

September 10, 2024 Presidential Debate Dial Test





- ❑ In partnership with [Innovating for the Public Good: R&D for Democracy](#) and [PSG Consulting](#), [TargetSmart](#) conducted qualitative research measuring the sentiment of nearly 100 voters around the September 10, 2024, presidential debate. The research used live dials and a pre-debate and post-debate survey with an audience of swing voters and Democratic-leaning mobilization targets in the top seven presidential battleground states.

- ❑ Swing voters are defined as at least one of the following:
 - Undecided/soft support for a candidate in the presidential race,
 - Splitting their tickets in the presidential and U.S. Senate race in their state, or
 - Holding unfavorable views of both candidates.

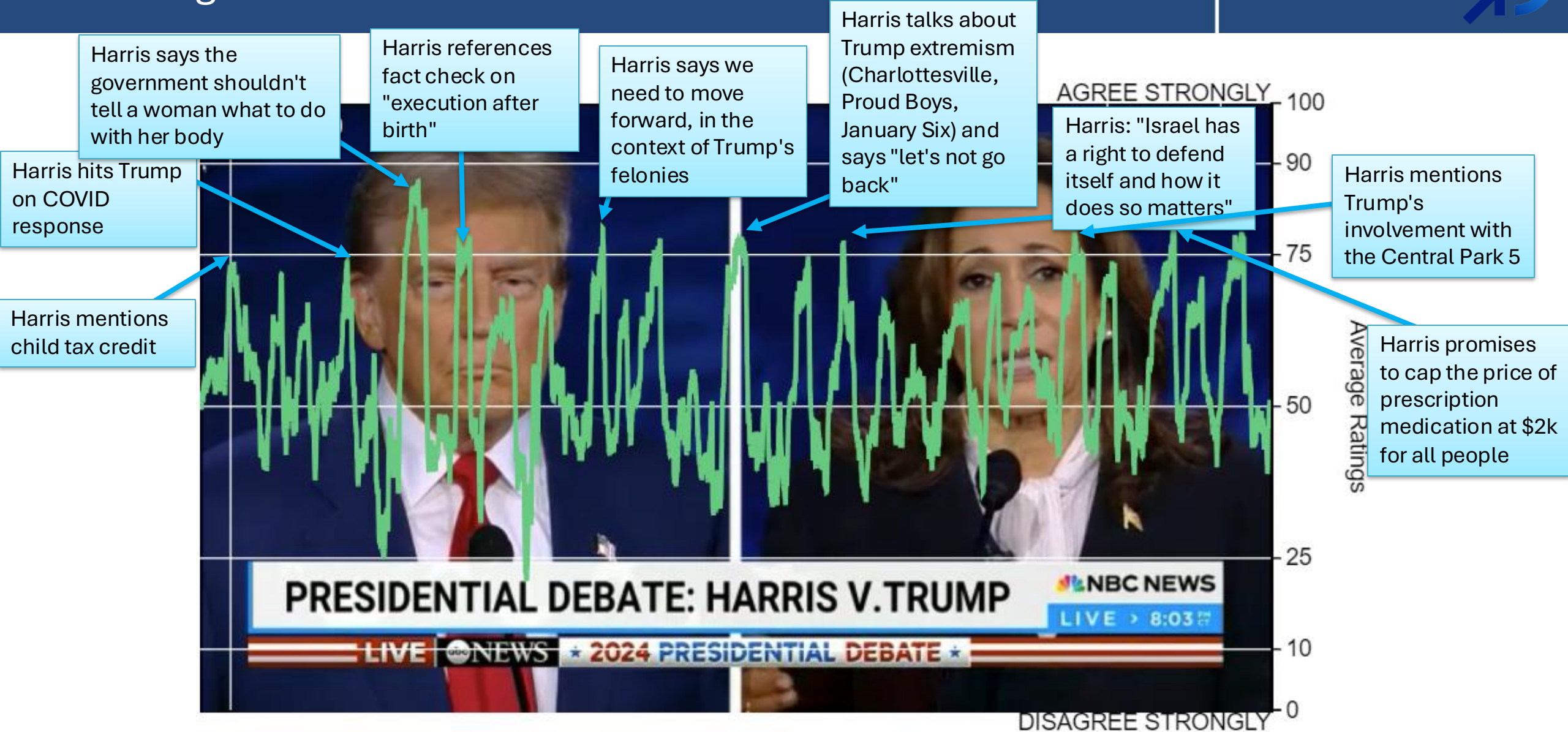
- ❑ Mobilization targets meet at least one of the following criteria:
 - Are Democratic or Democratic-leaning in terms of party identification,
 - Are single women,
 - Are voters of color, and
 - May or may not have voted in the 2022 midterm election.

- ❑ “Hot-button” feature enables isolation of key moments both "A Great Moment!" and "That's Inappropriate!"

- ❑ The participant pool recruited for this study leans Democratic. For this analysis, we focus on changes between the pre-debate survey and the post-debate survey.



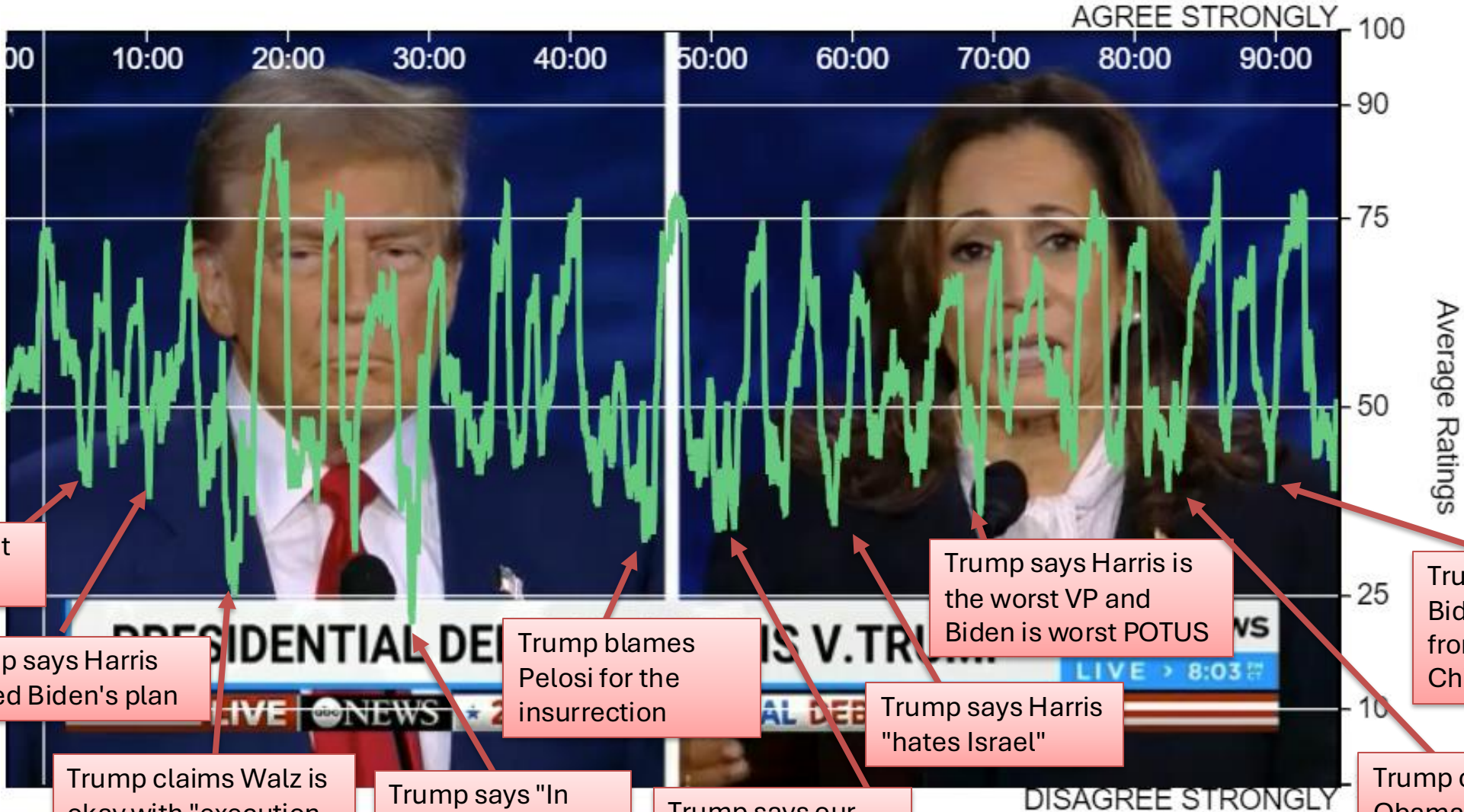
Debate Highs



Line represents sentiment dials of all participants in study



Debate Lows



Trump talks about immigrant crime

Trump says Harris copied Biden's plan

Trump claims Walz is okay with "execution after birth"

Trump says "In Springfield they're eating the dogs"

Trump blames Pelosi for the insurrection

Trump says our elections are bad

Trump says Harris "hates Israel"

