

# *New Hampshire REALTORS®*

## *New Hampshire Housing Affordability*

American Strategies designed and administered this telephone survey conducted by professional interviewers. The survey was conducted in the Spring of 2019 and reached 500 adults, age 18 or older, who indicated they were registered to vote in New Hampshire.

Forty-three percent of respondents were reached on wireless phones, eight percent on VOIP phones, and fifty percent on landlines. Quotas were assigned to reflect the demographic distribution of registered voters in New Hampshire, and the data were weighted to ensure an accurate reflection of the population. The sample was drawn from a third-party vendor voter file. The overall margin of error is +/- 4.4%. The margin of error for subgroups is larger and varies. Percentage totals may not add up precisely due to rounding.

# Executive Summary

**Voters have a generally positive view of the state's direction.** Most registered voters feel things are going well in New Hampshire (62 percent), but just over a quarter believe things are off on the wrong track in the state (27 percent). Voters with higher levels of education and income tend to be happiest, but opinions lean positive among all subgroups.

**Majority of voters consider housing costs to be a serious problem, on par with property taxes and school funding.** The cost to rent an apartment (26 percent *very* serious problem, 64 percent total serious problem) is slightly more troubling to voters than the cost of homeownership (22 percent *very* serious problem, 59 percent total serious problem). Renters, women, and voters in Central NH and Rockingham County are most concerned by housing costs.

**A majority say growth and development is happening at the right pace.** When asked about the pace of residential growth and development, 25 percent say that it is happening too fast; 56 percent say it is happening at about the right pace. Only 18 percent say residential growth is too slow. Voters in Rockingham County are less positive on residential growth, as 47 percent believe the pace is too fast. When asked about the speed of commercial growth, only 9 percent of New Hampshire voters say it is too fast, 59 percent say it is happening at about the right pace, and 31 percent say it is too slow.

# Executive Summary

**Most voters support building new housing in New Hampshire to increase supply and options.** Among the variety of options for increasing the housing supply, the most popular kinds among voters are housing for families with school-aged children (84 percent support, 11 percent oppose), housing for residents over age 55 (84 percent support, 14 percent oppose), and single-family detached homes (82 percent support, 15 percent oppose). Voters under 50 are significantly more supportive of housing for families with school-aged children, although no group opposes more of this housing. Margins are narrower, but still high, for single family, attached townhouses (67 percent support, 30 percent oppose), with the strongest support among the young. Opinions are mixed on the construction of apartment buildings (55 percent support, 43 percent oppose) and condominium buildings (48 percent support, 50 percent oppose).

**When faced with tradeoffs between density and sprawl, voters favor density.** Despite lower levels of support for more dense housing options, when the choice is either seeing more townhouses, apartments, and condominiums in and around the city center in order to preserve open land outside of town or building more single-family homes further away from city centers in order to avoid overcrowding, voters favor multi-family, dense housing options in cities and towns (53 percent) over single-family homes that may contribute to sprawl (37 percent).

**Preserving open space a greater concern than bringing housing prices down.** Voters overwhelmingly prioritize preserving open spaces (69 percent) over building more housing to bring prices down (18 percent). Seniors and voters in Rockingham County prioritize open space the most.

# Executive Summary

**Voters generally pleased with their current living situation.** On a 5-point satisfaction scale, nearly two-thirds (64 percent) of voters rate their satisfaction with their current housing as a 5, indicating a generally high level of satisfaction. Overall, the average rating is 4.4. Satisfaction increases with age and income level.

**Most voters say that they were satisfied with the housing options in their area when they made the decision to live where they are now.** Seven-in-ten voters say they were satisfied with their options, but younger voters report much lower levels of satisfaction than their older counterparts. Voters who bought their house 5 to 10 years ago, during the fallout from the financial crisis, are also less satisfied.

**Just over a third of voters want to move.** Thirty-five percent of voters would like to move from their current residence, with a quarter of homeowners and seventy percent of renters contemplating a move. The desire to move is highly correlated with age, as the desire to stay put increases with age.

**Two-in-five voters feel overburdened by their housing expenses.** Fifteen percent of voters say their rent or mortgage is a significant strain on their budget, and another 23 percent say their monthly housing payment is a slight strain on their budget (38 percent total). Renters, parents with kids at home, and voters aged 35 to 49 feel most strained, as over half of these voters say that their rent or mortgage is a strain on their budget.

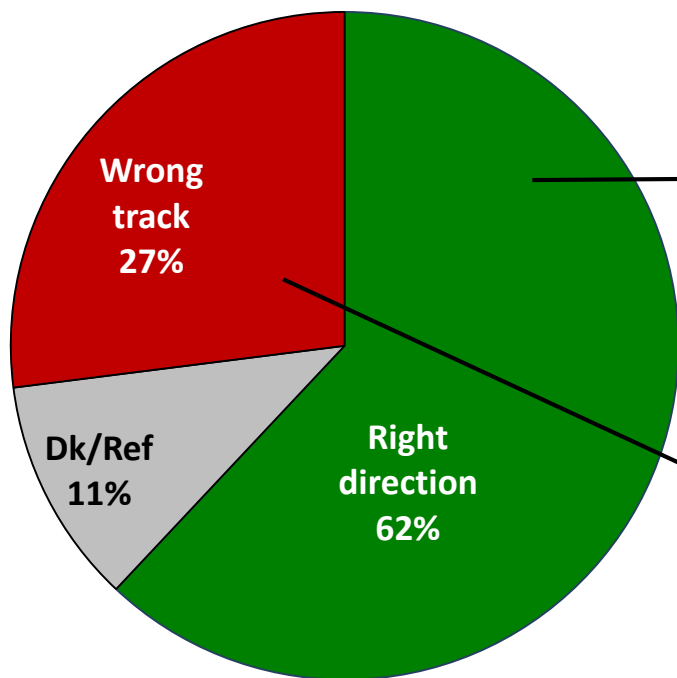
**A quarter of voters worry about affording a new residence if they needed to move.** Twenty-seven percent of voters rank their confidence a 1 or 2 out of 5 on a scale measuring how confident they felt they would be able to find a new home in their current community if they needed to move. Only slightly fewer (25 percent) were uncertain (1 or 2 on a 5-point scale) about their ability to find an affordable home in New Hampshire.

# *Issue Context*

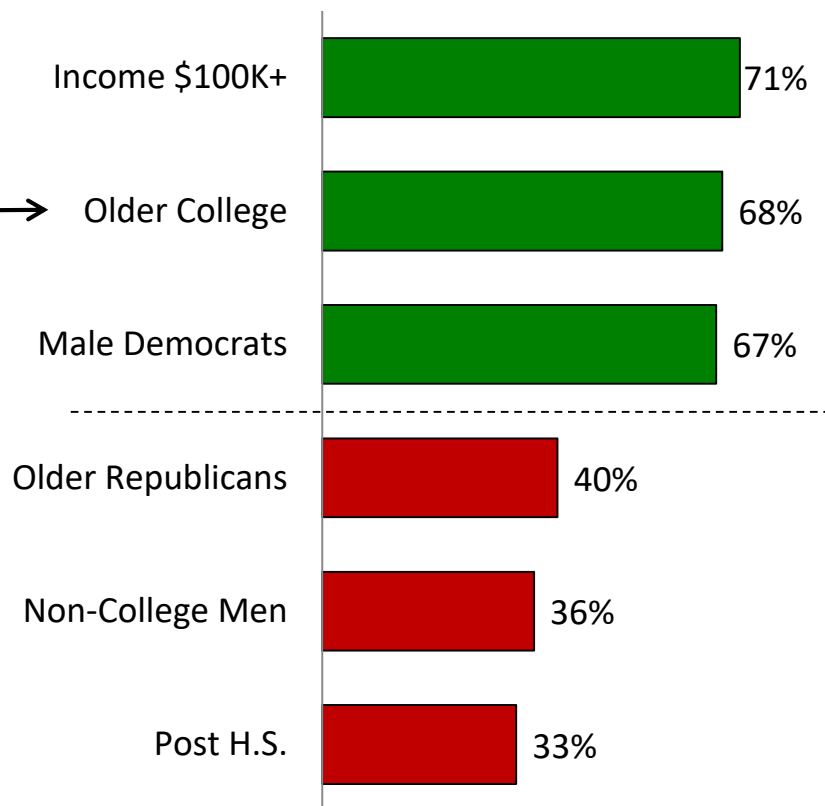
# Over 3-in-5 Voters Feel That New Hampshire is Headed in the Right Direction

*Opinions on the state's direction lean positive among all groups.*

### Direction of New Hampshire



### Direction by Group

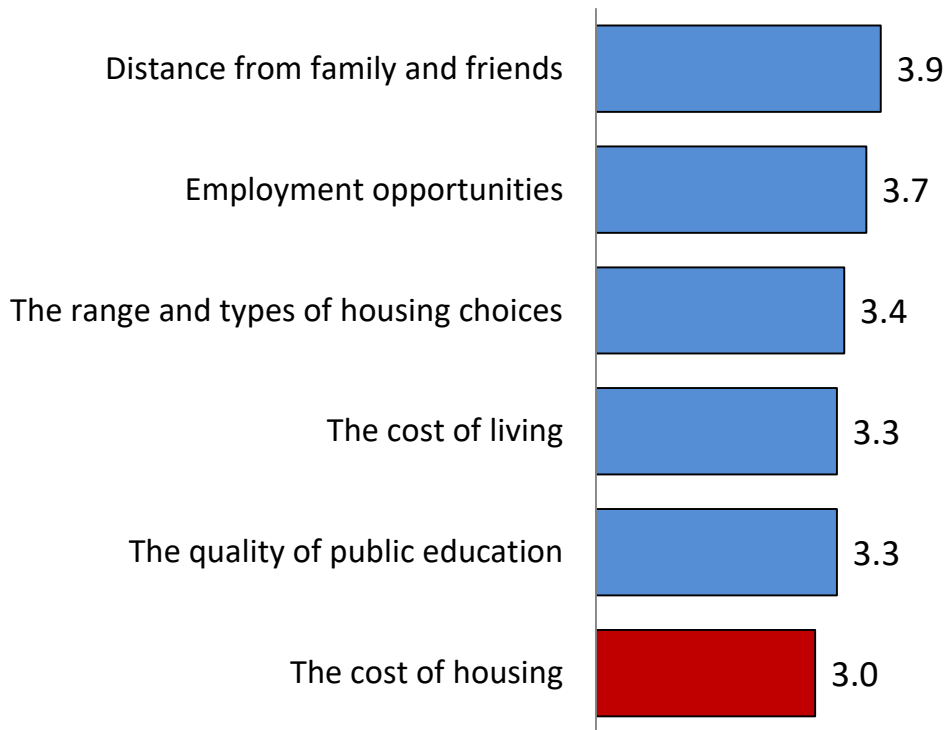


Q.3 Generally speaking, do you think that things in New Hampshire are going in the right direction, or do you feel things have gotten off on the wrong track?

