PUBLIC ATTITUDES ON AI TRUST, LITERACY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

@EqualAI

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Executive Summary

7 Key Findings from our Survey

1 People (71%) trust AI most when they have used it themselves.

2 Nearly half (46%) of Americans are uncomfortable with AI, regardless of safeguards.

3 People want to see (64%), fix (68%) and challenge (65%) the data AI collects on them.

4 Very few have been taught formally (1%) about AI or in work or school (4%).

5 Most people cannot say whether schools are preparing students for AI.

6 Americans want Congressional action to protect people and critical infrastructure.

7 AI will factor into votes in November (47%), but will not decide them.

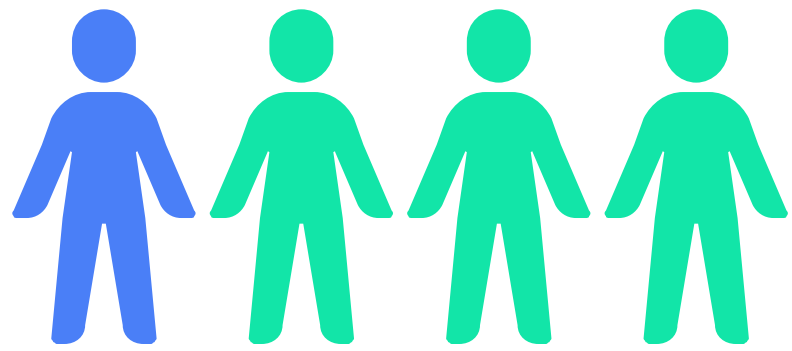
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77%

of Americans have used AI;
31% use it at least once a day.

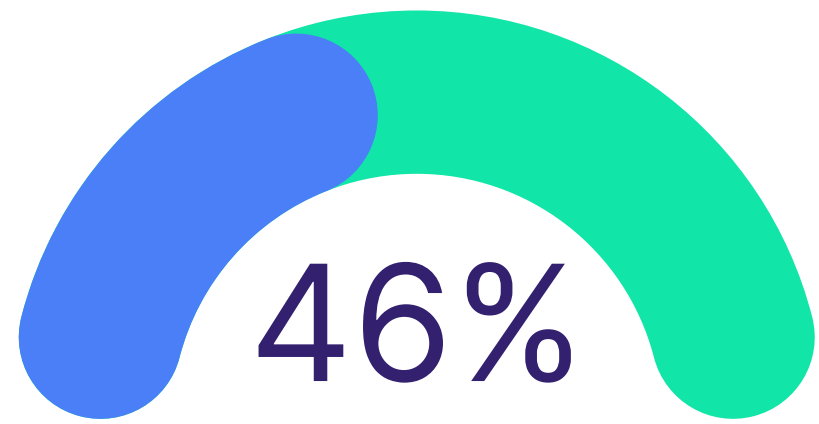
AI use shows some correlation to political ideology.
37% of very liberal respondents reported *never* using AI tools, compared to 24% of very conservative respondents.
Less than 1/5 respondents identifying as liberal, moderate or conservative reported *never* using AI tools.

1 in 4 respondents age 45-64 have **never used** an AI tool

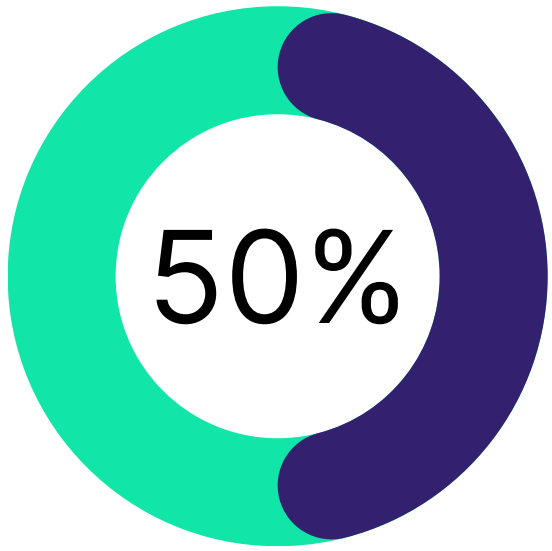


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Nearly half of Americans say they are **uncomfortable with a company using an AI system**, no matters what safeguards are in place.

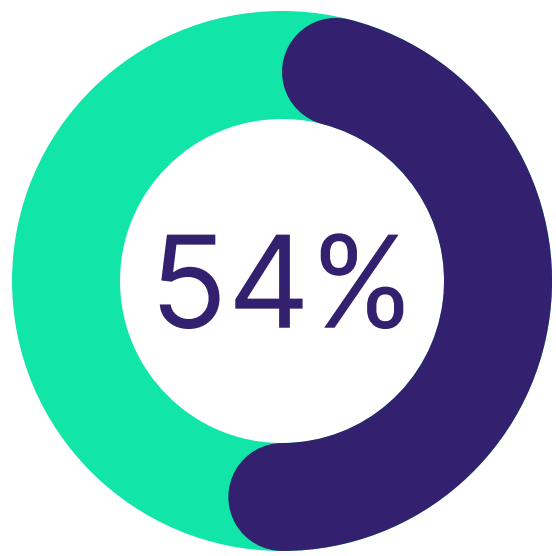


Comfort with corporate use of AI also varies across **demographics**.