Trump says Harris is the worst VP and Biden is worst POTUS

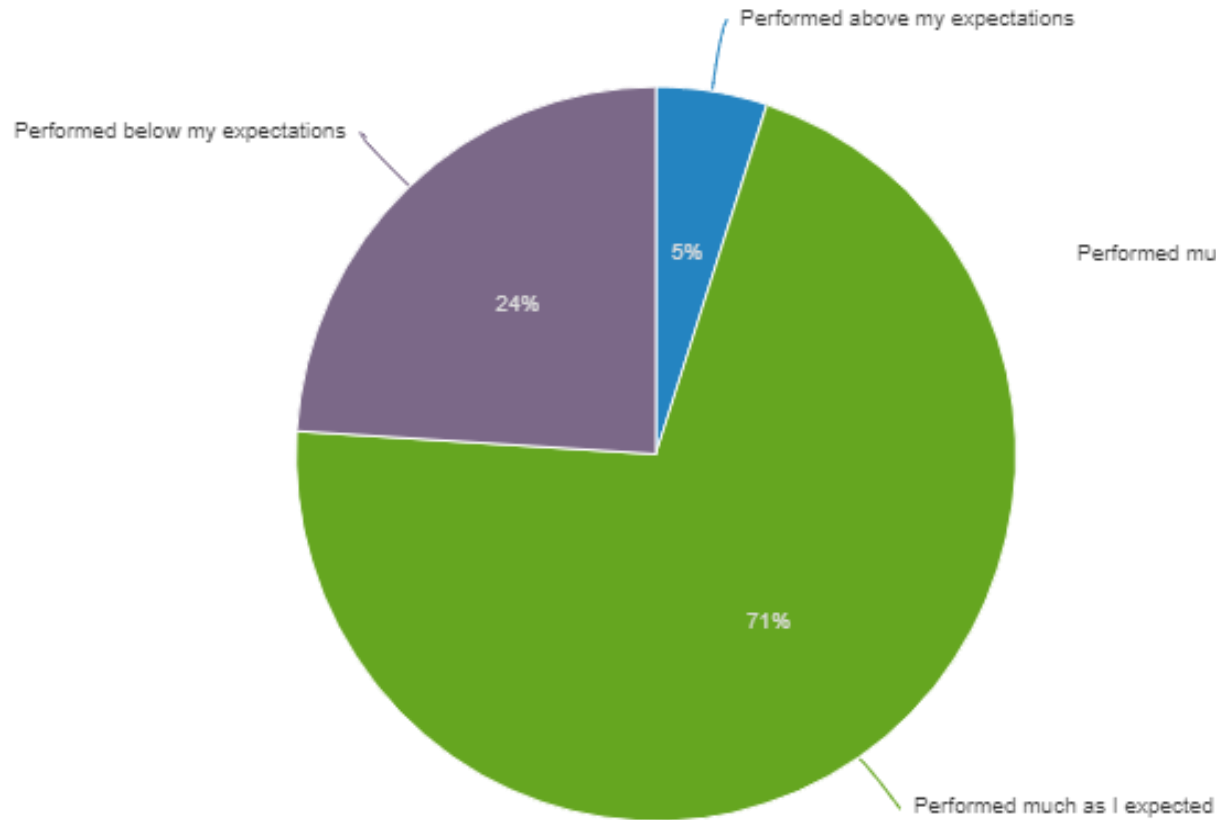
Trump on Obamacare

Trump claims the Bidens get money from Russia and China

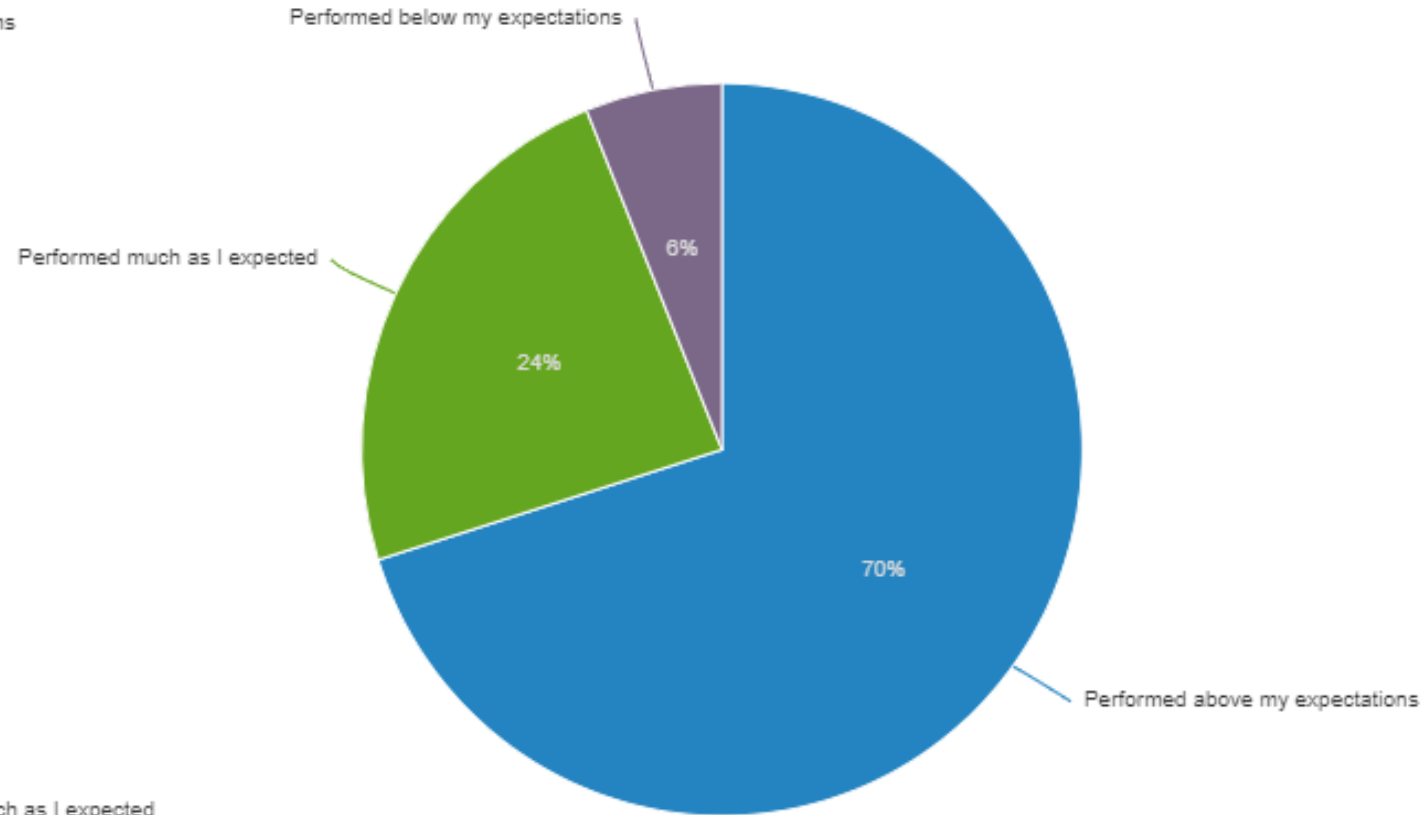




Trump Performance Expectations Met



Harris Performance Expectations Met

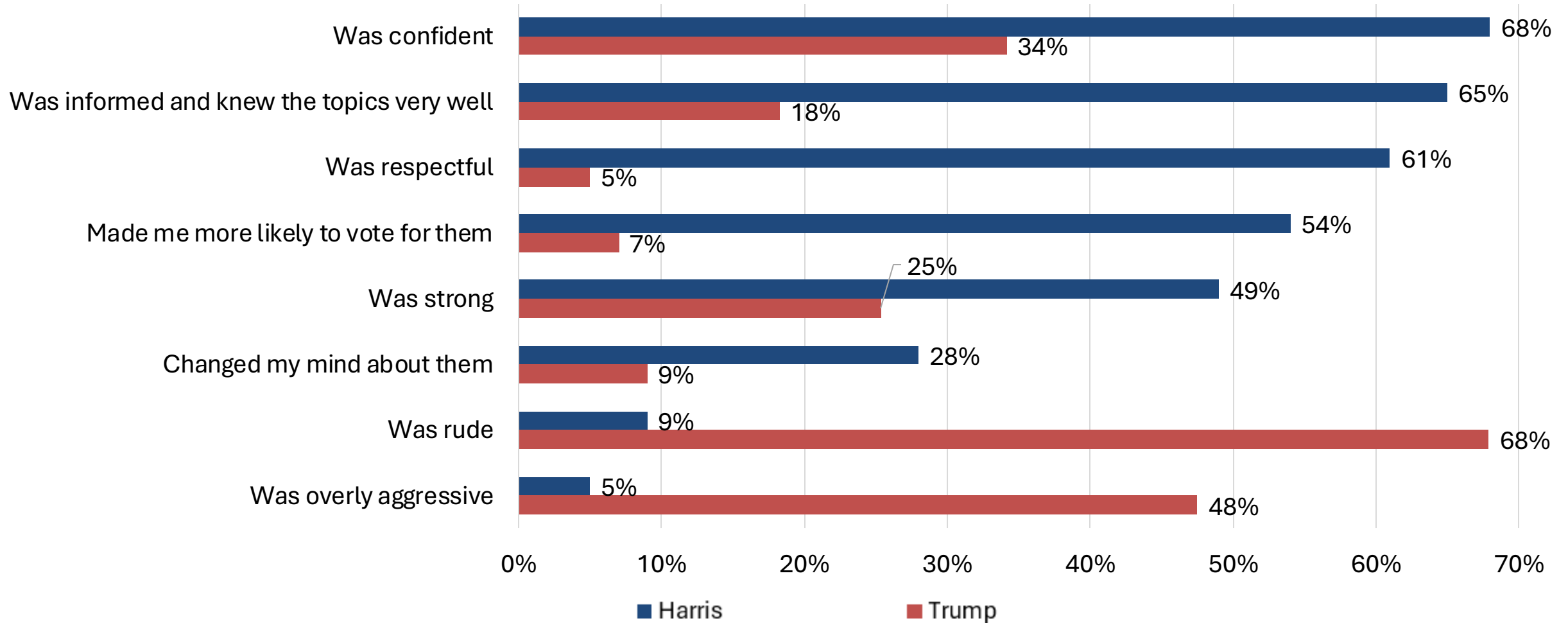


Overall, thinking about the performance of each candidate, did they perform above your expectations, perform much as you expected, or perform below your expectations?

Harris won on substance and on style



Debate Performance Descriptors

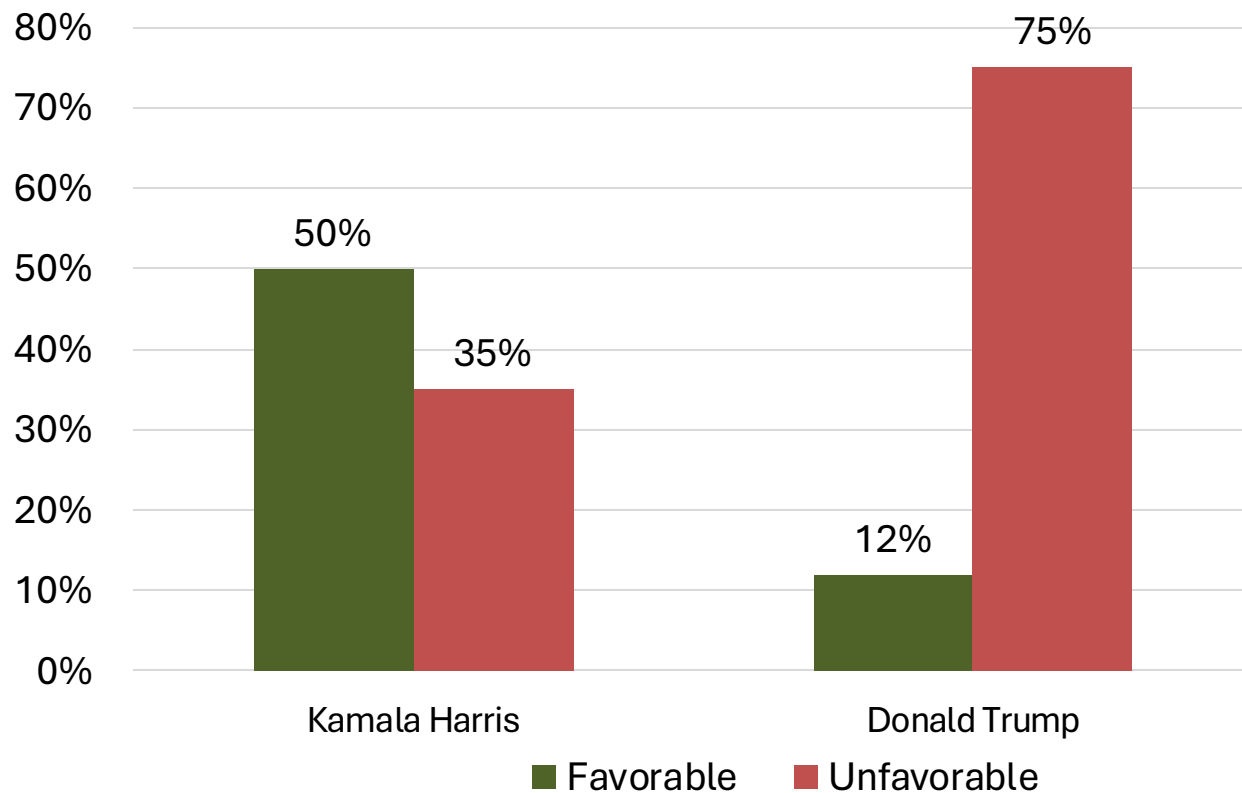


Which of these statements describe Kamala Harris's overall performance? Please select all that apply.
Which of these statements describe Donald Trump's overall performance? Please select all that apply.