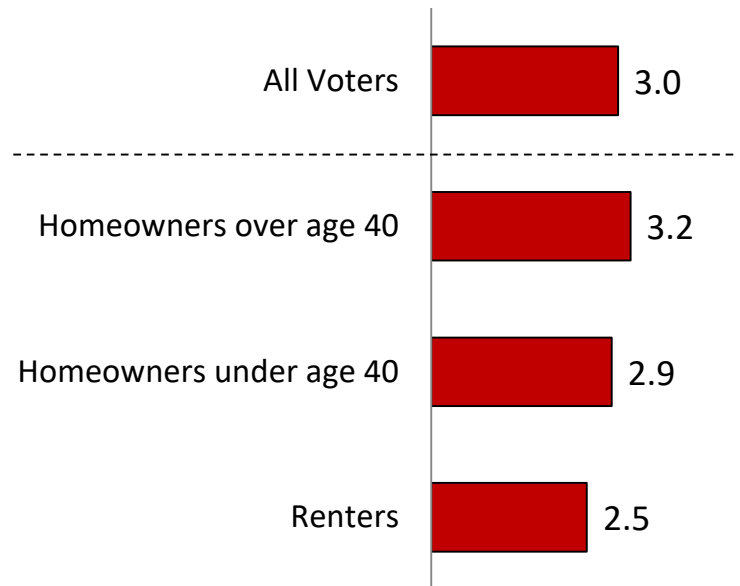
# Voters Happy with Distance from Family and Friends and Employment, but Give Cost of Housing Low Marks

*Renters are particularly unhappy with cost of housing.*

### Satisfaction with Life in New Hampshire: Mean on a 5-Point Scale



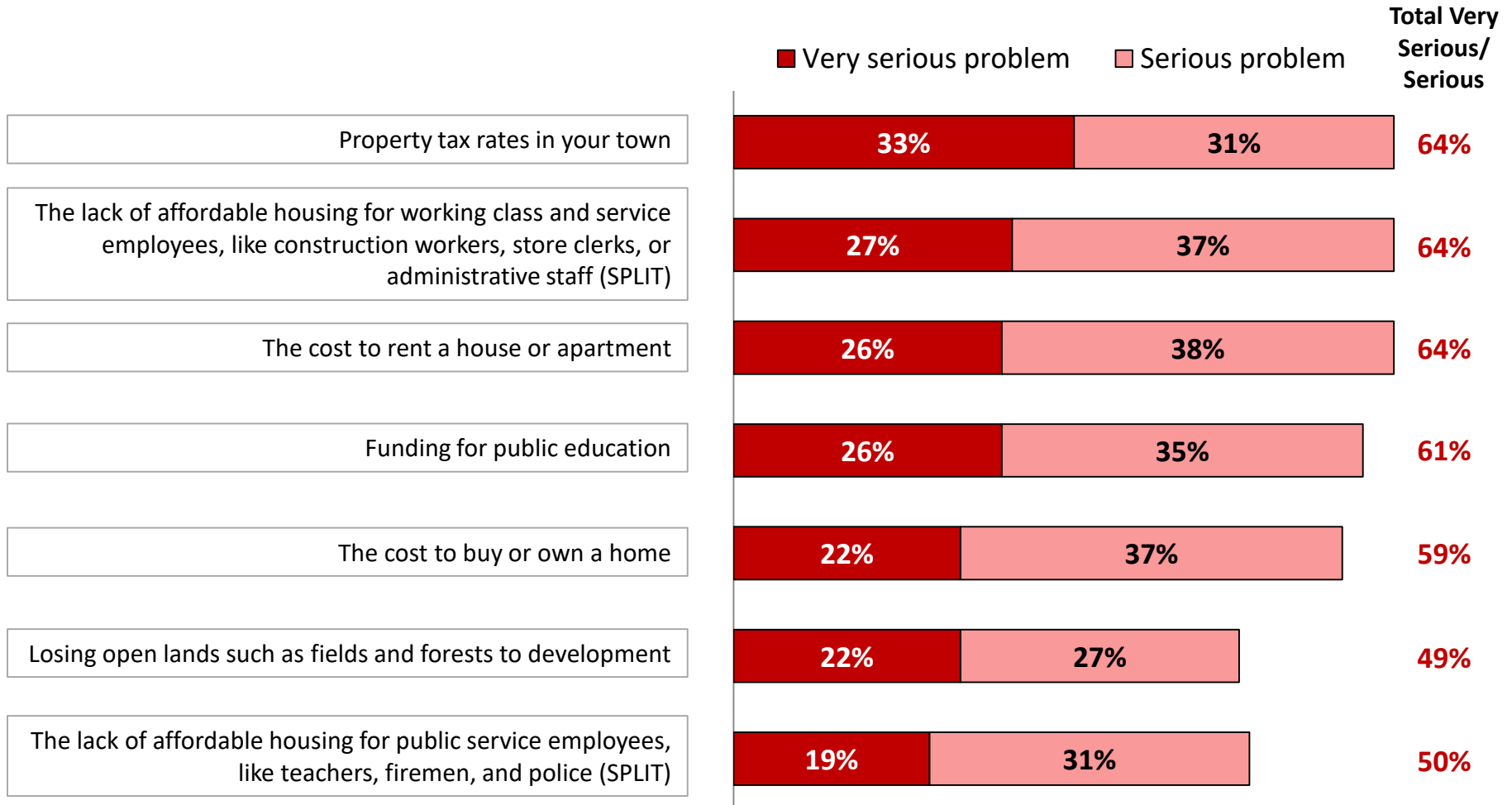
### Mean Satisfaction with Cost of Housing by Home Ownership



Q.4 Now I am going to read a list of things about life in New Hampshire in general. On a scale of 1 to 5, where 5 means very satisfied and 1 means not satisfied at all, how satisfied are you with each of the following as it relates to living in New Hampshire?

# Property Taxes, Lack of Affordable Housing, and the Cost of Rent are the Most Serious Problems

## Problem in Your Part of New Hampshire

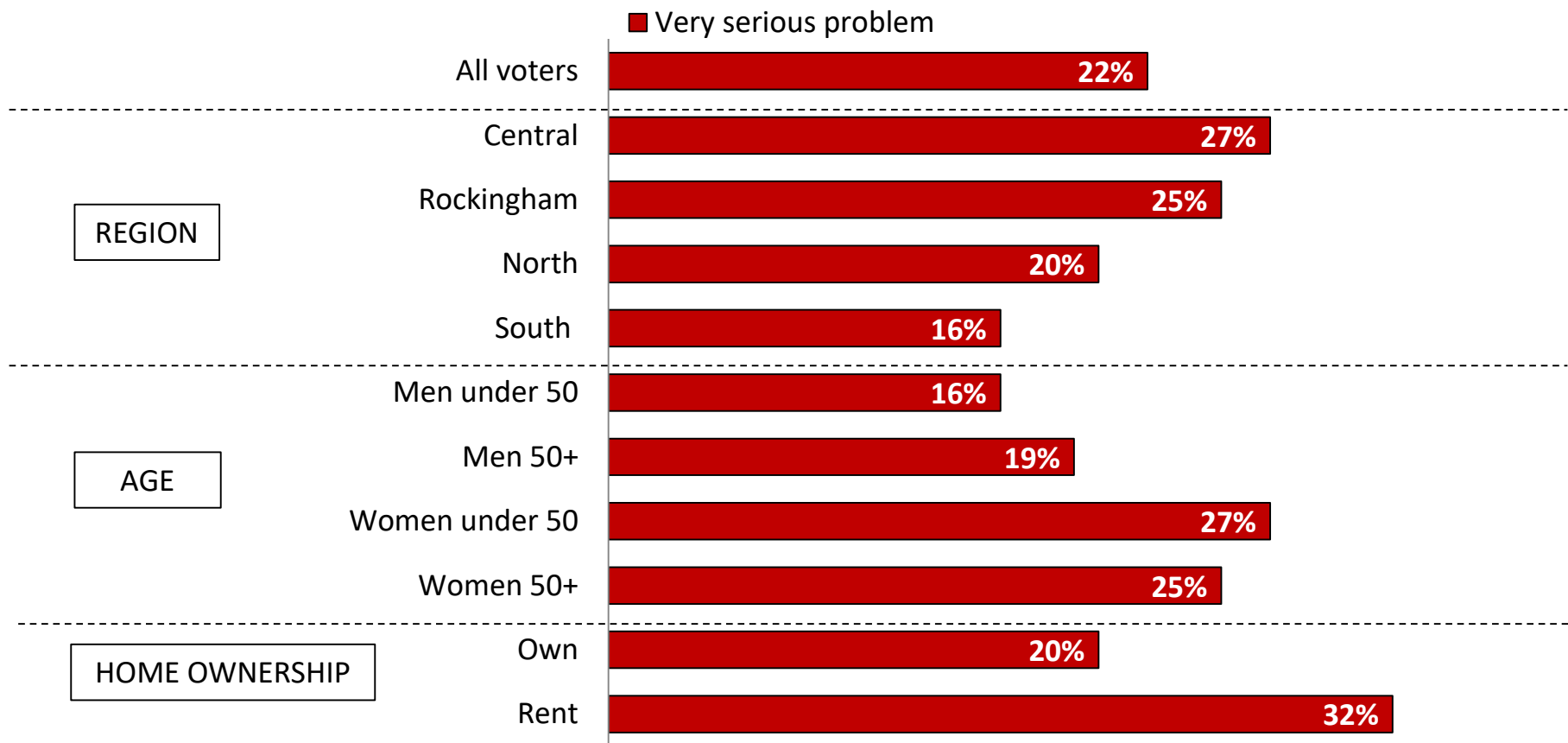


Q.5 Please tell me if you think each of the following is a very serious problem, a serious problem, a not very serious problem, or not a problem at all in your part of New Hampshire.



