November 2026

Future Partners

Sponsored by Miles Partnership



The State of the American Traveler

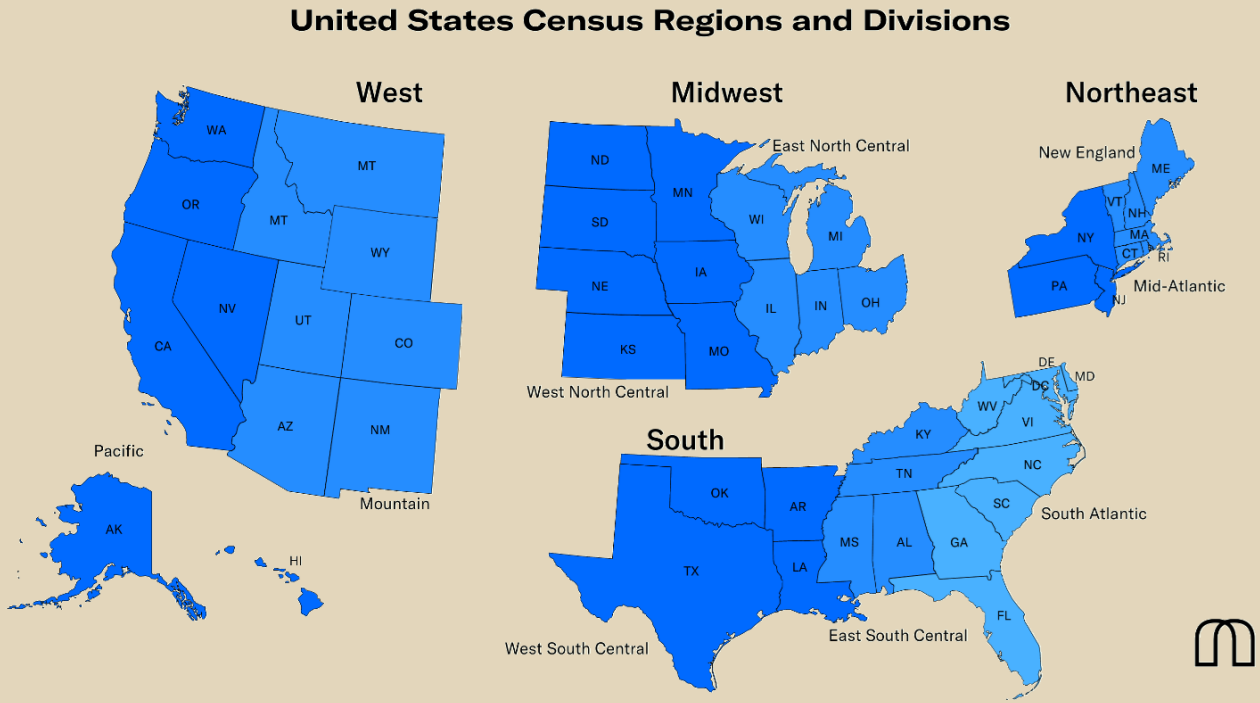
Destination Management

Bringing the future of travel within reach

Future Partners

The State of the American Traveler

- Monthly tracking survey
- Representative sample of adult American travelers in each of four U.S. regions
- Tracks traveler sentiment to generate insights into domestic travel trends
- 4,000+ fully completed surveys collected each wave.
- Surveys collected thru October 2026
- Confidence interval of +/- 1.55%
- Data is weighted to reflect the actual population of each region



Executive Summary

Residents still value tourism, but as crowding concerns climb they want a say in how it is managed, and most don't know their DMO is the organization that can give them one.

73.2%	**Tourism's economic value holds** say tourism helps local businesses, flat vs. 2025; 36.9% moved to their community after visiting.
+9.8 pts	**Crowding concern is climbing** 51.7% now say tourists bring crowds and traffic, and every negative measure rose year over year.
37.2%	**Gen Z is the most critical resident group** of Gen Z see too many tourists vs. 14.6% of Boomers+, yet 49.1% plan to cut their travel impact.
24.3%	**DMOs' community value is under-recognized** know DMOs generate visitor tax revenue; only 37.8% know their community has a DMO.
+13.6 pts	**Residents want a voice** 53.4% say DMOs should consult residents, up from 39.8%; only 44.4% feel they have any influence.

(Base: All respondents, 4,000 completed surveys. Data collected October 15-28, 2026.)