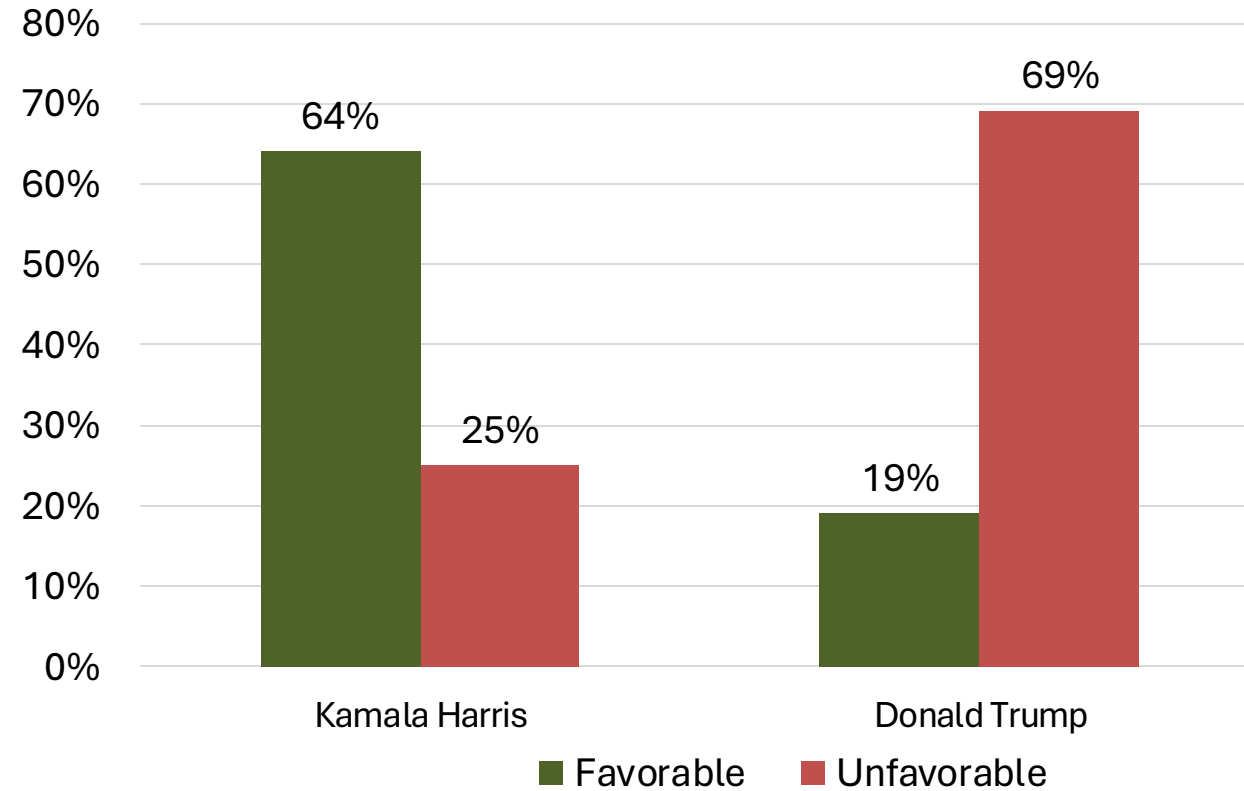
Harris made big gains in terms of favorability



Pre-Debate Favorability Ratings



Post-Debate Favorability Ratings

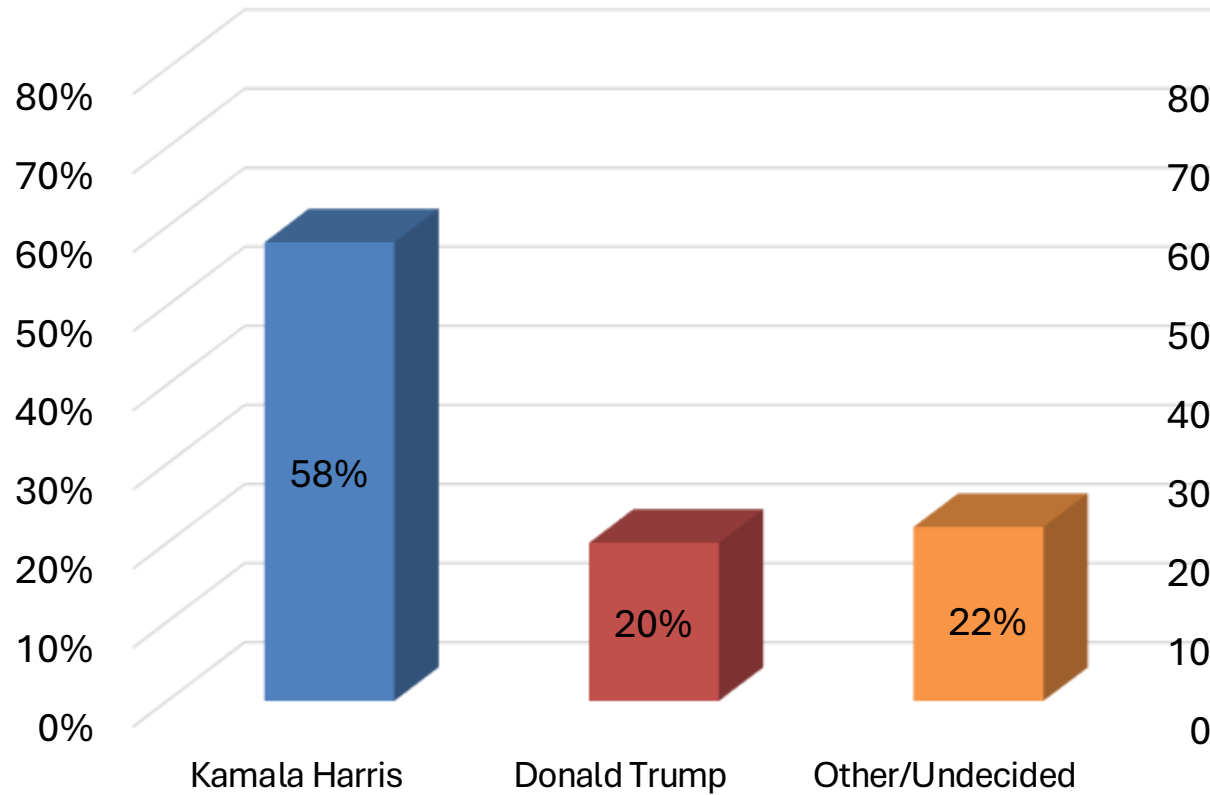


Now thinking about the political topics and figures that are important to you in the upcoming election, please rate how you feel towards the following people, issues, and organizations.

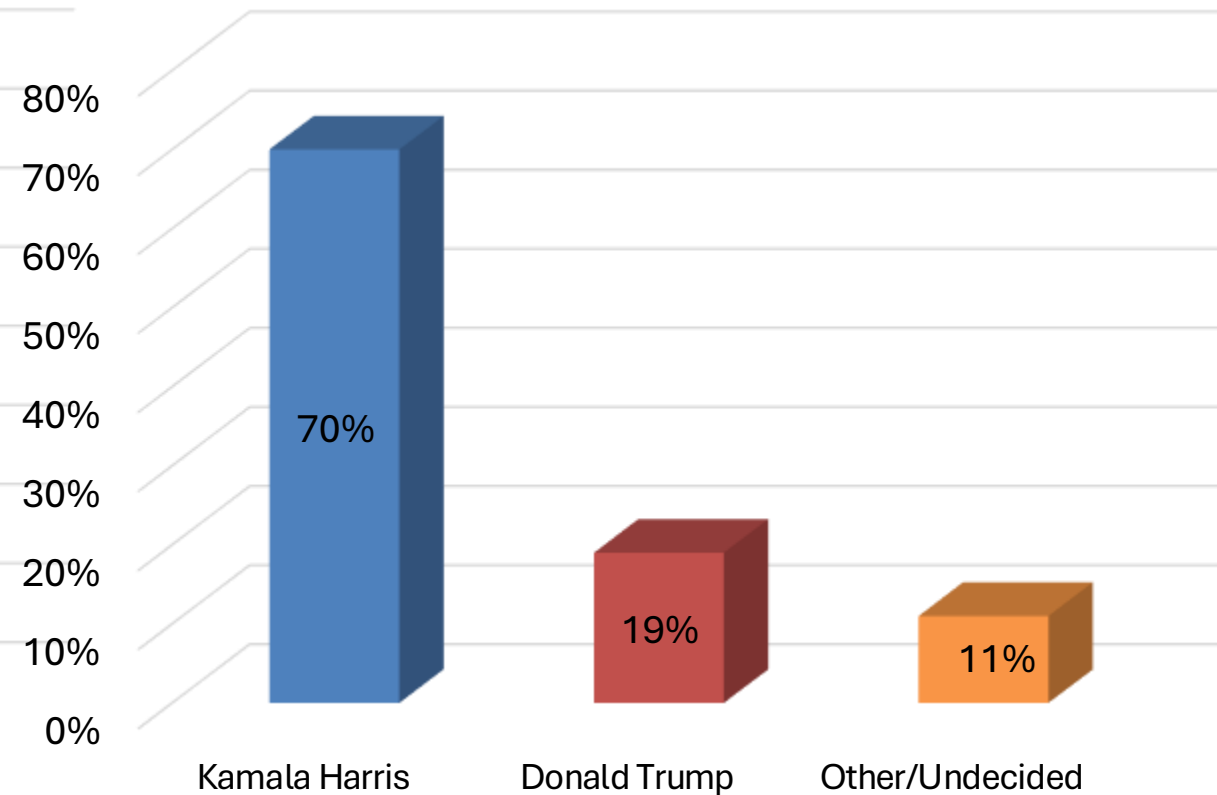
Harris expanded her lead after the debate



Initial Presidential Ballot



Final Presidential Ballot



Now, please think about the upcoming election for President in November 2024. If the election for President were held today, for whom would you vote?

Harris favorability gains concentrated among double haters and in the Blue Wall states



	Kamala Harris				Donald Trump			
	Pre-Debate Favorability		Post-Debate Favorability		Pre-Debate Favorability		Post-Debate Favorability	
	Total Favorable	Total Unfavorable	Total Favorable	Total Unfavorable	Total Favorable	Total Unfavorable	Total Favorable	Total Unfavorable
Swing	30	28	38	21	6	52	11	47
	45%	42%	58%	31%	9%	79%	17%	70%
Mobilization	15	4	19	2	4	14	6	15
	64%	17%	81%	7%	19%	63%	26%	65%
Double Haters	4	18	11	13	2	23	6	18
	13%	63%	39%	44%	7%	78%	19%	62%
Ticket Splitter	1	11	4	8	3	9	4	7
	9%	85%	33%	58%	21%	67%	33%	54%
Blue Wall	20	15	28	9	7	33	9	30
	47%	35%	65%	20%	15%	78%	20%	69%
Sun Belt	25	17	29	14	4	34	8	32
	53%	36%	63%	30%	8%	73%	18%	69%
All Respondents	45	32	57	22	10	67	17	61
	50%	35%	64%	25%	12%	75%	19%	69%

Now thinking about the political topics and figures that are important to you in the upcoming election, please rate how you feel towards the following people, issues, and organizations.

Harris consolidates mobilization voters and grows support among double haters



	Pre-Debate Presidential Ballot				Post-Debate Presidential Ballot				Net difference
	Kamala Harris	Donald Trump	Other/ Undecided	Harris - Trump	Kamala Harris	Donald Trump	Other/ Undecided	Harris - Trump	
Swing	36	14	16	+23	43	14	10	+29	+6
	55%	20%	25%	+34	64%	21%	15%	+43	+9
Mobilization	15	5	3	+10	19	3	1	+17	+6
	66%	20%	14%	+45	85%	12%	3%	+73	+28
Double Haters	13	6	10	+6	17	5	7	+12	+6
	43%	22%	35%	+21	58%	17%	25%	+42	+21
Ticket Splitter	5	4	4	0	4	7	2	-3	-3
	37%	33%	30%	+4	34%	54%	12%	-21	-25
Blue Wall	23	9	11	+14	30	8	6	+22	+8
	54%	21%	25%	+33	69%	18%	13%	+52	+19
Sun Belt	28	9	9	+19	32	9	5	+23	+4
	61%	20%	19%	+41	70%	20%	10%	+50	+9
All Respondents	51	18	20	+33	62	17	10	+45	+12
	58%	20%	22%	+37	70%	19%	12%	+51	+14

Now, please think about the upcoming election for President in November 2024. If the election for President were held today, for whom would you vote?

White voters and women moved the most towards Harris



	Pre-Debate Presidential Ballot				Post-Debate Presidential Ballot				Net difference
	Kamala Harris	Donald Trump	Other/ Undecided	Harris - Trump	Kamala Harris	Donald Trump	Other/ Undecided	Harris - Trump	
Men	23	9	9	+15	26	9	6	+17	+2
	58%	21%	21%	+37	63%	22%	15%	+42	+5
Women	28	10	10	+18	36	8	3	+28	+10
	58%	20%	21%	+38	76%	17%	7%	+60	+22
Single Women	23	5	6	+18	26	4	3	+21	+3
	68%	13%	19%	+54	77%	13%	10%	+63	+9
Younger Voters	38	12	16	+26	46	11	10	+35	+9
	58%	18%	24%	+40	69%	16%	15%	+53	+13
Older Voters	13	6	4	+7	16	6	0	+10	+3
	57%	27%	16%	+30	71%	27%	2%	+44	+14
White Voters	26	14	11	+12	34	11	7	+23	+11
	51%	28%	21%	+23	66%	22%	13%	+44	+21
Voters of Color	22	3	8	+18	26	4	3	+22	+4
	66%	10%	24%	+57	79%	11%	10%	+68	+11
All Respondents	51	18	20	+33	62	17	10	+45	+12
	58%	20%	22%	+37	70%	19%	12%	+51	+14

Now, please think about the upcoming election for President in November 2024. If the election for President were held today, for whom would you vote?