# Renters, Women, Central NH Voters, and Rockingham Voters Are Most Worried About the Cost to Buy a Home

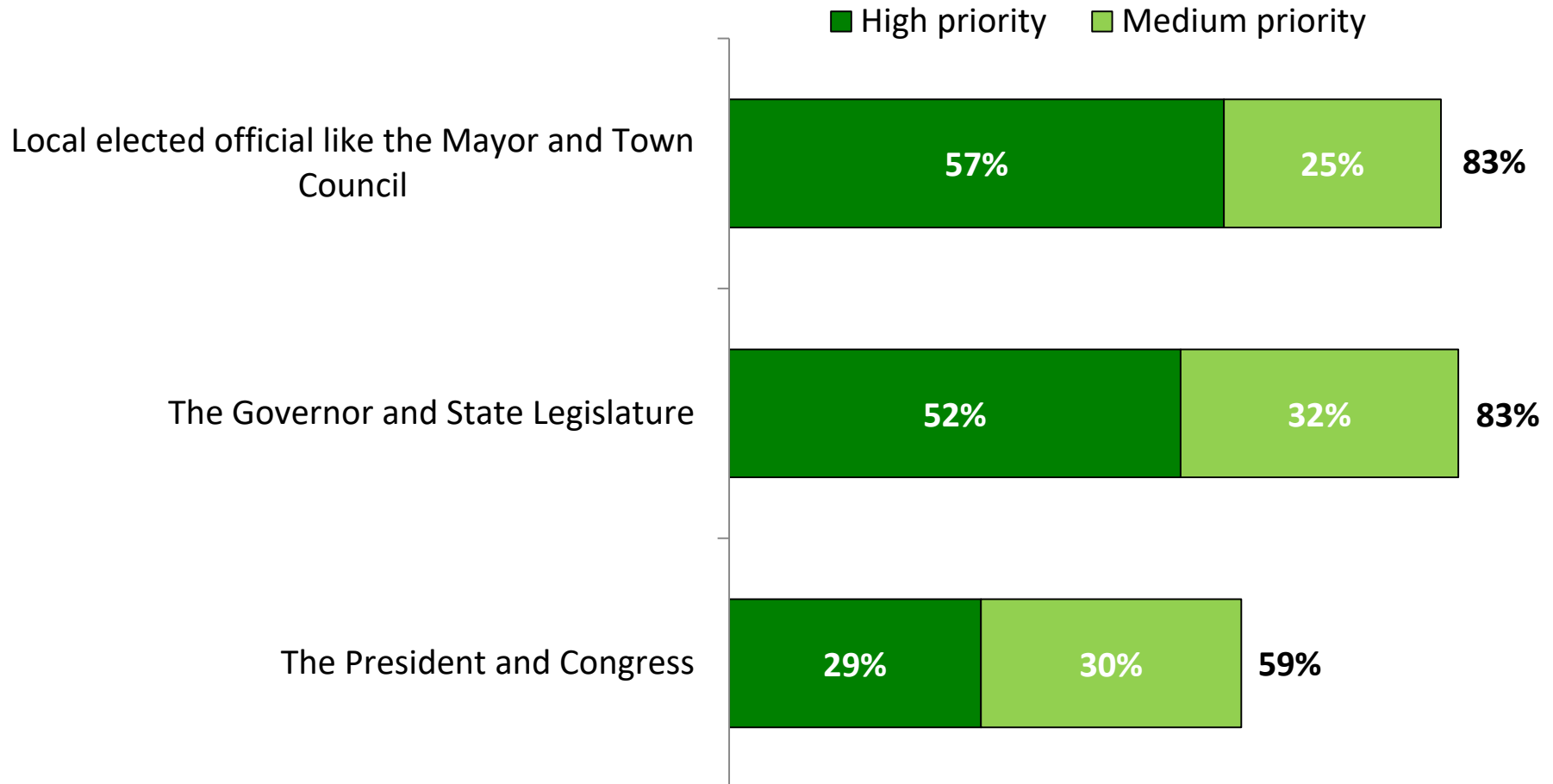
The Cost to Buy or Own a Home is a Very Serious Problem  
by Region, Age/Gender and Homeownership



Q.5A Please tell me if you think each of the following is a very serious problem, a serious problem, a not very serious problem, or not a problem at all in your part of New Hampshire: The cost to buy or own a home.

# Voters Would Like to See Elected Officials at All Levels Focus on Housing Affordability

Addressing Housing Affordability Should Be a High Priority

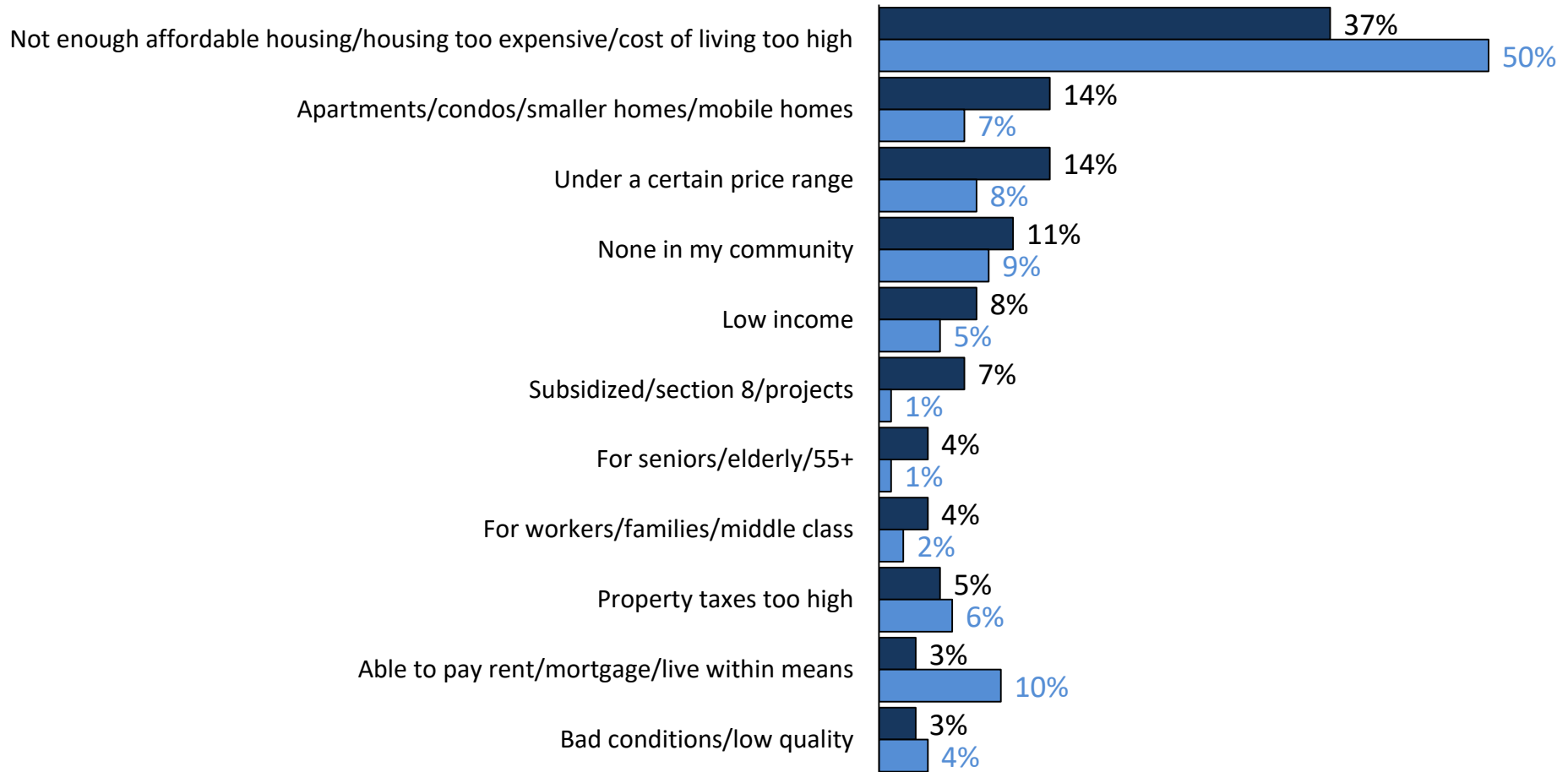


Q.6 How high of a priority should the cost of housing be for each of the following types of elected officials? Would you say that housing affordability should be a high priority, medium priority, low priority, or not a priority at all for (READ STATEMENT).

