



International Soccer United States Expectations for 2026

Background & Methodology

ThinkNow conducted a quantitative study among a nationally representative sample of U.S. adults, with the objective of understanding how they prepare for, feel about, and participate in the lead-up to the international soccer tournament taking place in Mexico, the U.S., and Canada in 2026.

The study explores emotions, rituals, media consumption habits, use of social networks, as well as perceptions about brands, advertising, and influencers linked to the event.



TOTAL SAMPLE: N=1,500



Survey Method

- Online Survey



Screening Criteria

- 18+ years of age



Regional Coverage

- National



Field Timing

- June 24 – July 19, 2025

Key Findings

- ★ **Excitement is high:** Nearly three-quarters of U.S. soccer fans are *very or extremely excited* about the 2026 tournament, especially **Hispanics, Asians, Gen Z, and Millennials**.
- ★ **Emotional engagement:** Fans see the World Cup as both a *global celebration* and a *personal connection*—a time to unite with family and friends and express national pride.
- ★ **Media habits:** Traditional TV remains dominant, but **YouTube, TikTok, Instagram, and WhatsApp** are central among younger fans.
- ★ **Second-screen behavior:** Six in ten fans plan to multitask during matches, with **Millennials and Gen Z** leading engagement in chats, highlights, and fantasy games.
- ★ **Spending priorities:** **Food and drinks** lead both planned and extra spending, followed by **team gear**; travel and décor rank lower.
- ★ **Brand impact:** **Nike, Adidas, and Coca-Cola** top brand associations; **Pepsi, McDonald's, and Budweiser** follow closely. Nearly half enjoy watching ads during the World Cup.

DETAILED FINDINGS

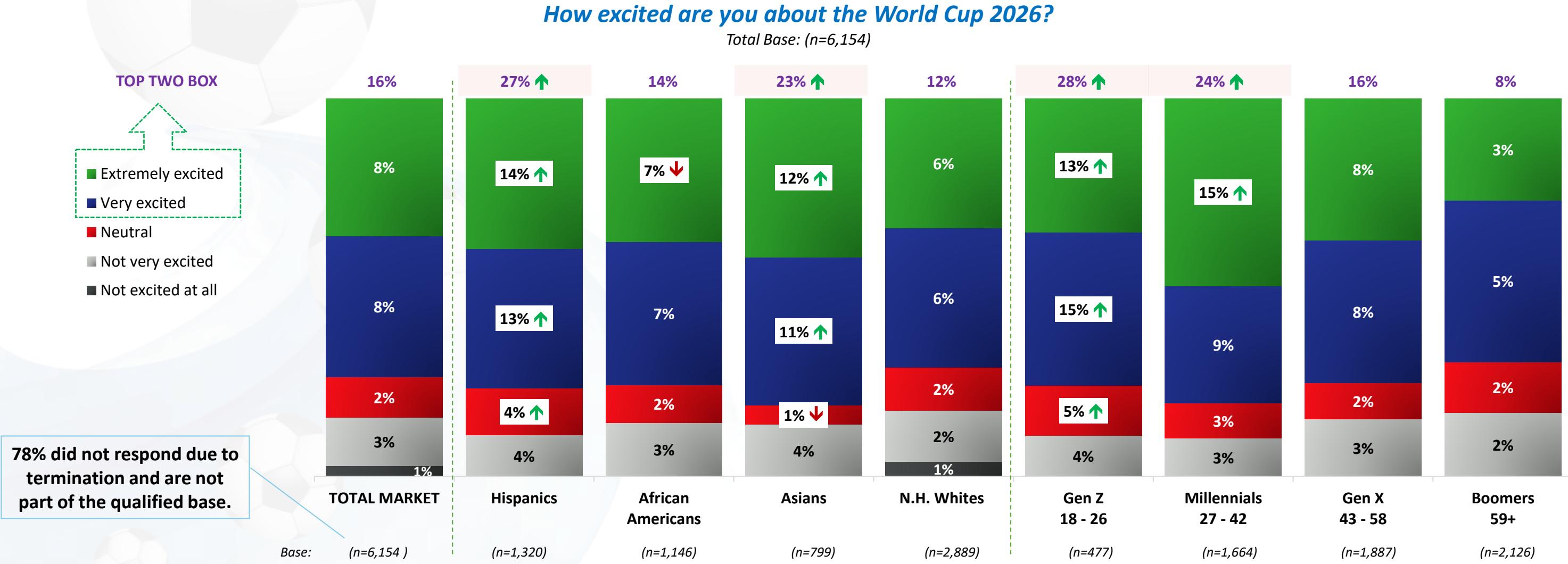




Among the Total US Population, Hispanics, Asians, and younger fans (Gen Z and Millennials) are most looking forward to the World Cup.

