



# Americans Care Deeply About Climate Change but Don't View It in a Political Context

Key findings from a July 6–14, 2025 national survey of U.S. adults

# 1. Executive Summary

This report highlights key findings from a national survey of 3,250 U.S. adults conducted via online panel July 6 – 14, 2025, by [Beacon Research](#) on behalf of the [Environmental Voter Project](#). Using a split-sample approach where groups of approximately 650 respondents were each asked about a single societal issue, the survey attempts to understand how Americans view particular issues in a “natural setting” before being primed to consider the topics within a political, social, or personal context.

The data relating to climate change is particularly revealing in that it suggests Americans could be more concerned about climate change than is typically measured in political polls, and that climate’s lower political salience might be due to Americans not viewing climate change as a political issue, but rather as a series of personal and corporate failings that require individual-level solutions.

Key findings include:

- **18% of Americans think about Climate Change every day.** 18% of U.S. adults think about the importance of “addressing climate change” every single day, which is twice the percentage (9%) who report thinking about the importance of “furthering abortion access or restrictions” on a daily basis.
- **Americans think about Climate Change more often than politically-charged issues like Immigration or Abortion.** 58% of U.S. adults report thinking about “the importance of addressing climate change” at least once a week, which is more than the number of Americans who think about immigration (55%), gun violence (50%), or abortion (39%) on a weekly basis.
- **Climate Change is important to more U.S. adults than Immigration is.** 49% of U.S. adults say that addressing climate change is either “extremely important” or “very important” compared to only 42% for “reforming immigration” and 38% for “furthering abortion access or restrictions.”
- **Americans do not view Climate Change in a political context.** When asked to list specific ways to go about addressing climate change, Americans’ top responses were purely individualistic, apolitical actions: reduce/reuse/recycle (22%) and general awareness/education/lifestyle changes (17%).

- **Americans do view issues like Abortion and Gun Violence in a political context.** When asked to list specific ways to go about addressing gun violence, Americans' top responses were overwhelmingly political: stricter gun laws/background checks (46%) and enforcing existing laws (13%). Americans' top responses for addressing abortion-related issues were similarly political: protecting abortion rights/legal abortion/right to choose (24%) and taking political action/protest/voting (16%).
- **Americans are less likely to blame "State & Federal Policies" for Climate Change than any other issue tested.** Only 29% of Americans blame "state and federal policies" over "individuals" or "corporations & financial interests" for issues related to climate change, which is less than all other issues tested.

Topline survey data can be found [here](#). Crosstabs can be found [here](#).

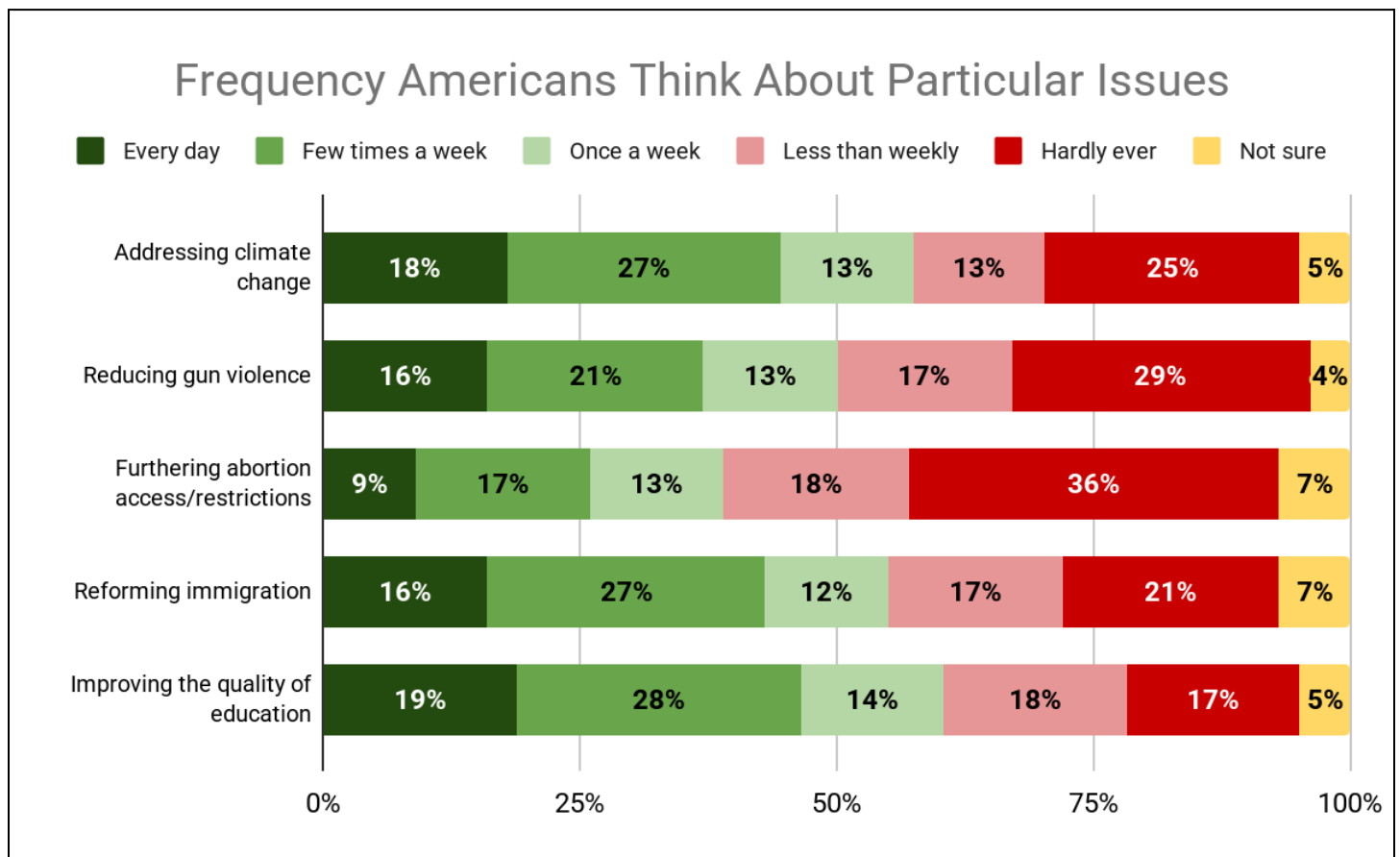
Some percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding or multi-response questions.