# With “Housing Affordability” Voters Cite Supply, While “Affordable Housing” Cues Housing Types and Costs

## Affordable Housing vs. Housing Affordability

■ Affordable housing ■ Housing affordability



Q. (SPLIT) Thinking more about housing in your community, what comes to mind when I say "affordable housing?"

Q. (SPLIT) Thinking more about housing in your community, what comes to mind when I say

"housing affordability?"

# *Housing Policy*

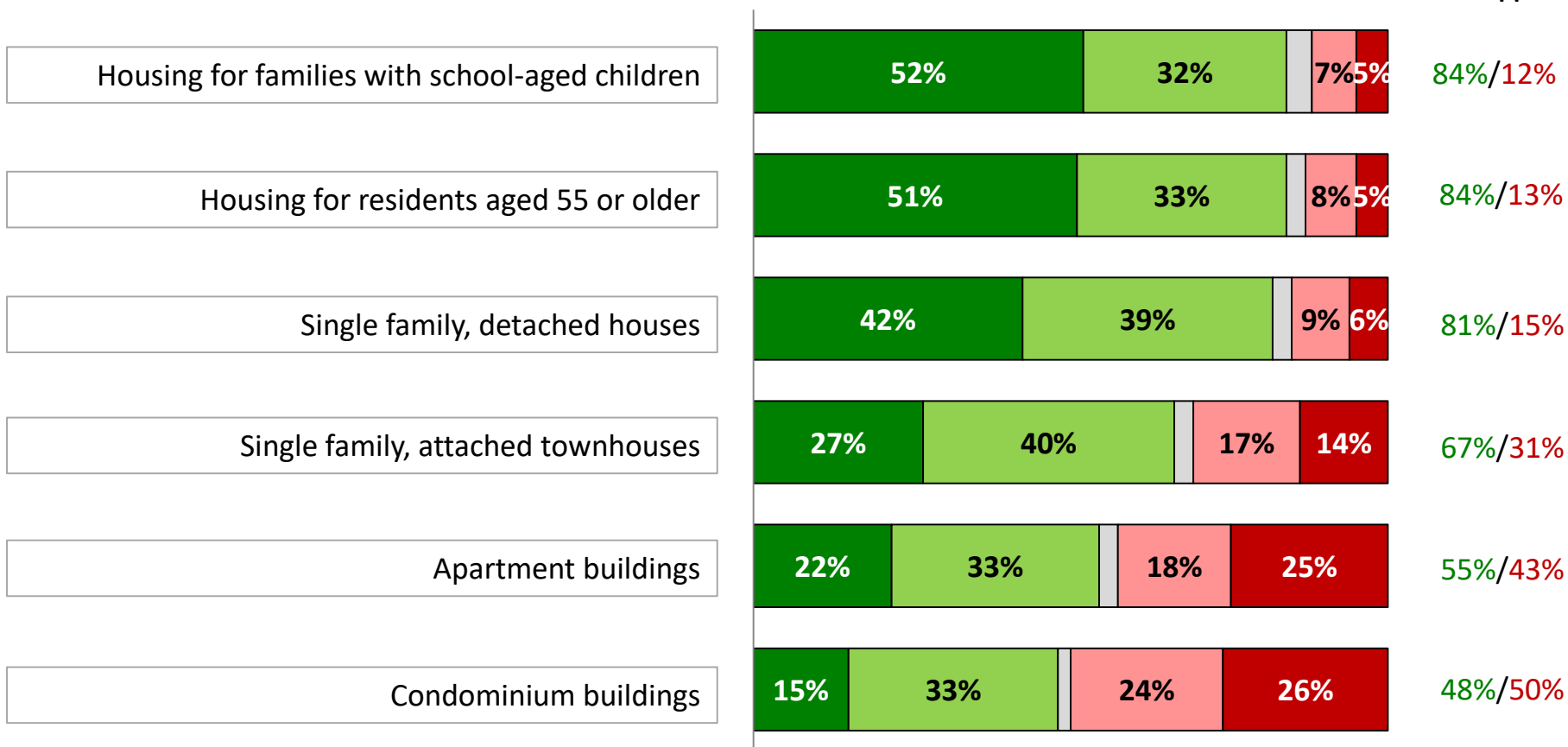
# Equal Support for Building Housing for Those with Small Children, Residents Age 55+

*Voters are more supportive of building single-family homes and townhouses than condos.*

## Support for Kind of Housing Built in Your Community

■ Strongly support  
 ■ Somewhat support  
 ■ Other  
 ■ Somewhat oppose  
 ■ Strongly oppose

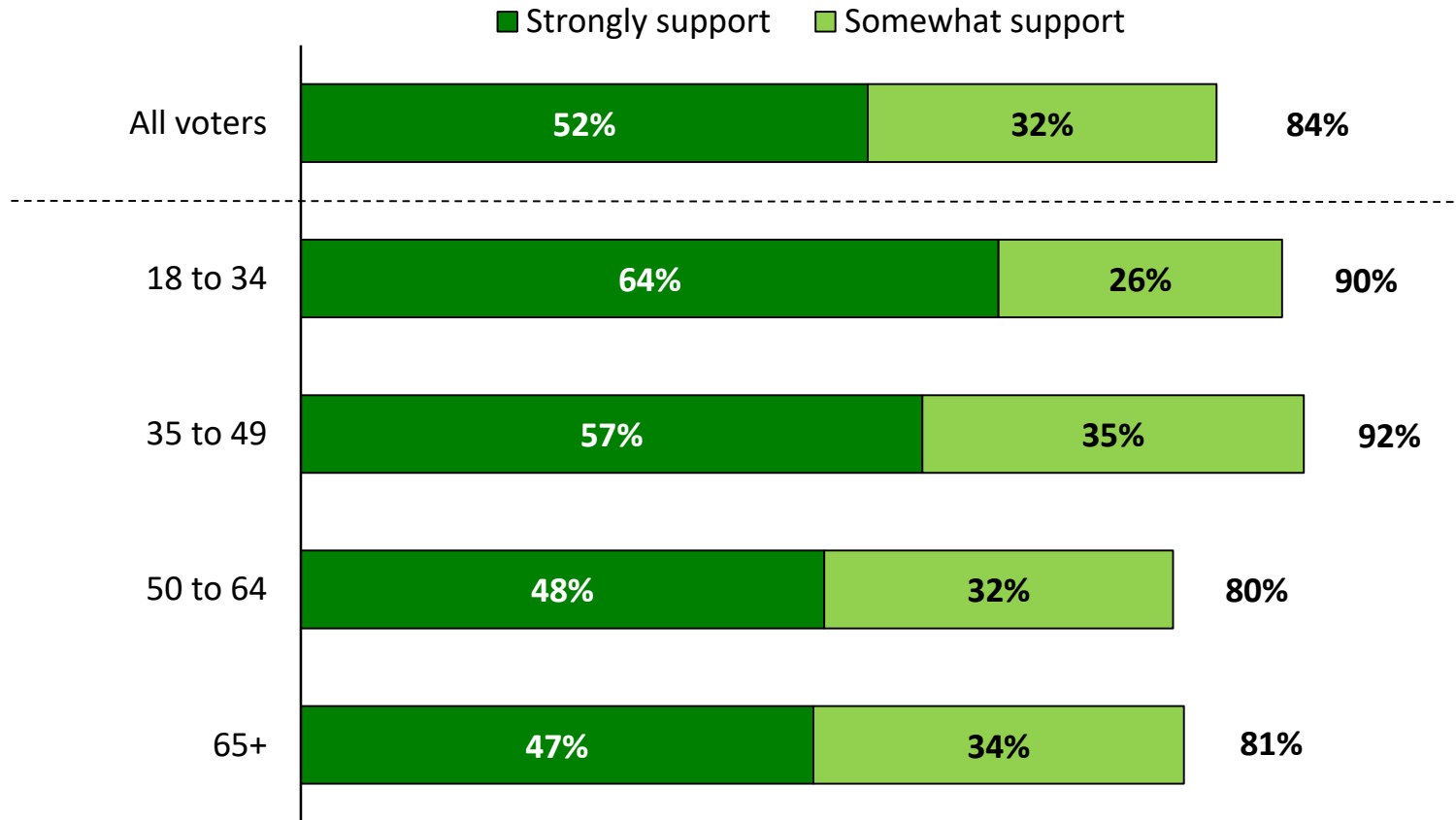
**Total Support/  
Total Oppose**



Q. 7 Some people would like to see more housing built in New Hampshire to increase supply and options. Please tell me if you would support or oppose more of each kind of housing being built in your community.

