

Changing Attitudes on Antisemitism in America, Before and After 10/7

December 2023



About

More in Common

For more information please visit
www.moreincommon.com
or contact us at us@moreincommon.com



The report was conducted by More in Common US, a nonpartisan research nonprofit that works to understand the forces driving us apart, find common ground, and bring people together to address our shared challenges.

We work in partnership with a wide range of civil society groups, as well as philanthropy, business, faith, education, media and government in order to connect people across lines of division.



Background

- On October 7, 2023, the terrorist organization Hamas executed a large-scale attack against Israel, killing at least 1,200 people and taking over 200 hostages. The terrorist attacks and subsequent Israeli military response in Gaza have fueled large-scale protests and activism across the US, and the country has experienced a surge in instances of antisemitism and violence directed towards Jewish Americans, as well as a significant spike in threats and violence against Muslim Americans and Arab Americans.
- In September 2023, weeks before the terrorist attack, More in Common was engaged in public opinion research of Americans' attitudes towards antisemitism. Between September 15 and 20, we surveyed 1,392 Americans on questions such as the extent to which they viewed antisemitism as a problem in the US, what they viewed as sources of antisemitism, and the extent to which they felt a responsibility to stand up to antisemitism.
- In November 2023, recognizing the severity of the situation and appreciating that we were in a unique position to assess changes in attitude among Americans before and after 10/7, we fielded a second national survey to 1,000 Americans asking a battery of questions about antisemitism that was identical to questions we asked in September. Thus, while the samples were of different Americans, we could compare data on the same question across two nationally-representative populations of American adults.
- The scope of this report, therefore, is intentionally narrow. We only include data on questions about antisemitism that we asked Americans both before and after 10/7. We do not report on many important issues that have received widespread media coverage, such as Americans' attitudes towards protests on college campuses, threats and violence directed at Muslim and Arab Americans, and attitudes towards Hamas, Israel, and the conflict in Gaza, among others. The absence of such data in no way reflects our assessment of the significance of those developments, but rather our focus on keeping the scope limited to data where we can report on change with scientific rigor.



Key Findings

On average, after October 7, Americans are significantly more likely to see antisemitism as a problem in the US.

- The percentage of Americans who see antisemitism as a problem in the US increased by 16 percentage points (62% to 78%).
- Before October 7, Democrats were significantly more likely to see antisemitism as a problem (73%) than were Republicans (56%) or Independents (63%). After October 7, concerns of antisemitism increased across the political spectrum. Now roughly 8 in 10 Democrats, Republicans, and Independents say it is a problem.
- The largest increase in concern about antisemitism was with Republicans (56% to 81%). Concern among Democrats increased from 73% to 83%.

Americans across the political spectrum feel a responsibility to stand up to antisemitism and see it as a threat to freedom.

- Prior to October 7, although majorities of Americans across the political spectrum said they felt they had a responsibility to stand up to antisemitism, Democrats were significantly more likely to say this (73%) relative to Republicans (58%). By November, the difference had narrowed substantially (71% and 65% respectively).
- After October 7, Americans are more likely to say that antisemitism represents a threat to all Americans' freedom. While Democrats remain unchanged with high support for this (72% before and after October 7), Republicans significantly increased their agreement that antisemitism represents a threat to all Americans' freedom (52% to 67%).

The most common response among Americans when asked whether antisemitic views are expressed by a particular political party has remained "Don't know"; Democrats shifted by 10 points towards attributing such views to both parties equally and Independents shifted by 11 points towards attributing such views to mostly Democrats.



Methodology

September 2023 Survey: More in Common partnered with international polling company YouGov to conduct online survey interviews with N = 1,392 US adults (including an oversample of n=107 Jewish Americans) from September 15-20, 2023. The respondents were matched to a sampling frame on gender, age, race, and education. The margin of error (adjusted for weighting) is +/- 3.1 for the US average and higher for subgroups.

November 2023 Survey: More in Common and partnered with YouGov to conduct online survey interviews and with N = 1,000 US adults from November 20-27, 2023. The respondents were matched to a sampling frame on gender, age, race, and education. The margin of error (adjusted for weighting) is +/- 3.4 for the US average and higher for subgroups.

Americans in Conversation: In October 2023, More in Common launched an online research community of approximately 150 diverse Americans titled “Americans in Conversation”. We engage them in a closed-loop online platform. Every week we share a survey activity that takes between 5 and 7 minutes. This includes asking them to react to content, probing their views on issues and events, and learning about their values and beliefs. From November 21-30, 2023, we asked Americans about antisemitism, as well as how their views on this have changed over time. A total of N=135 US participants completed the activity, with participants roughly representative across Census demographics such as age, gender, race, and partisanship. Quotations from participants are included in this report. Where provided, names have been changed to protect their privacy. Grammar and punctuation may have been lightly edited for clarity.

Note: Error bars represent the 95% confidence interval around each mean. Numbers in data visualizations are rounded to the nearest whole number. Figures may total to larger or smaller than one-hundred percent due to rounding, and column totals may not match with individual data points in graphics due to rounding.



Survey Questions

How much of a problem, if at all, do you think antisemitism, or hatred of Jewish people, is in the United States today?

