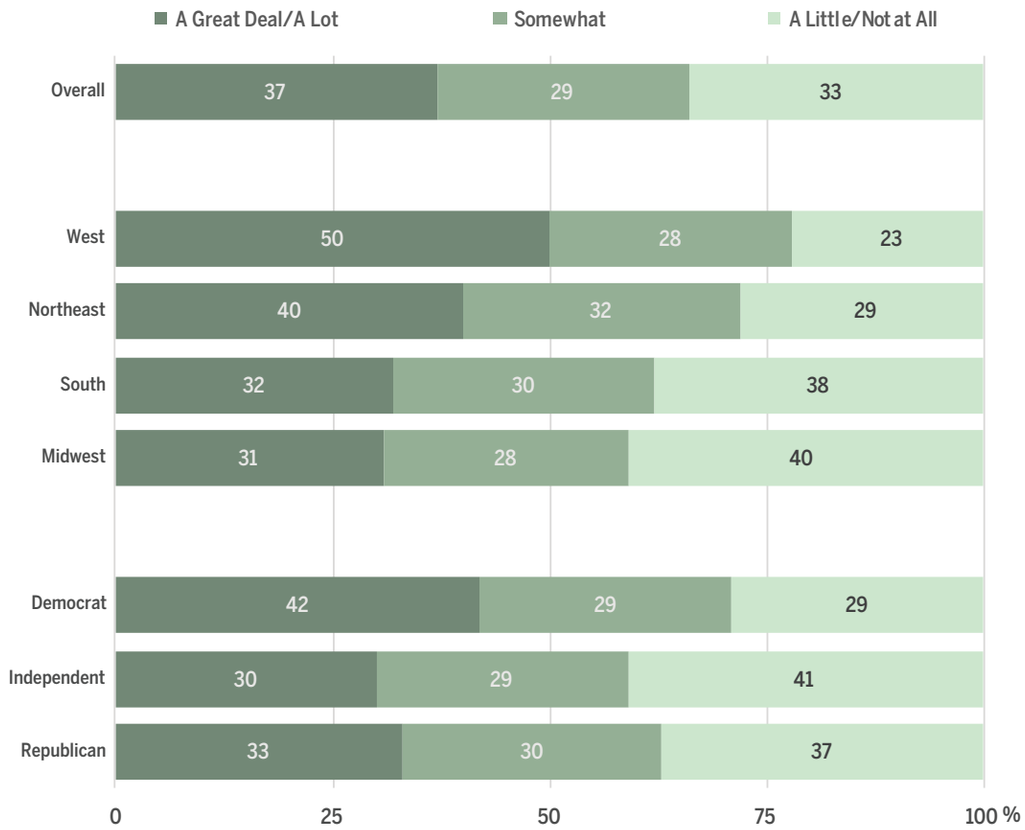


Question: [The state of politics in Asia] How much do each of the following matter to your state?
Source: Asia Matters for the States Survey conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago September 23–27, 2021, with 1,055 adults age 18 and older nationwide.

Forty-six percent of Americans believe the state of politics in Asia only matters a little or not at all to their state. A third think it matters somewhat and just 16% think it matters a lot or a great deal. Those living in the West are more likely to believe the state of politics in Asia matters a lot or a great deal to their own state.

ELECTED AND APPOINTED OFFICIALS, BUREAUCRATS, AND BUSINESS LEADERS

Percent of elites



Question: [The state of politics in Asia] How much do each of the following matter to your state?
Source: Asia Matters for the States Survey conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago September 21–October 13, 2021, with 1,446 state and local elected and appointed officials, bureaucrats, and business leaders.

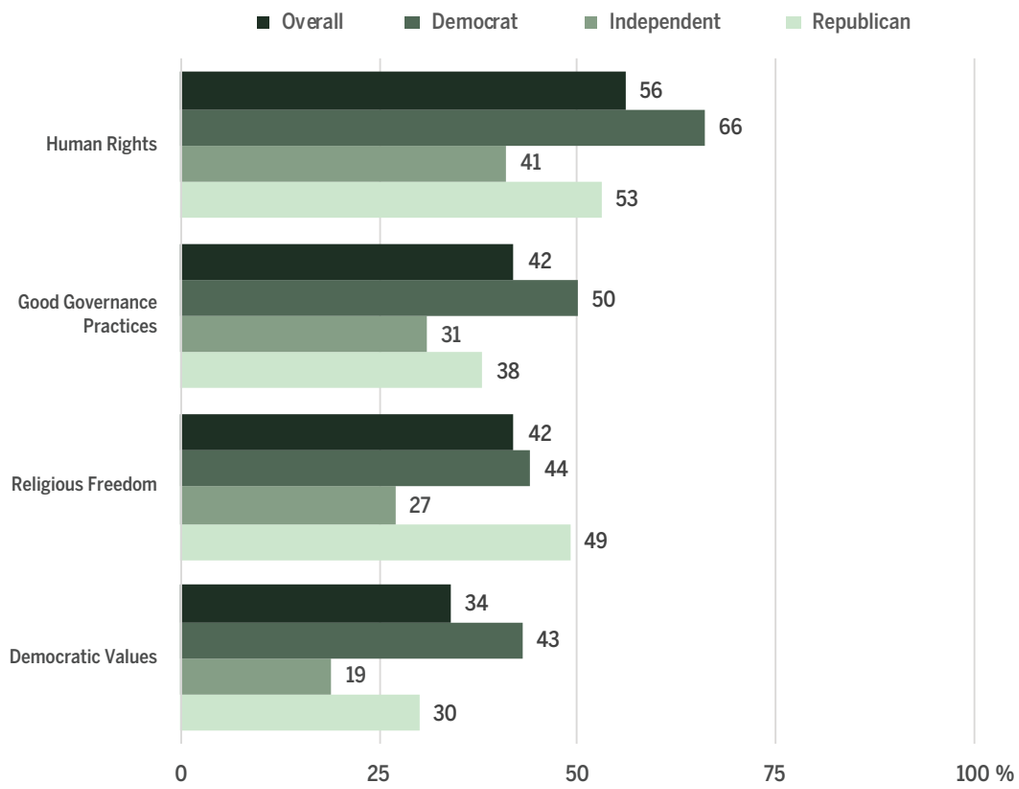
Sixty-seven percent of elites agree that the state of politics in Asia matters to their state, including 37% who say it matters a lot or a great deal. However, a third say it does not matter.

Elites living in the Western and Northeastern part of the country, as well as Democrats are more likely to say the state of politics in Asia matters a great deal to their state. In the West 50% of elites agreed that the state of politics in Asia matters to their state, whereas only 40% agreed in the Northeast, and 31% and 32% in the Midwest and South respectively.

How important is it for the United States to promote human rights, good governance practices, religious freedom, and democratic values?