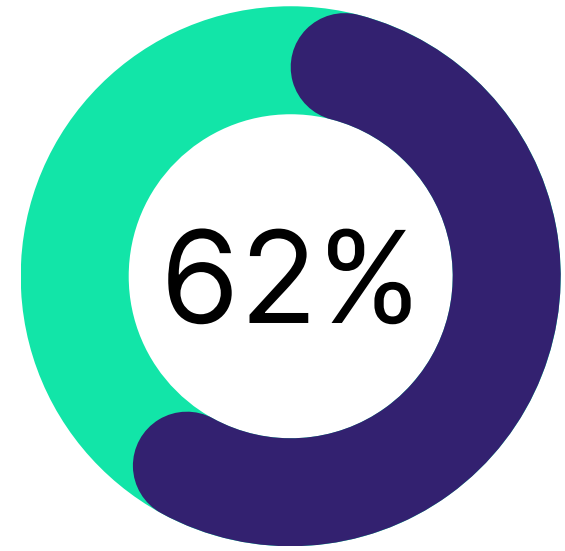
Gender

Women are more uncomfortable than men, 50% to 42%.



Age

54% of 65+ adults are uncomfortable, compared to 38% of 18-29.

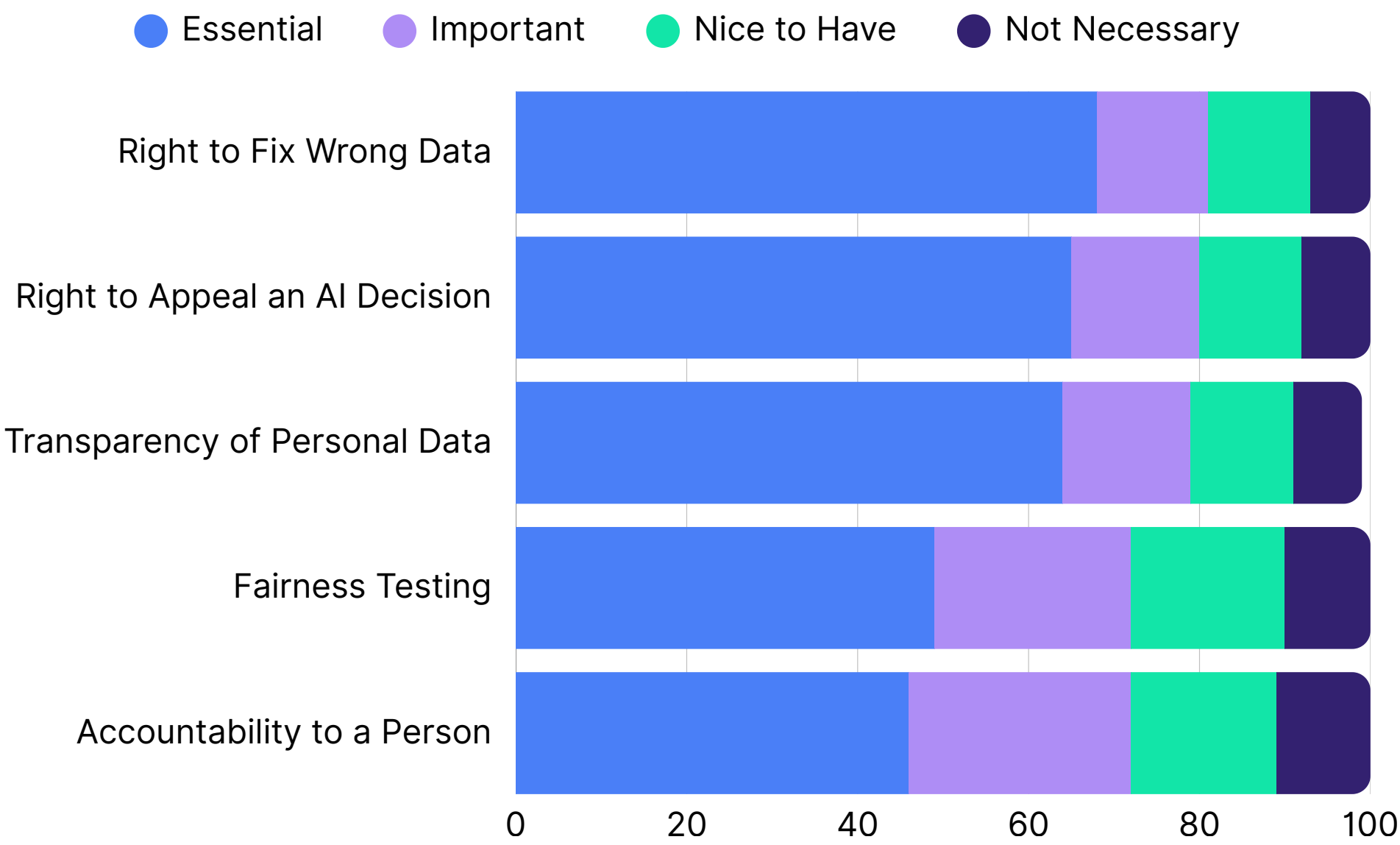


Political Party

62% of very liberal respondents are uncomfortable, higher than any other subgroup.