“They're Eating the Dogs” was indeed a low point for Trump



Abortion exchange was tremendous for Harris



Lots of negative hot buttons when Trump talks about executing babies after birth



Positive hot buttons when Harris claims Trump is insulting to women



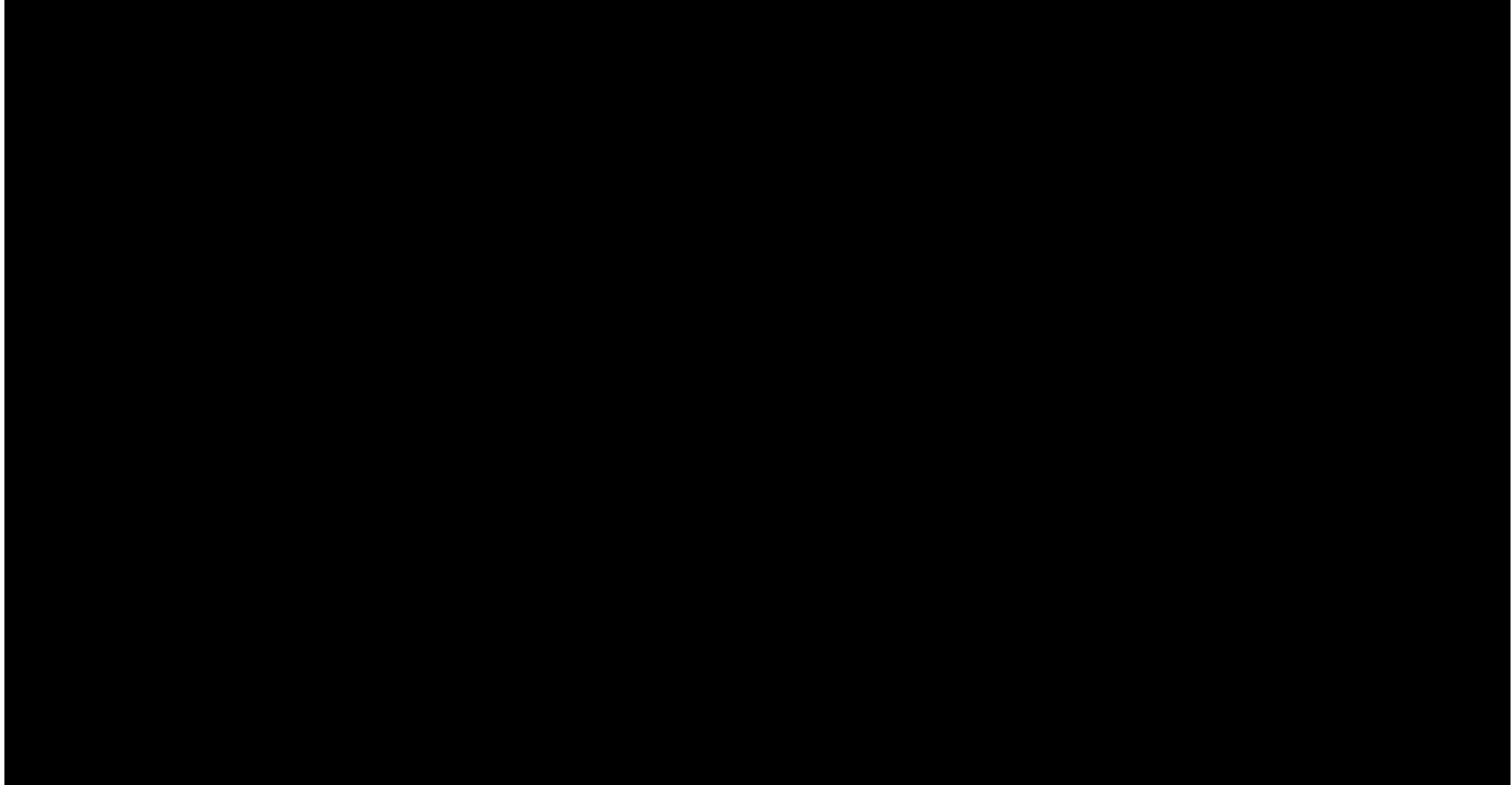
Dials rise as Harris talks about GOP endorsements



Harris's surprise confrontation revealing gun ownership yielded great moment hot buttons



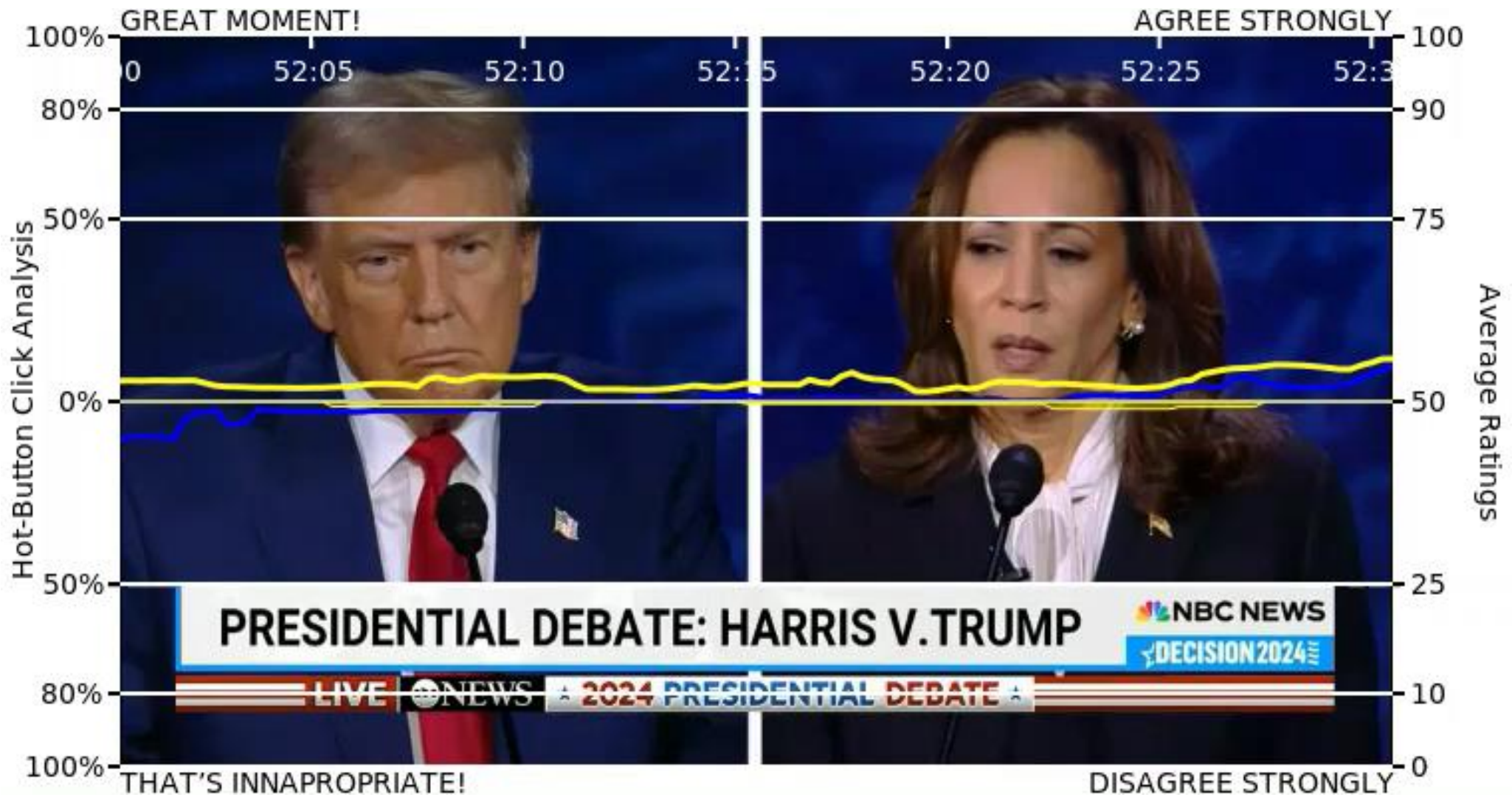
Harris meets Trump's "Marxist" claims with a smile, swing voters dial down



Swing voter hot buttons when Harris calls out Trump for attacking democracy when he doesn't like the outcome



Mobilization voters smash “great moment” hot button when Harris claims Trump was fired by 81 million voters



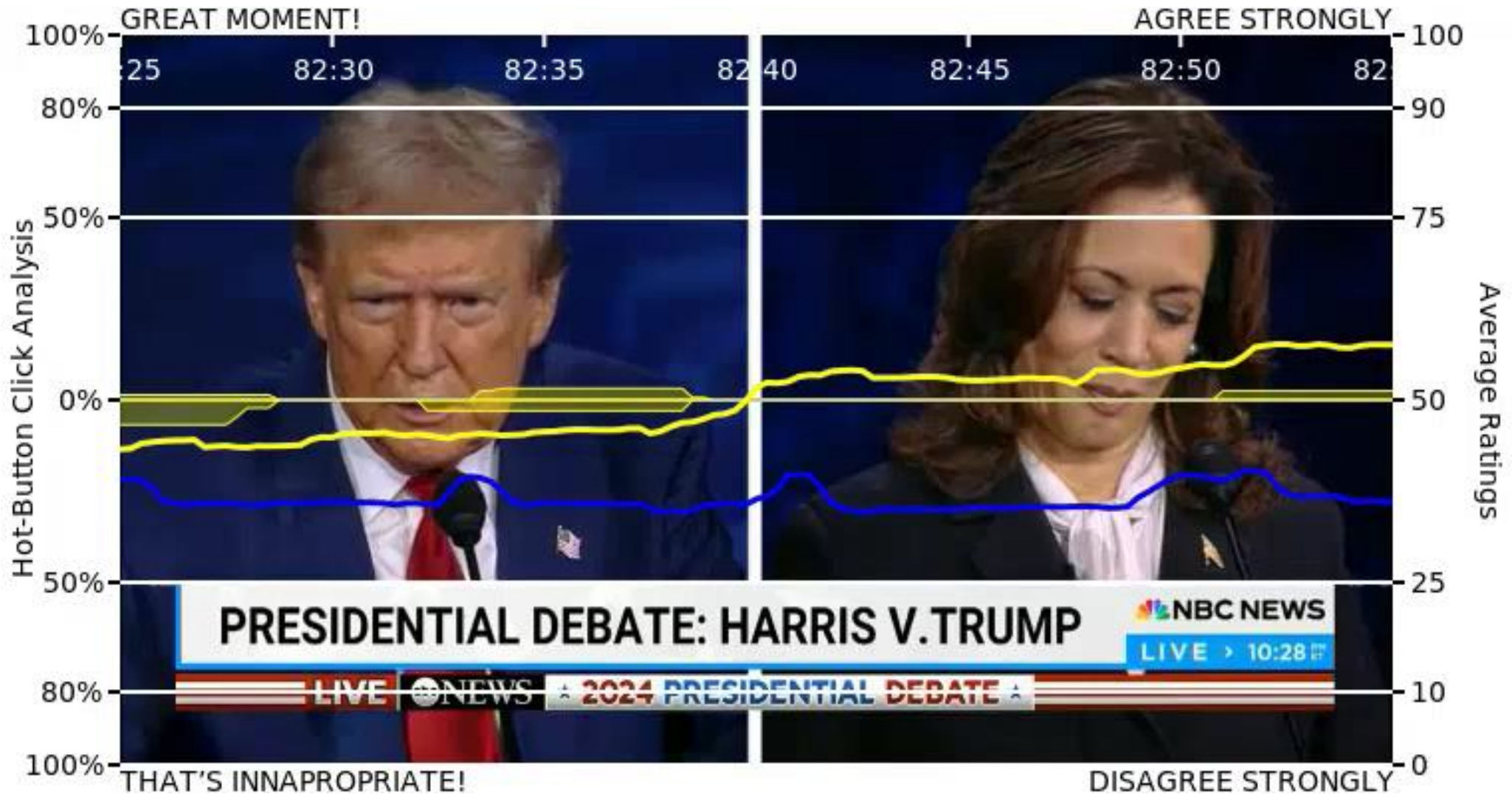
“Great moment” indications when Harris reminds Trump he’s not running against Biden



Trump confronting Harris for not having a plan backfires as swing voters dial down