## 2. How Often Americans Think of Various Issues

### A. Do Americans Think About Particular Issues on a Daily, Weekly, or Other Basis?

58% of U.S. adults report thinking about “addressing climate change” at least once a week, which is more than the number of Americans who think about immigration (55%), gun violence (50%), or abortion (39%) on a weekly basis. Climate change is second only to “improving the quality of education” (60%) when it comes to how often Americans think about the issues tested in this survey.

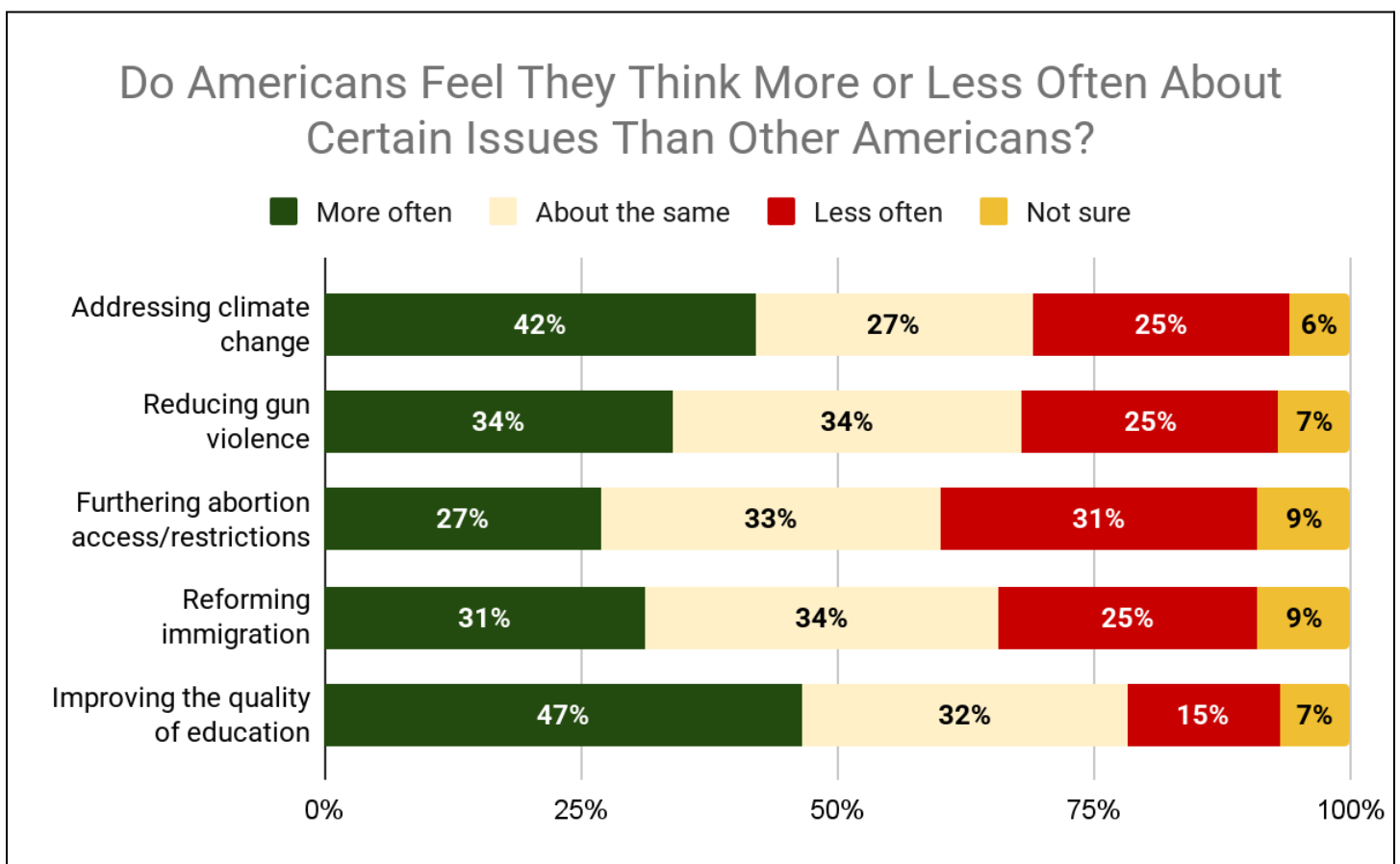
18% of Americans think about climate change every single day, which is twice the percentage (9%) who think about abortion on a daily basis, and only slightly behind the 19% who think about education each day.



## B. Perceptions of How Often Other Americans Think About Particular Issues.

Large pluralities of U.S. adults estimate that they think about “addressing climate change” (42%) and “improving the quality of education” (47%) more often than other Americans do. Only 25% of Americans believe they think about climate change less often than other Americans, and only 15% feel that way about education.

Although this survey’s cross-tabulations don’t reveal evidence of “pluralistic ignorance” (the psychological phenomenon where people erroneously believe their private views are different from the majority/plurality view), the high numbers of Americans who imagine they’re thinking about climate change more often than their peers suggest this topic is worthy of ongoing research.<sup>1</sup>