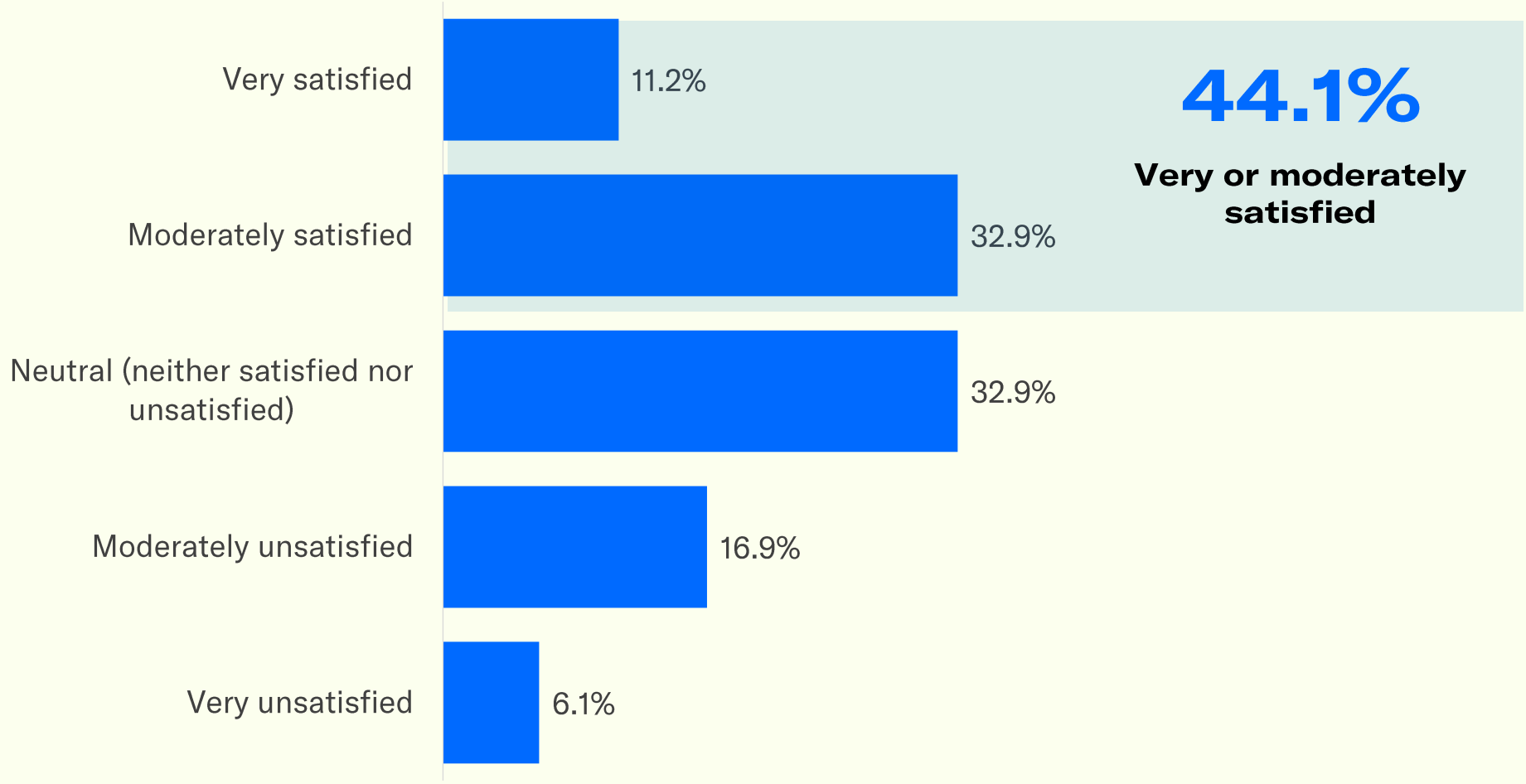
Resident Sentiment & Tourism Impacts



Future Partners

Fewer than half of Americans are satisfied with the direction their local community is headed.