GENERAL PUBLIC

Percent of adults



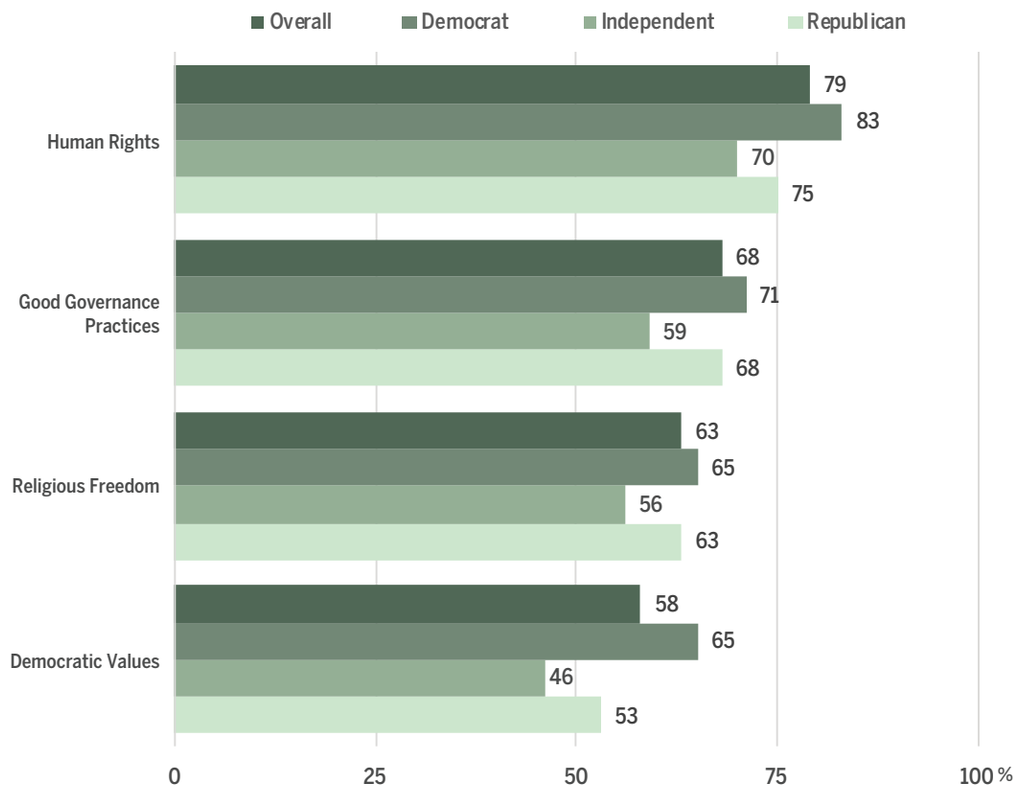
Question: How important is it for the United States to promote each of the following in Asia?
Source: Asia Matters for the States Survey conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago September 23–27, 2021, with 1,055 adults age 18 and older nationwide.

Over half (56%) consider it extremely or very important for the United States to promote human rights in Asia. While there is support for promoting good governance, democratic values, and religious freedom, it isn't as strong.

Democrats are more likely than Republicans and independents to place importance on the promotion of human rights, democratic values, and good governance practices. Republicans and Democrats feel similarly about the importance of promoting religious freedom.

ELECTED AND APPOINTED OFFICIALS, BUREAUCRATS, AND BUSINESS LEADERS

Percent of elites



Question: How important is it for the United States to promote each of the following in Asia?
Source: Asia Matters for the States Survey conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago September 21–October 13, 2021, with 1,446 state and local elected and appointed officials, bureaucrats, and business leaders.

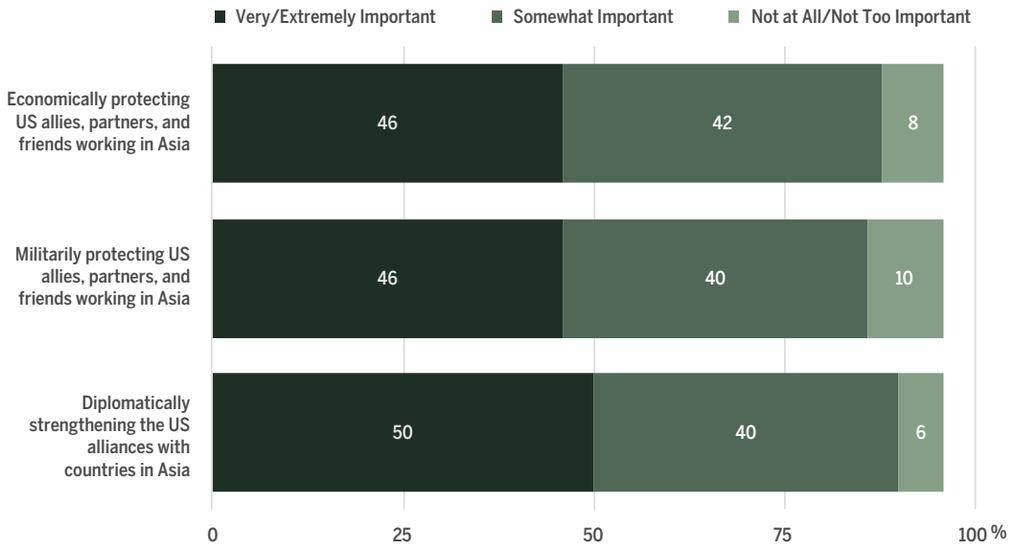
A majority of all elites agree it is very or extremely important to promote human rights, good governance, religious freedom, and democratic values in Asia.

Over 90% of elites agree it is at least somewhat important to promote human rights and good governance in Asia, and over 85% agree it is at least somewhat important to promote religious freedoms, and democratic values in Asia.

How important for US national security are diplomacy, the military, and economic solutions?

GENERAL PUBLIC

Percent of adults



Question: How important are each of the following for national security?
Source: Asia Matters for the States Survey conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago September 23–27, 2021, with 1,055 adults age 18 and older nationwide.

When it comes to protecting US national security, diplomatic (50%), military (46%), and economic solutions (46%) are prioritized about equally as extremely or very important.

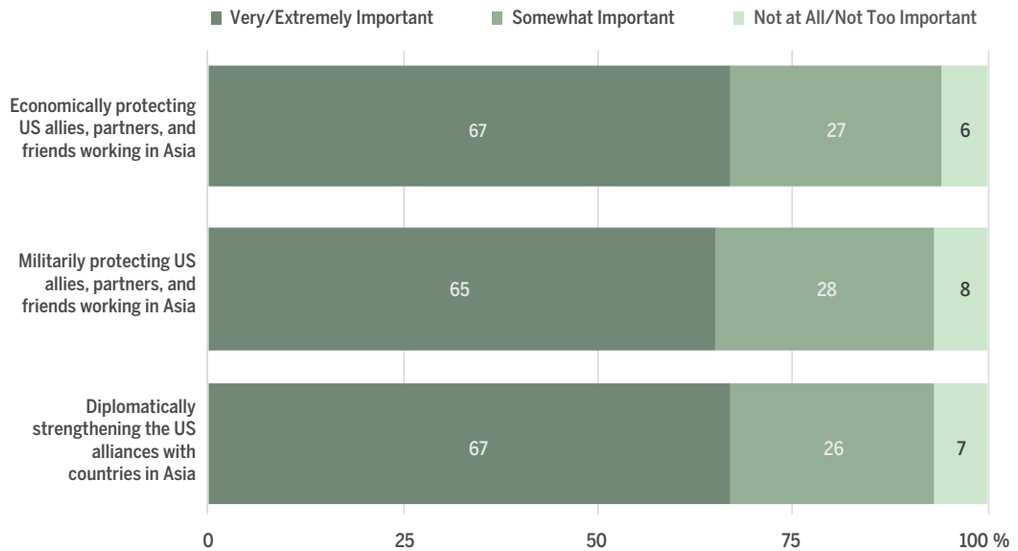
College graduates, Americans earning more than $60,000 a year, and those over the age of 60 were all more likely than other groups to agree that diplomatic solutions in Asia were important.

These same groups of Americans were also more likely to be generally supportivie of ecomonic and military solutions in Asia than others.

Regardless of political afilliation almost 90% of respondents agreed that diplomatic, military, and economic solutions were at least somewhat important.