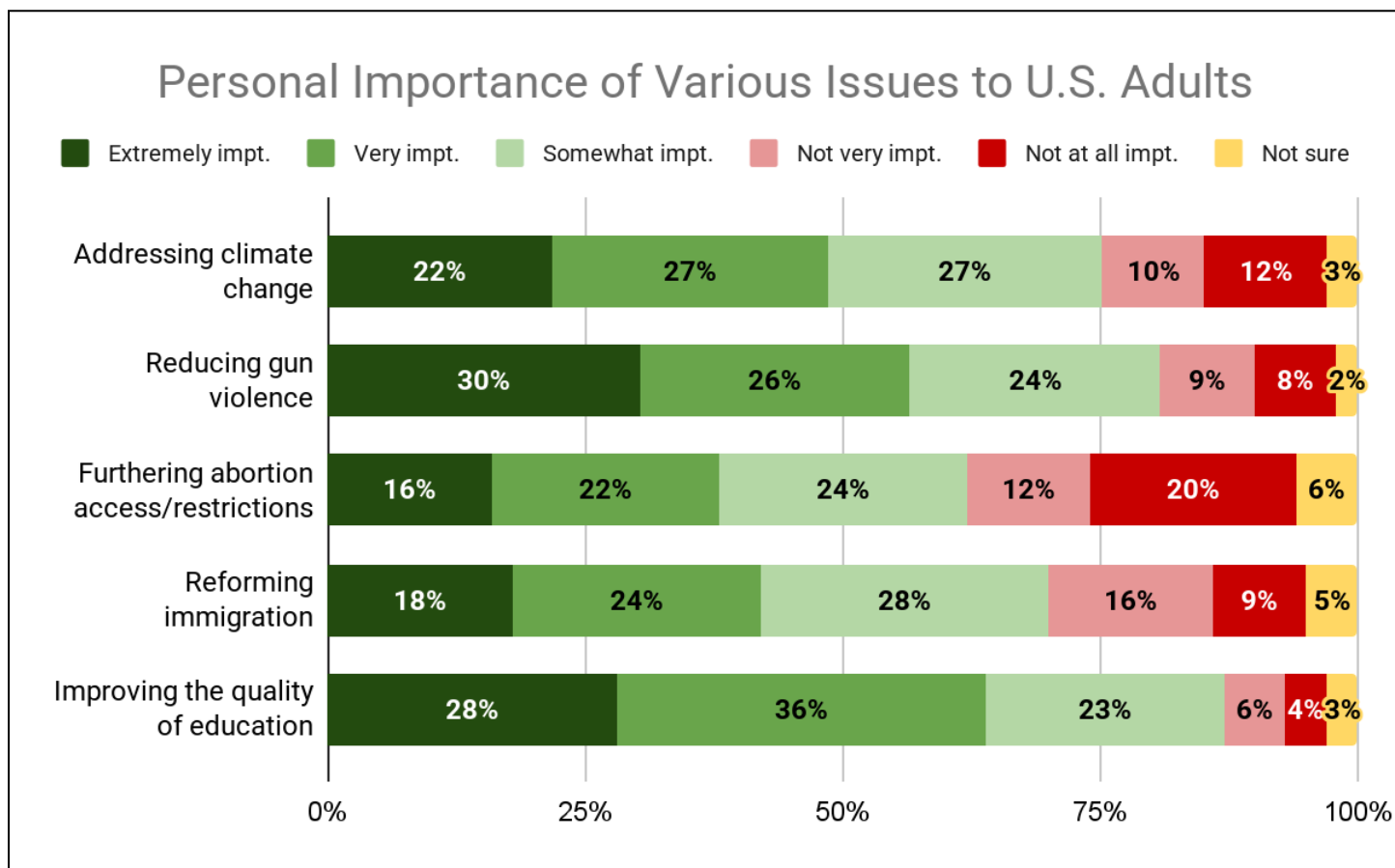
<sup>1</sup> See Sparkman, G., Geiger, N. & Weber, E.U. Americans experience a false social reality by underestimating popular climate policy support by nearly half. *Nat Commun* 13, 4779 (2022). <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41467-022-32412-y>

### 3. Issue Importance

#### A. How Important are Particular Issues to American Adults?

Although U.S. adults consider education and gun violence to be more important than climate change, more of the survey's respondents prioritized "addressing climate change" than those who prioritized "reforming immigration" or "furthering abortion access or restrictions."

22% of respondents said climate change was "extremely important" to them, compared to only 18% for immigration and 16% for abortion. A combined 49% of respondents said climate change was either "extremely important" or "very important," as opposed to only 42% for immigration and 38% for abortion. When including respondents who also said an issue was "somewhat important" to them, a total of 76% said that climate change was important, compared to just 70% for immigration and 62% for abortion.

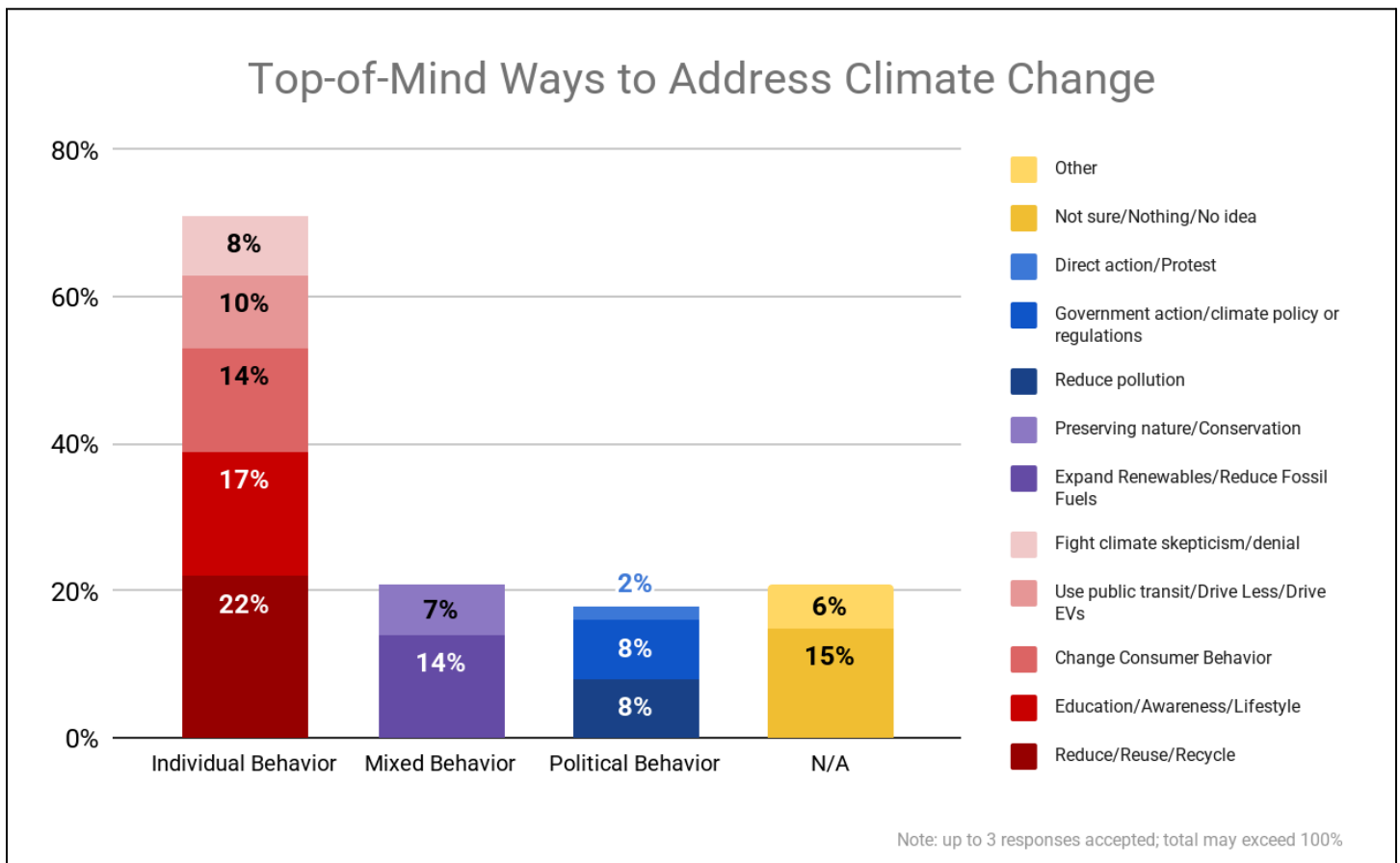




## 4. Solutions That Come to Mind When U.S. Adults are Asked How to Address Particular Issues<sup>2</sup>

### A. Survey Question: “What are some specific ways you can think of to go about addressing climate change? (Up to three responses accepted).”