- A very serious problem
- Somewhat of a problem
- Not much of a problem
- Not a problem at all
- Don't know

Antisemitic views are expressed...

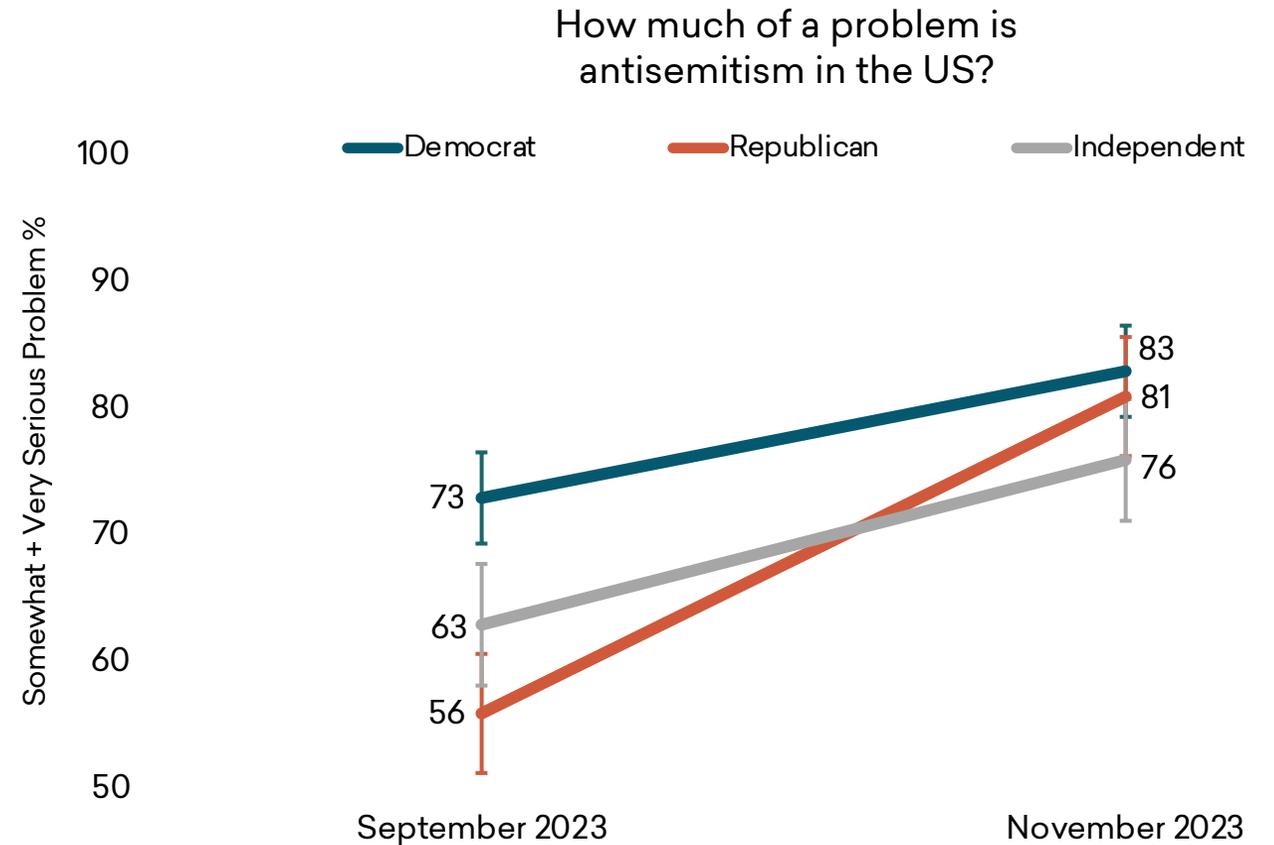
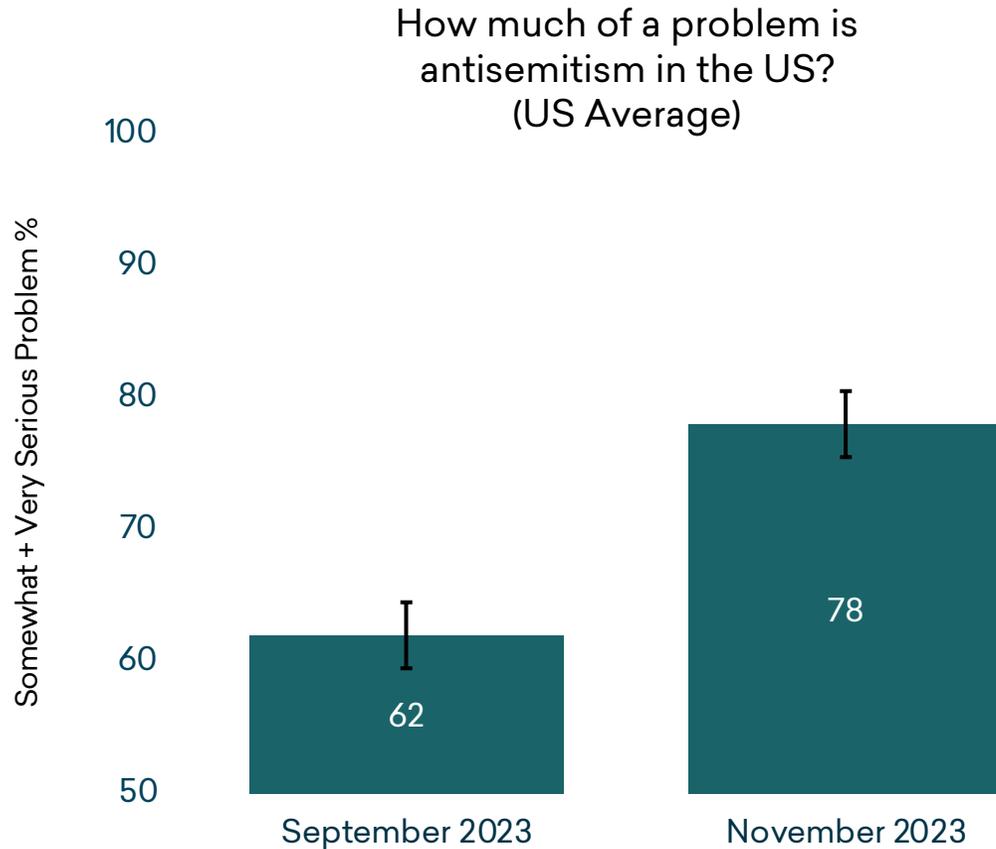
- Mostly by Democrats
- By Democrats and Republicans equally
- Mostly by Republicans
- Don't know