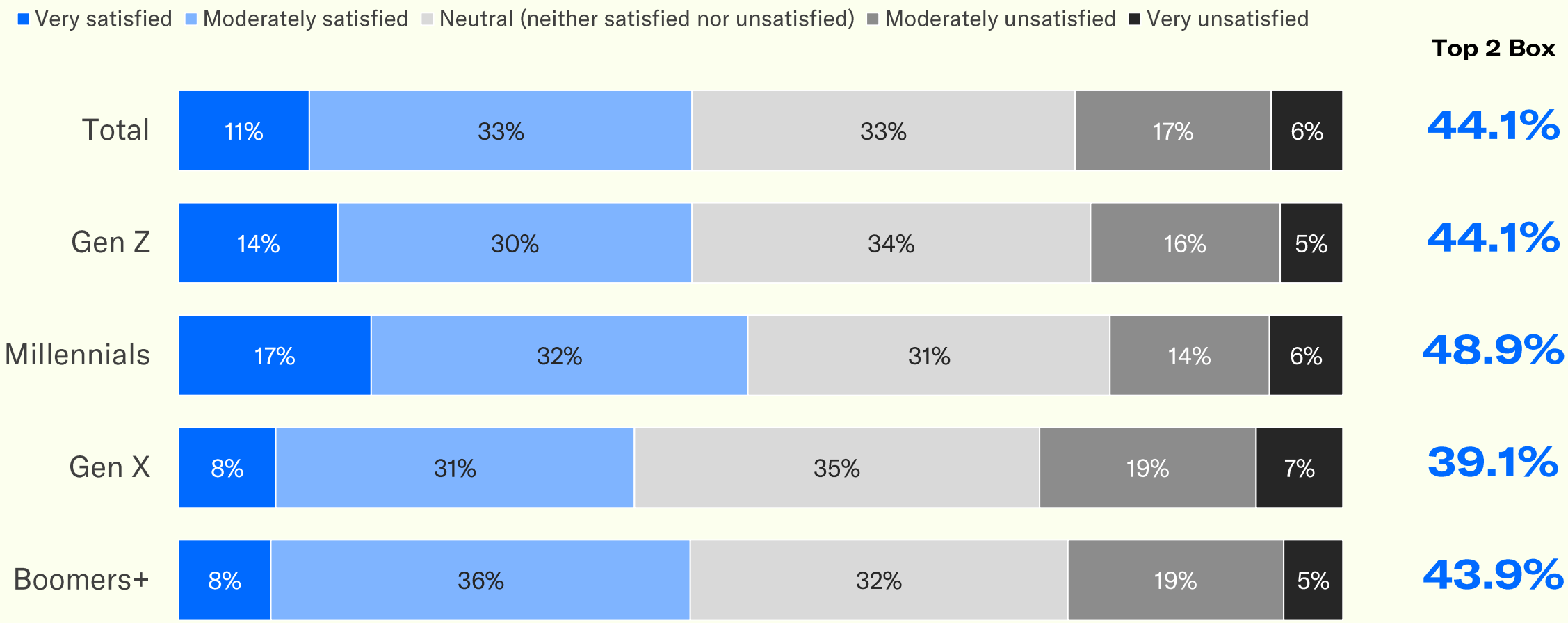
Question:
All things considered, how satisfied are you with the direction your local community is headed?



(Base: All respondents, 4,000 completed surveys. Data collected October 15-28, 2026.)

Millennials are the most satisfied with their community's direction; Gen X the least.