ELECTED AND APPOINTED OFFICIALS, BUREAUCRATS, AND BUSINESS LEADERS

Percent of elites



Question: How important are each of the following for national security?
Source: Asia Matters for the States Survey conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago September 21–October 13, 2021, with 1,446 state and local elected and appointed officials, bureaucrats, and business leaders.

Elites place equal priority on protecting national security through diplomatic, military, and economic approaches. Elites are also in agreement about approaches for national security.

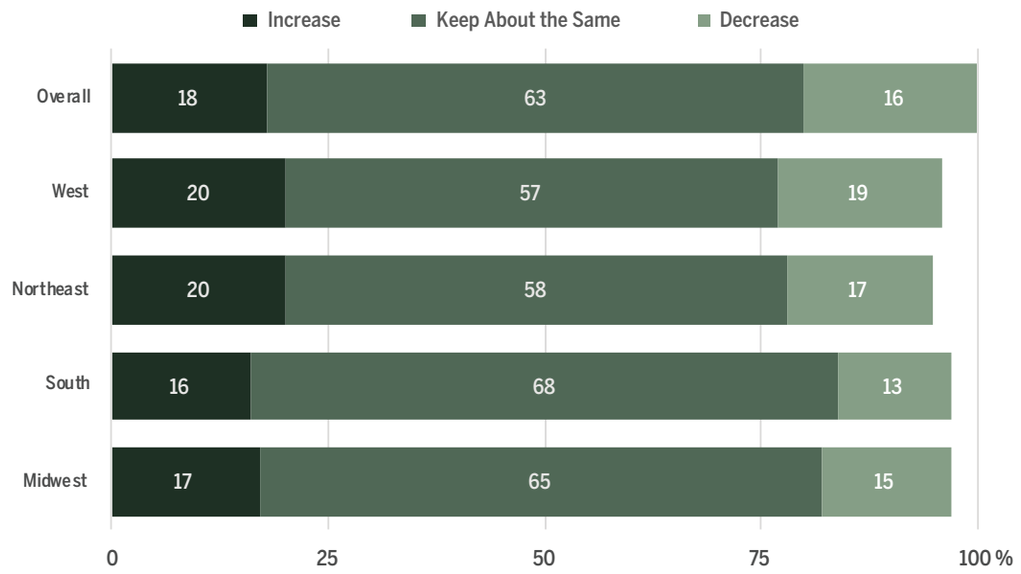
Nearly all agree that working diplomatically to strengthen alliances, militarily to protect US interests in the region, and economically protecting interests are important, with nearly two-thirds saying each is very or extremely important.

Elites who identified as Democrats were more likely to say that diplomatic approches were very or extrelmey improtant (72%), than Republicans (63%), and Independents (54%). However, almost 90% of all respondents agreed that diplomatic, economic, and military approaches were at least somewhat important regardless of political affiliation.

Should the United States increase, decrease, or keep about the same its military presence in Asia?

GENERAL PUBLIC

Percent of adults



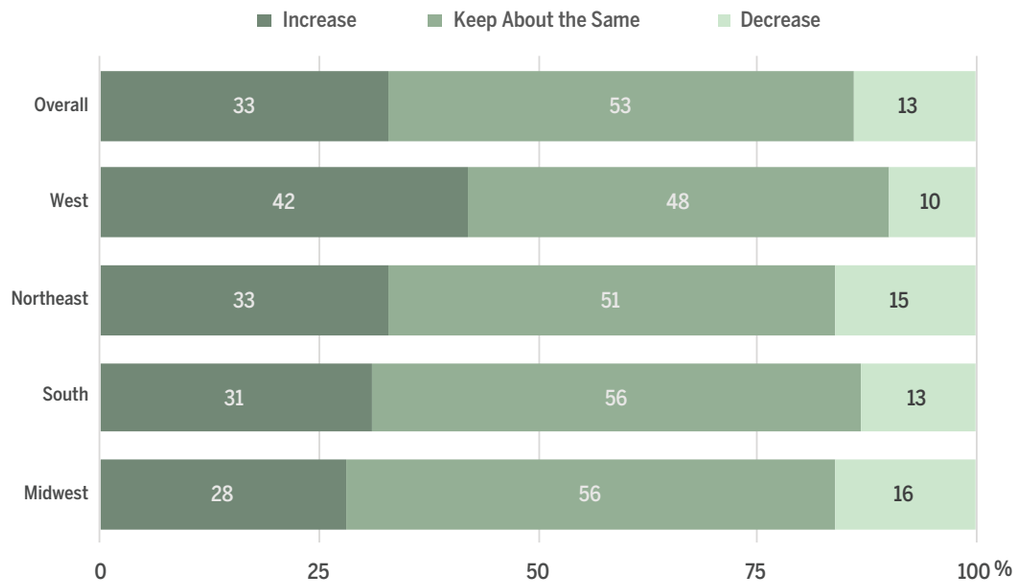
Question: Should the United States increase, decrease, or keep about the same its military presence in Asia?
Source: Asia Matters for the States Survey conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago September 23–27, 2021, with 1,055 adults age 18 and older nationwide.

A majority of Americans (63%) prefer keeping the US military presence in Asia about the same. Eighteen percent believe it should be increased and 16% say it should be decreased. Democrats are more likely to favor decreasing military presence in Asia compared to Republicans (24% vs. 7%) whereas Republicans are more likely to favor increasing military presence compared to Democrats (28% vs. 12%).

American's earning more tha $100,000 a year were more likely than other groups to believe that the US military presence in Asia should be increased. Men were also more likely than women to believe that the US military presence in Asia should be increased.

ELECTED AND APPOINTED OFFICIALS, BUREAUCRATS, AND BUSINESS LEADERS

Percent of elites



Question: Should the United States increase, decrease, or keep about the same its military presence in Asia?
Source: Asia Matters for the States Survey conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago September 21–October 13, 2021, with 1,446 state and local elected and appointed officials, bureaucrats, and business leaders.

About half of elites think the United States should keep its military presence the same in Asia, while a third think it should be increased. Just 13% say it should be decreased in the region.

Elites living in the Western part of the country are more likely than others to say that the United States should increase its military presence.

Bussiness leaders were more likely than other groups of elites to support increasing the US military presence in Asia.