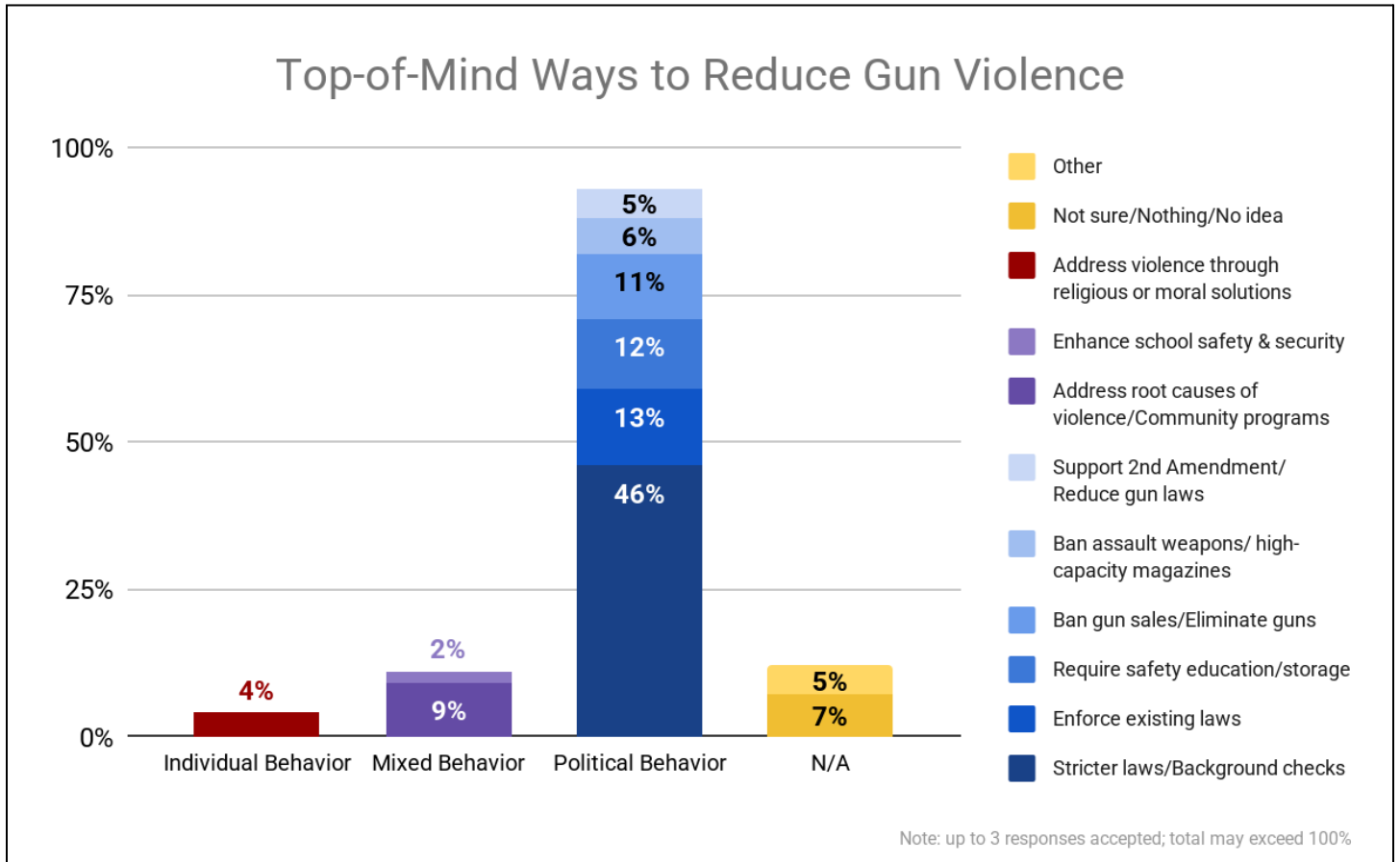
71% of survey responses mentioned various individual actions as ways to address climate change, with the top responses being variations of “Reduce/Reuse/Recycle” and “General awareness/Education/ Non-specific lifestyle changes.” This compares to only 18% of responses that suggested political approaches to the climate crisis. This data strongly suggests that U.S. adults are less likely to view climate change as a political issue than as an issue related to personal behavioral choices.



<sup>2</sup> For the questions in this section, open-ended responses were tabulated and categorized based on whether—in the survey analyst’s judgement—they were primarily individual solutions, political solutions, or mixed-individual-political solutions to the issues presented.

B. Survey Question: *“What are some specific ways you can think of to go about reducing gun violence? (Up to three responses accepted).”*