# Stronger Intensity of Support for Young Family Housing Among Younger Residents Than Older Residents

Support Housing for Families with School-Aged Children  
By Age

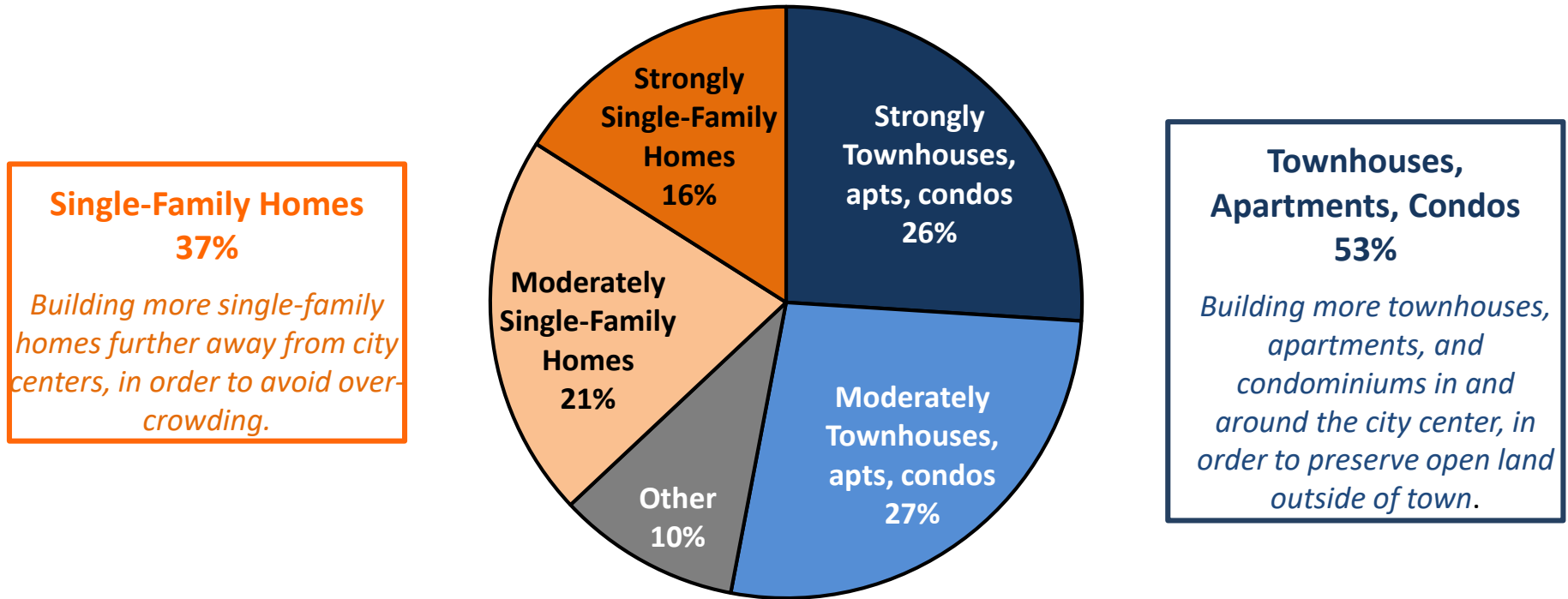


7. Some people would like to see more housing built in New Hampshire to increase supply and options. Please tell me if you would support or oppose more of each kind of housing being built in your community: *Housing for families with school-aged children.*

# A Slim Majority of Residents Support Building More Townhomes, Apts, and Condos Over Single-Family Homes

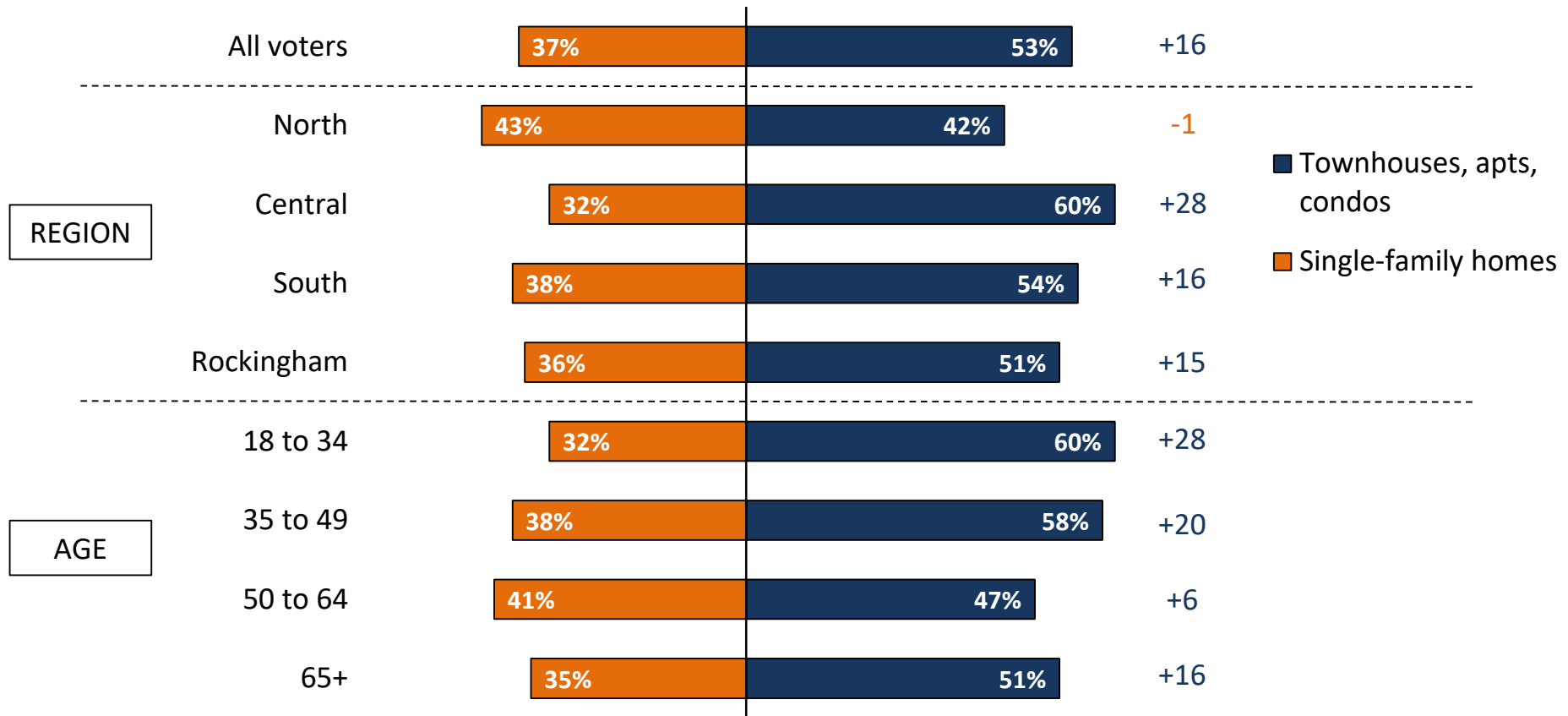
*In order to preserve open land outside of town*

Preference of Type of New Housing  
in New Hampshire



# Strongest Preference for Attached Homes is in Central NH and Among Younger Residents

Preference of New Housing in New Hampshire  
by Region, Age

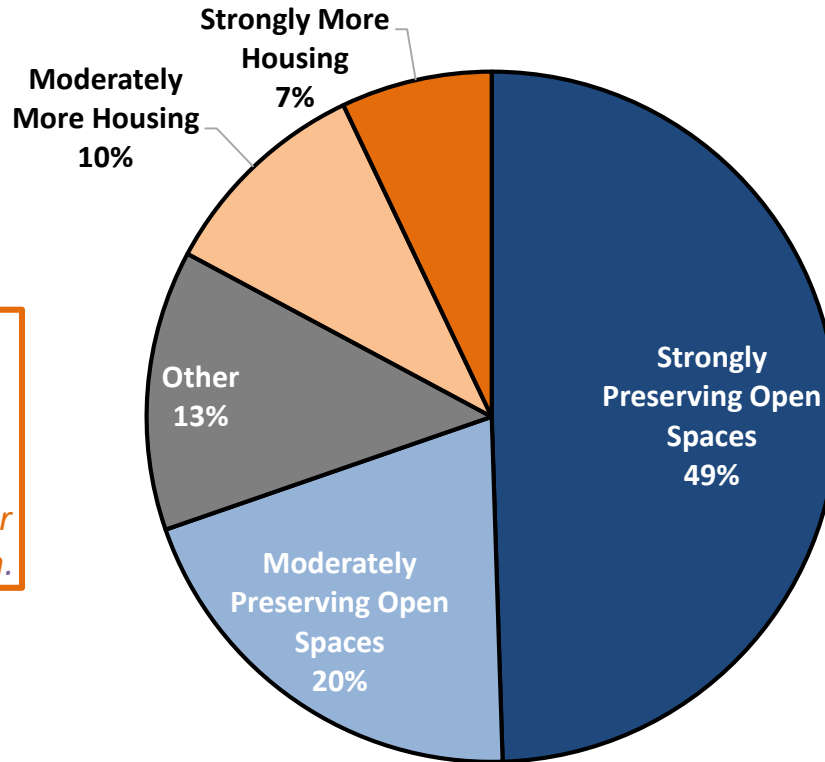




# 7-in-10 Prefer Preserving Open Space in NH Compared to the Erection of More Housing

*Half strongly prefer preserving open spaces*

## Preference Between Building More Houses and Preserving Open Space in New Hampshire



**More Housing  
18%**

*Building more housing throughout the state in order to bring housing prices down.*

**Preserving Open Spaces  
69%**

*Preserving open spaces, like wetlands, fields, and forests to order to maintain New Hampshire's unique character.*