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Data rights, **privacy** and **transparency** are the most prevalent concerns.

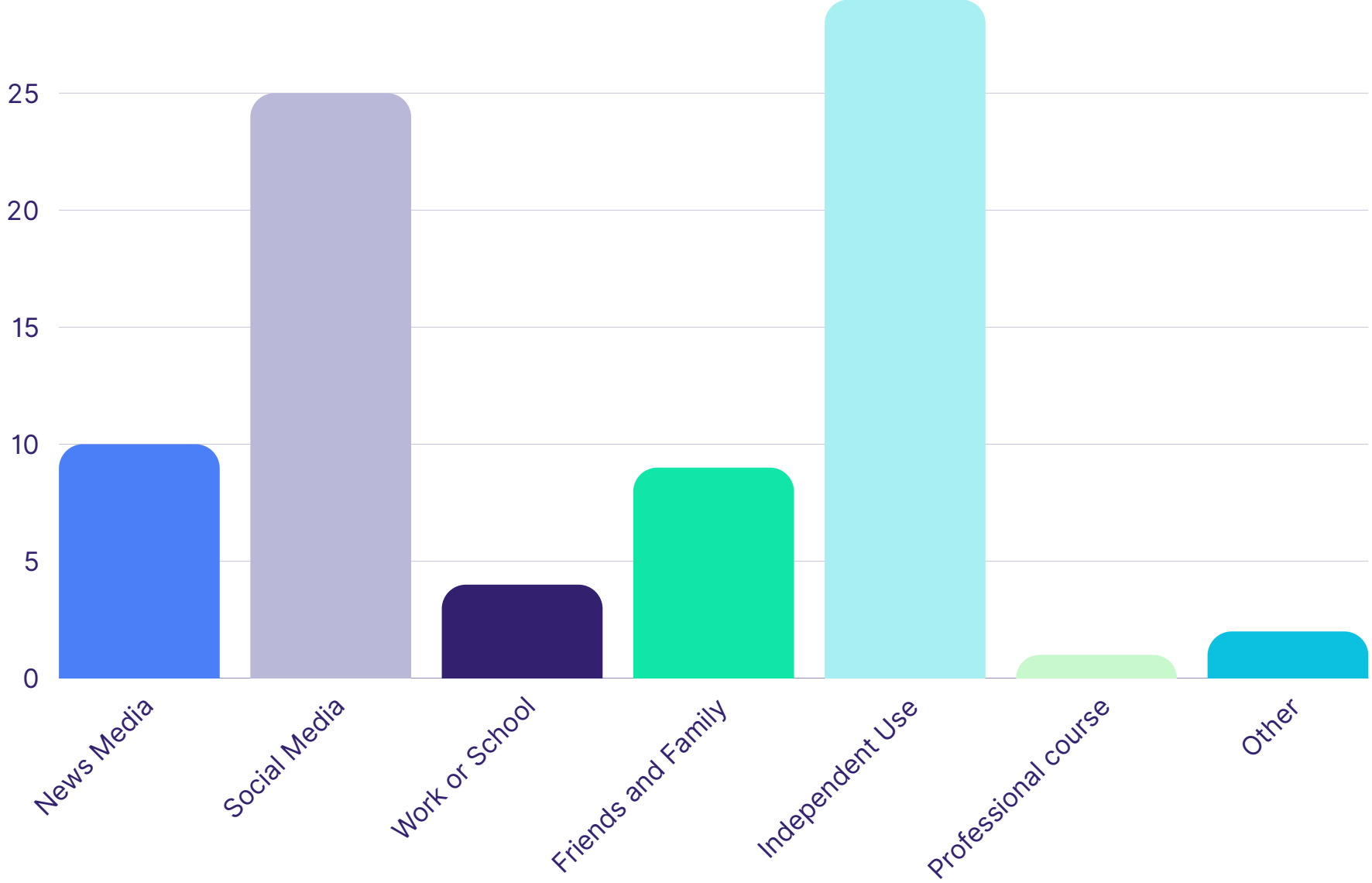


A majority of Americans prioritize rights to their own data and recourse when it comes to how they interact with AI systems.