Please read the following sentence and indicate your agreement or disagreement.

- I have a responsibility to stand up to antisemitism or hatred of Jewish people
- Antisemitism represents a threat to all Americans' freedom
- Antisemitism represents a threat to democracy in America
 - 1- Strongly disagree
 - 2
 - 3
 - 4 – Neither agree nor disagree
 - 5
 - 6
 - 7 – Strongly agree



Concern for antisemitism has increased by double digits since September. The increase in concern for antisemitism is especially prominent among Republicans.



Survey question: How much of a problem, if at all, do you think antisemitism, or hatred of Jewish people, is in the United States today?

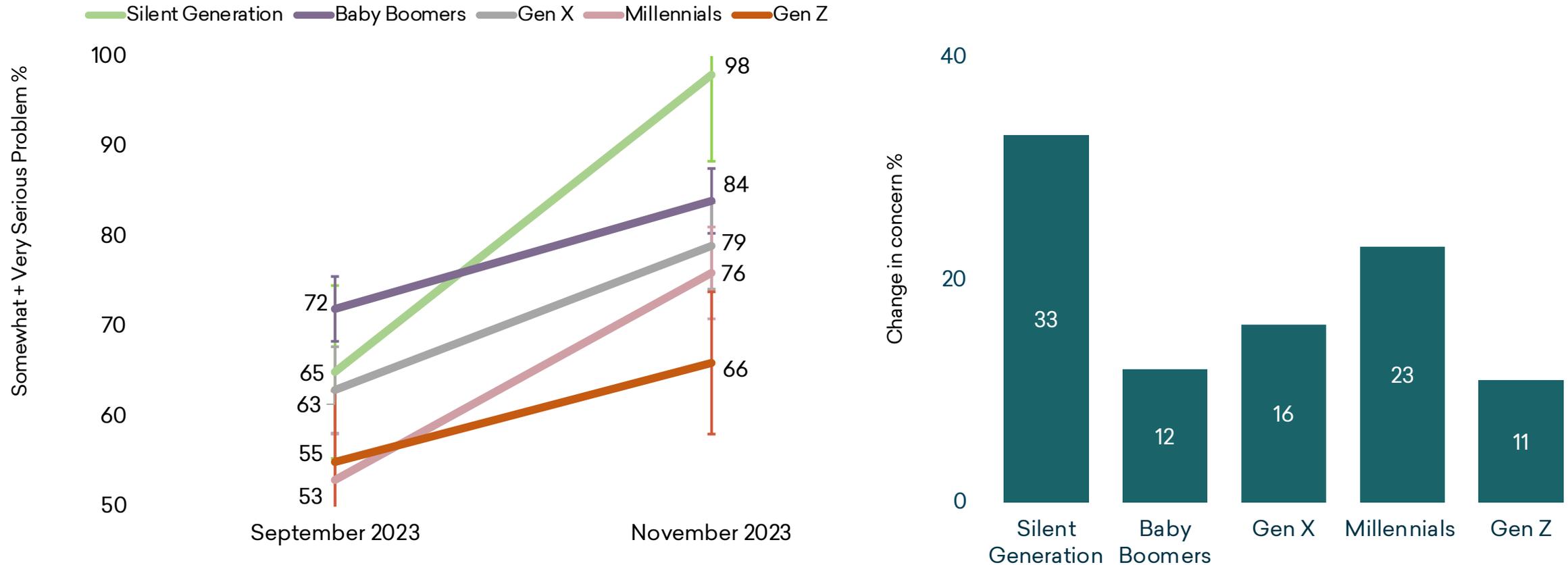
Source: More in Common

Note: Numbers in data visualizations are rounded to the nearest whole number. Figures may total to larger or smaller than one-hundred percent due to rounding, and column totals may not match with individual data points in graphics due to rounding.