# *Personal Living Situation*

# 2-in-3 Residents are Very Satisfied with Their Current Housing Situation

Satisfaction with Your Current Housing Situation on a 5-Point Scale

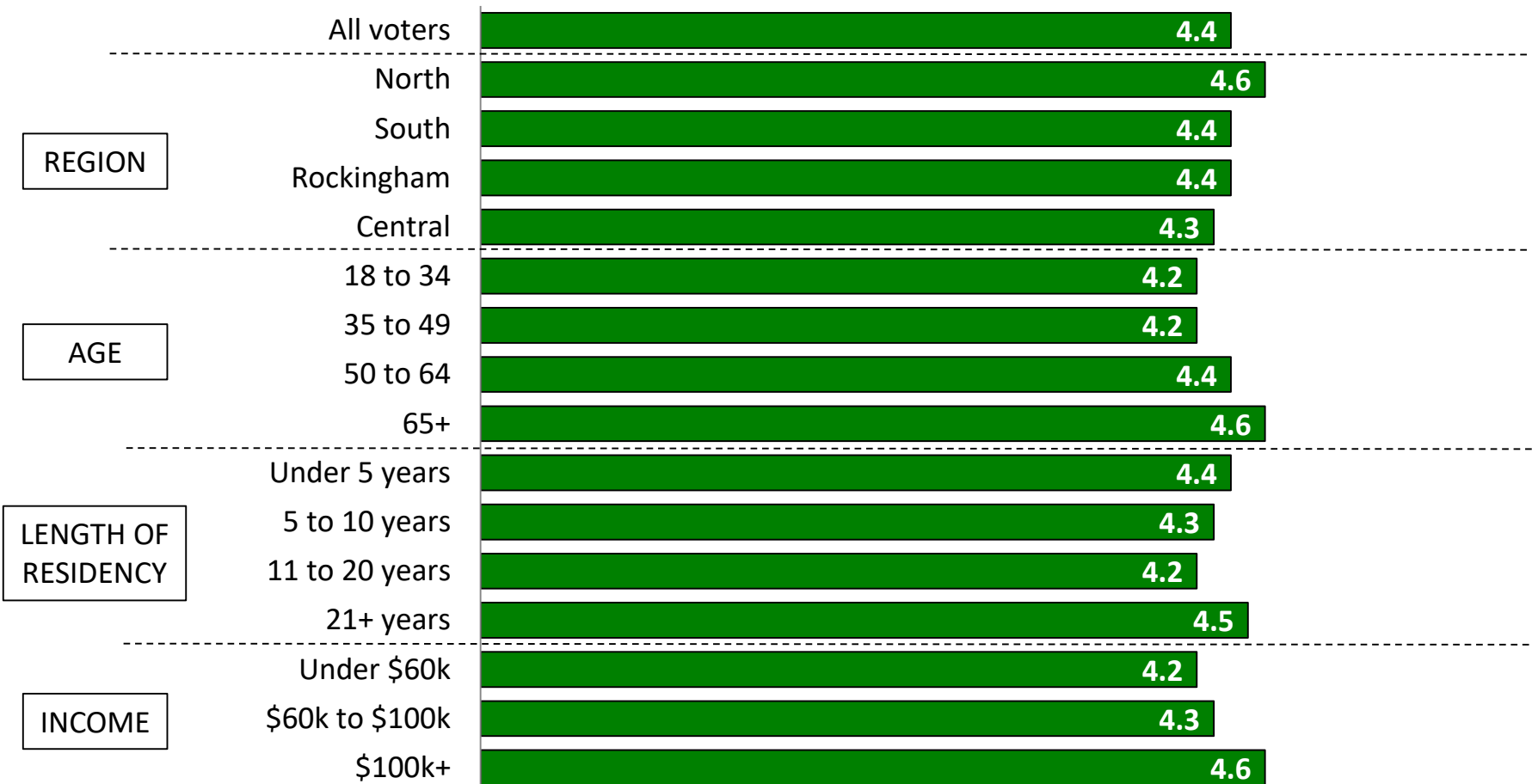


Q.10 Now think for a moment about the home, condominium, or apartment where you live. On a scale of 1 to 5, where 5 means very satisfied and 1 means not satisfied at all, how satisfied are you with your current housing situation?

# Younger People, Central NH Residents, and Those Who Make Less Money are Less Likely to Be Satisfied

## Mean Satisfaction with Your Current Housing Situation on a 5-Point Scale

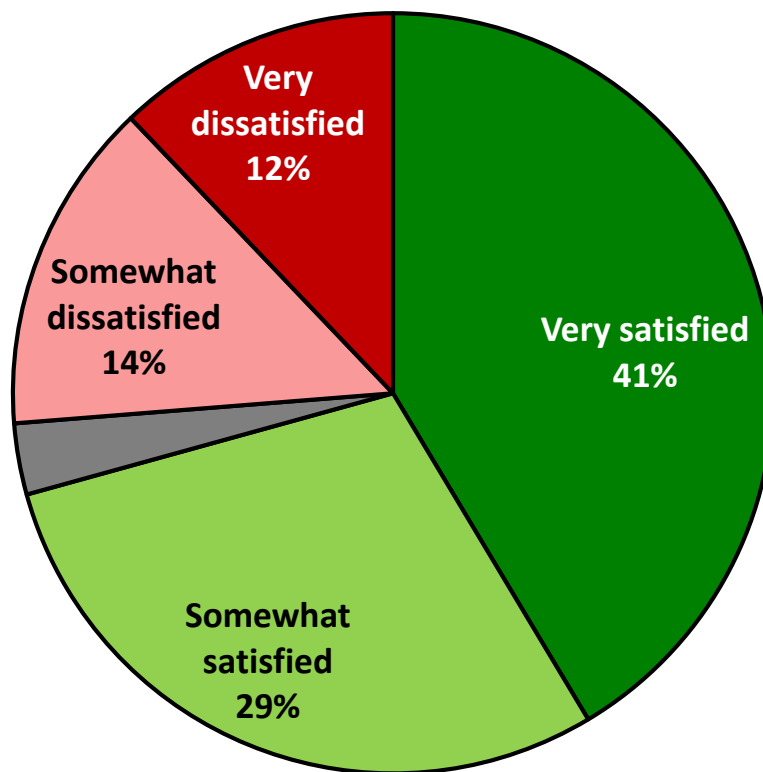
*by Region, Age, Residency Length, Income*



Q.10 Now think for a moment about the home, condominium, or apartment where you live. On a scale of 1 to 5, where 5 means very satisfied and 1 means not satisfied at all, how satisfied are you with your current housing situation?

# 7-in-10 Say They Were Satisfied with the Options They Had Available When They Were Looking for Housing Last

Level of Satisfaction with the Housing Options  
In Your Price Range When You Made Decision to Live There



**Dissatisfied**  
*Total: 27%*

<b>Renters:</b>	<b>48%</b>
<b>Less than 5 years in residence:</b>	<b>42%</b>
<b>Young College:</b>	<b>37%</b>
<b>Age 18-34:</b>	<b>35%</b>

**Satisfied**  
*Total: 70%*

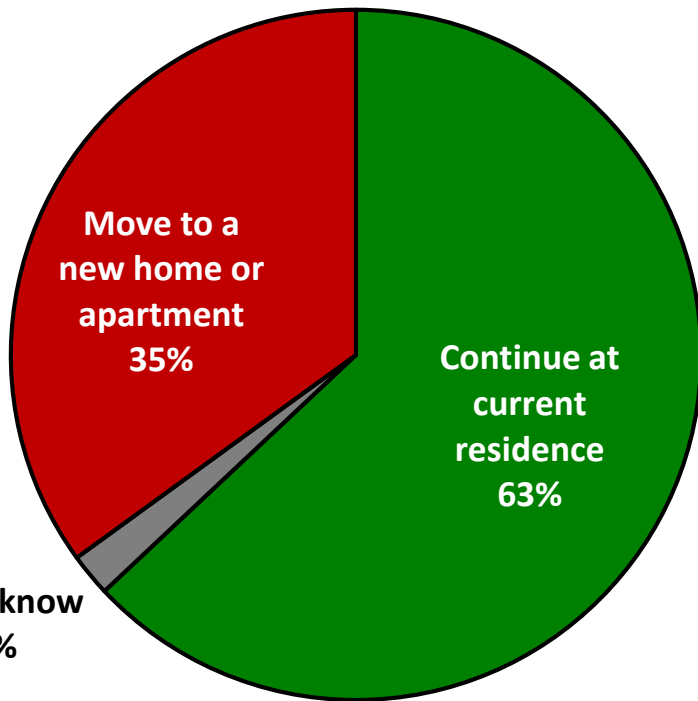
<b>Non-College Men:</b>	<b>79%</b>
<b>Over 64:</b>	<b>78%</b>
<b>Homeowners 40+:</b>	<b>76%</b>

Q. 12 When you made the decision to live where you are now, were you satisfied or dissatisfied with the housing options that were in your price range?

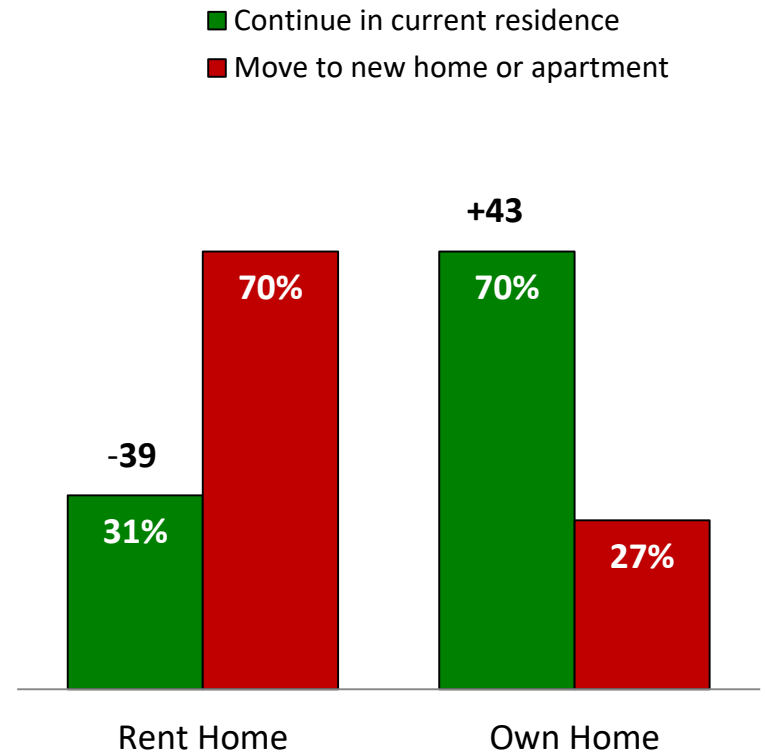
# Almost One-Third Anticipate Moving in the Near Future