Few Americans have learned about AI from a formal program.

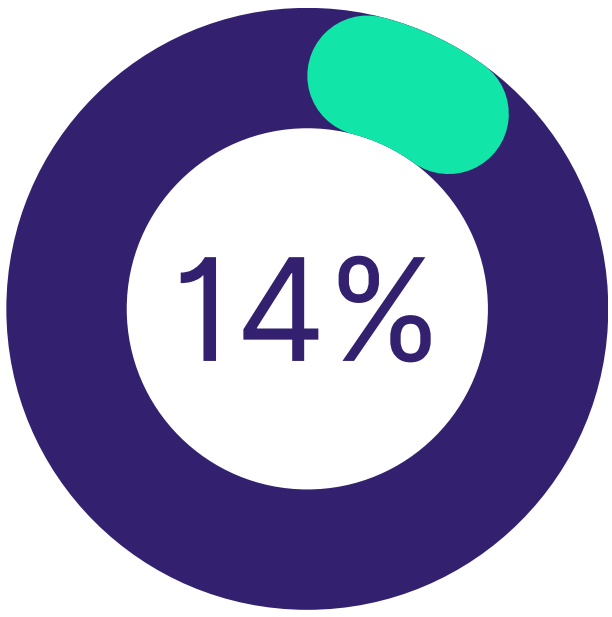
4% of respondents learned about AI from use at work or school, only 1% studied it in a formal learning environment. **Independent use (29%), Social media (25%) and News media (10%) were the most common sources** to learn about AI.

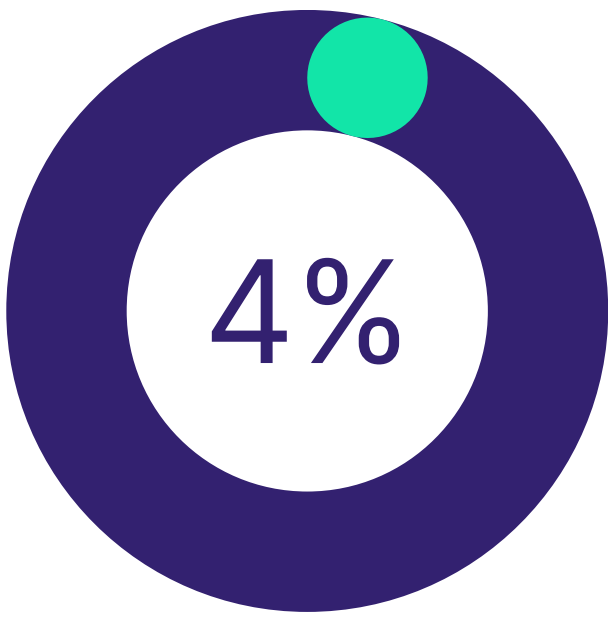
Where have you learned most of what you know about AI?



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Only **14%** of workplaces have an AI use policy in place