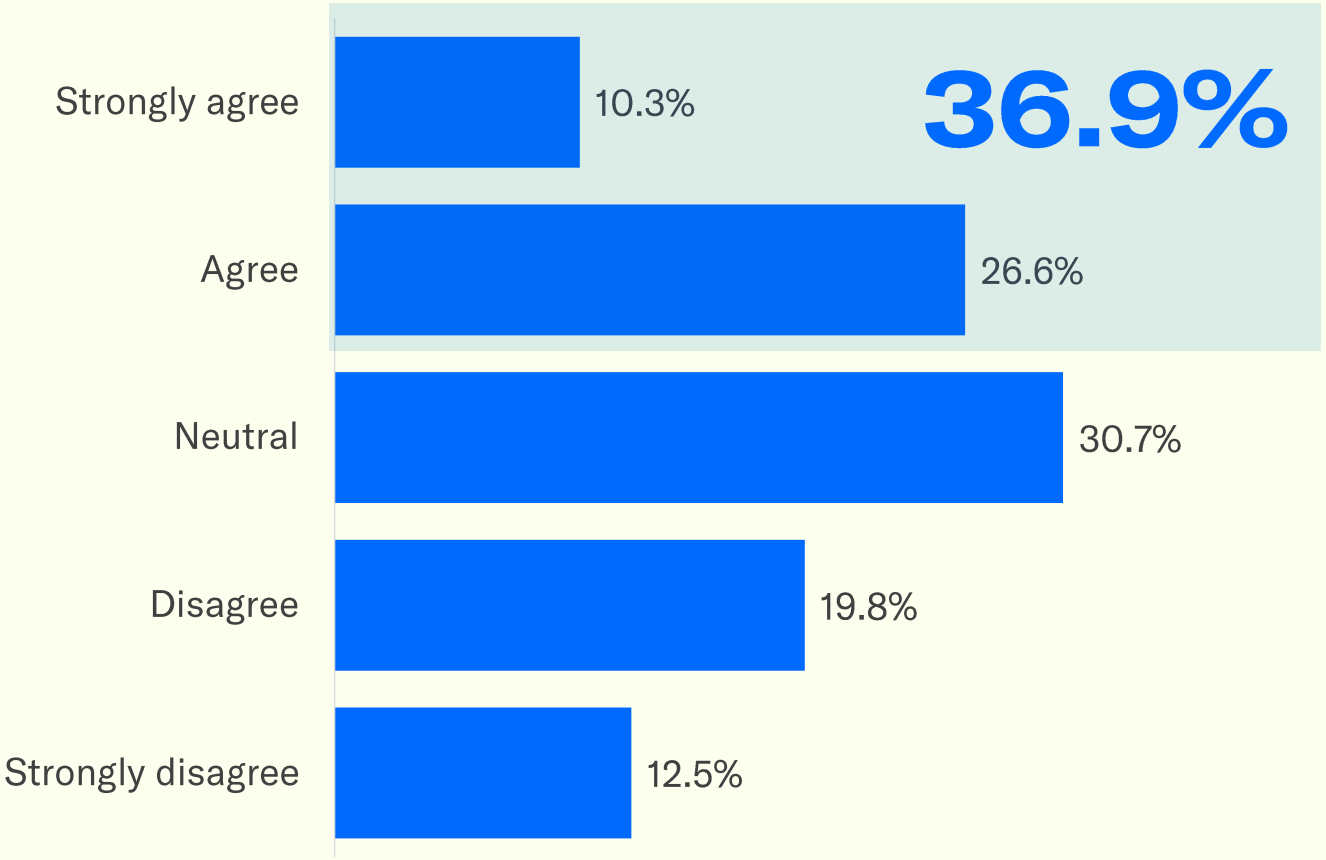
Question: All things considered, how satisfied are you with the direction your local community is headed?

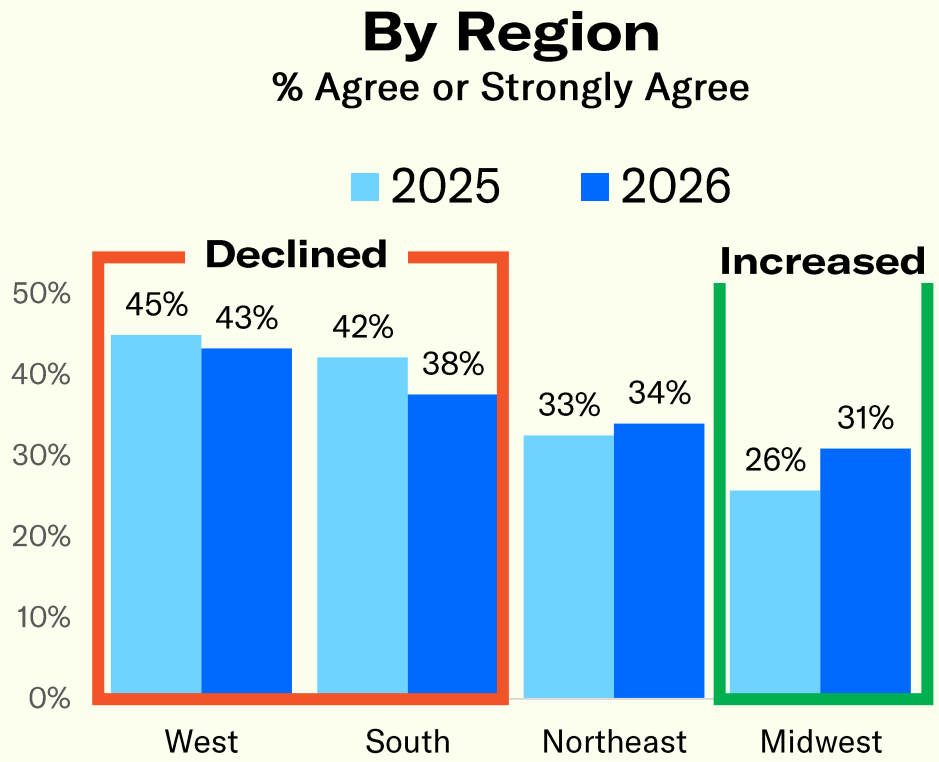


(Base: n=4,000; Gen Z n=299, Millennials n=1,185, Gen X n=1,202, Boomers+ n=1,314. Data collected October 15-28, 2026.)