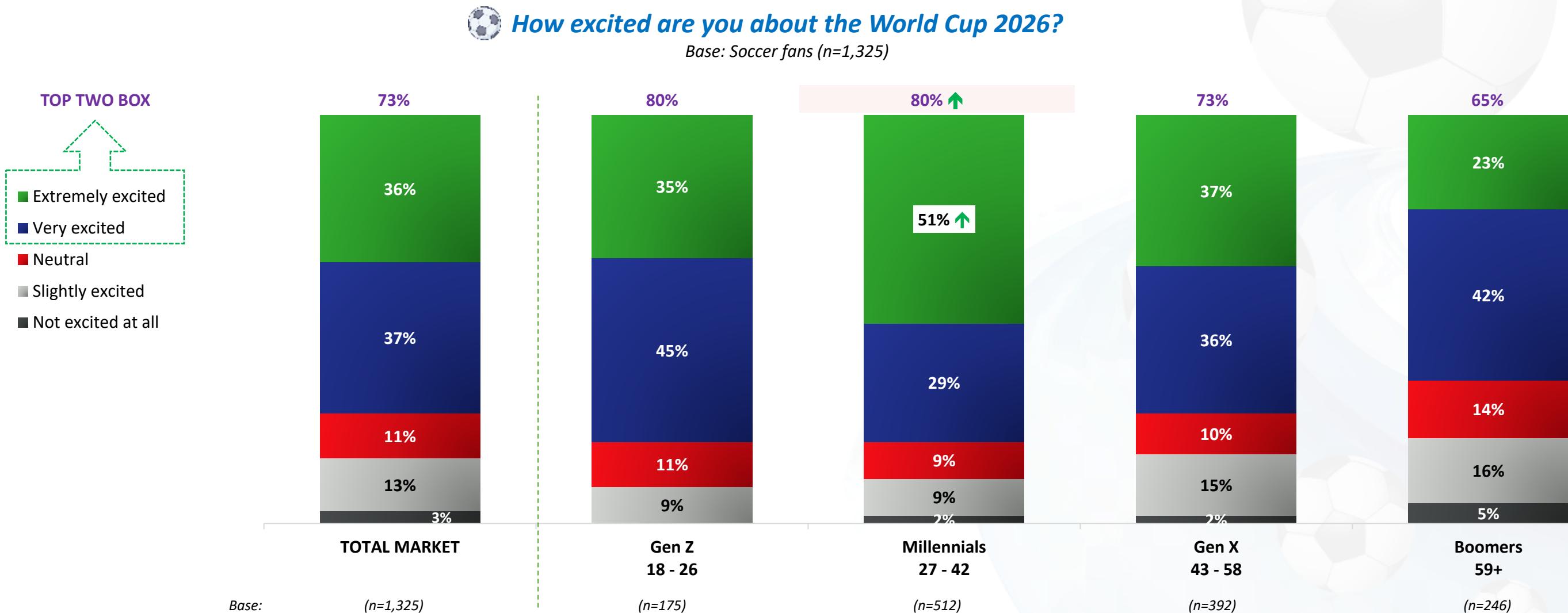
How excited are you about the World Cup 2026?

Total Base: (n=6,154)





Among the 60 million American soccer fans, excitement about the 2026 tournament is strong, with nearly three-quarters saying they are “Very” or “Extremely” excited. Gen Zers and Millennials stand out as the most enthusiastic groups.





Two in five American soccer fans see the upcoming tournament as both a global celebration of the sport and a showcase of its top talent.

- ❖ Millennials stand out for being more likely to view the event as a time to connect with family and friends, and as an opportunity to support their favorite teams.
- ❖ Emotional connections tied to national pride are more strongly felt among men (indicated by the male marker).



What does the World Cup 2026 mean to you personally?

Base: Soccer fans (n=1,325)

	TOTAL	Hispanics	African Americans	Asians	N.H. Whites	Gen Z 18-26	Millennial 27-42	Gen X 43-58	Boomer +59
A celebration of global soccer	44%	38%	43%	49%	44%	41%	39%	42%	49%
A showcase of the best talent in soccer	39%	32% ↓	38%	36%	40%	32%	33% ↓	38%	48% ↑
A cultural event uniting fans	29%	30%	30%	25%	28%	27%	33%	30%	26%
An opportunity to support my favorite team	29%	31%	27%	30%	29%	29%	37% ↑	23% ↓	26%
A time to connect with family and friends	28%	32%	28%	27%	26%	32%	35% ↑	25%	22%
A nostalgic tradition I've followed for years	22%	22%	19%	25%	21%	30% ↑	25%	19%	19%
Emotional connection with my country, no matter where I'm living	19% ♂	23%	15%	16%	17%	21%	20%	18%	17%
A chance to explore host countries (USA, Canada, Mexico)	18%	22%	20%	21%	17%	18%	23%	20%	13%
An excuse to host or attend fun gatherings	11%	12%	13%	8%	12%	13%	14%	15%	5% ↓
Just another sporting event — I'll watch if I can	10%	7%	11%	10%	11%	11%	11%	12%	8%

Base:

(n=1,325)

(n=447)

(n=211)

(n=206)

(n=461)

(n=175)

(n=512)

(n=392)

(n=246)

The slides marked with the ♂ symbol represent soccer fans only.

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A little over half of soccer fans in the U.S. feel optimistic about their favorite team's chances in next World Cup. Millennials stand out as the most likely to be extremely optimistic, while Boomers are the least confident about their teams.