Although all generations showed an increase in overall level of concern about antisemitism, the increase was especially prominent with older generations.

How much of a problem is antisemitism in the US?



Survey question: How much of a problem, if at all, do you think antisemitism, or hatred of Jewish people, is in the United States today?

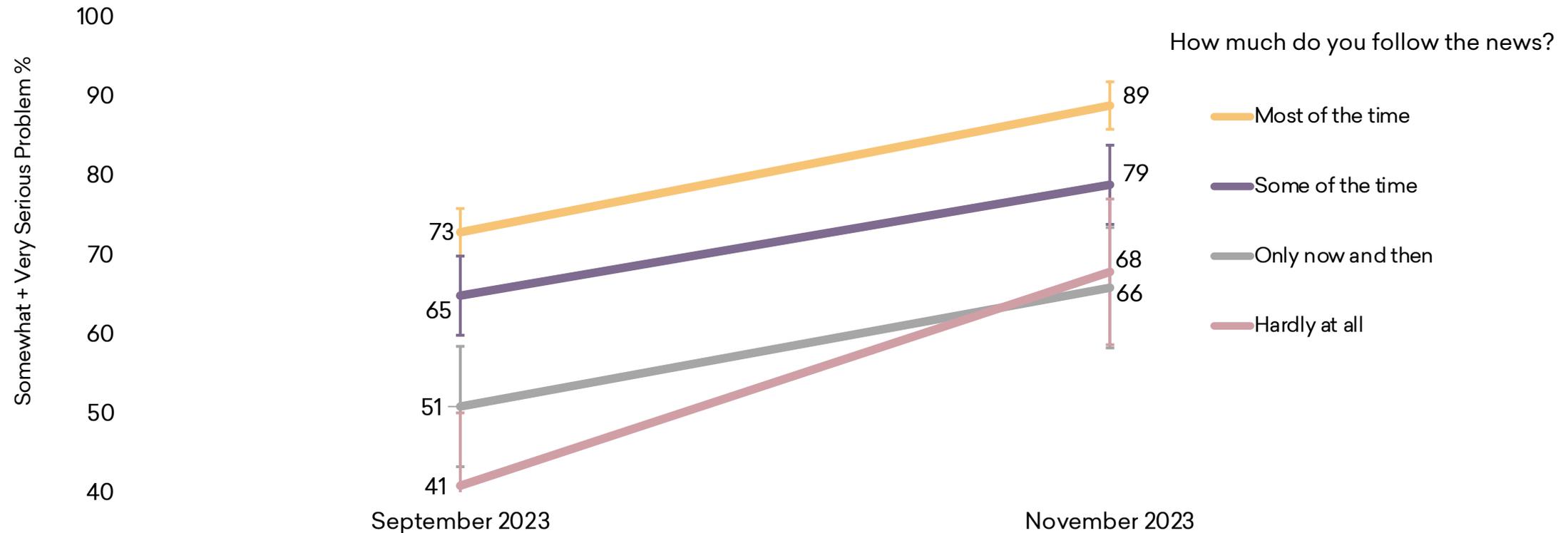
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After October 7, Americans least likely to follow the news showed a significant increase in concern about antisemitism (41% to 68%).

How much of a problem is antisemitism in the US?



Survey question: (1) How much of a problem, if at all, do you think antisemitism, or hatred of Jewish people, is in the United States today? (2) Some people seem to follow what's going on in government and public affairs most of the time, whether there's an election going on or not. Others aren't that interested. Would you say you follow what's going on in government and public affairs...Not showing: "Don't know".