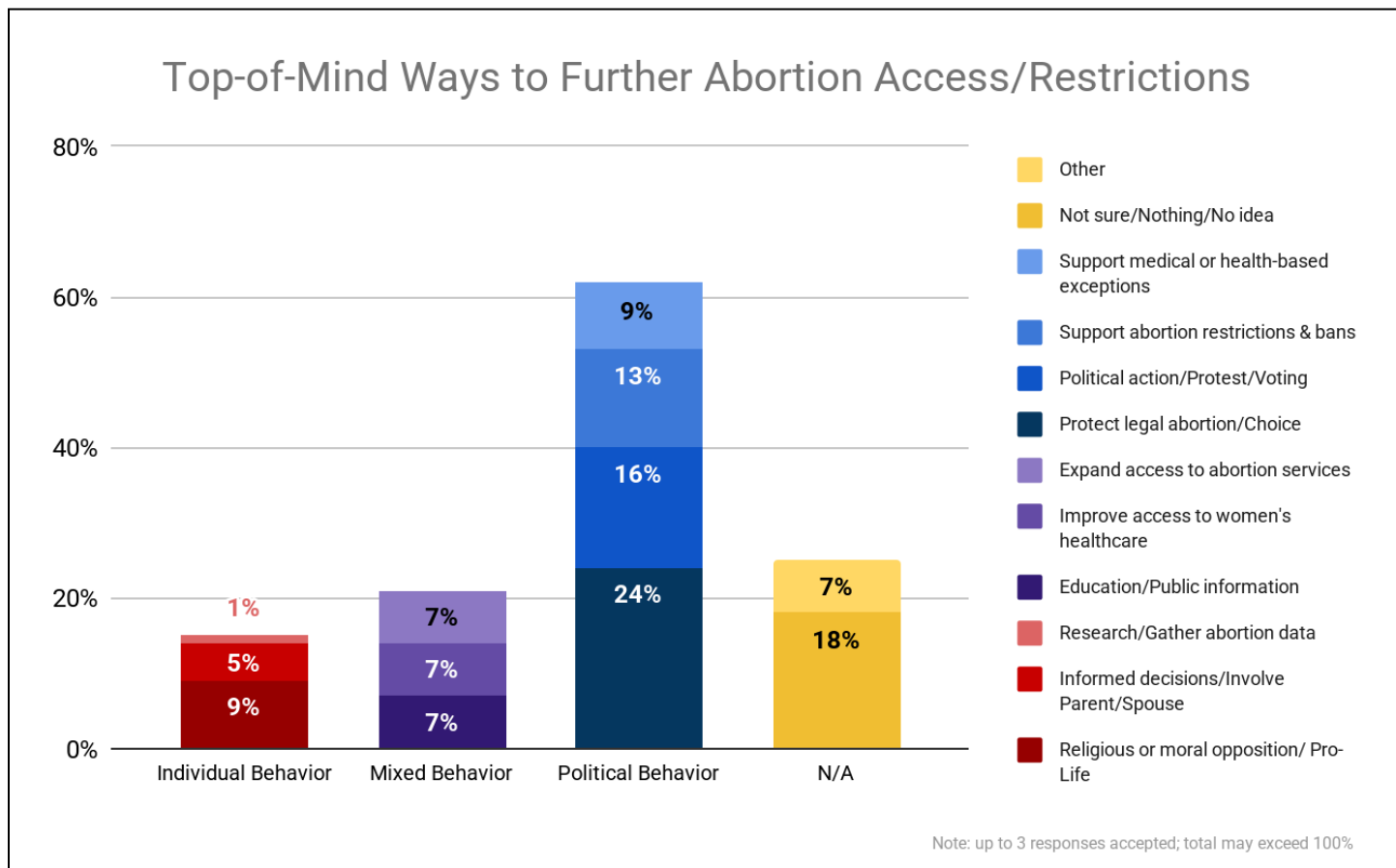
In sharp contrast to how Americans think of addressing climate change, U.S. adults overwhelmingly suggested political approaches (rather than individual approaches) to reducing gun violence. 93% of the collected responses indicated a preference for some form of political solution to gun violence, compared to a mere 4% of responses that suggested individual solutions to the issue.





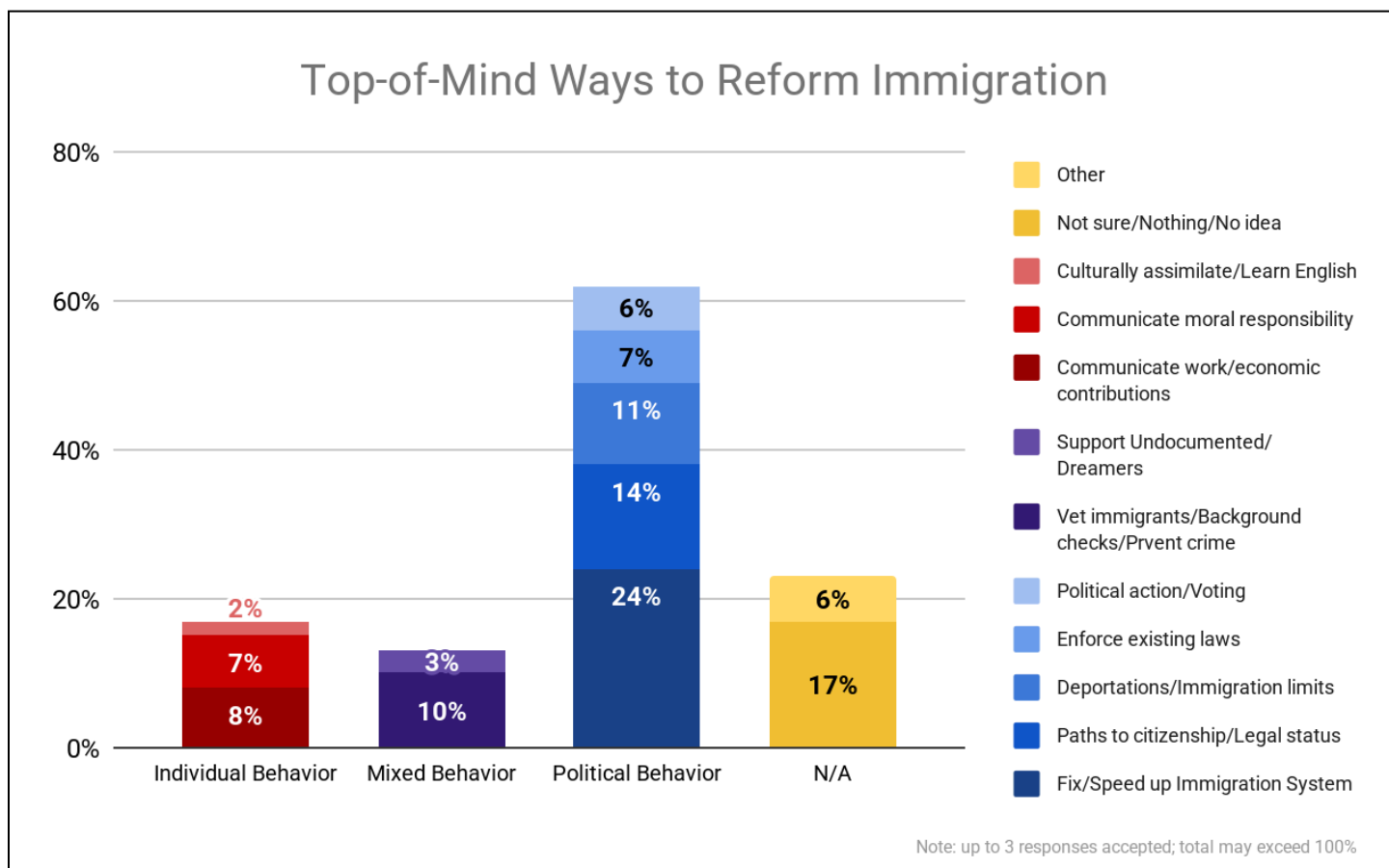
C. Survey Question: *“What are some specific ways you can think of to go about furthering abortion access or restrictions? (Up to three responses accepted).”*

When asked for top-of-mind suggestions about abortion (either how to further abortion access or restrict it), U.S. adults responded by offering political solutions by a 4-to-1 margin over individual behavioral solutions (62% to 15%). This finding echoes the survey data on gun violence, with respondents viewing abortion in a similarly political context.