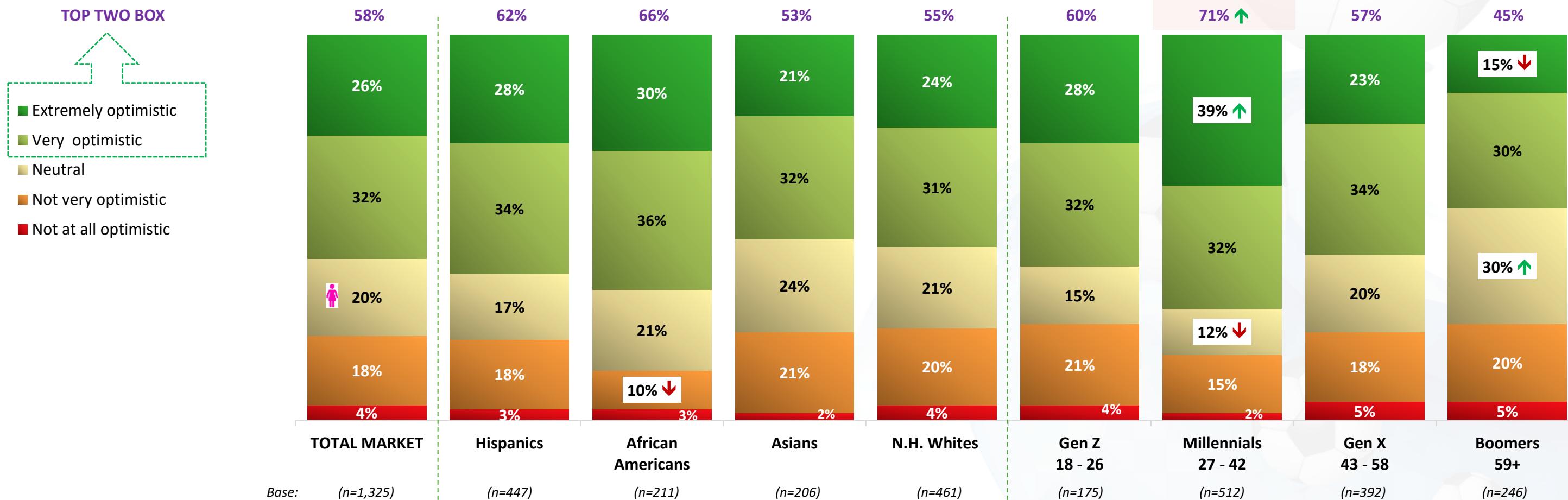


❖ Women (marker) and Boomers are more likely than other groups to remain neutral or less optimistic about their team's chances.



How optimistic are you about your favorite team's chances of success in the World Cup 2026?

Base: Soccer fans (n=1,325)



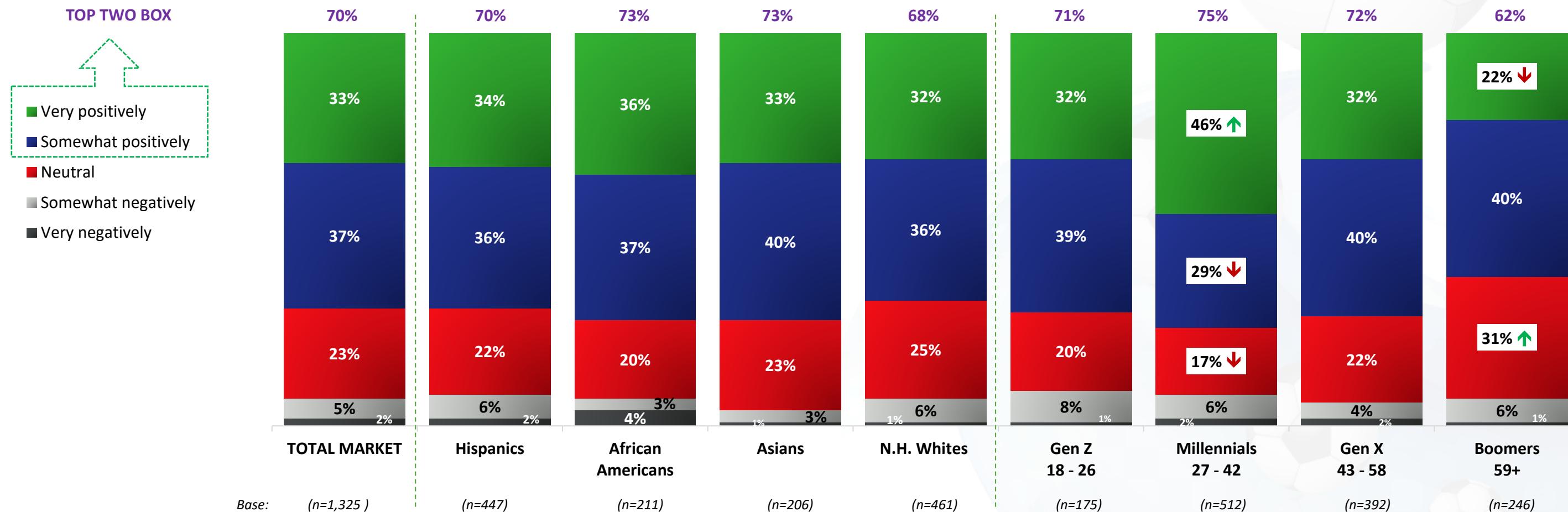


Seven in ten American Soccer Fans feel positively represented, but Boomers and Non-Hispanic Whites are most likely to feel neutral, while Millennials show more polarization, they are split between strong pride and skepticism.



How well do you feel your community is represented in U.S. media coverage of the World Cup or major sporting events?