Over one-third of Americans say they moved to their community because they visited and loved it.

Question: Please rate how much you agree or disagree with the following statement: "I moved to my local community primarily because I visited and loved the place."





(Base: All respondents, 4,000 completed surveys. Data collected October 15-28, 2026.)

Within Census Bureau Newsroom

About the Newsroom

Facts for Features

News Releases

Press Kits

Stats for Stories

Tip Sheets

For Immediate Release: Tuesday, January 27, 2026

U.S. Population Growth Slows Due to Historic Decline in Net International Migration

January 27, 2026
Press Release Number: CE

Midwest's Population Growing Again

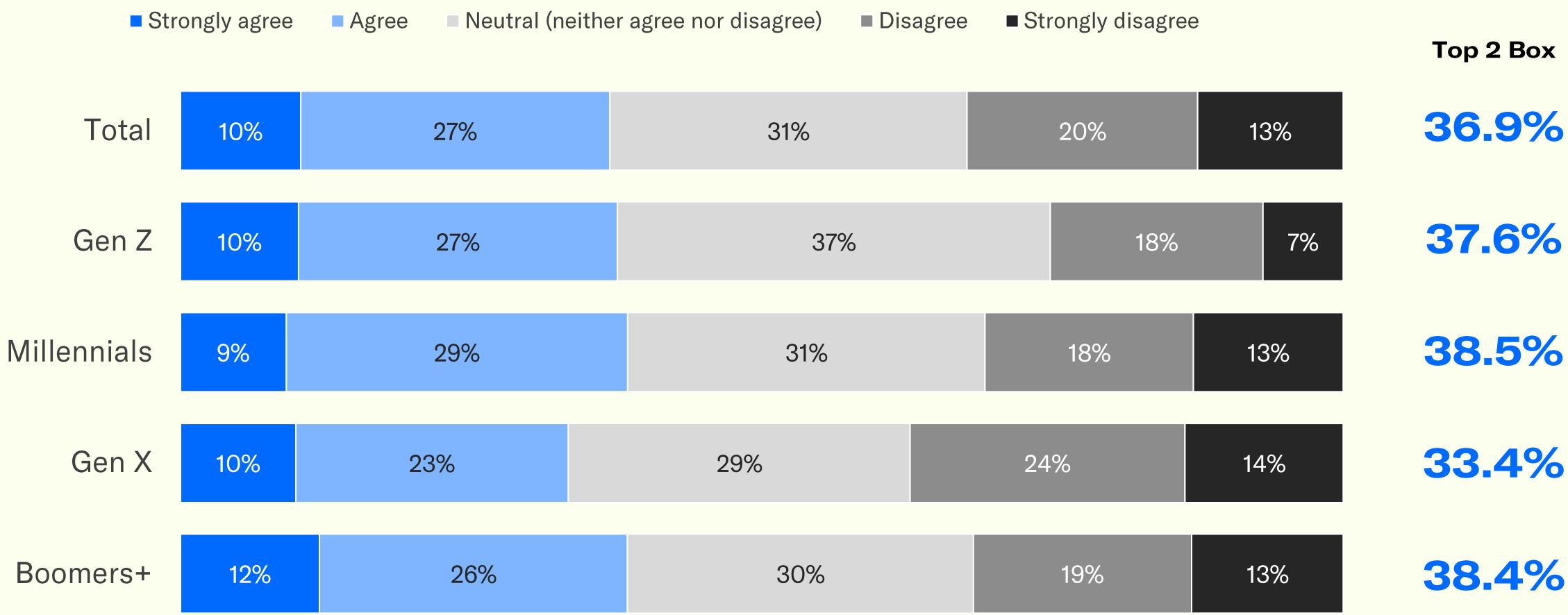
The Midwest was the only region where all states gained population from July 2024 to July 2025. In addition, after experiencing population decline in 2021 and small growth in 2022, the Midwest's population grew solidly in 2023 (259,938), 2024 (386,231), and 2025 (244,385). Slight gains in natural change (births minus deaths) for some of the states in the Midwest contributed to their population growth.