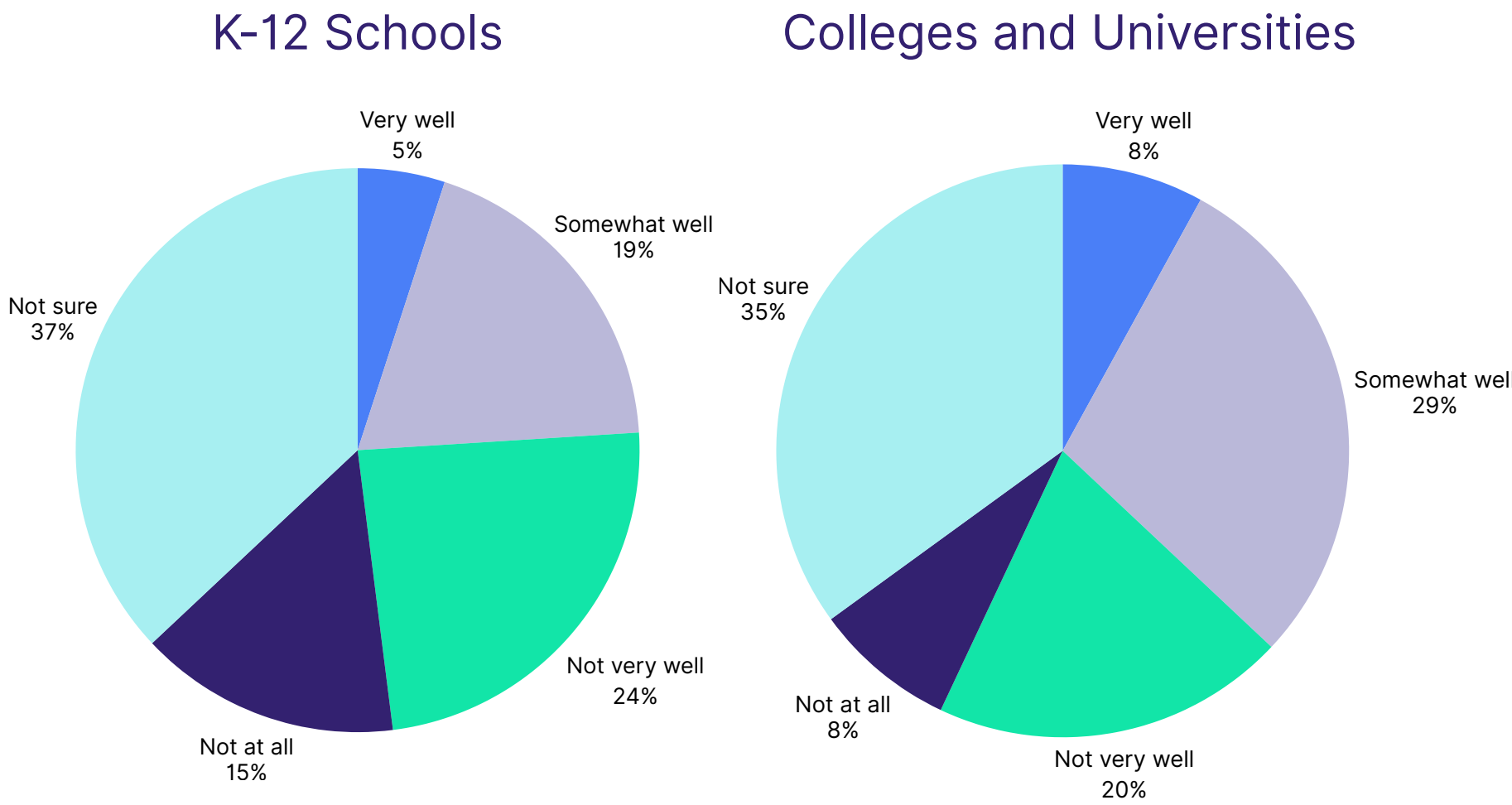




Only **4%** of workplaces have offered extensive AI training, guidelines or workplace upskilling

We asked respondents whether their workplace has an AI use policy, and whether they've been offered training on how to use AI tools at work. 27% responded that their workplace did not have an AI use policy, 15% weren't sure. Only 14% were offered any AI training in their workplace, only 4% received extensive training. 26% were offered ***no*** training, guidelines or education about using AI at work.

Americans have **more confidence** in **colleges and universities** to prepare students to understand AI than **K-12 schools**