Base: Soccer fans (n=1,325)



Arrows indicate significant difference at 95% confidence level against total market

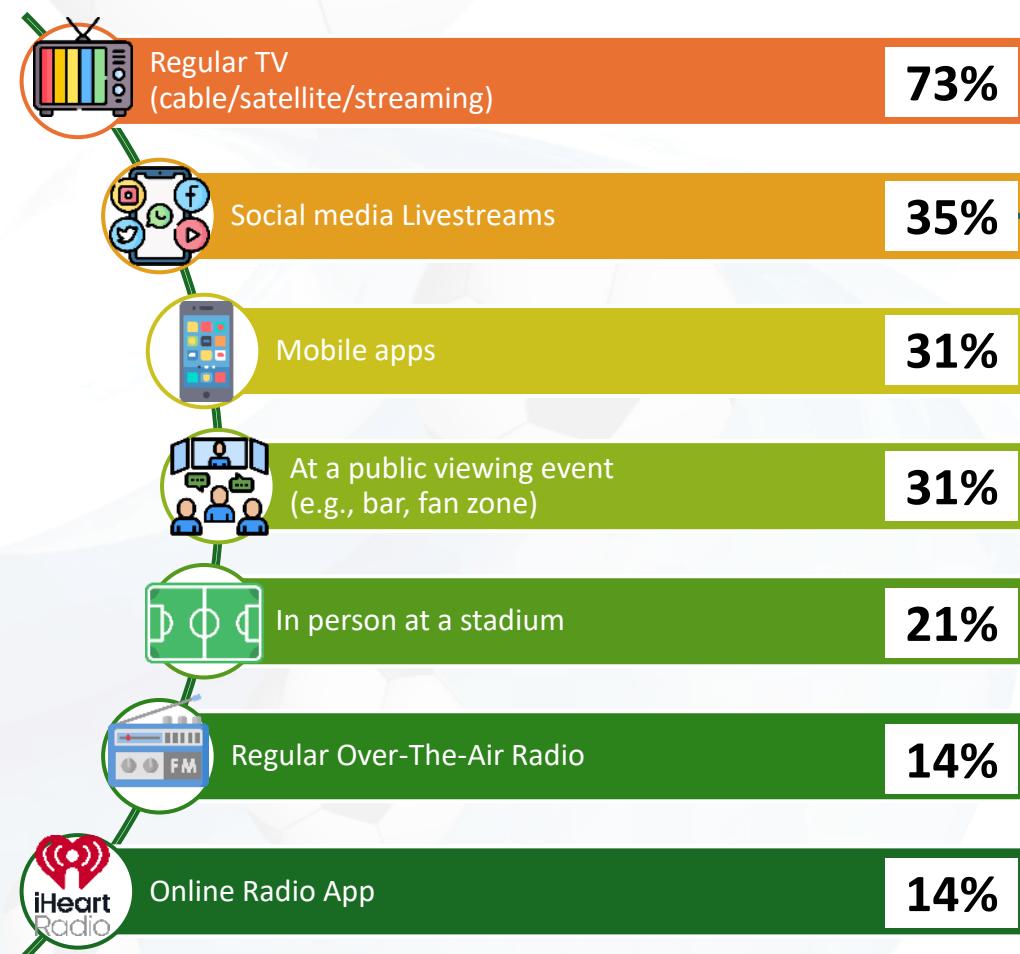


Most Americans plan to follow the next soccer tournament through regular TV, with smaller shares turning to social media livestreams, mobile apps, or public viewing events. YouTube dominates, while Facebook, TikTok, and Instagram also play a strong role among those using social media.

- Millennials are the most likely to say they'll use WhatsApp, TikTok, Instagram, and Snapchat to follow the tournament.

How are you planning to watch or listen the World Cup 2026 matches?

Base: Soccer fans (n=1,325)



What social media sites do you plan to watch or listen to the games on?

Base: Watching games on social media

	TOTAL	Hispanics	African Americans	Asians	N.H. Whites	Gen Z 18-26	Millennial 27-42	Gen X 43-58	Boomer +59
YouTube	89%	86%	92%	89%	91%	88%	90%	87%	88%
facebook	66%	66%	54% ↓	55% ↓	71%	46% ↓	71%	75%	54%
Instagram	60%	56%	63%	48%	62%	56%	73% ↑	54%	37% ↓
TikTok	53%	53%	48%	43%	56%	66%	65% ↑	52%	19% ↓
X	44%	37%	38%	36%	46%	39%	52%	42%	29%
WhatsApp	32%	28%	21%	28%	36%	11% ↓	41% ↑	29%	24%
Snapchat	30%	29%	22%	16%	33%	29%	43% ↑	26%	4% ↓
twitch	29%	22%	31%	19%	32%	31%	37%	29%	11%
reddit	25%	17% ↓	24%	23%	29%	25%	30%	27%	8% ↓

Base: (n=502) (n=168) (n=74*) (n=89*) (n=171) (n=68*) (n=254) (n=126) (n=54*)

* Caution: Small base size

Arrows indicate significant difference at 95% confidence level against total market