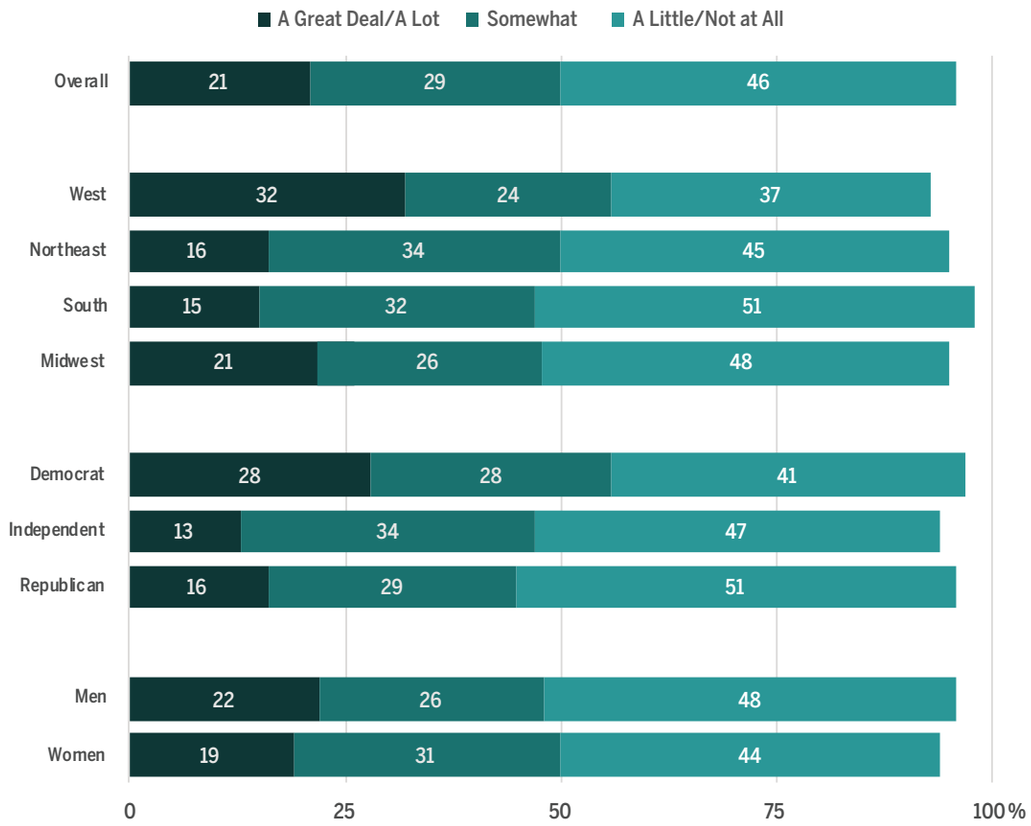
Climate Change and the Environment

When it comes to the environment, the local connections with Asia are less clear for many elites and the general public.

How much do the environmental conditions in Asia matter to your state?

GENERAL PUBLIC

Percent of adults

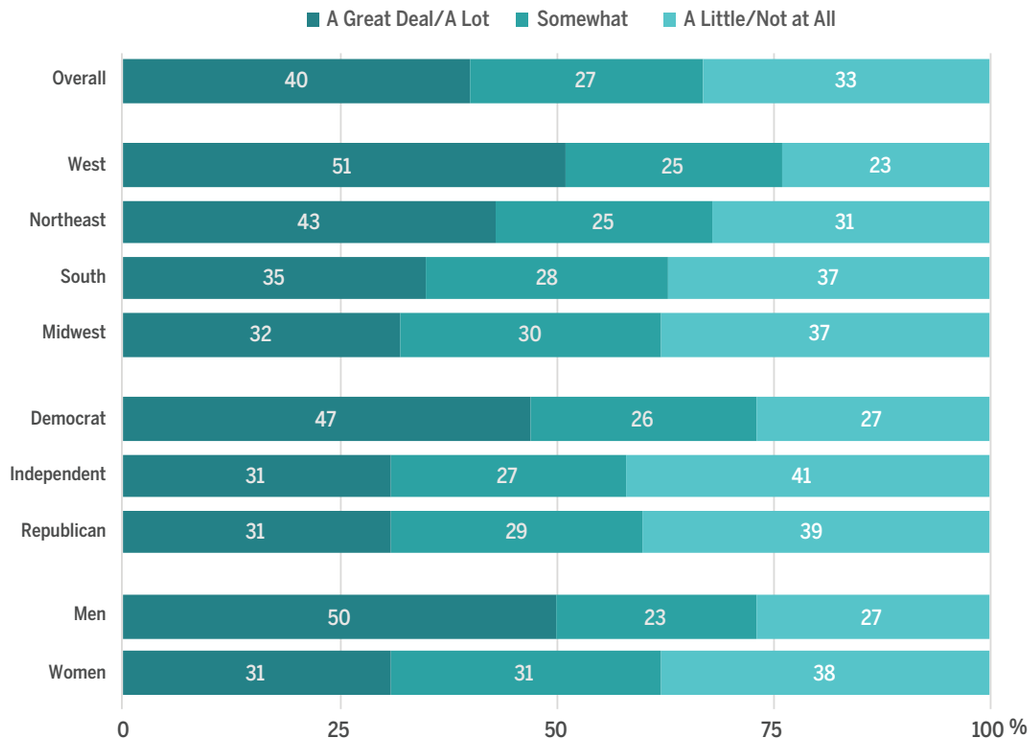


Question: [Environmental conditions in Asia] How much do each of the following matter to your state?
Source: Asia Matters for the States Survey conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago September 23–27, 2021, with 1,055 adults age 18 and older nationwide.

Almost half of all Americans believe that enviornmental conditons in Asia effect their state. However, respondents in the West, Democrats, and those with college degrees were more likely to believe that enviormental conditions in Asia mattered a great deal or a lot to their state.

ELECTED AND APPOINTED OFFICIALS, BUREAUCRATS, AND BUSINESS LEADERS

Percent of elites



Question: [Environmental conditions in Asia] How much do each of the following matter to your state?
Source: Asia Matters for the States Survey conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago September 21–October 13, 2021, with 1,446 state and local elected and appointed officials, bureaucrats, and business leaders.

There is awareness that the environmental conditions in Asia affect the United States but only about half of elites feel there should be an increase in cooperation with Asia to combat climate change.

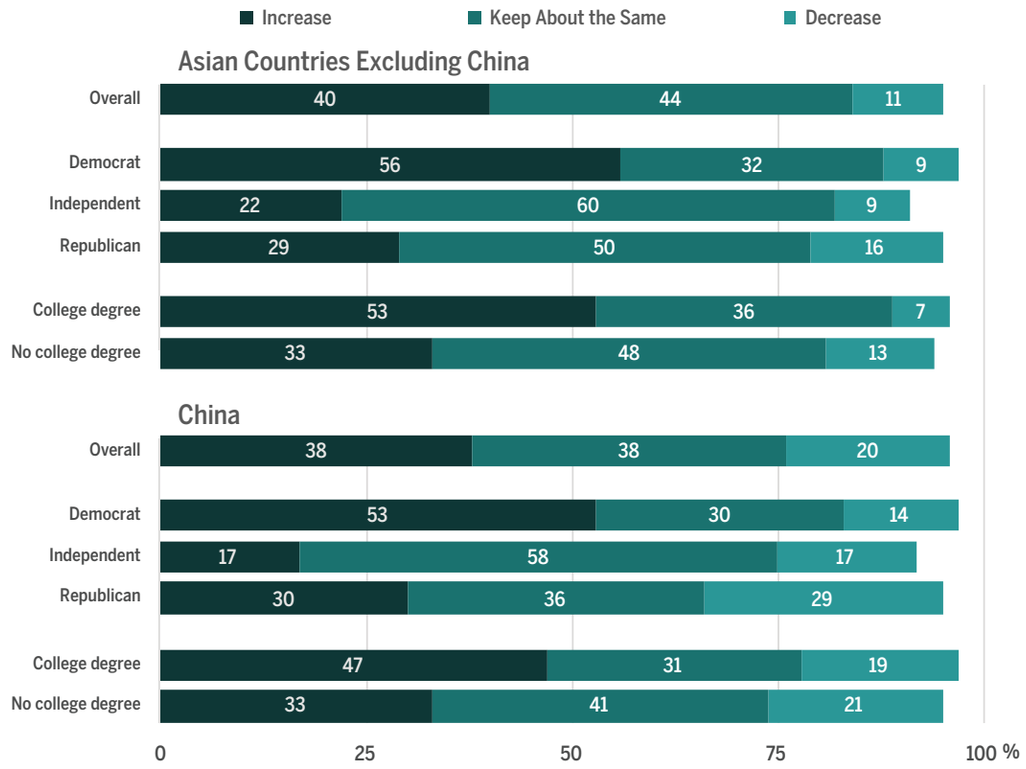
Two-thirds of elites say the environmental conditions in Asia impact their state, including 40% who say it impacts their state a lot or a great deal.