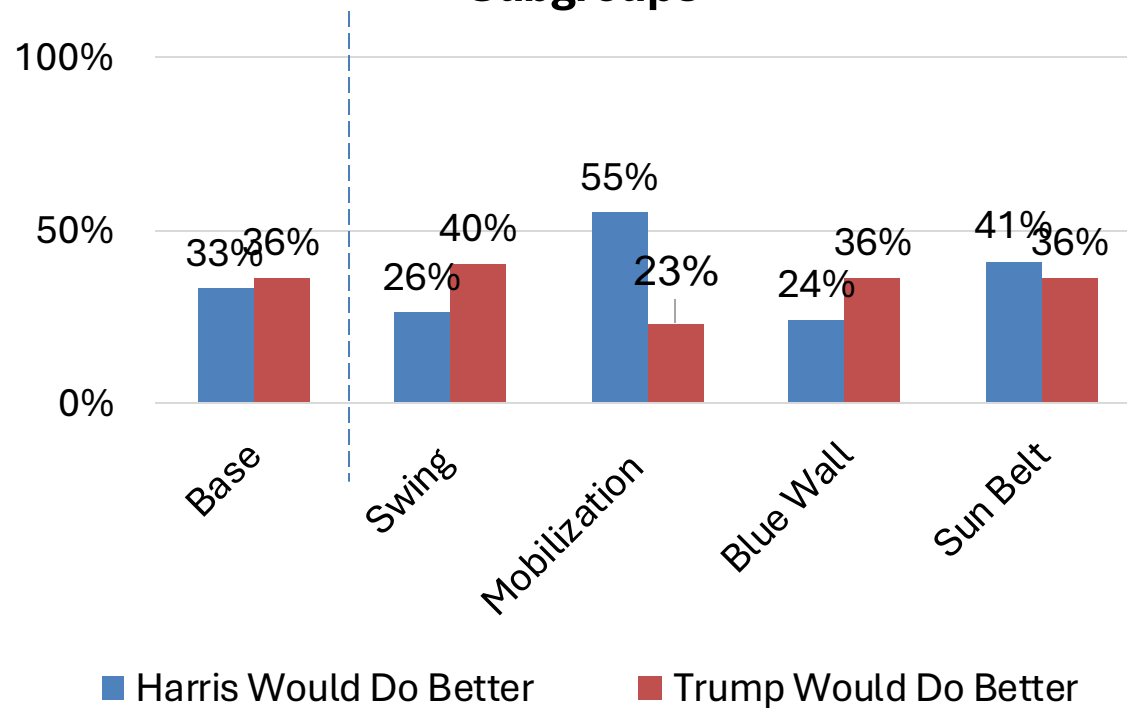
Swing voters dial down when Trump speaks of “concepts of a plan” to replace Obamacare



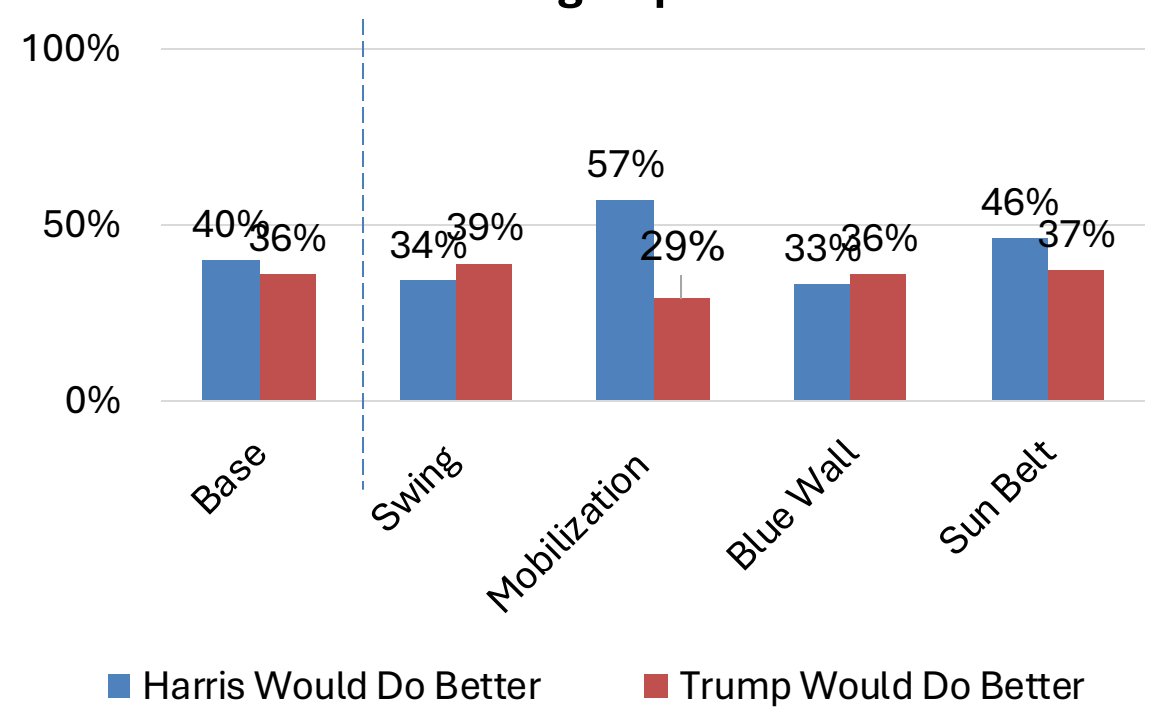
Harris made only modest gains on inflation



Pre-Debate do Better on “Controlling Inflation and Rising Prices” by Key Subgroups



Post-Debate do Better on “Controlling Inflation and Rising Prices” by Key Subgroups

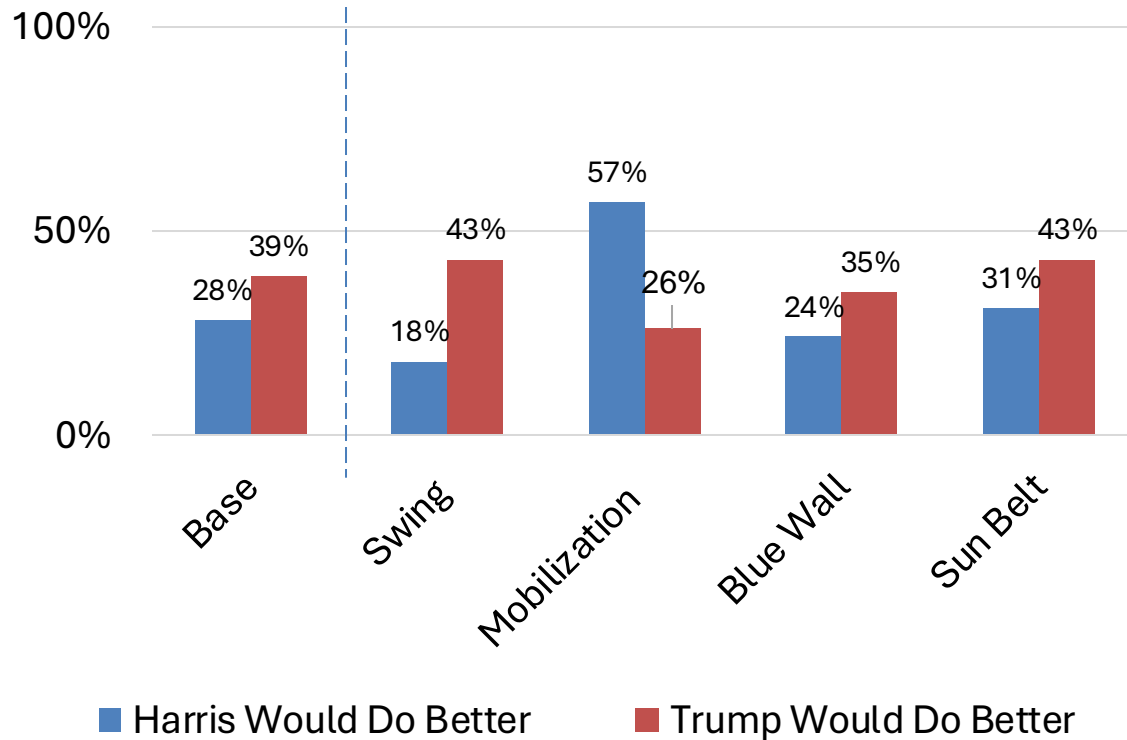


Now you will read some issues. For each issue, please say whether you think Kamala Harris or Donald Trump would do a better job with handling that issue.

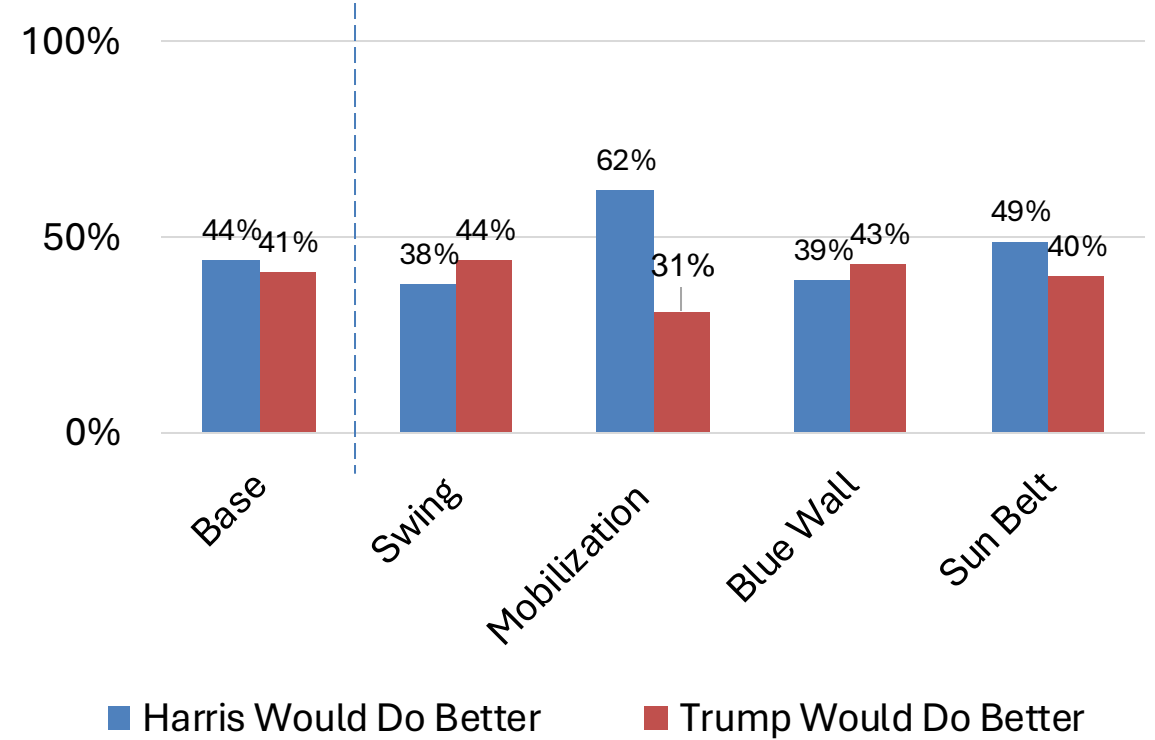
But swing voters moved towards Harris on the economy overall