"From July 2024 through June 2025, the Midwest also saw positive net domestic migration for the first time this decade," said Marc Perry, senior demographer at the Census Bureau. "And while the net domestic migration was a relatively modest 16,000, this is still a notable turnaround from the substantial domestic migration losses in 2021 and 2022 of -175,000 or greater."

Ohio (net domestic migration of 11,926 in 2025, compared to -32,482 in 2021) and Michigan (net domestic migration of 1,796 in 2025, compared to -28,290 in 2021) exemplify this emerging trend.

Visiting before relocating is a consistent path across generations, slightly less so for Gen X.

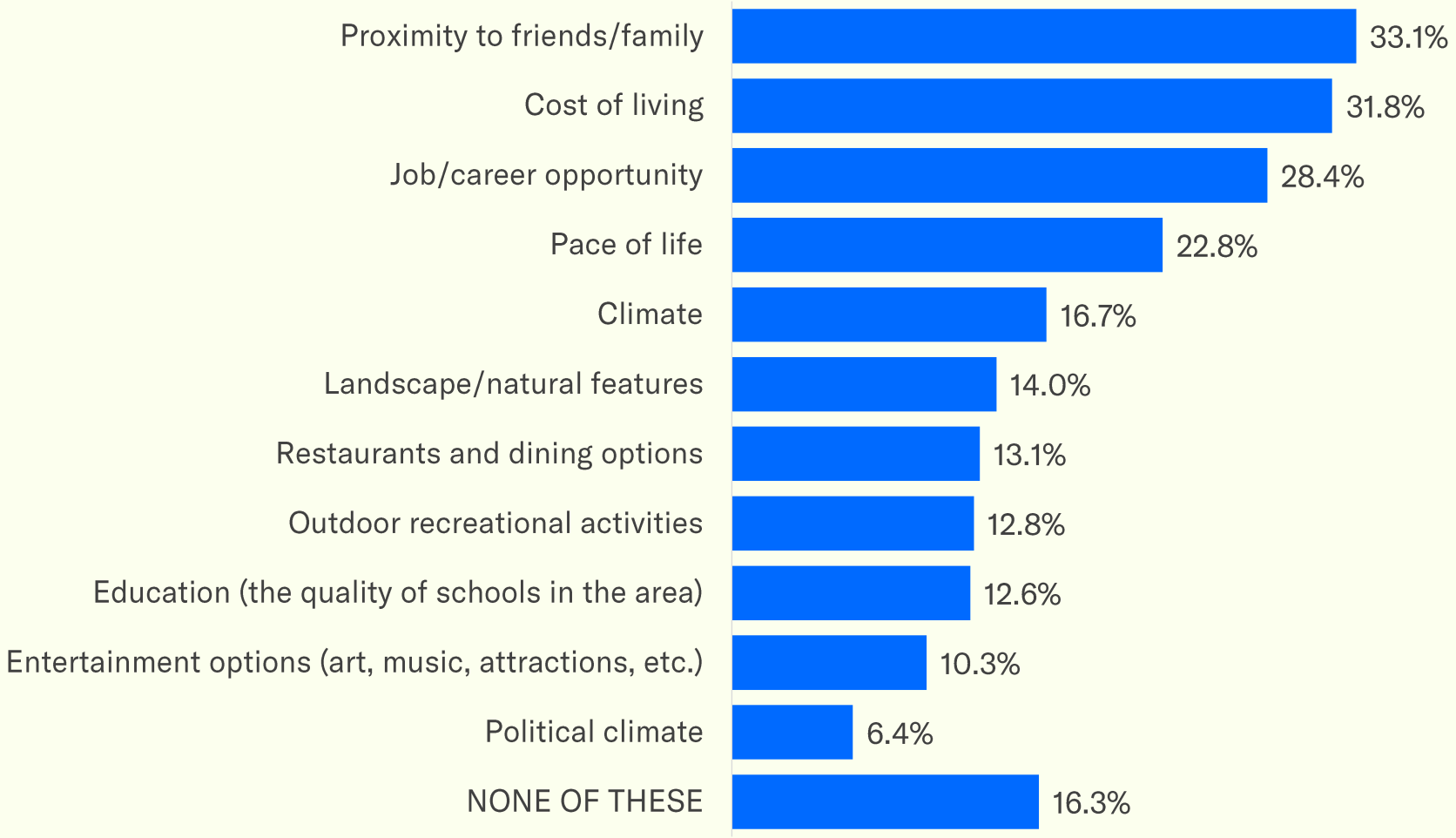
Question: Please rate how much you agree or disagree with the following statement: "I moved to my local community primarily because I visited and loved the place."