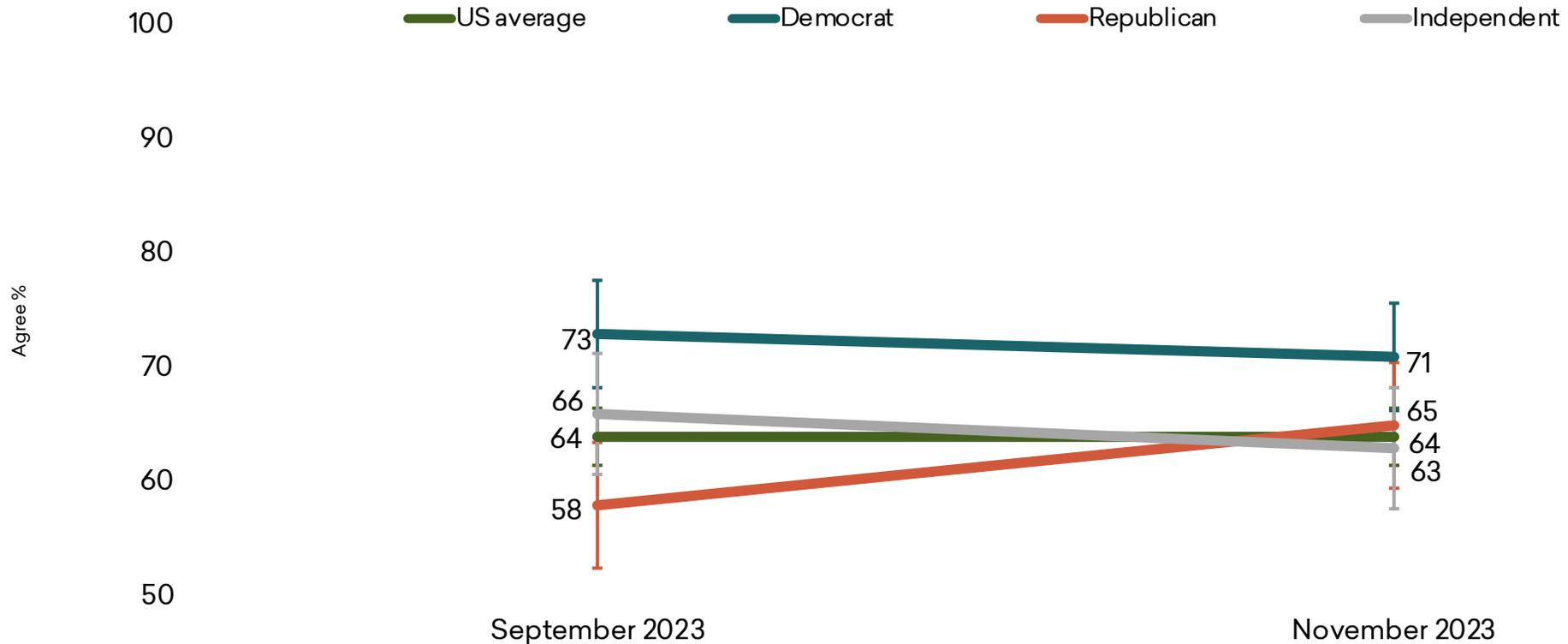
Source: More in Common

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Americans across the political spectrum feel a responsibility as individuals to stand up to antisemitism.

Agreement: “I have a responsibility to stand up to antisemitism or hatred of Jewish people”



Survey question: Please read the following sentence and indicate your agreement or disagreement.

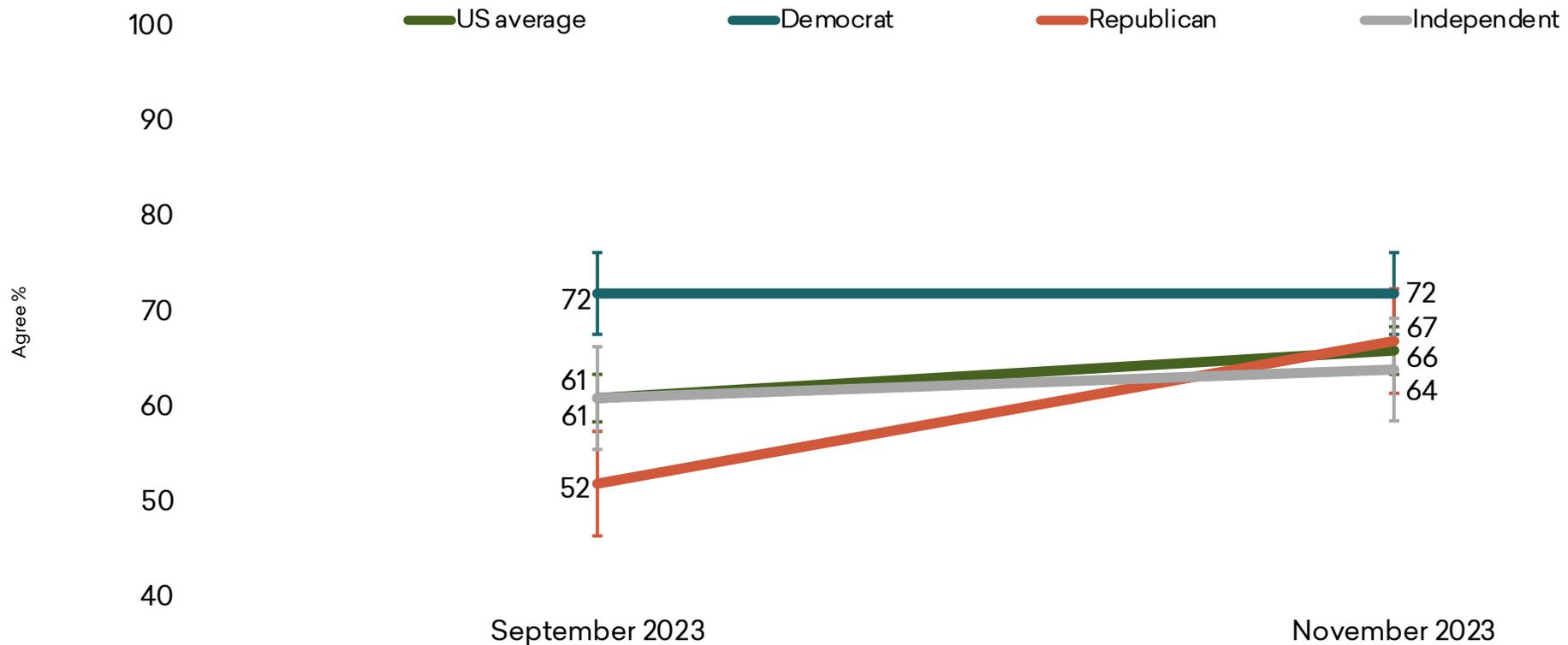
Source: More in Common

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Similarly, Democrats, Republicans, and Independents all say antisemitism represents a threat to all Americans' freedom.