*A quarter of home owners wish to move in the near future while over 2-in-3 renters do*

### Preference for Future Housing



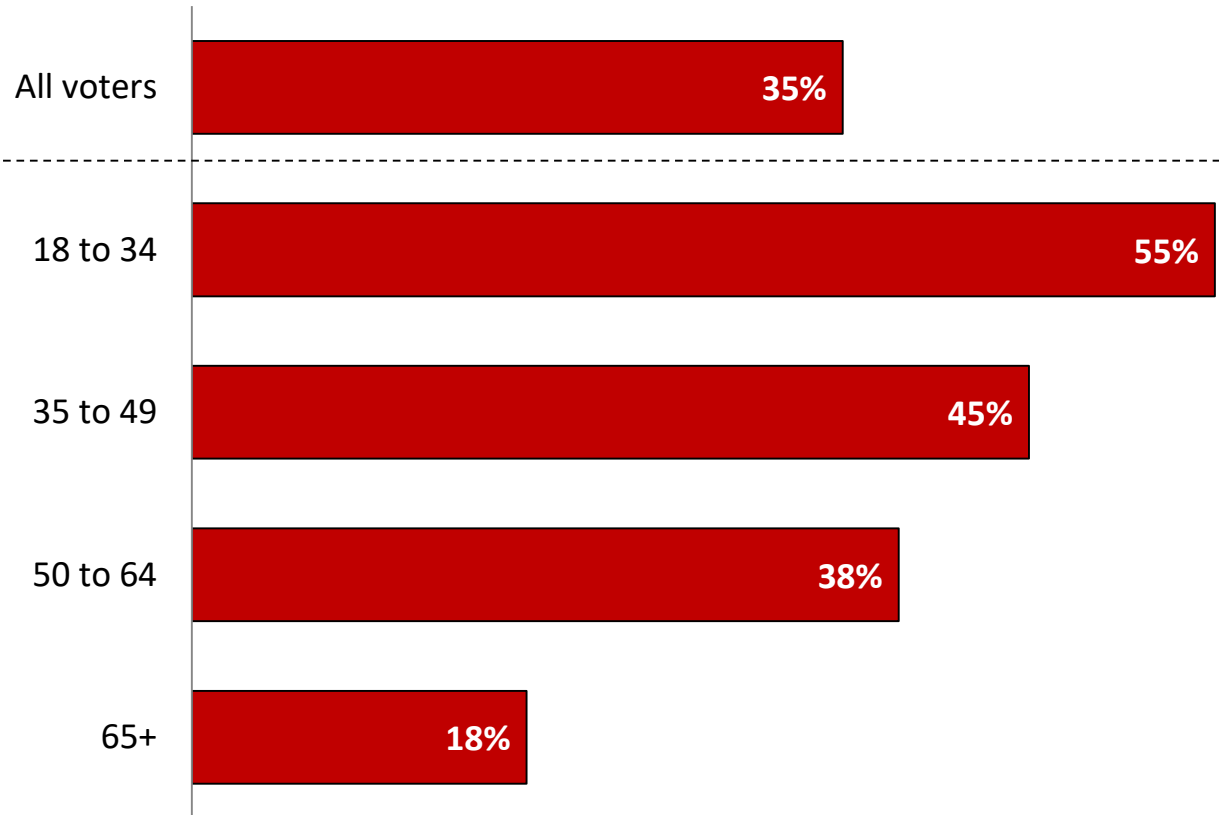
### Preference for Future Housing *by Home Ownership*



Q.13 As you think ahead a few years, would you like to continue to live where you are now OR move to a new home or apartment?

# Eagerness to Move is Highly Correlated with Age

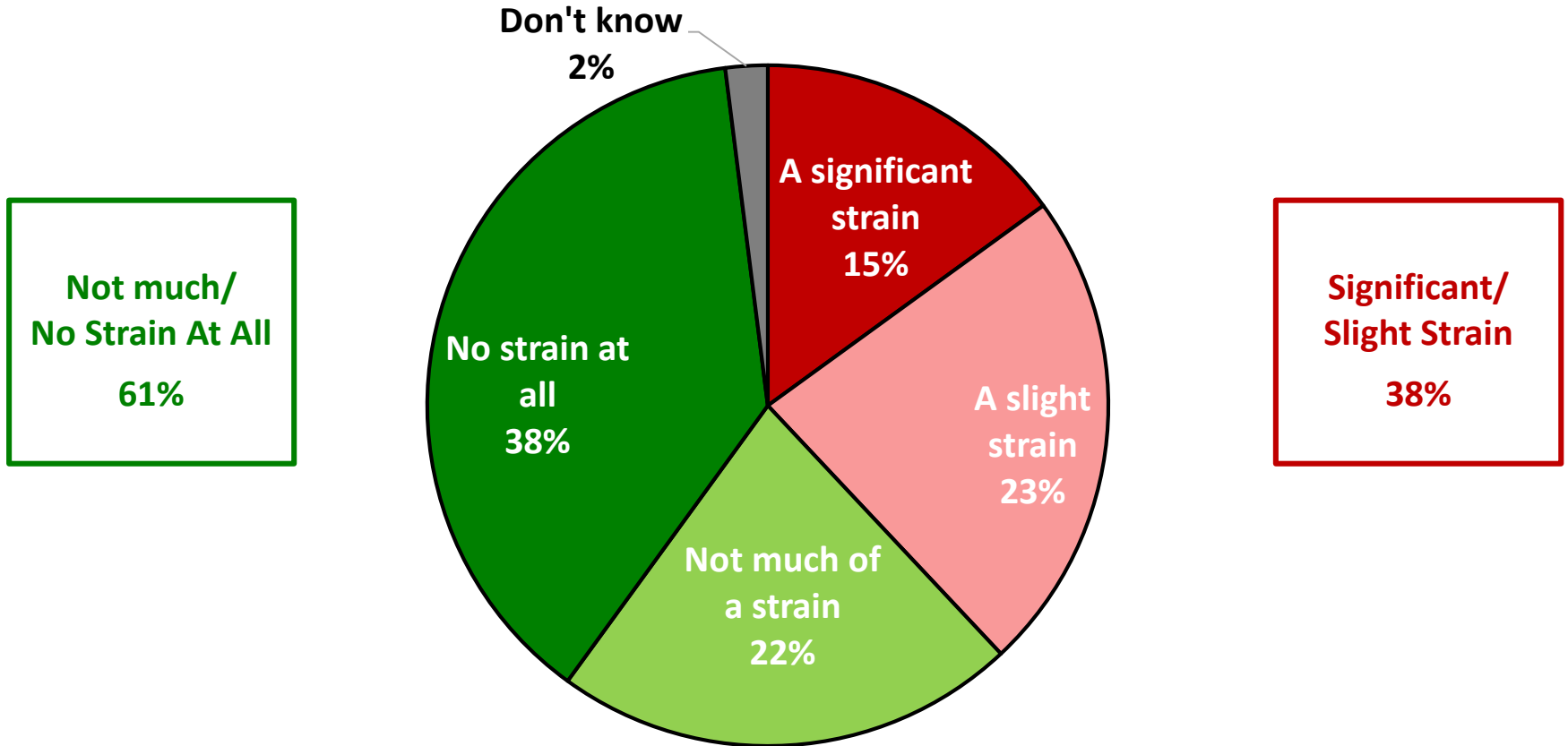
Percent Want to Move to a New Home  
in the Next Few Years  
*by Age*



Q.13 As you think ahead a few years, would you like to continue to live where you are now OR move to a new home or apartment?

# 2-in-5 Say Their Rent or Mortgage Puts a Significant or Slight Strain on Their Monthly Budget

Financial Strain of Your Rent/Mortgage



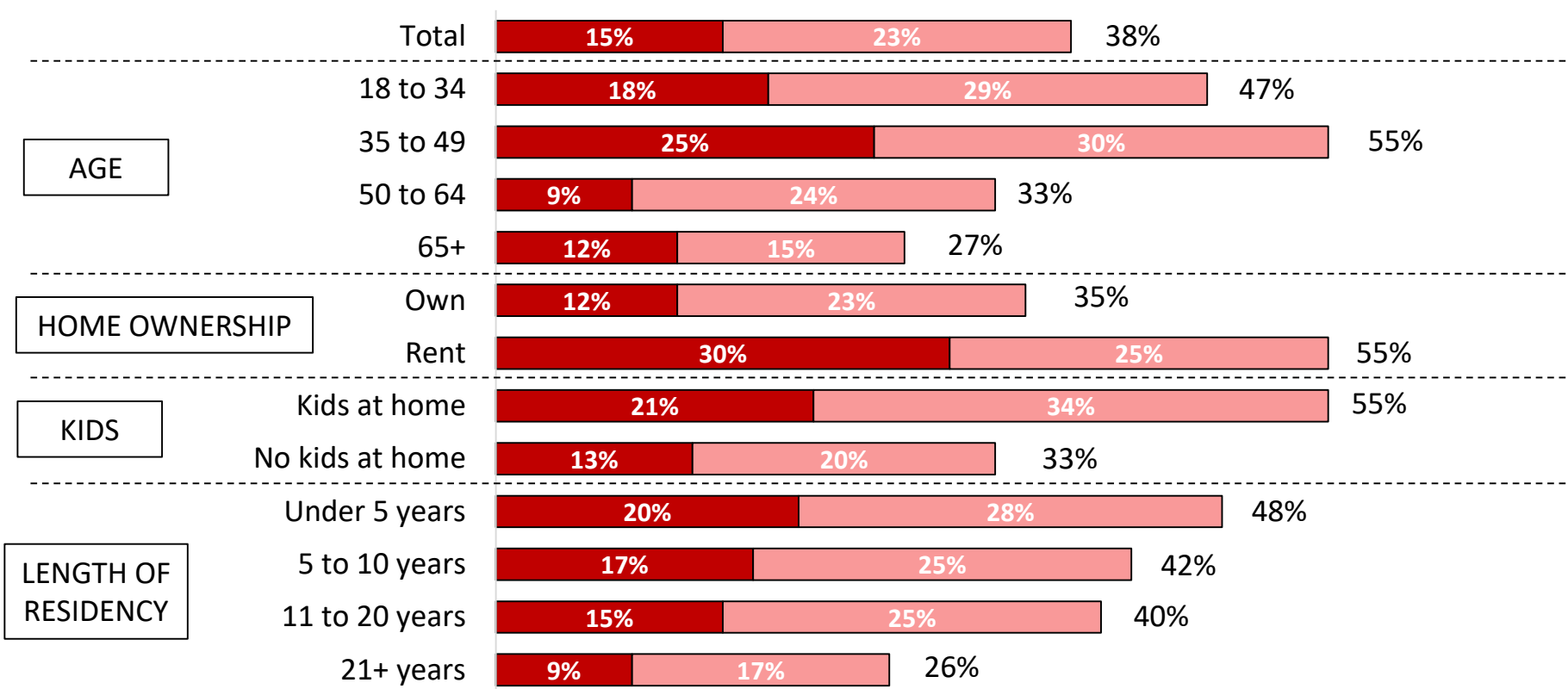
Q. 16 How much of a financial strain on your budget is paying your rent or mortgage each month? Is it a significant strain, a slight strain, not much of a strain, or no strain at all?