Both men and Democrats are more likely to so say that the environmental conditions of Asia impact their state, as are people living in the western United States.

Should the United States increase or decrease its cooperation with Asian countries to combat climate change?

GENERAL PUBLIC

Percent of adults



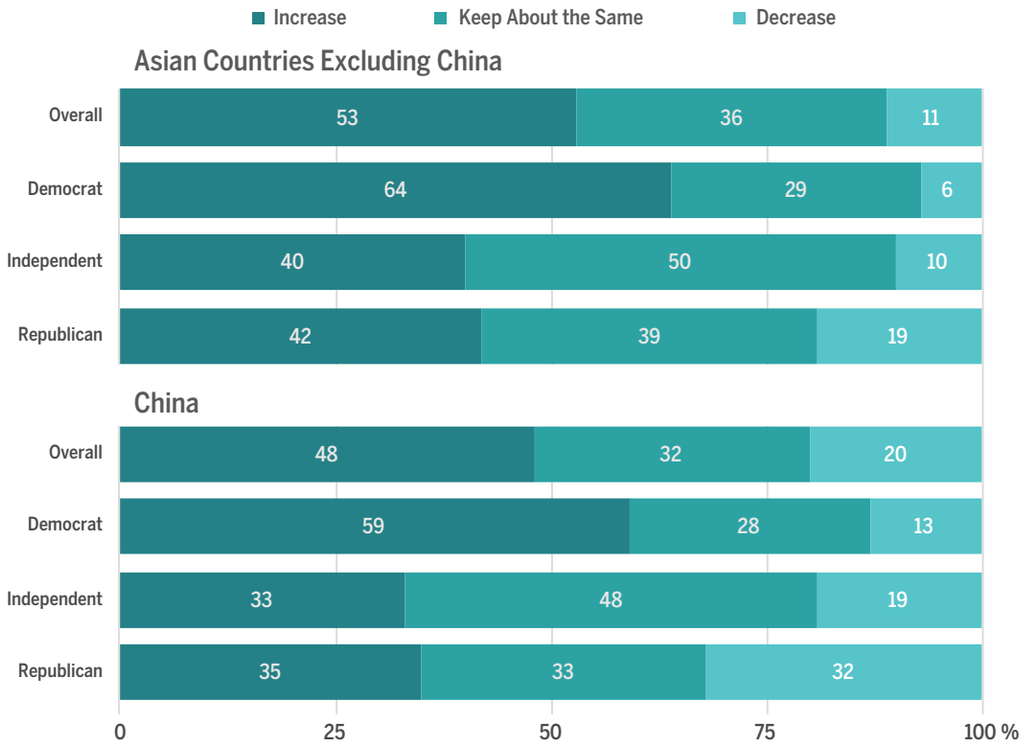
Question: Should the United States increase, decrease, or keep about the same in its cooperation with each of the following to combat climate change?
Source: Asia Matters for the States Survey conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago September 23–27, 2021, with 1,055 adults age 18 and older nationwide.

Almost half of Americans (46%) consider the environmental conditions in Asia as mattering only a little or not at all to their state. Twenty-nine percent believe environmental conditions in Asia matter somewhat and 21% believe they matter a lot or a great deal to their state.

Regarding cooperation with countries in Asia to combat climate change, about 4 in 10 Americans believe the United States should increase their efforts with China (38%) and other Asian countries (40%). Democrats and those with a college degree are more likely to favor increasing cooperation to combat climate change with both China and other Asian countries.

ELECTED AND APPOINTED OFFICIALS, BUREAUCRATS, AND BUSINESS LEADERS

Percent of elites



Question: Should the United States increase, decrease, or keep about the same in its cooperation with each of the following to combat climate change?
Source: Asia Matters for the States Survey conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago September 21–October 13, 2021, with 1,446 state and local elected and appointed officials, bureaucrats, and business leaders.

About half of elites say cooperation to combat climate change with Asian countries, as well as with China specifically, should be increased, while about a third feel that the current cooperation on climate change should stay the same. And although few feel cooperation should decrease, about twice as many say the United States should decrease cooperation with China (20%) compared to other countries in the region (11%).

Democrats are more likely than Republicans to say that the United States should increase cooperation with both China and the rest of Asia to combat climate change, while Republicans are more likely than Democrats to say they should decrease cooperation.

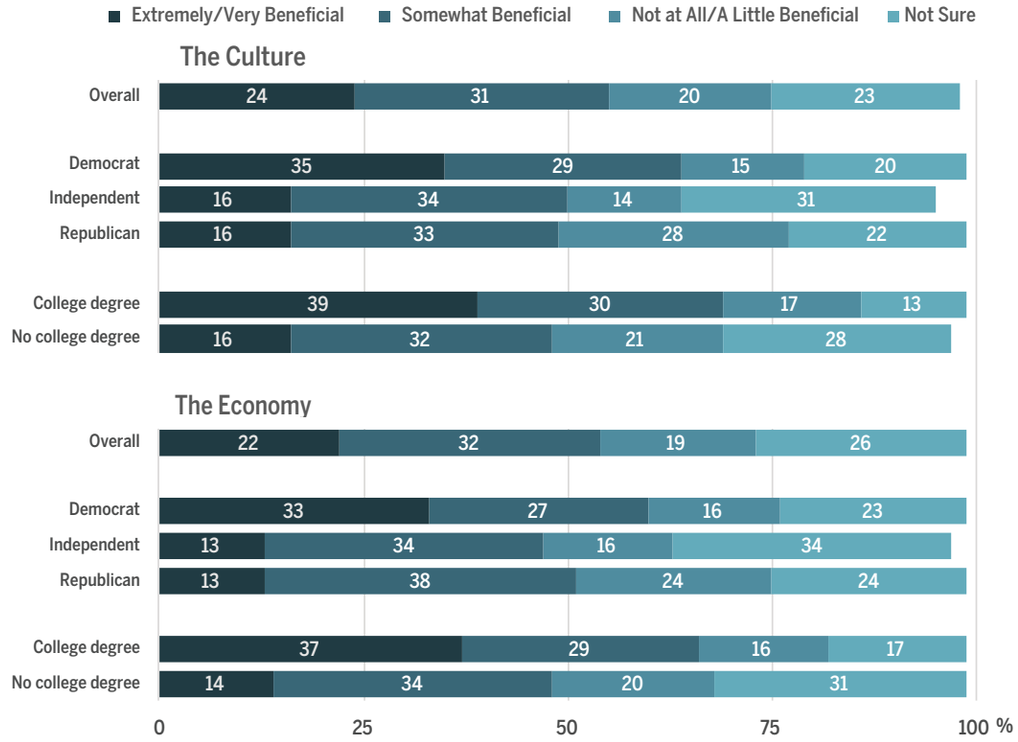
People-to-People Connections

Overall, elites are more likely than the general population to believe that people-to people connections with Asia bring benefits to their state.

How beneficial is the presence of students from Asia—for culture and for the economy—for universities and surrounding communities in your state?