**Pre-Debate do Better on “The Economy”
by Key Subgroups**



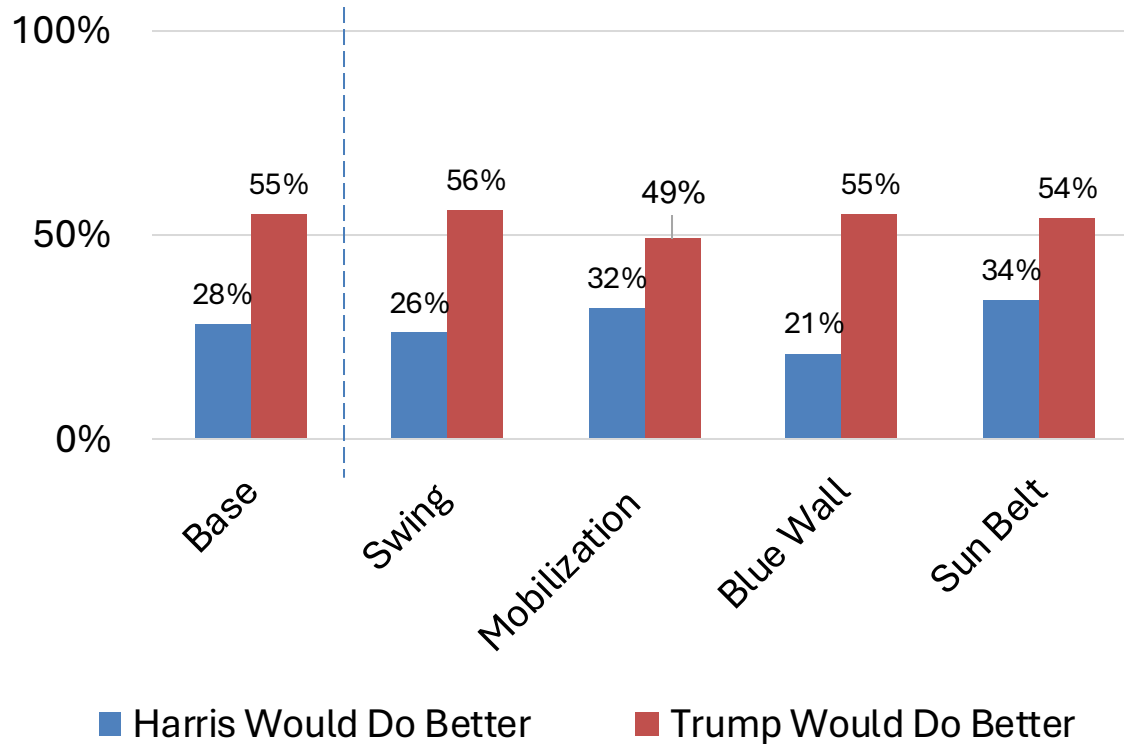
**Post-Debate do Better on “The Economy”
by Key Subgroups**



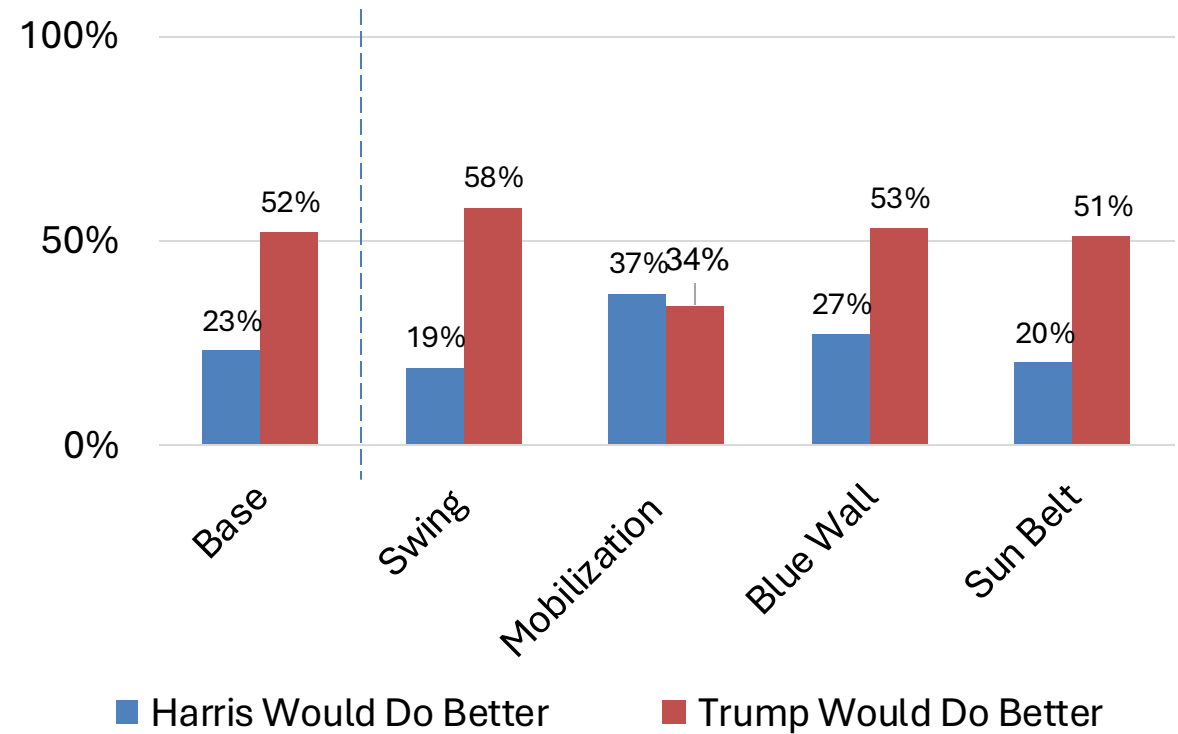
Now you will read some issues. For each issue, please say whether you think Kamala Harris or Donald Trump would do a better job with handling that issue.



Pre-Debate do Better on “Immigration/the Border” by Key Subgroups



Post-Debate do Better on “Immigration/the Border” by Key Subgroups

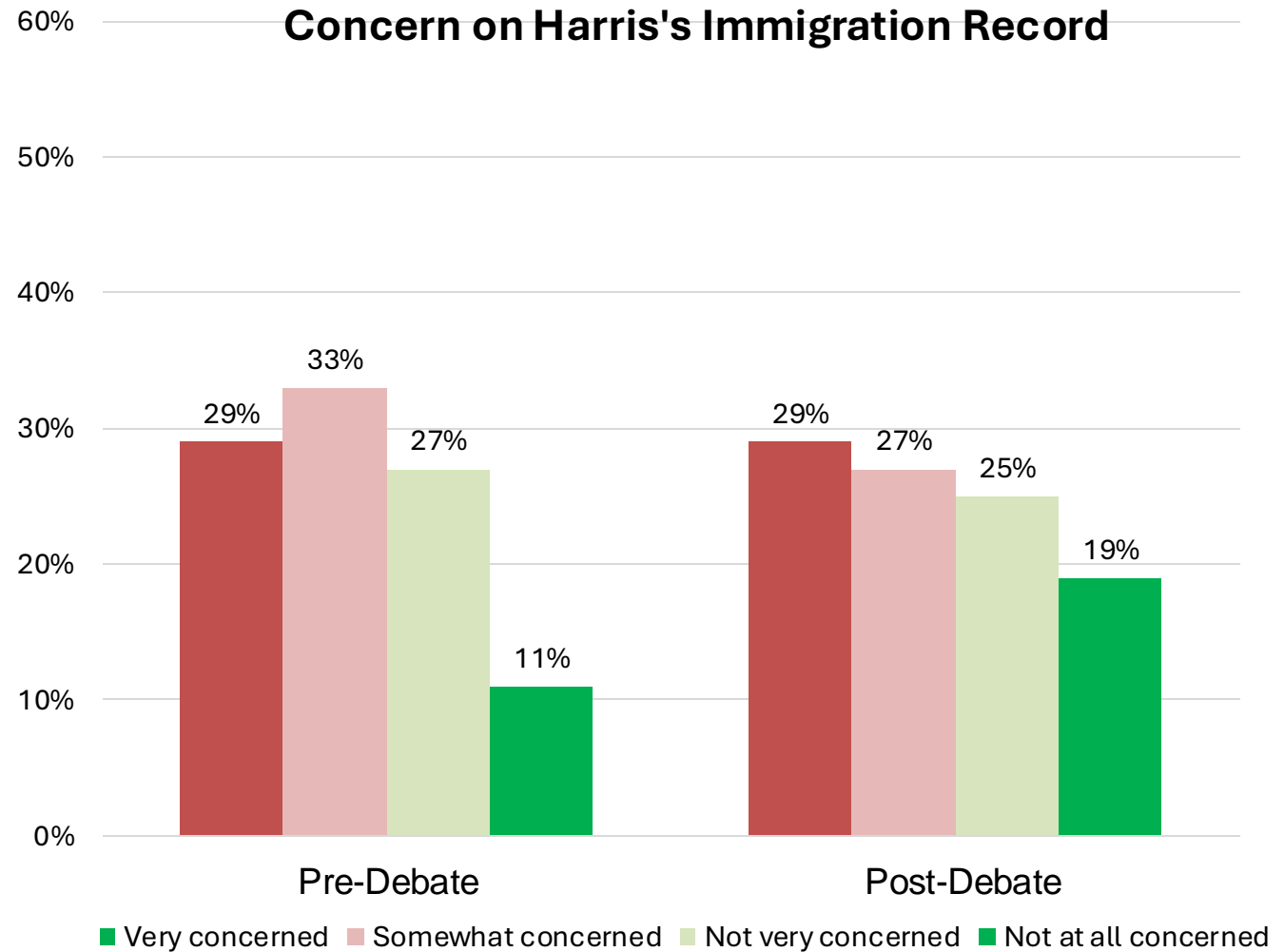


Now you will read some issues. For each issue, please say whether you think Kamala Harris or Donald Trump would do a better job with handling that issue.

But despite his focus on immigration throughout the debate, Trump failed to lift resonance of these concerns about Harris

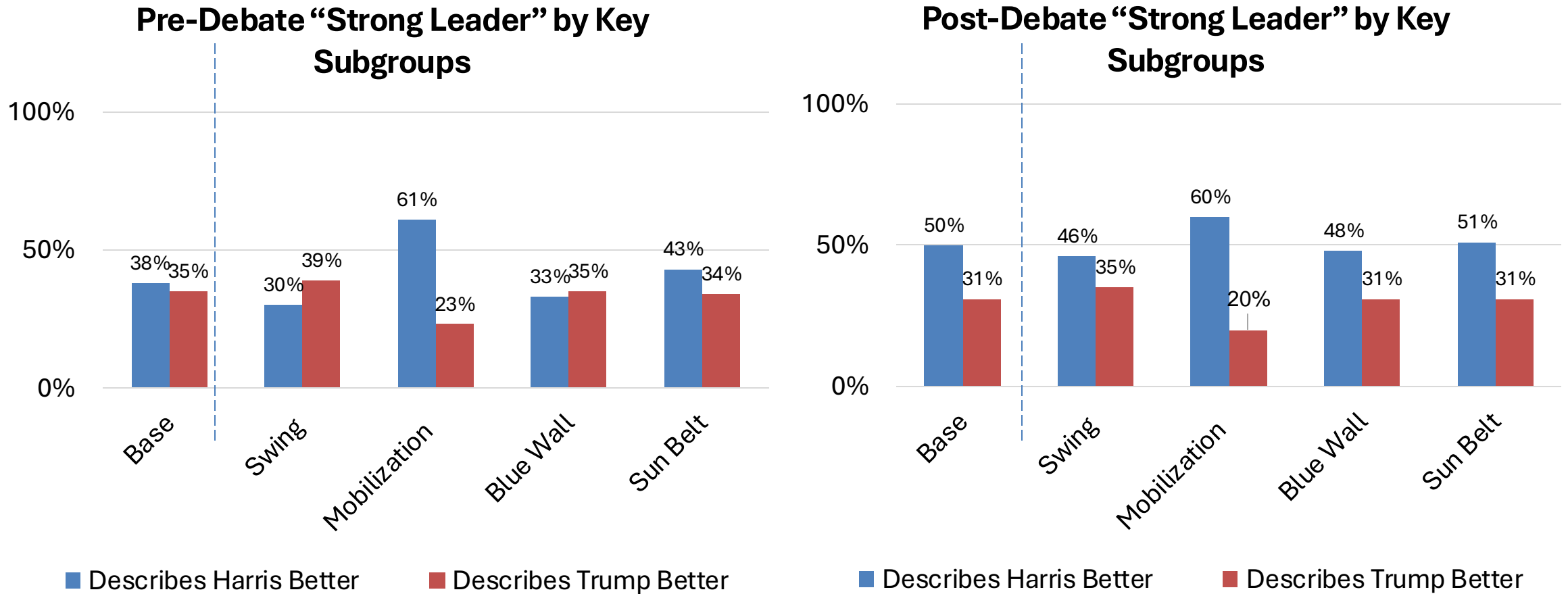


Kamala Harris is weak on the border and weak on illegal immigration. As Joe Biden's border czar, Harris oversaw the highest level of illegal crossings and the highest level of illegal immigration our country has ever seen. Harris supports weak borders and amnesty for illegal immigrants.