# Renters, Young People, Those with Kids at Home, and Short-Time Residents More Likely to Say it is a Strain

**Financial Strain of Your Rent/Mortgage**  
by Age, Homeownership, Kids, Length of Residency

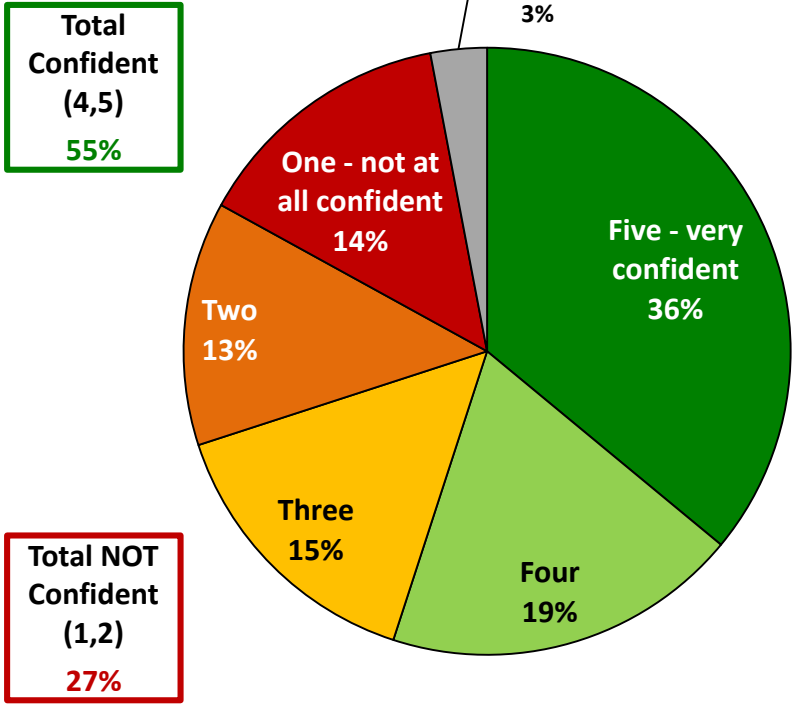
■ A significant strain    ■ A slight strain



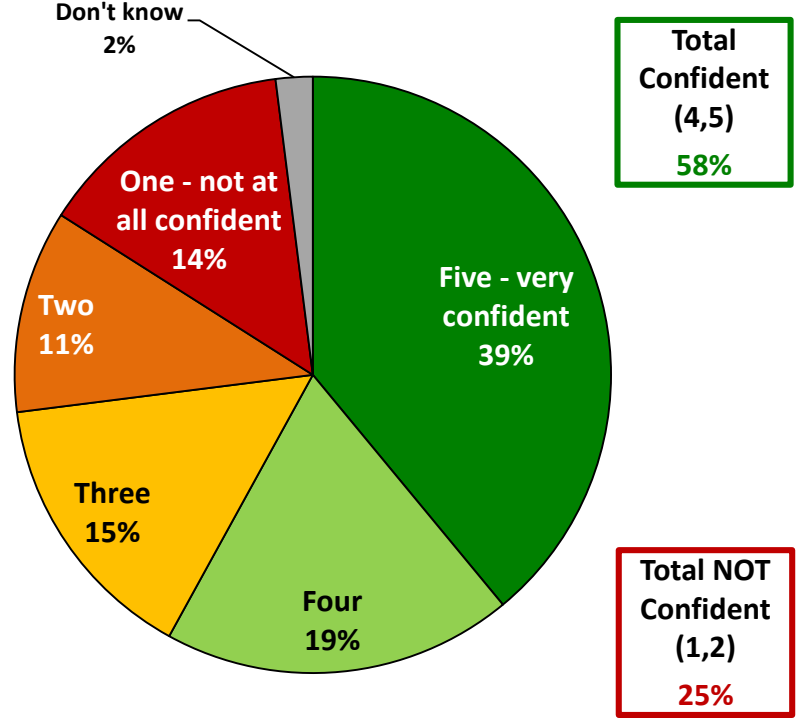
Q.16 How much of a financial strain on your budget is paying your rent or mortgage each month? Is it a significant strain, a slight strain, not much of a strain, or no strain at all?

# One-Fourth of Voters Are NOT Confident They Could Afford the Kind of Home They Want in Their Community/State

**Confidence of Being Able to Afford the Kind of Home You Want in Your Community**



**Confidence of Being Able to Afford the Kind of Home You Want in New Hampshire**

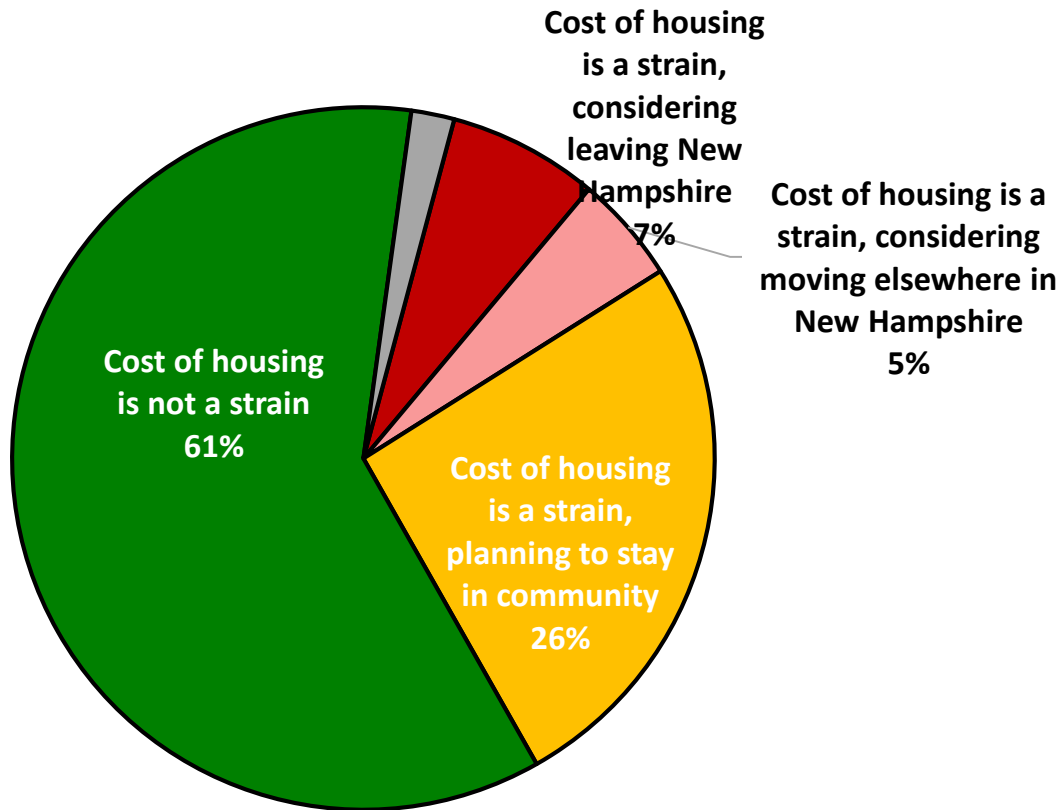


Q.18 On a scale of 1 to 5, where 5 means very confident and 1 means not at all confident, how confident are you that if you had to move from your current residence you would be able to afford to own or rent a home that meets your needs in YOUR COMMUNITY?

Q.19 On a scale of 1 to 5, where 5 means very confident and 1 means not at all confident, how confident are you that if you had to move from your current residence you would be able to afford to own or rent a home that meets your needs in NEW HAMPSHIRE?

# 1-in-14 Registered Voters Is Seriously Considering Leaving New Hampshire Because the Cost of Housing is a Strain on Their Budget

## Seriously Considering Moving Because of Cost of Housing



### Seriously Considering Moving Because of the Cost of Housing by Age

Under Age 35: 7%  
Age 35 to 49: 13%  
Age 50 to 64: 7%  
Age 65+: 2%

Q.17 (IF SIGNIFICANT, SLIGHT, OR NOT MUCH IN Q.21) Does the cost of your housing make you and your family seriously consider moving away from the part of New Hampshire you live in now or not?  
(IF YES): Does it make you consider moving elsewhere in New Hampshire, or outside of the state?