GENERAL PUBLIC

Percent of adults



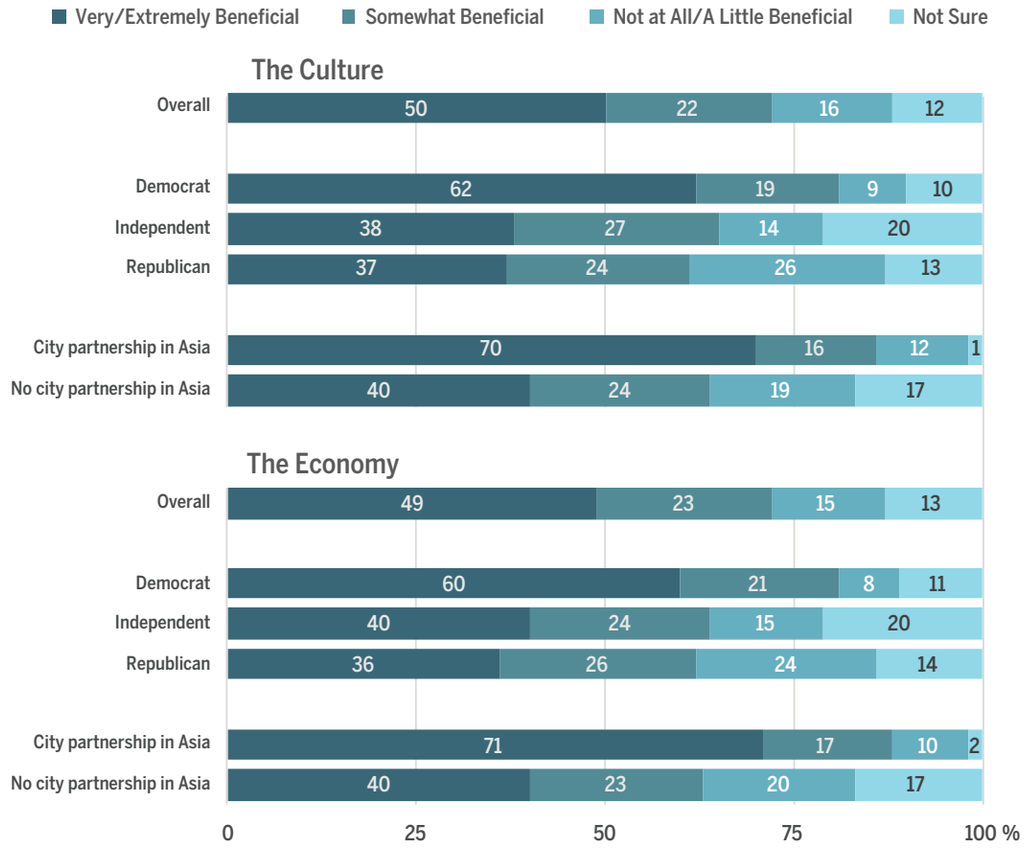
Question: How beneficial is the presence of students from Asia for each of the following for universities and surrounding communities in your state?
Source: Asia Matters for the States Survey conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago September 23–27, 2021, with 1,055 adults age 18 and older nationwide.

Fifty-five percent of Americans see the benefit of study abroad programs.

About half of Americans believe study abroad programs are at least somewhat beneficial when it comes to the state's culture and economy, though many aren't sure about the impacts of these programs. Democrats and those with a college degree are more likely to find the presence of students from Asia beneficial to both the culture and economy of universities and surrounding communities.

ELECTED AND APPOINTED OFFICIALS, BUREAUCRATS, AND BUSINESS LEADERS

Percent of elites



Question: How beneficial is the presence of students from Asia for each of the following for universities and surrounding communities in your state?
Source: Asia Matters for the States Survey conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago September 21–October 13, 2021, with 1,446 state and local elected and appointed officials, bureaucrats, and business leaders.

Many elites see benefits that Asian students, tourism, and immigration have on their state.

Half of elites are unsure if their city or state has had any official partnership with countries in Asia. Among the 31% who say they do have a sister city or partnership, however, 85% found them beneficial, including 66% who found them very or extremely beneficial.

About three-fourths of elites say Asian students at local universities are beneficial to the culture and economy of their state, including half who say their presence is very or extremely beneficial.

Elites who have a local partnership with an Asian country are more likely than those without to say Asian students are beneficial to their state, as are Democrats.

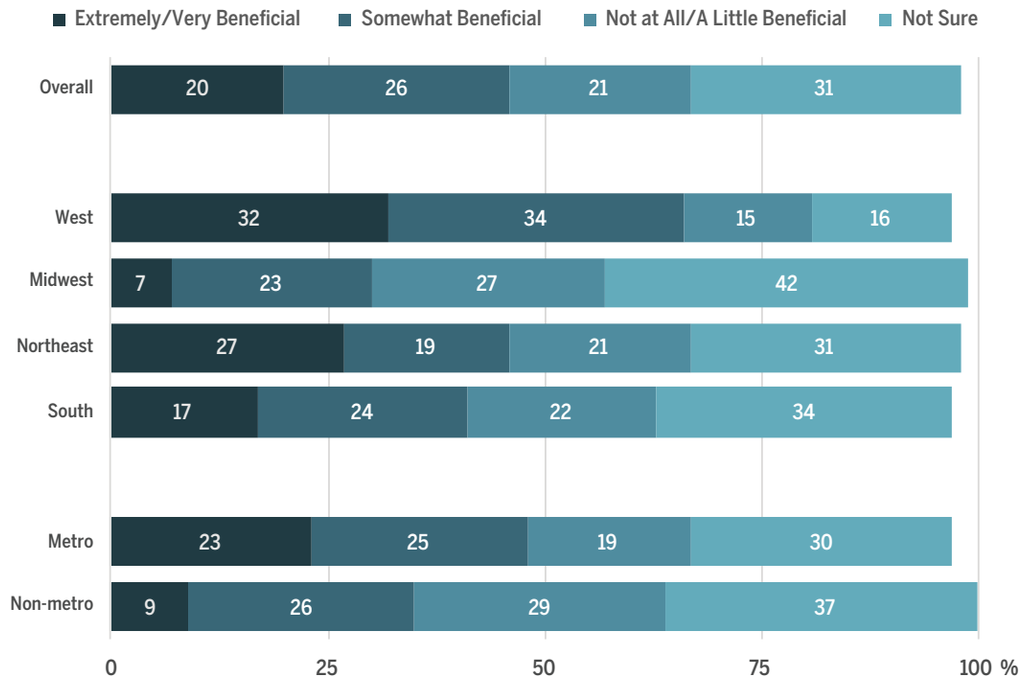
A majority are supportive of study abroad programs that encourage students in their state to study abroad in Asian countries. Sixty-two percent support these programs, 29% neither favor nor oppose, and just 9% oppose them.

Again, those with an Asian sister city or partnership, as well as Democrats, are more supportive of study abroad programs. Seventy-five percent of those with a sister city support such programs, compared to 54% of those who do not. And 72% of Democrats support encouraging students to study abroad in Asia compared to 51% of Republicans.

How beneficial is tourism from Asia to the economy of your state?