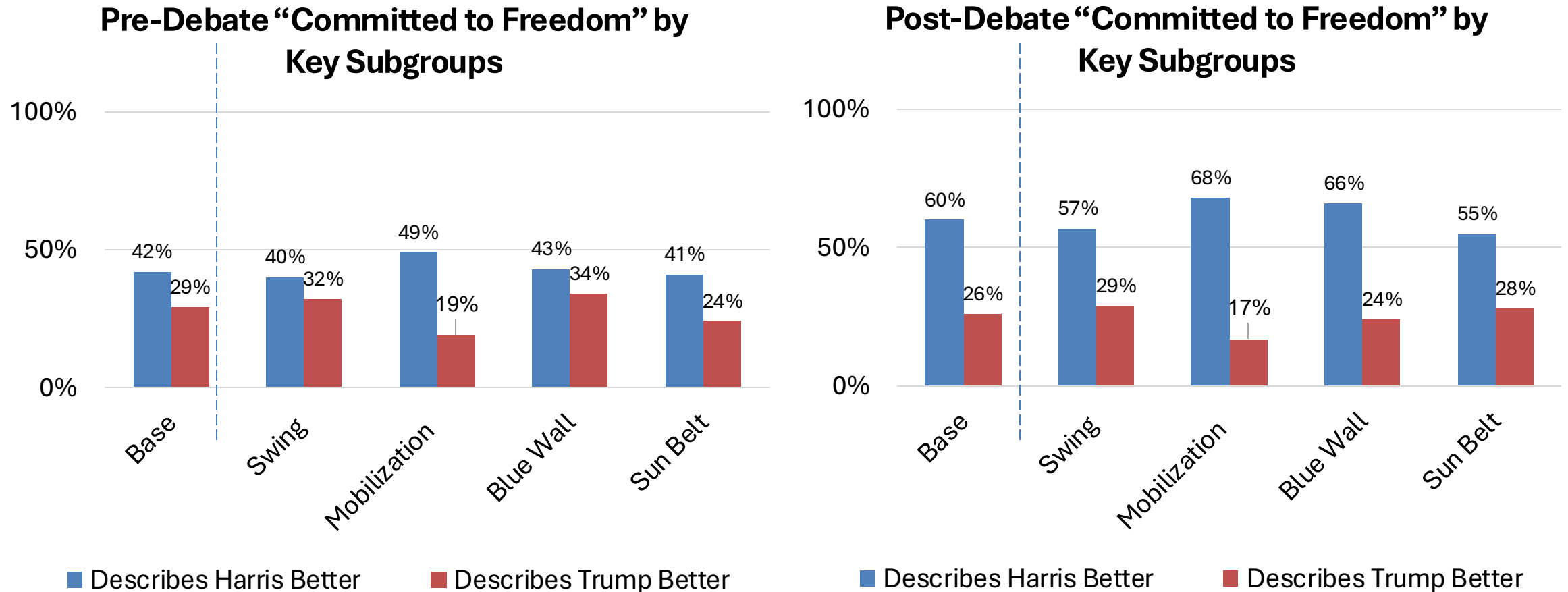
Please indicate the extent to which each of the following statements makes you concerned, if at all, about Kamala Harris.

Harris made big strides on “strong leader” among swing voters



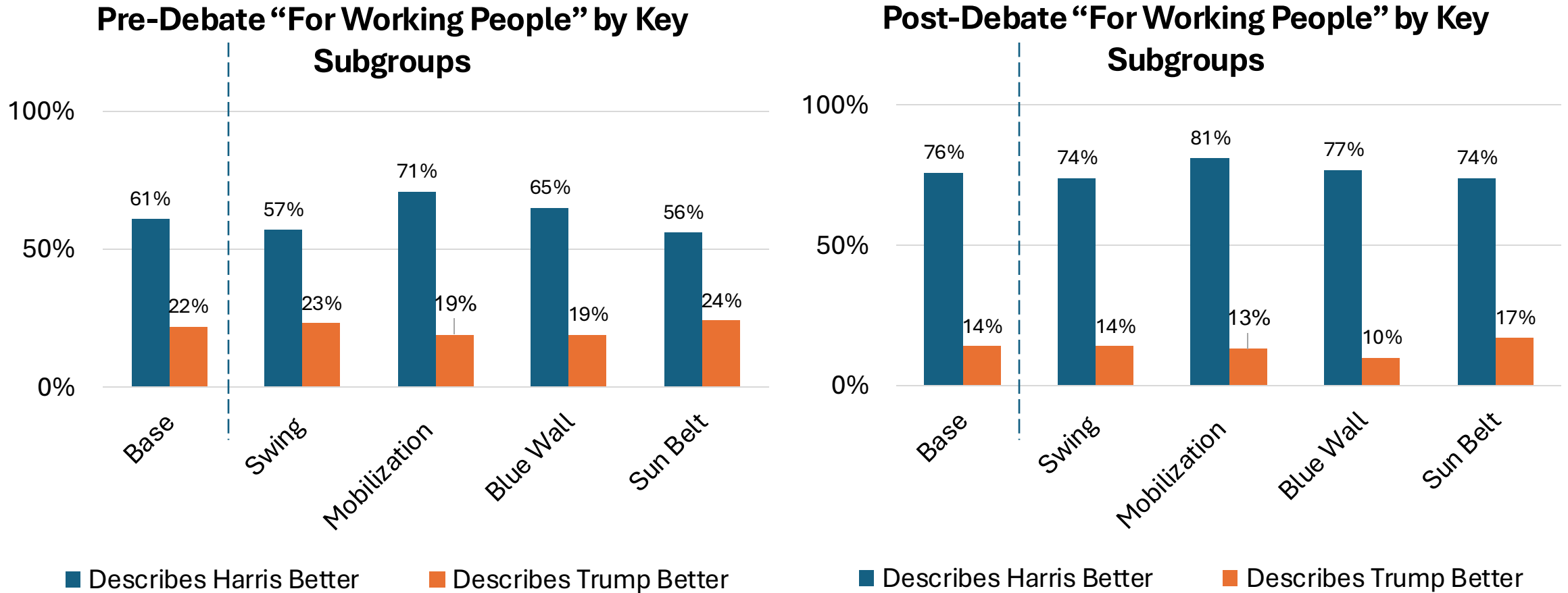
Now you will read some descriptors. For each descriptor, please say whether you think it better describes Kamala Harris or Donald Trump?

Harris also expanded edge on commitment to freedom



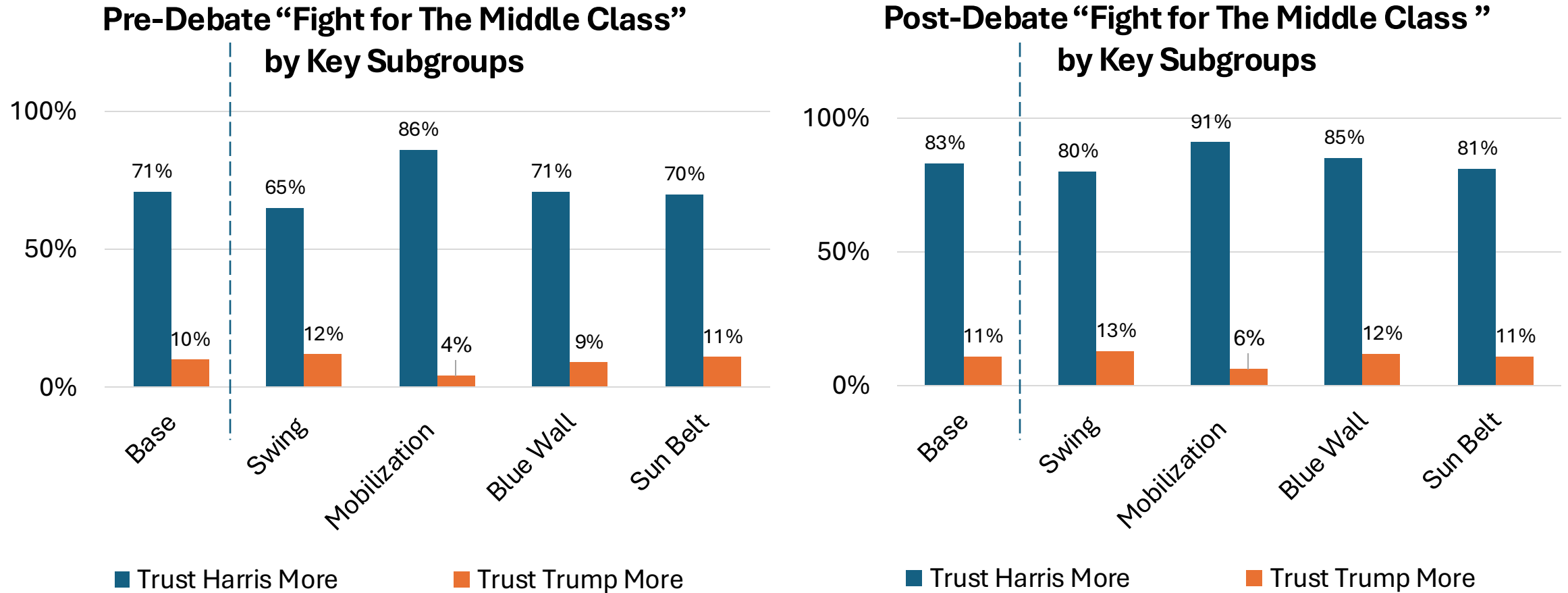
Now you will read some descriptors. For each descriptor, please say whether you think it better describes Kamala Harris or Donald Trump?

Big growth for Harris among swing voters on being for working people



Now you will read some descriptors. For each descriptor, please say whether you think it better describes Kamala Harris or Donald Trump?

Swing voters move towards Harris on fighting for the middle class

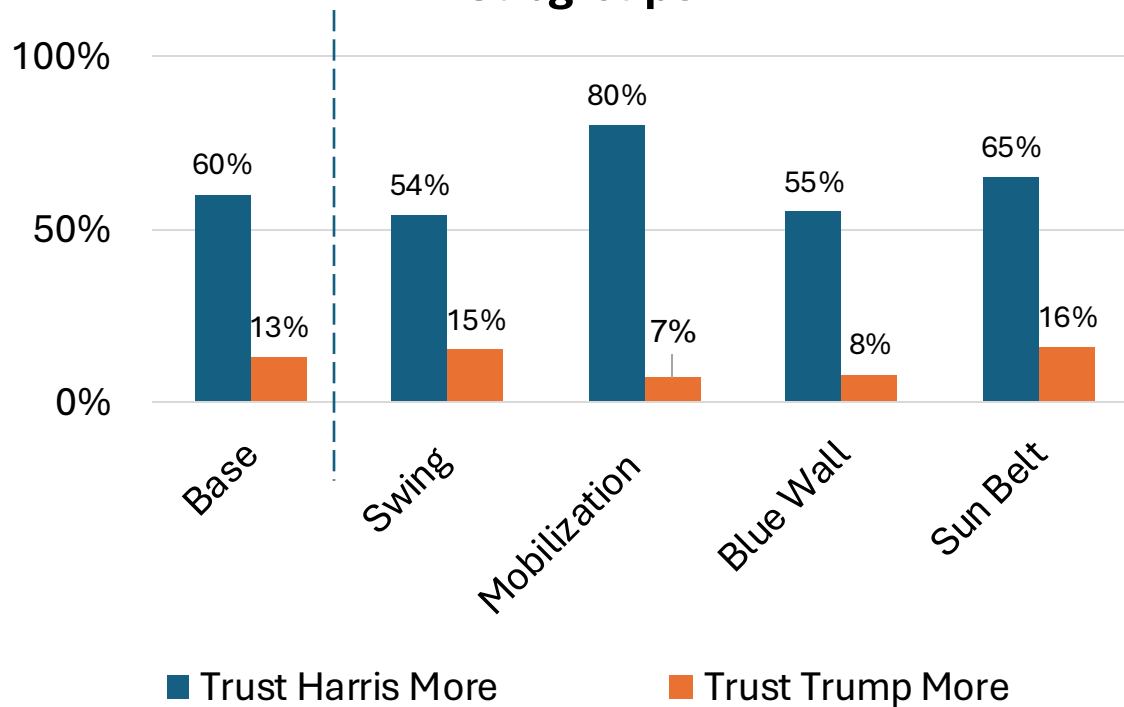


Now you will read some descriptors. For each descriptor, please say whether you think it better describes Kamala Harris or Donald Trump?