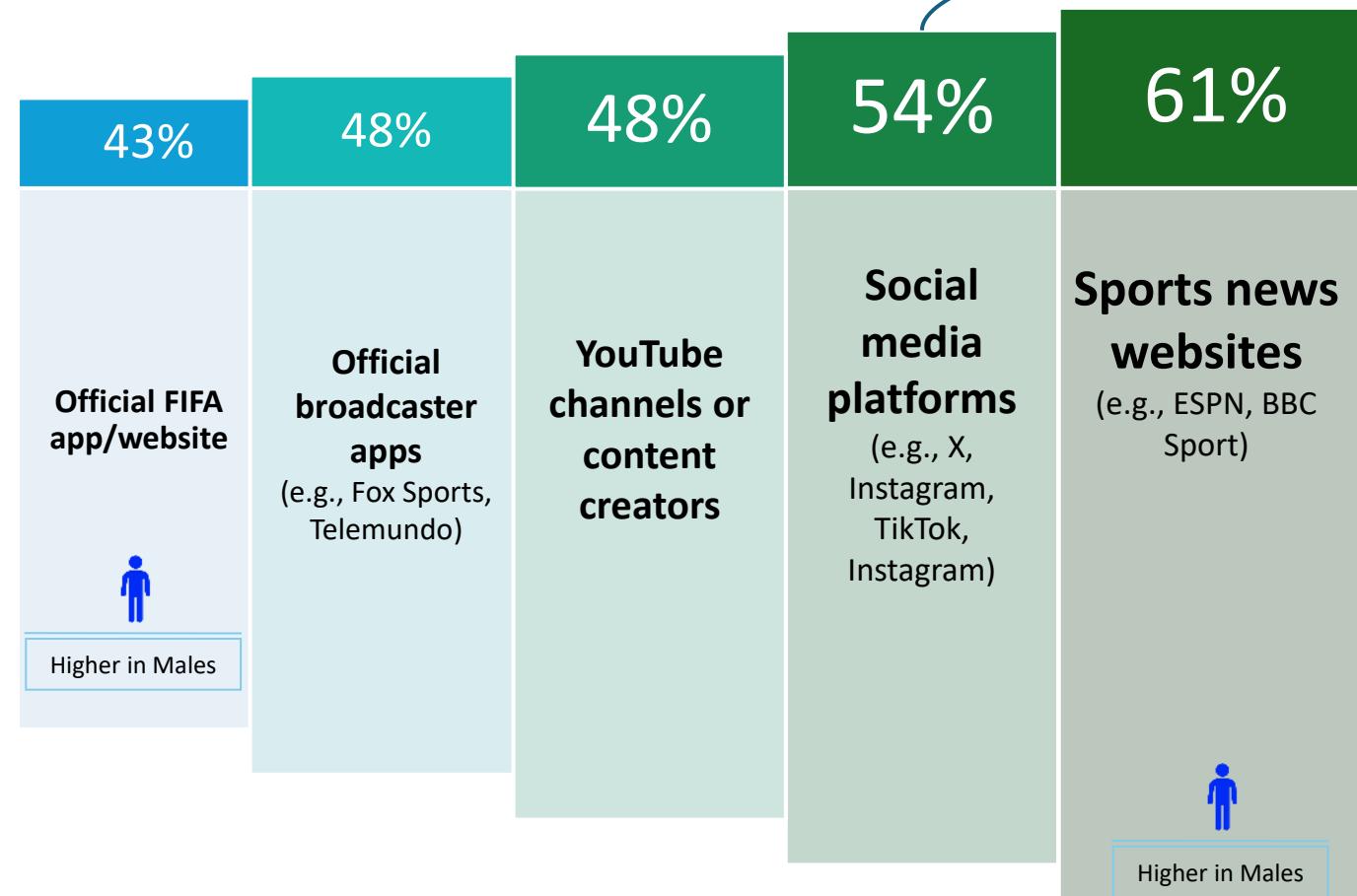
Most American soccer fans plan to follow highlights or reactions of the tournament mainly through sports news websites, especially men, followed closely by social media platforms like Facebook and YouTube.



- Gen Z and Non-Hispanic Whites, on the other hand, are notably less likely to use Facebook compared to other groups.
- Instagram and TikTok stand out as important sources for younger generations, particularly Gen Z and Millennials.

From which platforms or sources will you follow World Cup news, reactions, or highlights?

Base: Soccer fans (n=1,325)



What social media sites do you plan to use as sources for World Cup news, reactions, or highlights?

Base: Using social media as source of information

	TOTAL	Hispanics	African Americans	Asians	N.H. Whites	Gen Z 18-26	Millennial 27-42	Gen X 43-58	Boomer +59
YouTube	79%	76%	82%	85%	79%	76%	78%	83%	75%
Facebook	71%	63% ↓	58% ↓	72%	78% ↑	43% ↓	73%	79%	76%
Instagram	70%	71%	72%	69%	70%	73%	78% ↑	71%	46% ↓
TikTok	56%	59%	64%	49%	54%	74% ↑	61%	50%	39% ↓
X	47%	39%	54%	38%	48%	43%	51%	47%	35%
WhatsApp	30%	29%	16% ↓	34%	34%	14% ↓	39% ↑	32%	17% ↓
Snapchat	28%	28%	20%	16%	31%	28%	35%	29%	9% ↓
Reddit	28%	19% ↓	28%	32%	30%	23%	32%	31%	13% ↓
Twitch	23%	15%	25%	19%	25%	20%	29%	24%	5% ↓

Base: (n=766) (n=271) (n=114) (n=107) (n=267) (n=133) (n=361) (n=200) (n=72*)

Higher in Males

Arrows indicate significant difference at 95% confidence level against total market