(Base: n=4,000; Gen Z n=299, Millennials n=1,185, Gen X n=1,202, Boomers+ n=1,314. Data collected October 15-28, 2026.)

Proximity to family, cost of living and jobs are the leading reasons Americans chose their community.

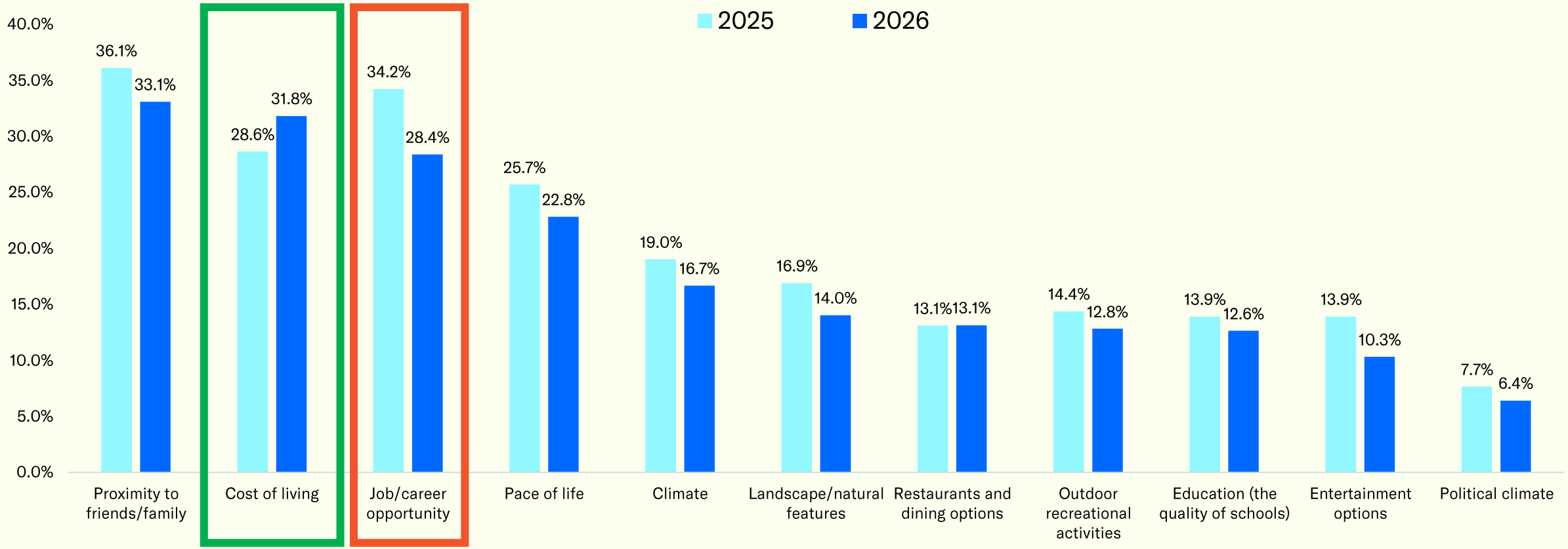
Question:
Which of the following reasons best describe why you originally moved to your local community? (Select all that apply)



(Base: All respondents, 4,000 completed surveys. Data collected October 15-28, 2026.)

Cost of Living grew YOY as a cited reason for moving to their current community, while career opportunities as a reason for moving declined most.

Question: Which of the following reasons best describe why you originally moved to your local community? (Select all that apply)



(Base: All respondents, 4,000 completed surveys. Data collected October 15-28, 2026.)

Younger generations weigh cost and entertainment more; Boomers prioritize being near family.