Agreement: "Antisemitism represents a threat to all Americans' freedom"



Survey question: Please read the following sentence and indicate your agreement or disagreement.

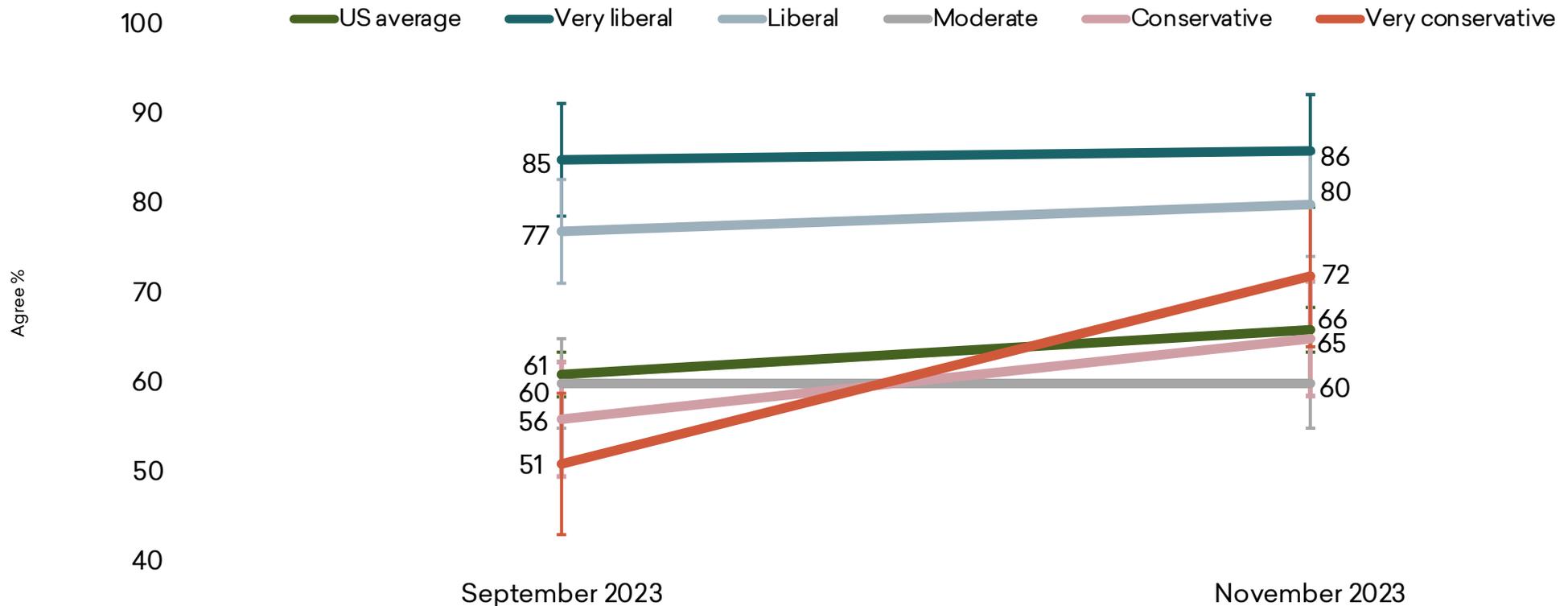
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Very liberal Americans have remained most likely (85% to 86%) to see antisemitism as a threat to all Americans' freedoms; very conservative Americans showed the greatest increase (51% to 72%).

Agreement: "Antisemitism represents a threat to all Americans' freedom"



Survey question: Please read the following sentence and indicate your agreement or disagreement.