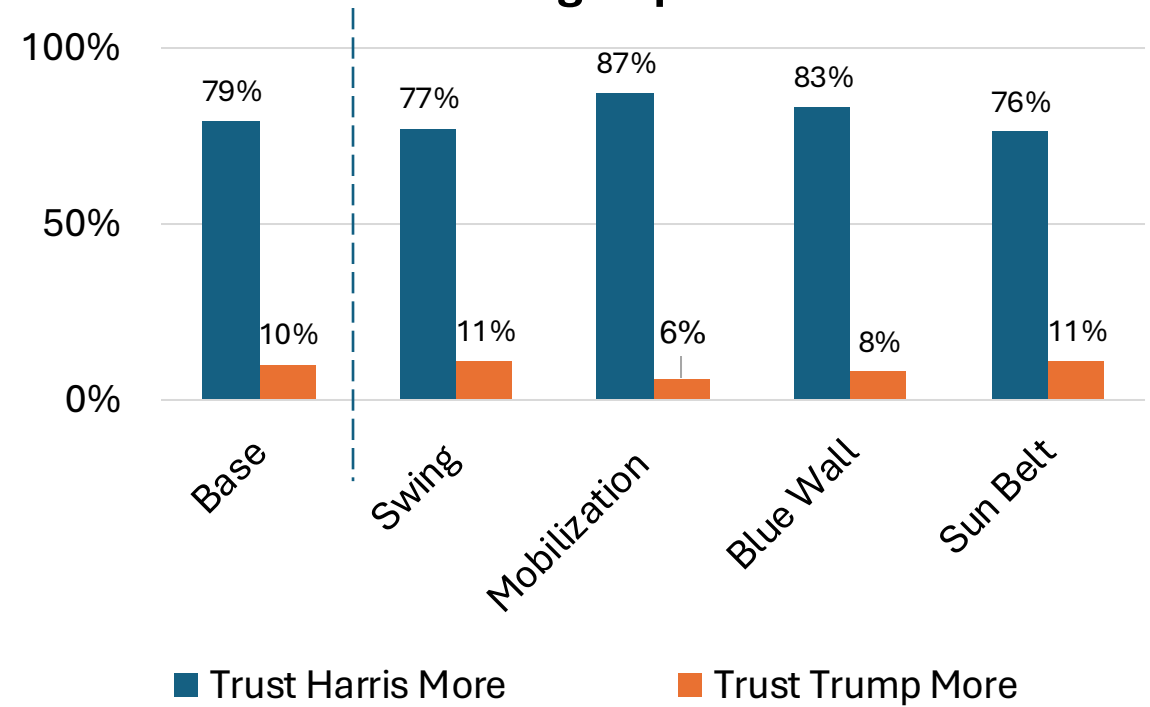
Harris also made strides on opportunity frame among swing voters



Pre-Debate “Ensure all Americans have Opportunities to Succeed” by Key Subgroups



Post-Debate “Ensure all Americans have Opportunities to Succeed” by Key Subgroups

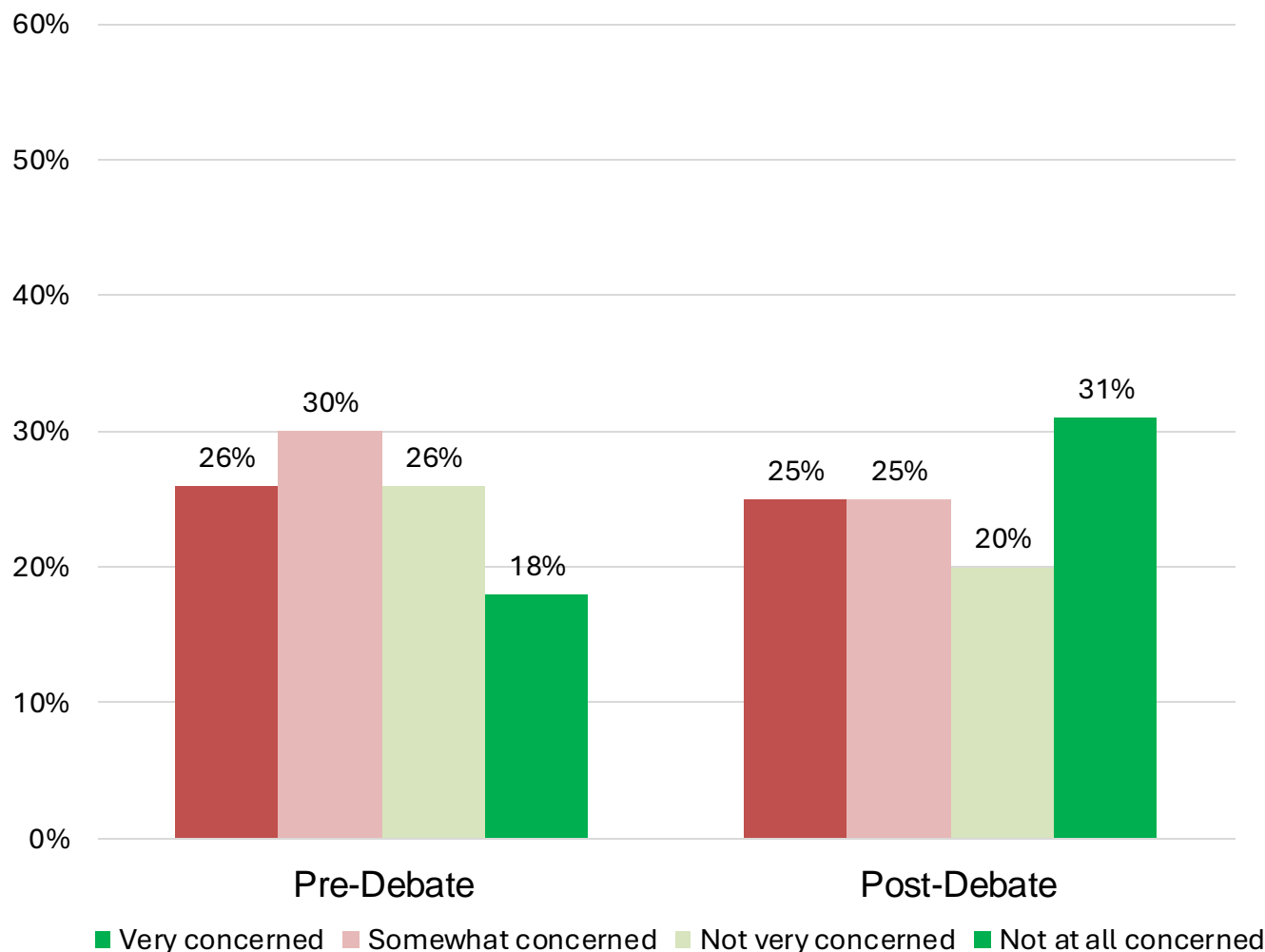


Now you will read some descriptors. For each descriptor, please say whether you think it better describes Kamala Harris or Donald Trump?

No evidence Trump's performance lifted salience of "San Francisco liberal" hit on Harris

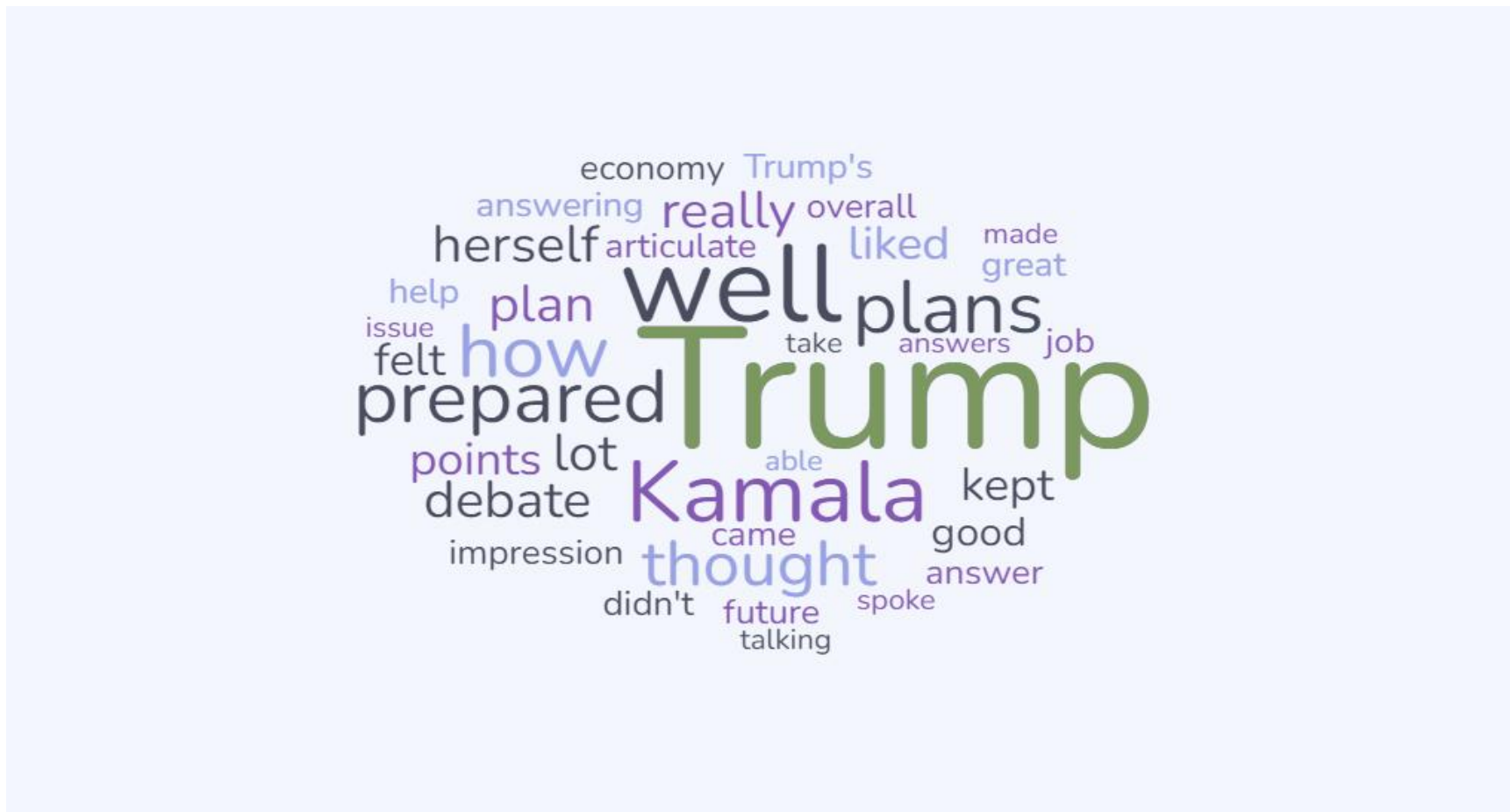


Kamala Harris is a radical San Francisco liberal who helped Joe Biden pass policies that have ruined our economy. As President, Harris will raise taxes on families, small businesses, and large employers, and explode government debt and spending to pay for big-government programs and giveaways. This will make inflation even worse, increase the cost of living even more, destroy our economy, and kill jobs.



Please indicate the extent to which each of the following statements makes you concerned, if at all, about Kamala Harris.

Voters were impressed with how well-prepared Harris was and thought she did a good job standing up to Trump



Please describe your overall impression of Kamala Harris in the debate tonight. Please be as specific as possible.

While a Harris win would bring hope



If Kamala Harris is elected, how would you feel? Please be as specific as possible.



- ✓ Harris exceeded expectations, accomplished key goals in the debate, drove her narrative, and in the process, engendered trust and confidence.
- ✓ Harris leveraged key moments on abortion, made gains on the economy, parried attacks on immigration and Biden Administration.
- ✓ Harris's centrist strategy spoke to swing voters without alienating mobilization voters. Her non-verbal performance a source of strength.
- ✓ Harris emerged as the stronger candidate, more committed to freedom, and the candidate more trusted and prepared to be POTUS.
- ✓ Trump largely met low expectations these voters had for him and his number was essentially unmoved by his performance. All the debate's lowlights were his.



- ✓ Continue to portray VP Harris as strong, confident, and prepared.
- ✓ Reinforce notions Harris cares about people, is fighting for the middle class, and is the only candidate who will protect our freedom.
- ✓ Keep centering Harris's plans, particularly as they relate to the economy.
- ✓ Bring the conversation back to abortion and health care freedom as much as possible.
- ✓ Confidently assert Harris is NOT Biden, but rather represents a new generation of leadership.