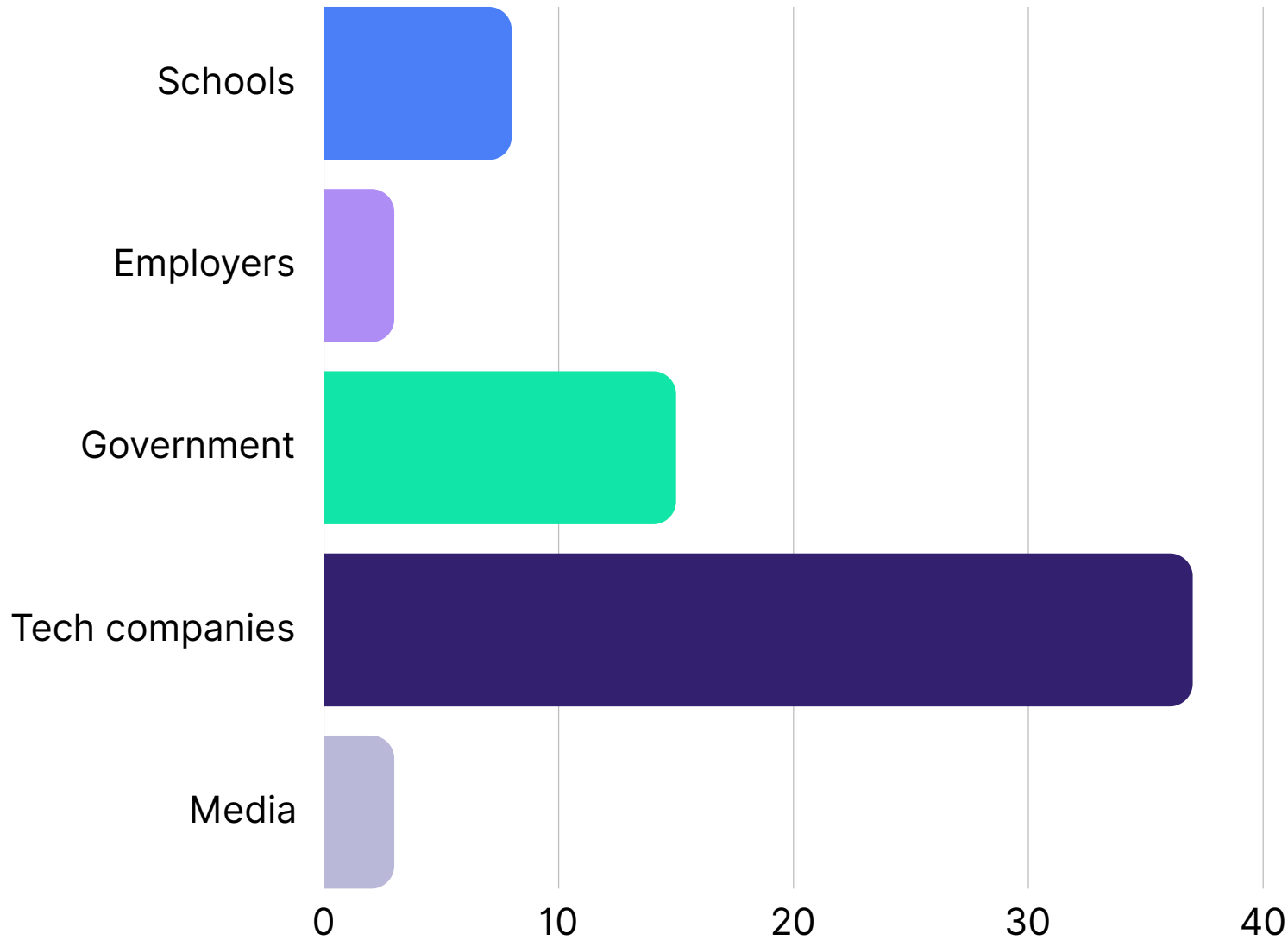


We asked whether American K-12 schools are preparing students to understand and work with AI. **Only 5% thought K-12 schools were preparing students “very well,” while a majority weren’t sure.** The number was static when asked how well their own K-12 school’s were preparing their kids:

Americans had greater confidence in how well American colleges and universities were preparing students to understand and work with AI: 8% said “Very well,” and 29% said “Somewhat well.”

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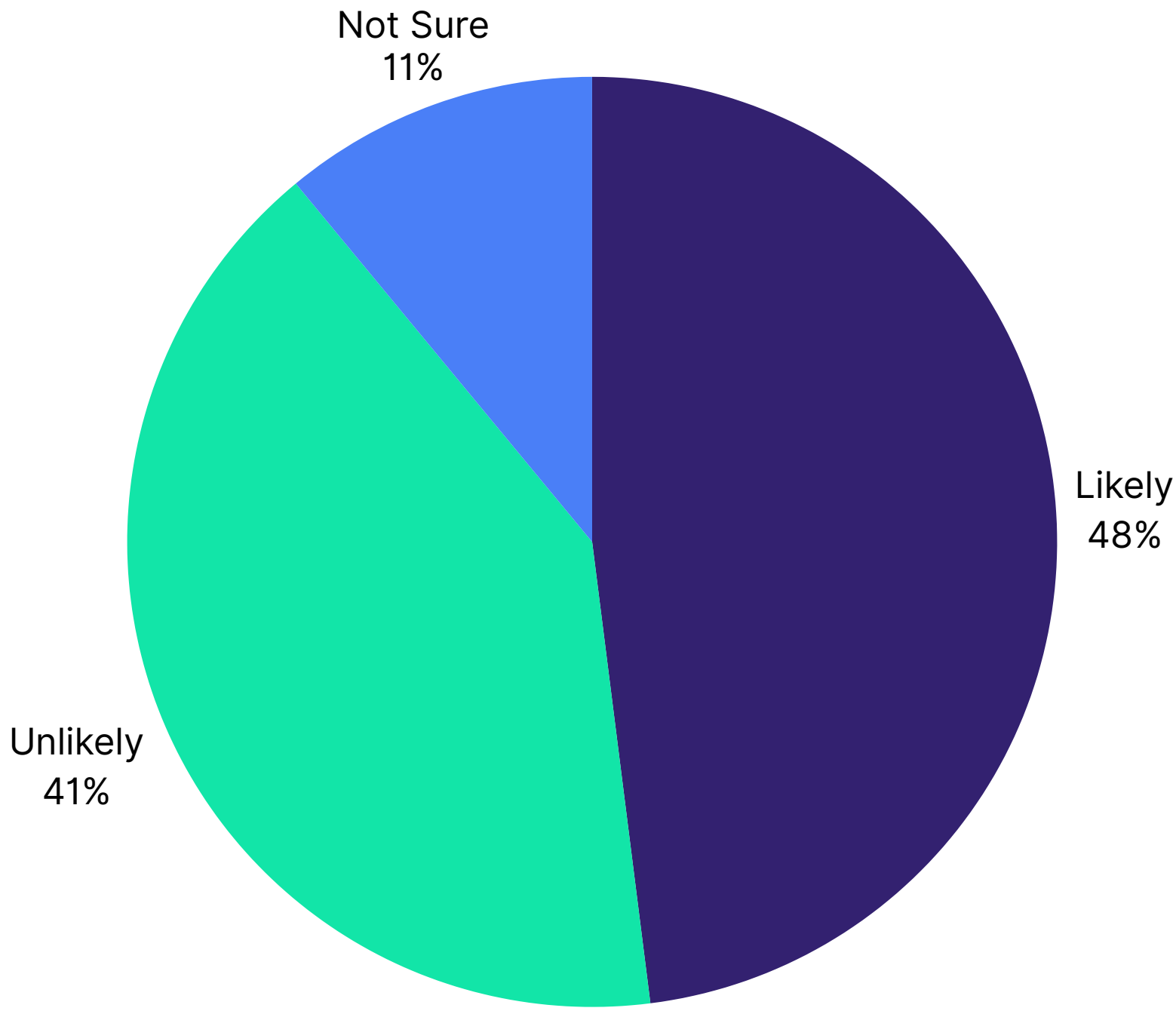
Americans want technology companies to help the public understand AI.