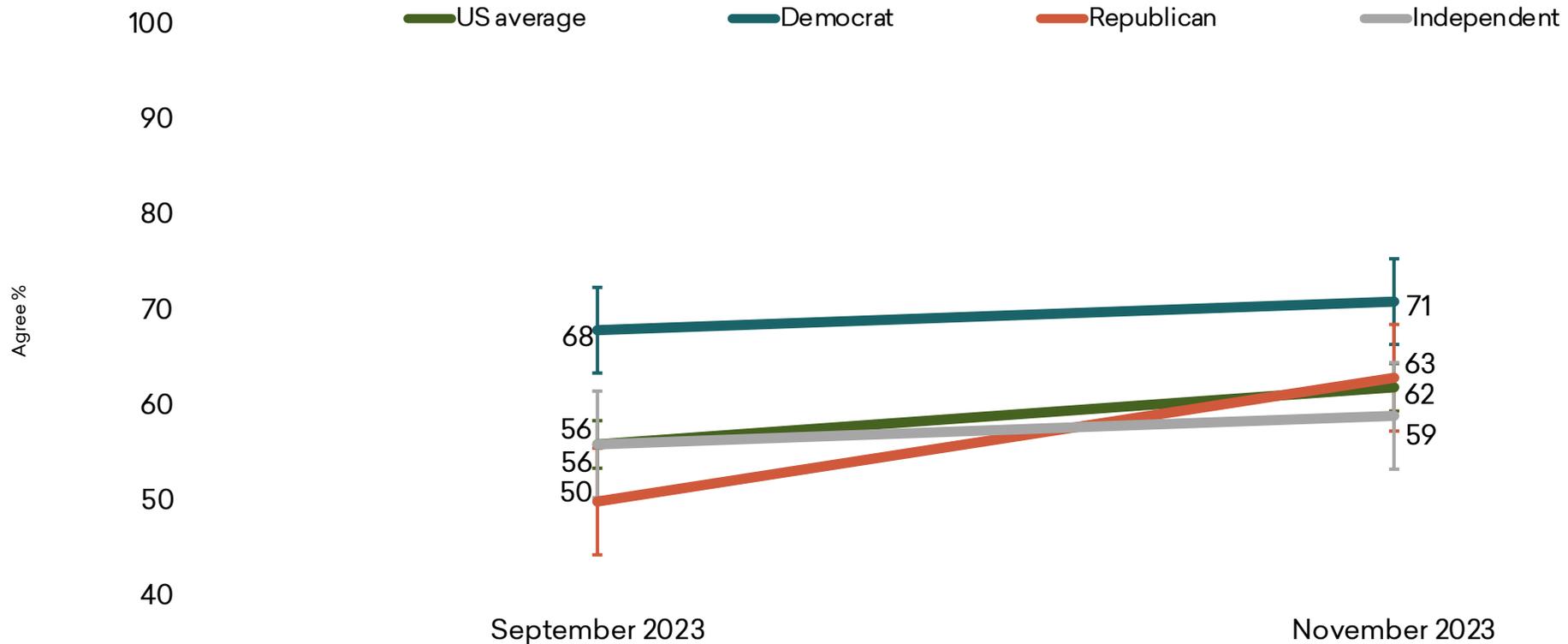
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More than 6 in 10 Americans now feel antisemitism represents a threat to democracy in America.

Agreement: “Antisemitism represents a threat to democracy in America”



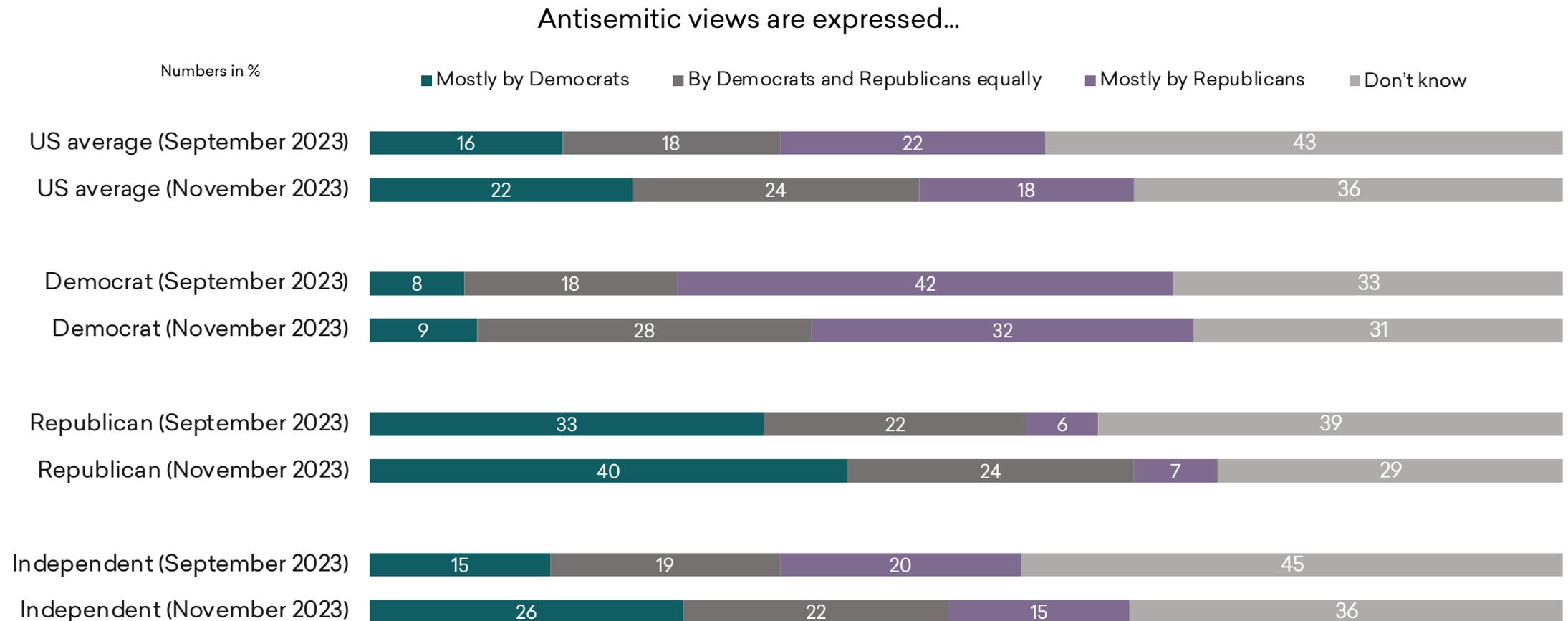
Survey question: Please read the following sentence and indicate your agreement or disagreement.