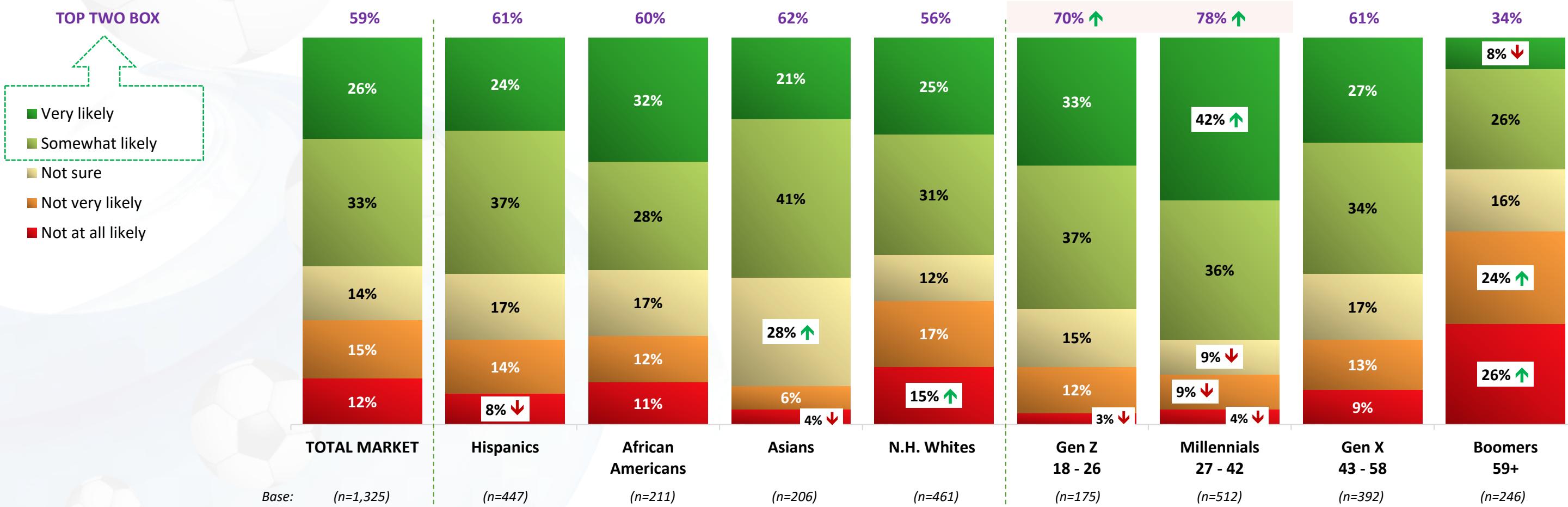
Six out of ten American soccer fans are likely to use a second screen during matches, with Gen Zer's and Millennials standing out as the most engaged in this behavior.

- ❖ N.H. Whites show the highest levels of “not very” or “not at all likely” to second-screen.
- ❖ Boomers are the least likely to engage in this practice.



During matches, how likely are you to use a second screen (phone, tablet, etc.) to interact or multitask?

Base: Soccer fans (n=1,325)



Most Americans who expect to use a second screen during matches will do so for game-related use: chatting about the game, checking stats, and watching replays/highlights.



- ❖ African Americans stand out for being more likely to order food on a second screen.
- ❖ Millennials are more likely than other generations to participate in fantasy games/brackets.



Which second screen activities do you plan to engage in during matches?

Base: Somewhat / Very likely to use a second screen

	TOTAL	Hispanics	African Americans	Asians	N.H. Whites	Gen Z 18-26	Millennial 27-42	Gen X 43-58	Boomer +59
Checking stats	59%	56%	50%	55%	62%	52%	59%	65%	51%
Chatting about the game (social media, texting)	58%	57%	57%	53%	60%	66%	64%	56%	45% ↓
Watching replays/highlights	53%	51%	52%	59%	53%	44%	54%	54%	51%
Ordering food	47%	43%	60% ↑	47%	46%	58%	53%	45%	31% ↓
Following live commentary	47%	46%	43%	52%	47%	35% ↓	48%	49%	47%
Fantasy games/brackets	24%	20%	27%	26%	24%	18%	33% ↑	22%	8% ↓
Base:	(n=840)	(n=287)	(n=137)	(n=130)	(n=286)	(n=119)	(n=384)	(n=246)	(n=91*)

* Caution: Small base size

Arrows indicate significant difference at 95% confidence level against total market