Over 30% of respondents across all demographics (party, gender, education level, race/ethnicity) felt tech companies should bear responsibility for helping the public understand AI. Employers and the media were the least likely to bear responsibility, according to respondents.

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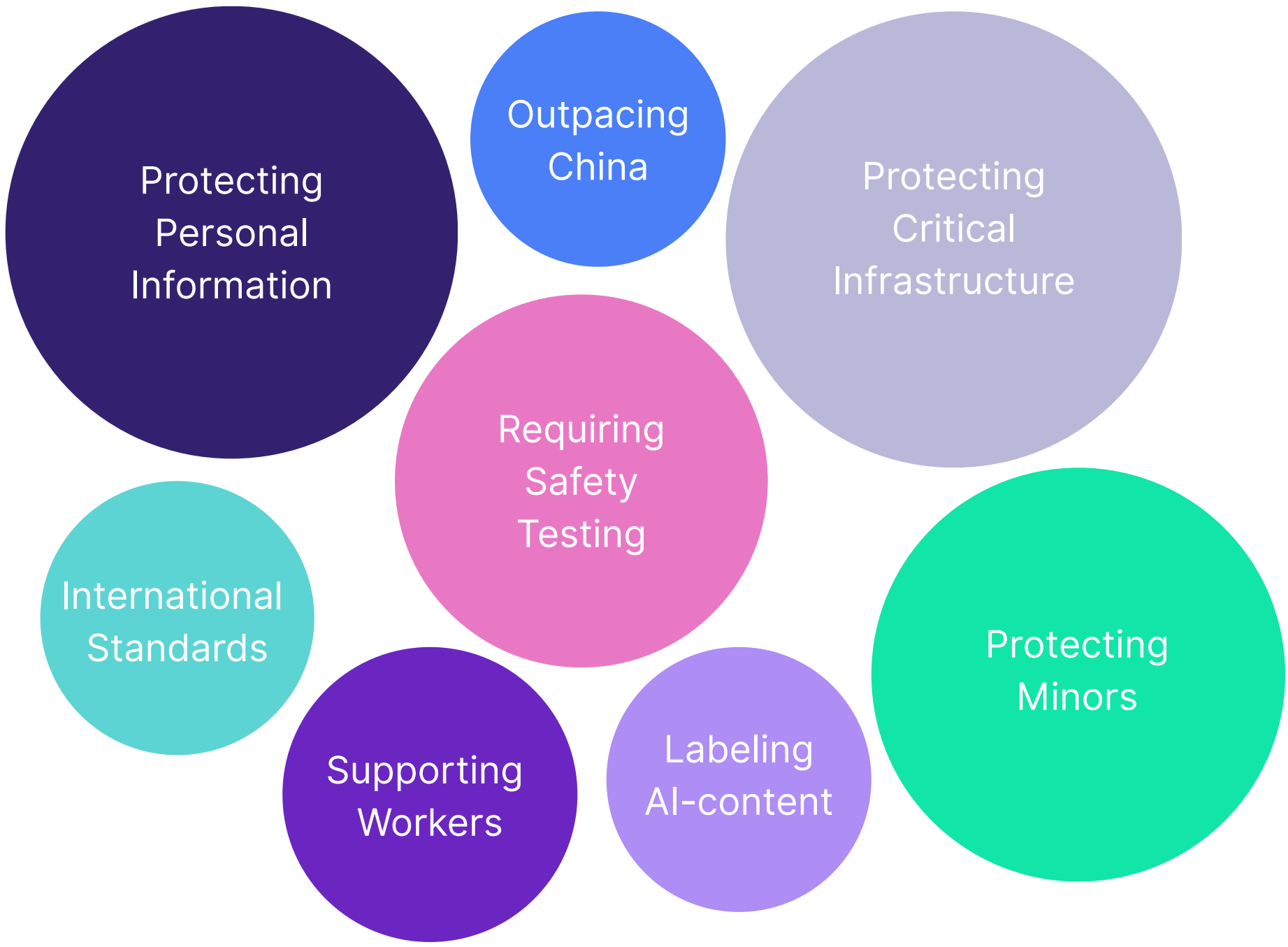
Roughly half of Americans would take free AI training if it were offered locally.