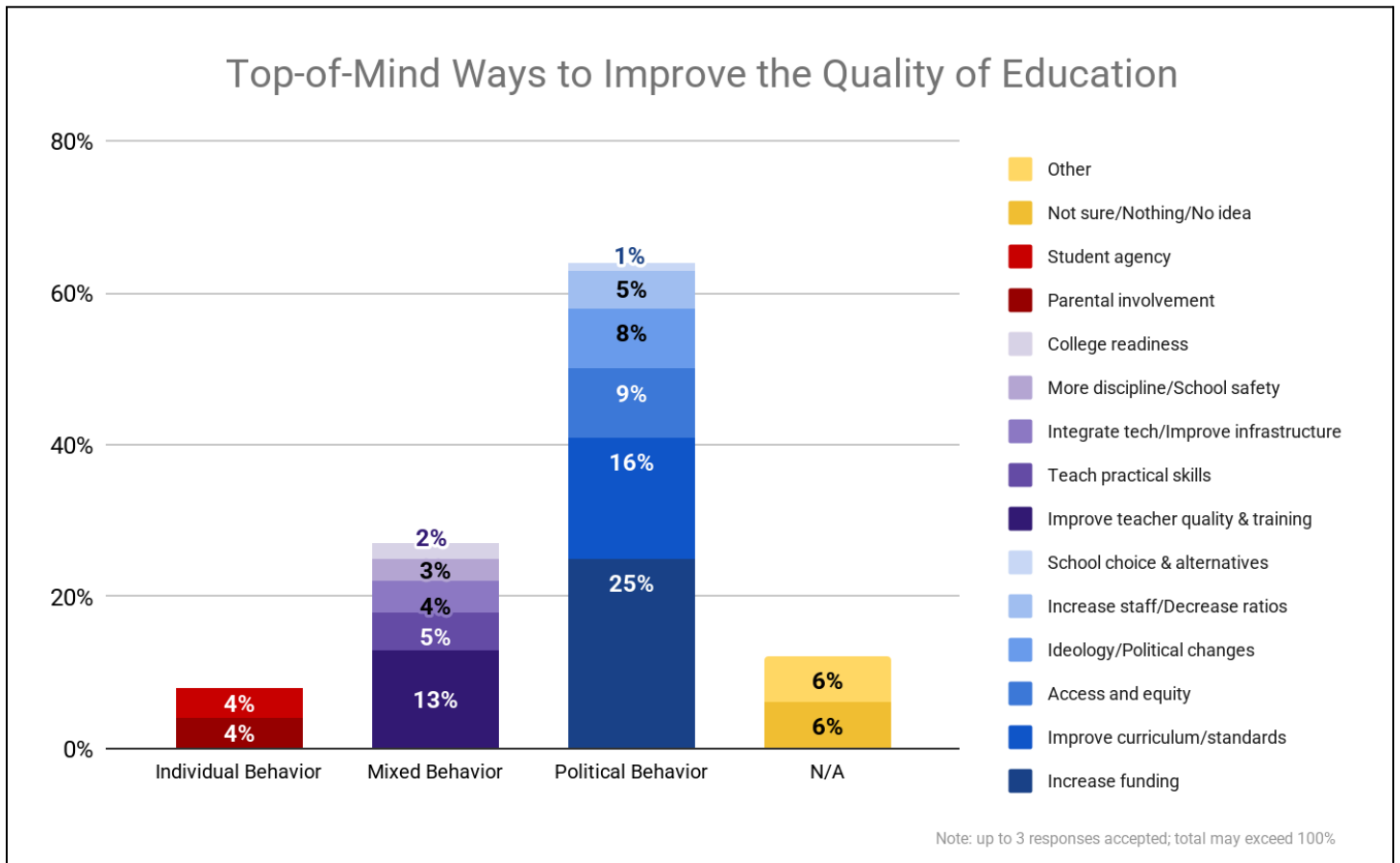
D. Survey Question: “What are some specific ways you can think of to go about reforming immigration? (Up to three responses accepted).”

Just as with responses related to abortion, respondents’ top-of-mind suggestions for ways to reform immigration also favored political solutions (62%) over individual solutions (17%) by an almost 4-to-1 margin.