Source: More in Common

Note: Numbers in data visualizations are rounded to the nearest whole number. Figures may total to larger or smaller than one-hundred percent due to rounding, and column totals may not match with individual data points in graphics due to rounding.



The most common response among Americans when asked whether antisemitic views are expressed by a particular political party has remained "Don't know"; Democrats shifted towards attributing such views to both parties equally (18% to 28%) and Independents shifted towards attributing to mostly Democrats (15% to 26%).



Survey question: Antisemitic views are expressed...

Source: More in Common

Note: Numbers in data visualizations are rounded to the nearest whole number. Figures may total to larger or smaller than one-hundred percent due to rounding, and column totals may not match with individual data points in graphics due to rounding.



Americans in Conversation

Between November 21 and 30, 2023, More in Common asked an online research community of approximately 150 Americans, broadly reflective the country's demographic and ideological composition, about their views on antisemitism and about whether and how their views have changed in the aftermath of the October 7 terrorist attacks. A total of N=135 US participants completed the activity, with participants roughly representative across Census demographics such as age, gender, race, and partisanship. Quotations from participants are included in the next few slides. Where provided, names have been changed to protect their privacy. Grammar and punctuation may have been lightly edited for clarity.



Have your views towards the term antisemitism changed in the past month? Why or why not? Has the war between Israel and Hamas contributed to changes in your views on antisemitism in the past month? Please explain.

Views from Americans who are less politically-engaged



Faith, aged 45-54 Asian American woman, Democrat, Passive Liberal

“Honestly, I never realized that antisemitism still existed in such a strong form in modern day. It may be mostly my fault as I never really paid much attention to the events in Israel/Palestine so I always thought of antisemitism of being more prevalent during WWII. I have heard some news stories of some antisemitism acts that actually shocked me because I did not think it was this strong in the United States.”



Al, aged 55-64 Black man, Democrat, Politically Disengaged

“Seeing more news about it on TV makes me realize how things are and how things need to change...I feel more empathetic toward the Jewish people.”



Holly, aged 25-34 white woman, Democrat, Passive Liberal

“While my stance on antisemitism has not changed, I wasn’t aware how prevalent it was until the recent war.”



Jon, aged 35-44 white man, Democrat, Passive Liberal

“It has shown me that there is more antisemitism simmering under the surface than I ever thought.”



Have your views towards the term antisemitism changed in the past month? Why or why not? Has the war between Israel and Hamas contributed to changes in your views on antisemitism in the past month? Please explain.

Views from conservative Americans



Chloe, aged 65+ Asian American woman, Republican, Traditional Conservative

“I am surprised that antisemitism exists throughout the world. I am even more surprised that it exists in the United States. I thought that it was limited to neo-Nazi groups but this is not the case. Antisemitism exists today and the current war in Israel has emboldened antisemites to act on their feelings.”



Stan, aged 45-54 white man, Republican, Traditional Conservative

“Not really, just surprised how prevalent it is, I thought it was mostly abolished.”



Harry, aged 55-64 white man, Republican, Devoted Conservative

“If anything, it has made my support for the Jewish people even stronger!”



Have your views towards the term antisemitism changed in the past month? Why or why not? Has the war between Israel and Hamas contributed to changes in your views on antisemitism in the past month? Please explain.

Views from liberal Americans



Kenzy, aged 65+ white woman, Democrat, Progressive Activist

“I had not thought much about antisemitism until 5 years ago when Tree of Life. my hometown of Pittsburgh, was targeted by an antisemitic terrorist attack that left 11 dead. Since Oct 7, I feel that there has been a traumatic increase with outright acts of antisemitism being regularly committed.”



Eason, aged 45-54 white man, Democrat, Progressive Activist

“Not me personally, but I know people who have been victimized by antisemitism since 10/7 and I unfortunately know people who have verbally expressed antisemitism opinions since 10/7.”



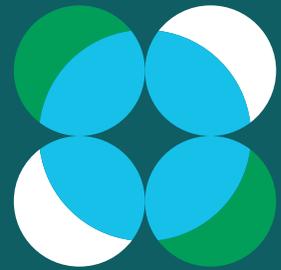
Darcy, aged 18-24 Black woman, Democrat, Traditional Liberal

“I have never subscribed to antisemitism, but I think that the current war has almost misconstrued the definition of antisemitism. Some people are saying that if you don't support Israel, then you're antisemitic”



Conclusion

- At a time when questions about the nature and prevalence of antisemitism are increasingly prominent in the national discourse, our study offers revealing insights into Americans' views on these issues.
- Overall, we find there is widespread and heightened concern about antisemitism, with approximately 8 in 10 Americans across the political spectrum now seeing it as a problem.
- Republicans' increase in concern was particularly notable. The data also underscores a generational difference in views towards antisemitism, with older Americans more likely to express concern relative to younger people.
- The qualitative data from Americans in Conversation also underscores how the terror of the October 7 attacks seized the attention of all Americans, irrespective of how actively they follow the news, and caused them to see antisemitism as a significant and threatening problem.
- This data indicates there are significant opportunities, and a widespread desire, for Americans to work constructively across the ideological spectrum to stand up against and counter antisemitism.



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