There is no partisan gap on free AI training. **49%** of Democrats, **48%** of Republicans and **47%** of Independents would take it if offered in their community.

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Americans want Congress to Act on AI. Top concerns include:



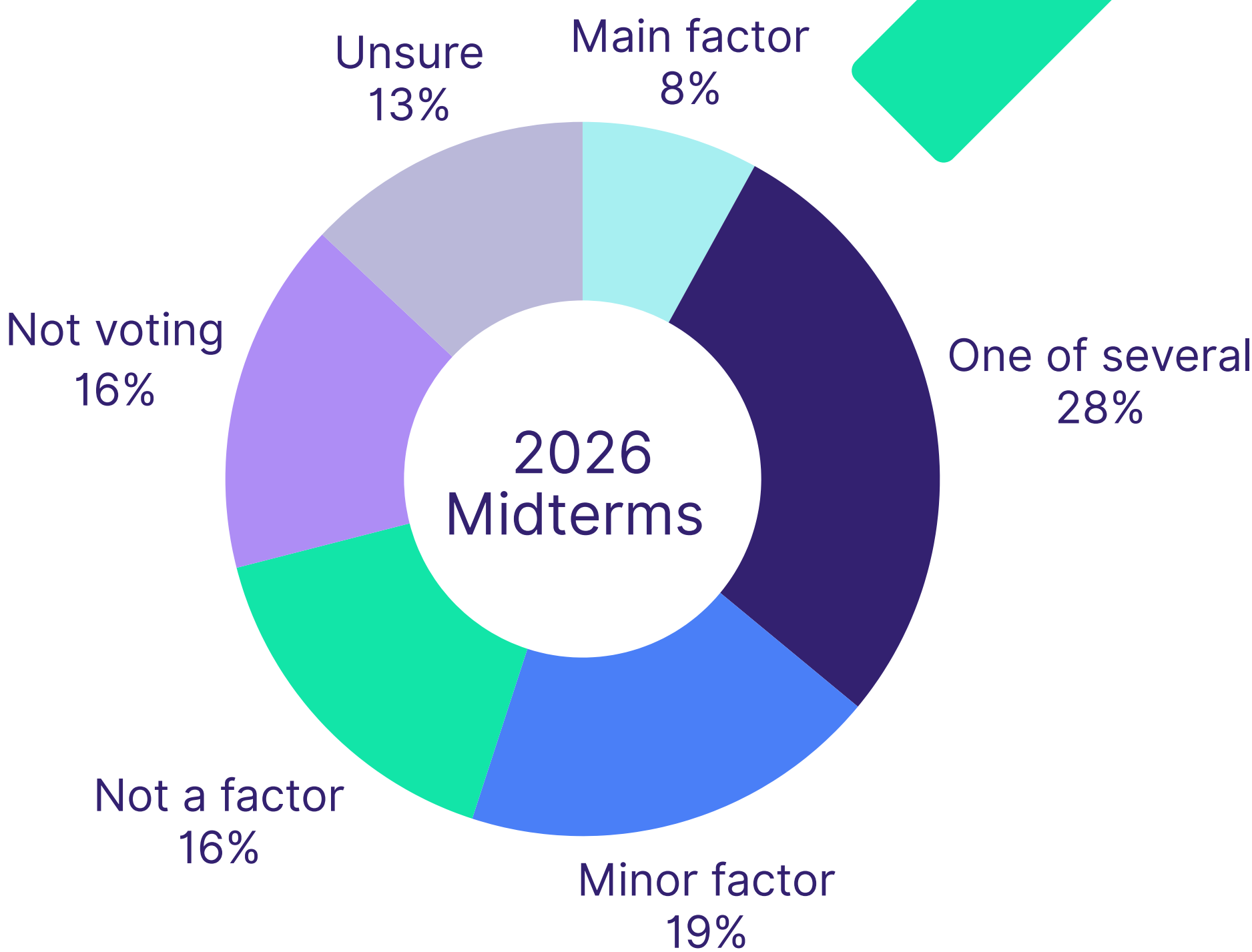
Only

4%

of Americans **don't** want Congress to act on AI.

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AI is a **real factor** shaping how Americans show up to the ballot box in November.



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in September, EqualAI released its first national survey on AI and public trust. Fielded by YouGov from Aug. 31 - Sept. 8, 2026 across 2,000 adults, our survey found bipartisan demand for the ability to correct and appeal AI decisions, and for Congressional action on AI. For more information about our survey, visit our website at EqualAI.Org.