GENERAL PUBLIC

Percent of adults



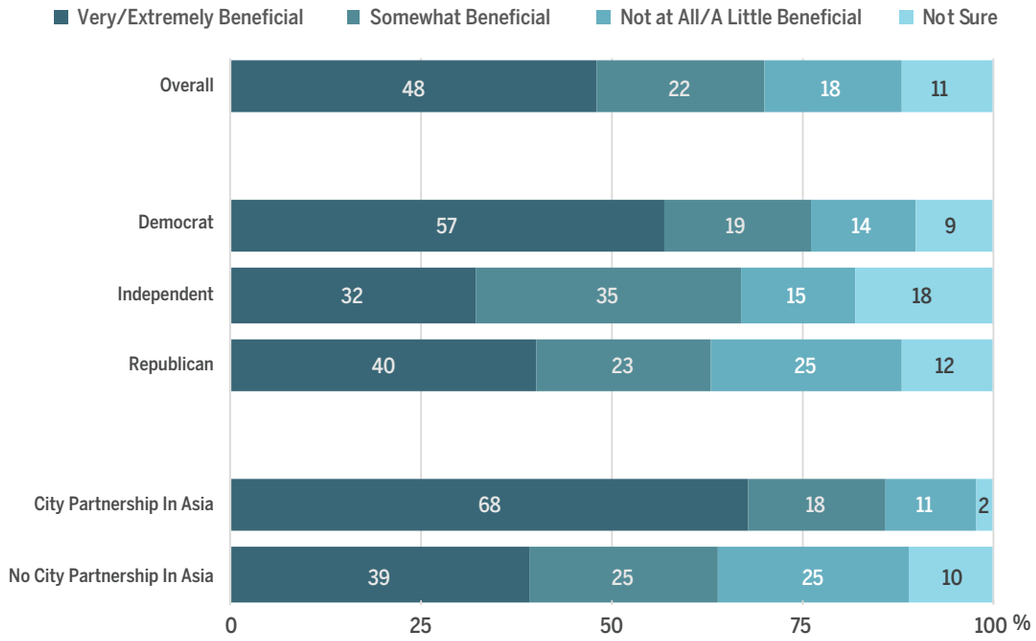
Question: How beneficial is tourism from Asia to the economy of your state?
Source: Asia Matters for the States Survey conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago September 23–27, 2021, with 1,055 adults age 18 and older nationwide.

Twenty-one percent of Americans think tourism from Asia is only a little or not at all beneficial to the economy of their state, but many (31%) are unsure about its impact. Those living in metropolitan areas of the country are more likely to believe tourism from Asia is beneficial to their state's economy, as well as those living in the West compared to the Midwest and South.

Encouraging students in their state to study abroad in Asia did not garner overwhelming support, with 48% neither favoring nor opposing and 41% favoring such programs. Ten percent of Americans oppose programs that encourage students to study abroad in Asia. Similarly, Democrats are more likely to favor these programs compared to Republicans and Independents (56% vs. 31% and 25%, respectively), as well as those with a college degree compared to those without (54% vs. 33%).

ELECTED AND APPOINTED OFFICIALS, BUREAUCRATS, AND BUSINESS LEADERS

Percent of elites



Question: How beneficial is tourism from Asia to the economy of your state?
Source: Asia Matters for the States Survey conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago September 21–October 13, 2021, with 1,446 state and local elected and appointed officials, bureaucrats, and business leaders.

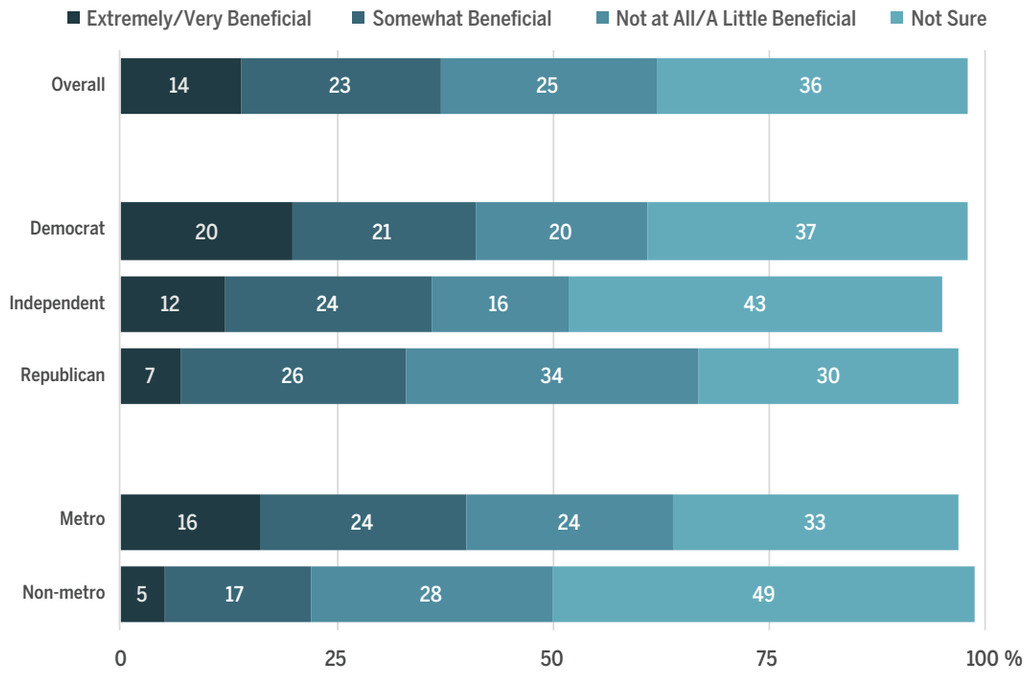
Most elites consider tourism as beneficial, including 48% who see it as very or extremely beneficial. Eighteen percent say it is not beneficial, and 11% say they are unsure.

Fewer elites living in the Midwest (66%) say tourism is at least somewhat beneficial, compared to 80% of those in the South, 82% of those in the Northeast, and 88% of those in the West.

How beneficial is immigration from Asia to the economy of your state?

GENERAL PUBLIC

Percent of adults

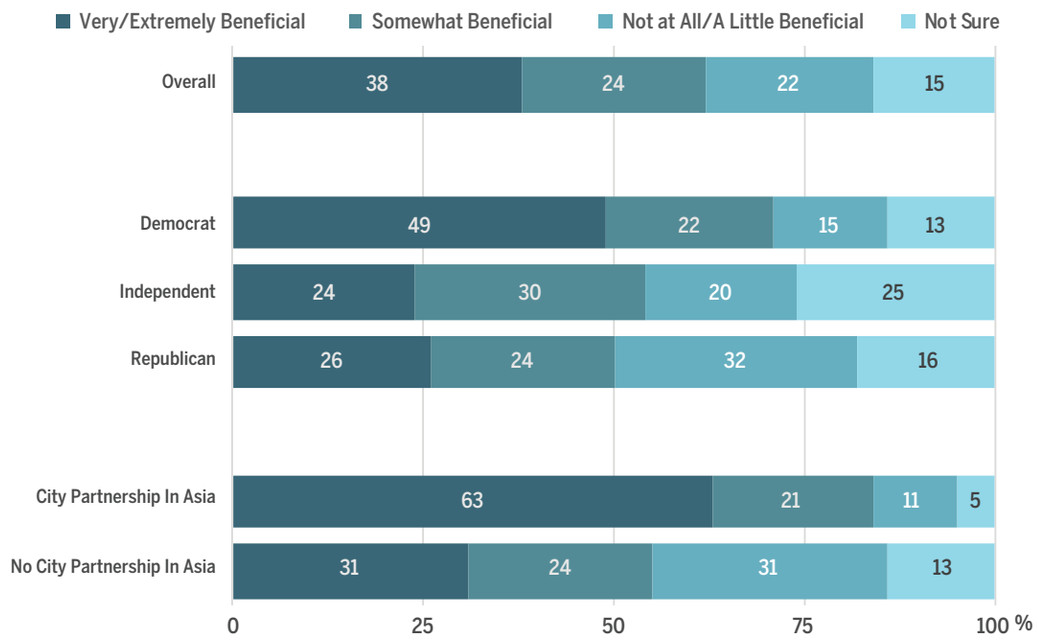


Question: How beneficial is immigration from Asia to the economy of your state?
Source: Asia Matters for the States Survey conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago September 23–27, 2021, with 1,055 adults age 18 and older nationwide.