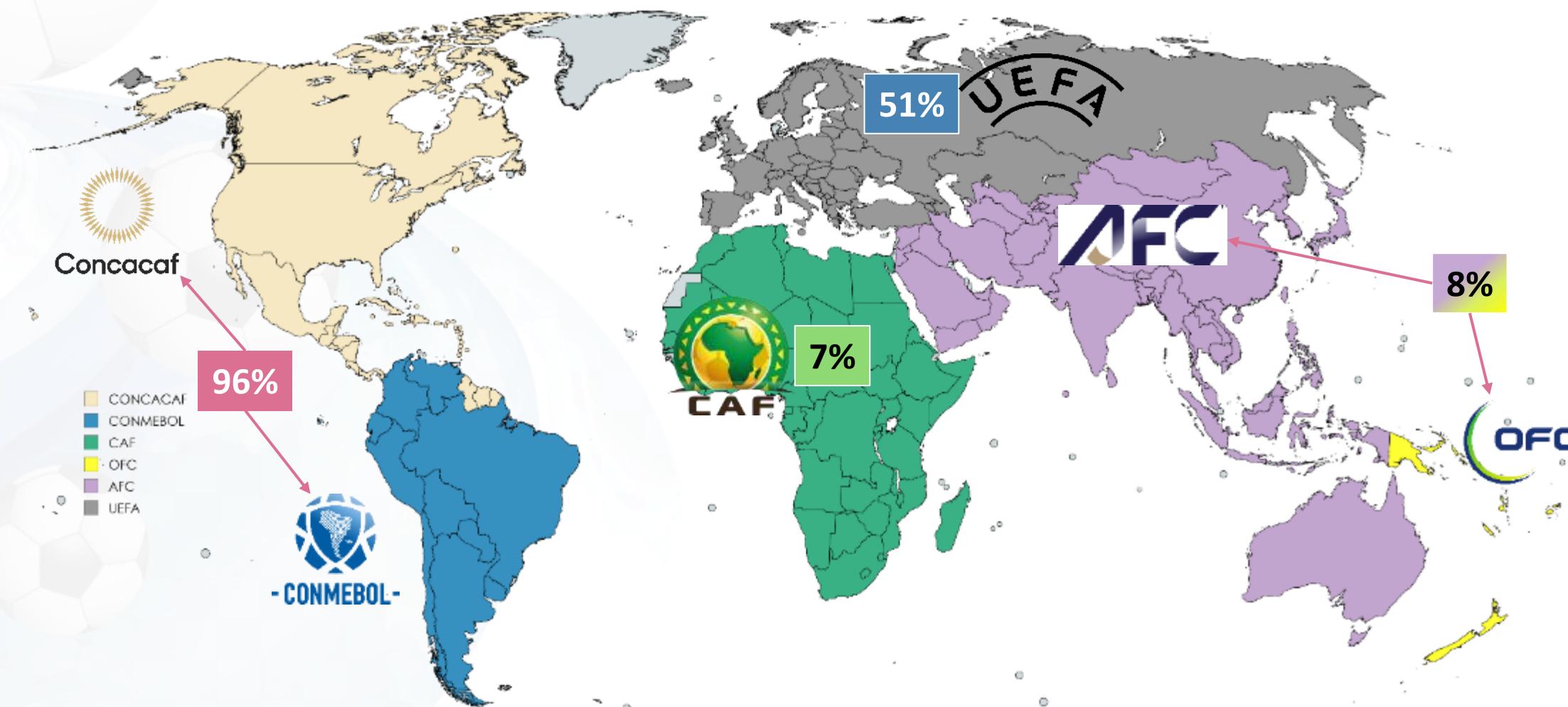


Soccer fans in the U.S. are most excited to follow teams from North & Central America (CONCACAF), South America (CONMEBOL), and Europe (UEFA).



Which national teams are you most excited to follow during the World Cup?

Base: Soccer fans (n=1,325)



Food and drinks dominate both planned and extra spending for American soccer fans. Beyond that, team gear (jerseys, hats, scarves) stands out as a stronger priority than travel, subscriptions, or decorations.



Which of the following do you expect to buy more of during the World Cup?

Base: Soccer fans (n=1,325)



67%
Chips / snacks



56%
Soft drinks



53%
Takeout / delivery food



53%
Beer or other alcohol drink



39%
Jerseys, hats, or team gear



26%
Decorations (flags, banners)



8%
None of the above

If you were to spend extra money during the World Cup, what would you prioritize?

Base: Soccer fans (n=1,325)



Game-day food and drinks

60%



Team gear (jerseys, hats, scarves)

42%



Subscriptions or apps to watch the matches

27%



Travel to see friends/family

27%



Betting, fantasy leagues, or pools

26%



Decorations or party supplies

21%



I don't plan to spend extra

10%

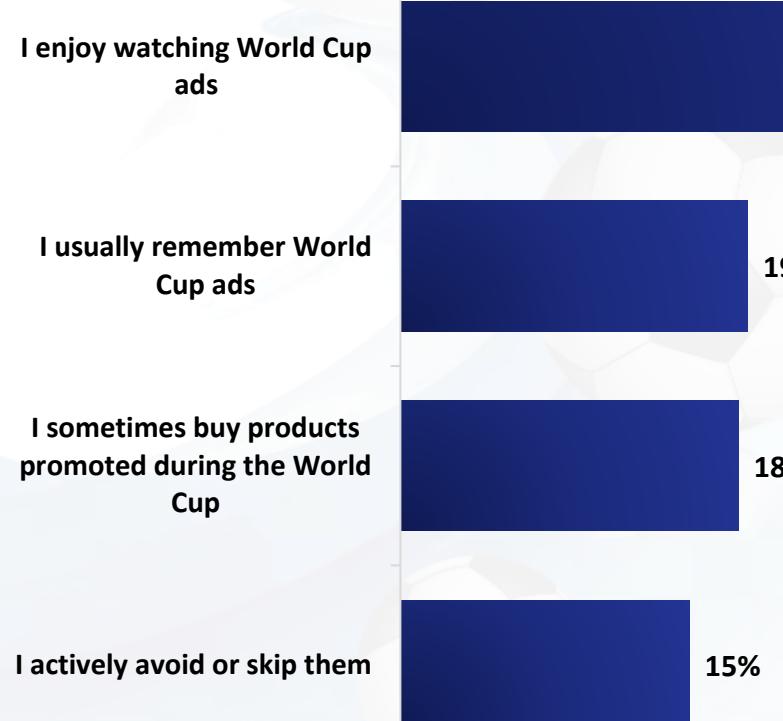


Nearly half of American soccer fans enjoy watching ads during the tournaments.

Brand associations are led by Nike, Adidas, and Coca-Cola, with Pepsi following closely. Food and beverage brands like McDonald's and Budweiser are also recalled more strongly than financial brands such as Visa and Mastercard.