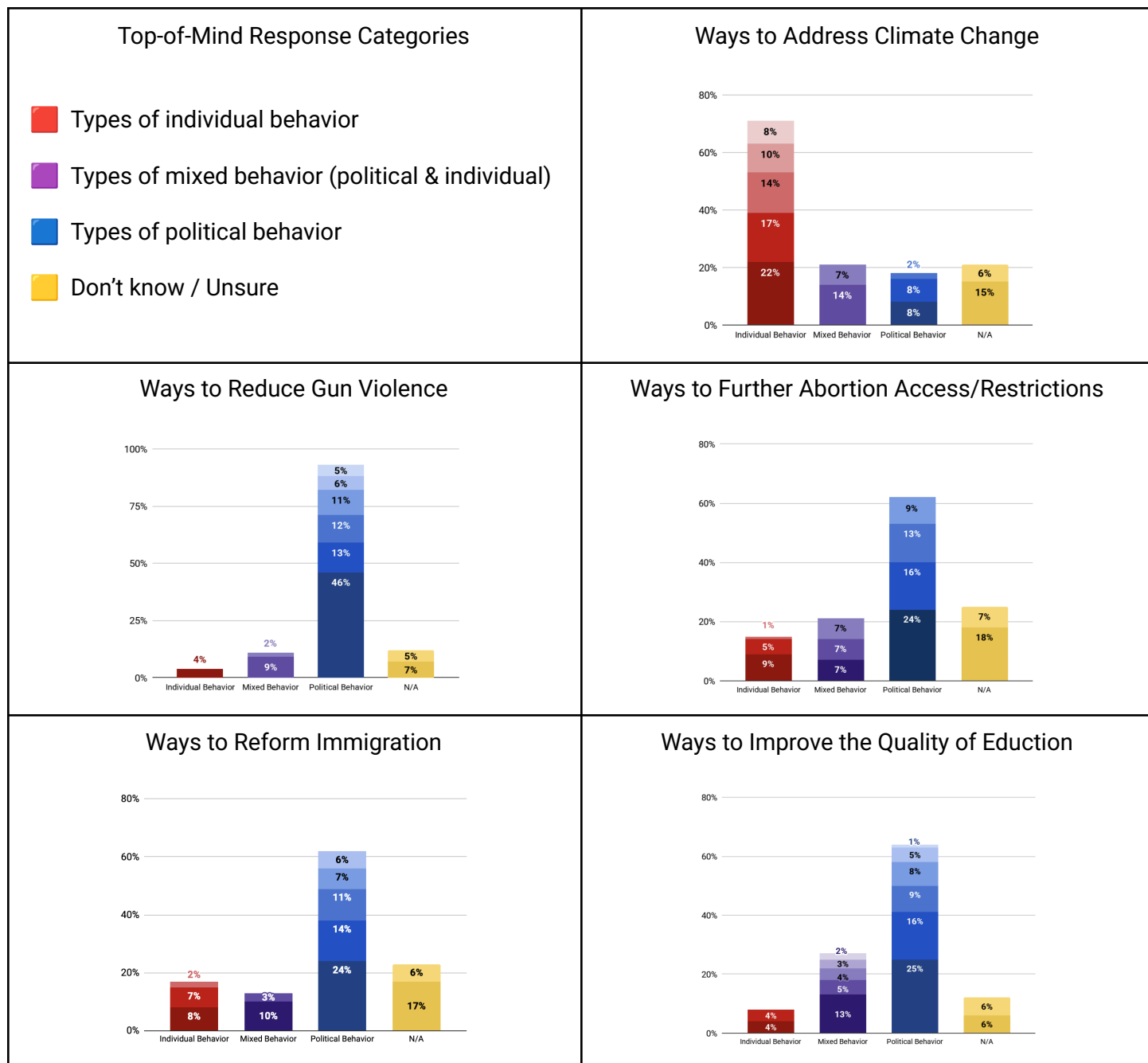
E. Survey Question: *“What are some specific ways you can think of to go about improving the quality of education? (Up to three responses accepted).”*

When asked to suggest specific ways to improve the quality of education, respondents offered a comparatively high number of “mixed behavior” responses (27%), often including solutions that require a blend of political actions (funding/curriculum decisions) and more apolitical actions (individual/community efforts). Nevertheless, the clearest takeaway from the education-related responses is that various political solutions (64%) still dramatically outweighed the individual solutions offered (8%).



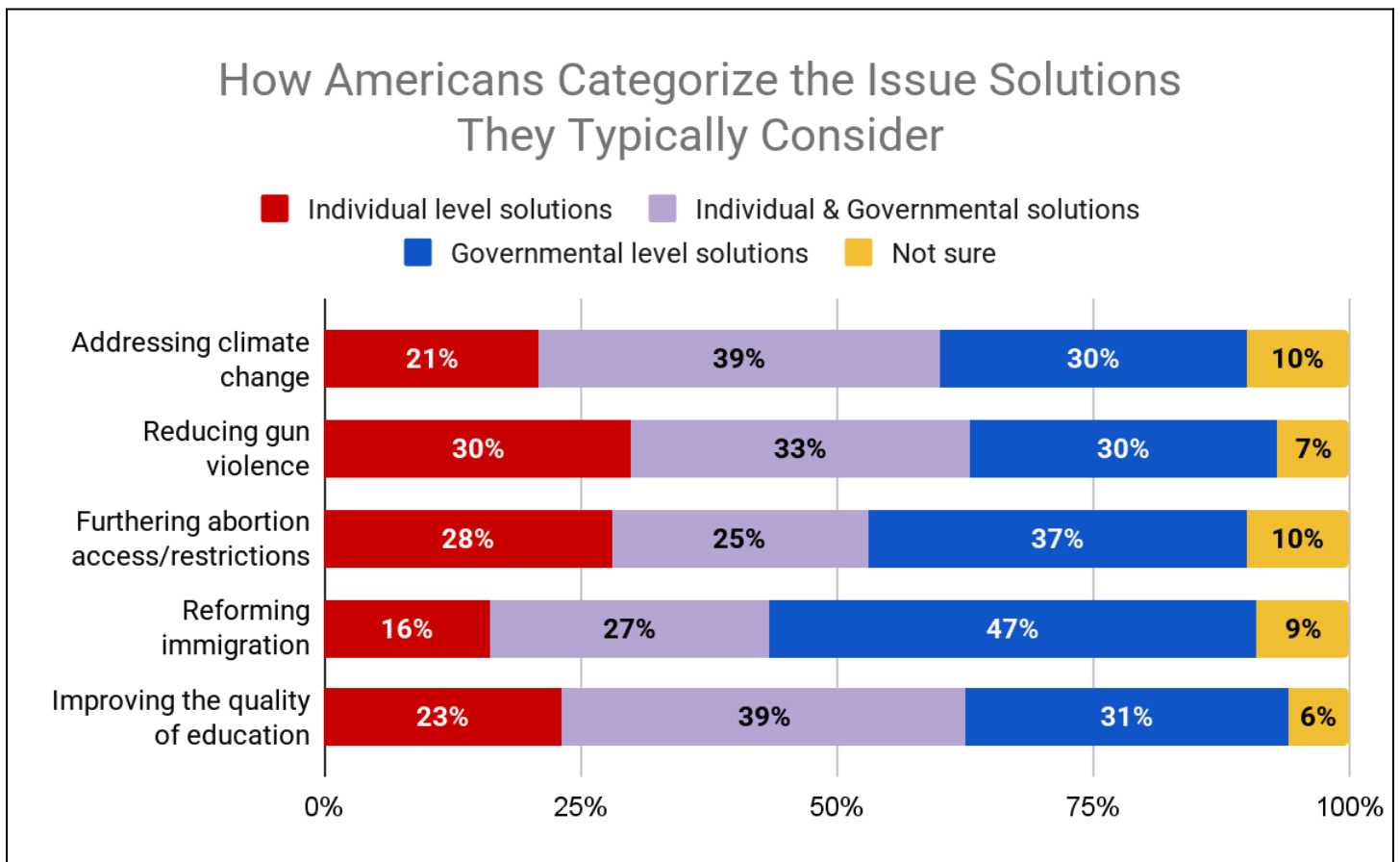
## F. Visual Comparison of how Americans View Issues in Individual vs. Political Contexts.

The following visual comparison of the last five charts shows how Americans' views on addressing climate change are uniquely apolitical when compared to the top-of-mind solutions offered for other societal issues.