A quarter of adults believe Asian immigration only has a little benefit or none at all to the economy of their state. Thirty six percent are unsure. Democrats and those living in metropolitan regions of the country are more likely to think immigration from Asian countries is extremely or very beneficial to their state. Those living in non-metropolitan regions are more likely to be unsure compared to metropolitan residents (49% vs. 33%).

ELECTED AND APPOINTED OFFICIALS, BUREAUCRATS, AND BUSINESS LEADERS

Percent of elites



Question: How beneficial is immigration from Asia to the economy of your state?
Source: Asia Matters for the States Survey conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago September 21–October 13, 2021, with 1,446 state and local elected and appointed officials, bureaucrats, and business leaders.

Among elites, 62% say immigration is at least somewhat beneficial to their state, while 22% say it is not beneficial and 15% are not sure.

Democrats and those with a partner city in Asia are more likely to say both tourism and immigration are beneficial to their state.

Study Methodology

This study was conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago and with funding from the East-West Center.

The target population for this study was two-fold: General population comprised of adults aged 18 and over representing the 50 states and the District of Columbia and "elites" comprised of elected and appointed officials, business leaders and bureaucrats in the United States. Interviews for the general population portion of the study were conducted between September 23rd and 27th 2021. Interviews for the elites portion of the study were conducted between September 21st and October 13th 2021.

General population data were collected using a multi-mode approach that allowed respondents to complete the interview via web or with an NORC telephone interviewer. Elites survey data were collected via web only.

General population:

General population data were collected using the AmeriSpeak Omnibus®, a monthly multi-client survey using NORC's probability-based panel designed to be representative of the US household population. The survey was part of a larger study that included questions about other topics not included in this report. During the initial recruitment phase of the panel, randomly selected US households were sampled with a known, non-zero probability of selection from the NORC National Sample Frame and then contacted by US mail, email, telephone, and field interviewers (face-to-face). The panel provides sample coverage of approximately 97% of the US household population. Those excluded from the sample include people with P.O. Box only addresses, some addresses not listed in the USPS Delivery Sequence File, and some newly constructed dwellings.

Panel members were randomly drawn from AmeriSpeak, and 1,055 completed the survey—992 via the web and 63 via telephone. The final stage completion rate is 20.1% t, the weighted household panel response rate is 19.1%, and the weighted household panel retention rate is 75.1%, for a cumulative response rate of 2.9%. The overall margin of sampling error is +/-4.3 percentage points at the 95% confidence level, including the design effect. The margin of sampling error may be higher for subgroups.

Once the sample has been selected and fielded, and all the study data have been collected and made final, a poststratification process is used to adjust for any survey nonresponse as well as any noncoverage or under and oversampling resulting from the study specific sample design. Poststratification variables included age, gender, census division, race/ethnicity, and education. Weighting variables were obtained from the 2021 Current Population Survey. The weighted data reflect the US population of adults aged 18 and over.

Elites:

Sample from the elites survey was compiled from three sources: Leadership Connect, D&B Hoovers, and Lucid. Elected and appointed officials and a portion of the business leader segment were sent email invitations inviting them to participate in the survey. Bureaucrats and a portion of the business leader segment were contacted and invited through Lucid's panel.

About the East-West Center

The East-West Center promotes better relations and understanding among the people and nations of the United States, Asia, and the Pacific through cooperative study, research, and dialogue.

Established by the US Congress in 1960, the Center serves as a resource for information and analysis on critical issues of common concern, bringing people together to exchange views, build expertise, and develop policy options. The Center is an independent, public, nonprofit organization with funding from the US government, and additional support provided by private agencies, individuals, foundations, corporations, and governments in the region. Over nearly 60 years of serving as a US-based institution for public diplomacy in the Indo-Pacific region with international governance, staffing, students, and participants, the Center has built a worldwide network of 65,000 alumni and more than 1,100 partner organizations. The Center's 21-acre Honolulu campus, adjacent to the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, is located midway between Asia and the US mainland and features research, residential, and international conference facilities. The Center's Washington, DC office focuses on preparing the United States for an era of growing Asia Pacific prominence.

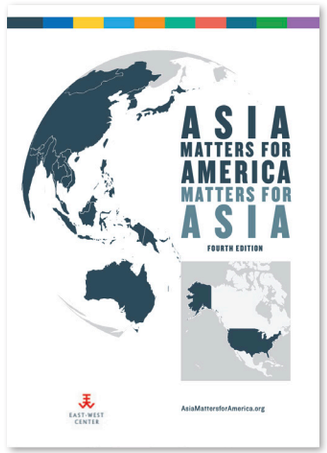
For more information, visit https://www.eastwestcenter.org

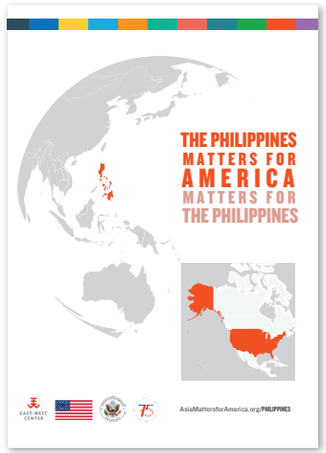
About NORC at the University of Chicago

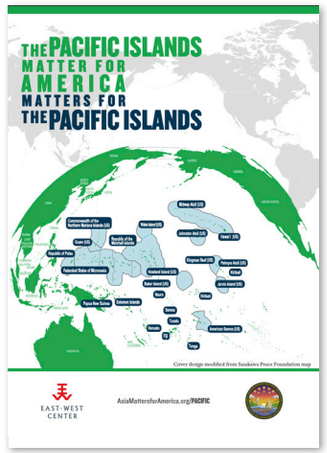
As one of the world's foremost independent research institutions, NORC at the University of Chicago delivers objective data and meaningful analysis to help decision-makers and leading organizations make informed choices and identify new opportunities. Since 1941, NORC has applied sophisticated methods and tools, innovative and cost-effective solutions, and the highest standards of scientific integrity and quality to conduct and advance research on critical issues. Today, NORC expands on this tradition by partnering with government, business, and nonprofit clients to create deep insight across a broad range of topics and to disseminate useful knowledge throughout society.

Headquartered in downtown Chicago, NORC works in over 40 countries around the world, with additional offices on the University of Chicago campus, the DC metro area, Atlanta, Boston, Silicon Valley and San Francisco. Please visit http://www.norc.org for more information.

Notes







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THE ASIA MATTERS FOR AMERICA INITIATIVE

Asia Matters for America/America Matters for Asia is an interactive resource for credible and nonpartisan information, graphics, analysis, and news on US-Indo-Pacific relations at the national, state, and local levels.

AsiaMattersforAmerica.org

ASIA MATTERS FOR AMERICA PUBLIC & ELITE OPINION

This initiative maps the trade, investment, employment, business, diplomacy, security, education, tourism, and people-to-people connections between the United States and the Indo-Pacific at the national, state, and local levels. This publication, the one-page connections summaries for states and Congressional districts, and the AsiaMattersforAmerica.org website are resources for understanding the robust and dynamic US-Indo-Pacific relationship.

The *Asia Matters for America* initiative is coordinated by the East-West Center in Washington, and can be contacted at:

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