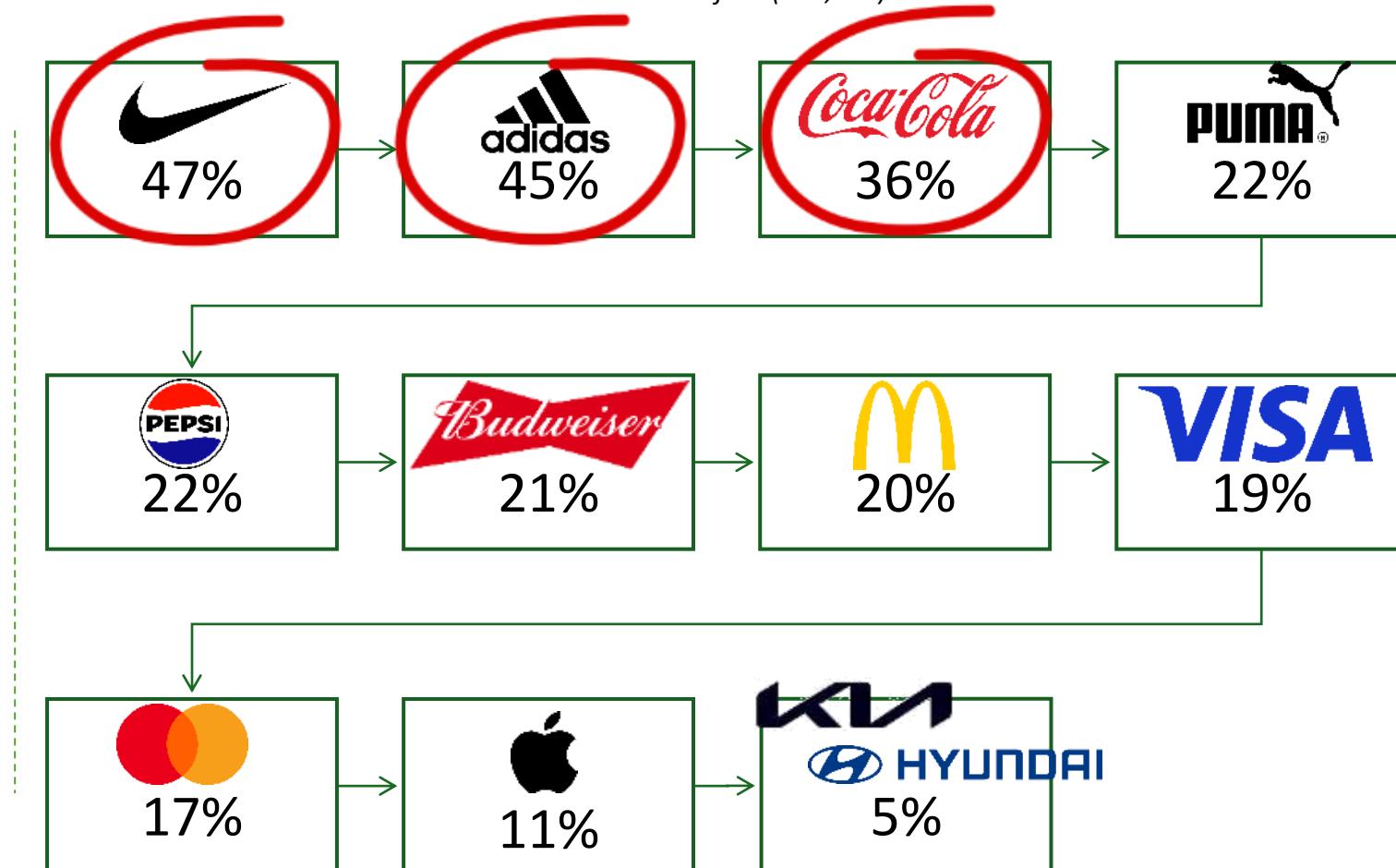
How do you feel about advertising during the World Cup?

Base: Soccer fans (n=1,325)



Which of the following brands do you associate with soccer or sports culture?

Base: Soccer fans (n=1,325)



Arrows indicate significant difference at 95% confidence level against total market

APENDIX

Participant Profile

	TOTAL MARKET	Male	Female	Hispanics	African Americans	Asians	N.H. Whites	Gen Z 18-26	Millennials 27-42	Gen X 43-58	Boomers 59+
		(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)	(F)	(G)	(H)	(I)	(J)
GENDER											
Female	50%	--	100%	50%	50%	50%	50%	50%	50%	48%	51%
Male	50%	100%	--	50%	50%	50%	50%	47%	50%	51%	49%
Other (Net)	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	3% I	--	1%	--
AGE											
18 to 26	15%	15%	16%	22% EF	20% EF	12%	12%	100%	--	--	--
27 to 42	28%	28%	28%	35% F	28%	37% F	26%	--	100%	--	--
43 to 58	27%	27%	26%	27%	27%	27%	27%	--	--	100%	--
59+	30%	29%	30%	16%	24%	23%	35% CDE	--	--	--	100%
Median age	46	45	47	39	44	44	49	22	34	50	67
ETHNICITY											
Hispanic/Latino	19%	18%	19%	100%	--	--	--	28% IJ	24% J	20% J	9%
Black, African-American	13%	14%	12%	--	100%	--	--	21% HJ	13%	14%	10%
Asian	6%	7%	5%	--	--	100%	--	9%	5%	6%	5%
White (Non-Hispanic)	62%	62%	64%	--	--	--	100%	42%	58% G	60% G	77% GHI
REGIONS											
Northeast	17%	18%	17%	14%	16%	21%	18%	13%	21% G	18%	16%
Midwest	21%	19%	23%	10%	18% C	12%	25% CE	25% I	18%	13%	28% HI
South	38%	42% B	35%	38% E	57% CEF	24%	36% E	40%	35%	41%	37%
West	24%	22%	26%	38% DF	9%	43% DF	21% D	23%	27% J	27% J	19%
Base:	(1,550)	(n=743)	(n=746)	(n=500)	(n=250)	(n=250)	(n=500)	(n=241)	(n=502)	(n=367)	(n=390)