## G. How Americans Broadly Categorize Their Solutions to Various Issues.

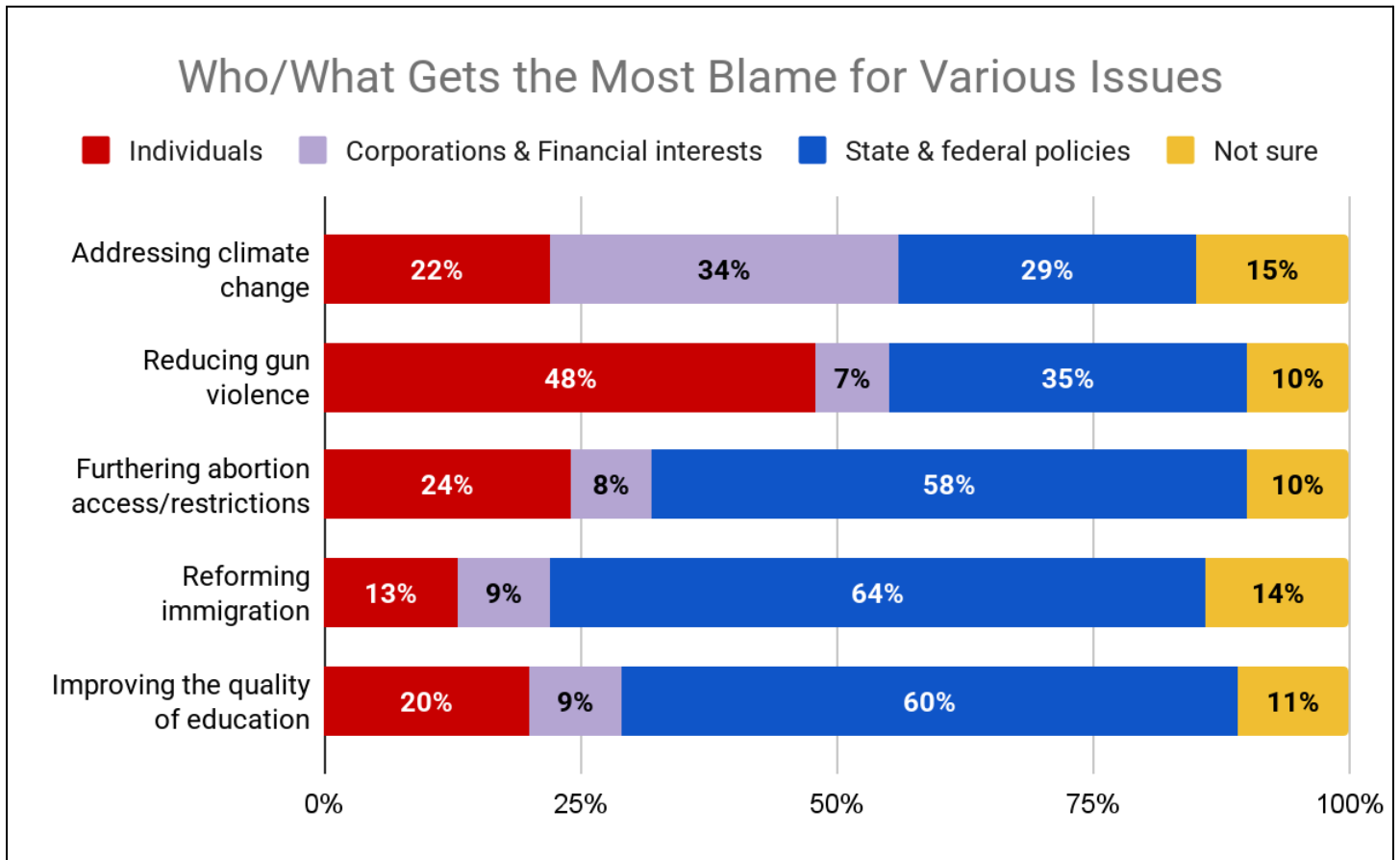
When asked to broadly categorize the issue solutions they typically consider, respondents tended to misestimate the proportion of individual vs. political solutions that were top-of-mind for each issue. When considering ways to address climate change, only 21% of respondents said they tend to think of purely individual-level solutions, whereas our analysis showed that 71% of the specific solutions they had previously offered were individual actions. When asked about gun violence, respondents broadly categorized their solutions evenly across all three categories: individual-level (30%), half-individual-half-governmental (33%), and governmental-level (30%), grossly underestimating the 93-to-4 margin by which their previous specific answers had favored governmental solutions over individual solutions to gun violence.



## H. Who/What Americans Blame Most for Various Issues.

When asked to assign blame for various societal issues, once again U.S. adults were least likely to consider politics when thinking about the causes of climate change. Only 29% of respondents blamed state and federal policies most for issues related to climate change, as opposed to 64% who blamed governmental policies for issues related to immigration. This result is consistent with data from throughout the survey which shows that when Americans think about climate change they are unlikely to consider political causes or political solutions.

One interesting note is that a plurality of U.S. adults (34%) blame “corporations and financial interests” most for issues related to climate change, whereas corporate actors are not blamed nearly as much for any of the other issues tested in this survey.



## 5. Environmental Voter Project

The Environmental Voter Project (EVP) is a nonpartisan nonprofit that uses data analytics to identify environmentalists who don't vote and then applies cutting-edge behavioral science messaging to nudge them into being more consistent voters. Working in 21 states with over 7,000 volunteers, EVP will canvass, call, mail, and send digital ads to almost 7 million low propensity environmental voters in hundreds of local, state, and federal elections in 2025.

## 6. Methodology

This survey of U.S. adults was conducted between July 6th and July 14th , 2025, by Beacon Research. The survey consists of a total of 3,250 interviews, conducted online. Respondents were sourced from a marketplace of online panels, and quotas based on age, gender, race/ethnicity, region, and voter registration status were used to recruit a representative sample of U.S. adults.

To ensure data quality, the survey included attention checks and trap questions to screen out respondents who were not sufficiently focused on the questions. Respondents who completed the survey improbably fast were also removed during data cleaning.

Post-stratification weights were applied after fielding to ensure the results accurately reflected the demographic profile of the U.S. adult population. Weight targets were developed from the U.S. Census Bureau's most recent American Community Survey (2019-2023) estimates.

The sample of 3,250 U.S. adults has a credibility interval, similar to a probabilistic poll's margin of error, of  $\pm 1.7$  percentage points at the 95% confidence level. Subsets based on demographics or split samples have higher credibility intervals. The survey was offered in English.

The survey was funded by the Environmental Voter Project.