Question: Which of the following reasons best describe why you originally moved to your local community? (Select all that apply)

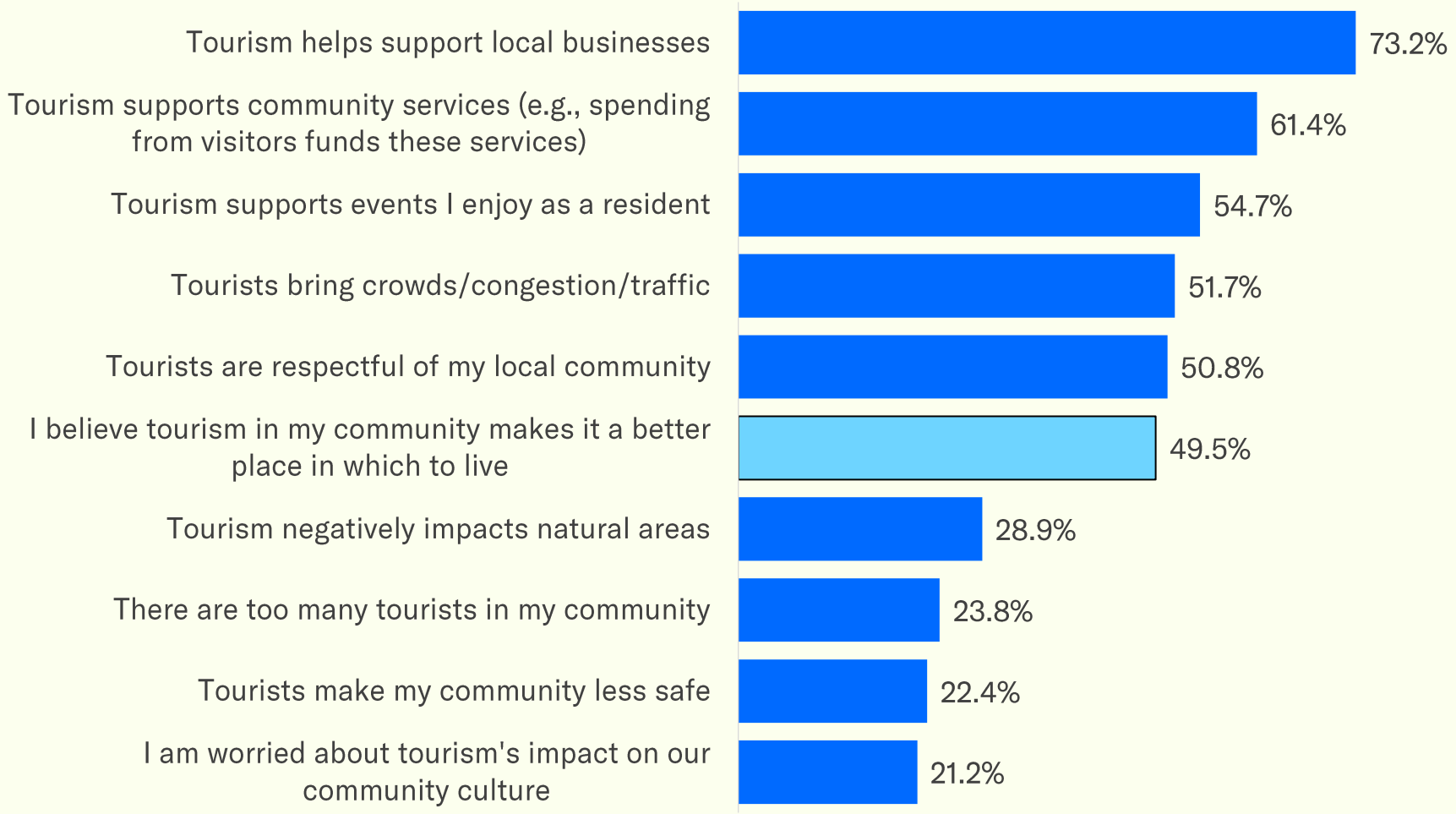
	Total	Gen Z	Millennials	Gen X	Boomers+
Proximity to friends/family	33.1%	31.1%	30.8%	32.3%	36.7%
Cost of living	31.8%	33.5%	34.0%	33.0%	28.1%
Job/career opportunity	28.4%	26.5%	31.4%	29.4%	25.3%
Pace of life	22.8%	21.2%	22.7%	22.0%	24.2%
Climate	16.7%	18.5%	15.1%	15.5%	18.5%
Landscape/natural features	14.0%	12.3%	13.6%	13.9%	15.1%
Restaurants and dining options	13.1%	14.0%	14.0%	11.9%	13.1%
Outdoor recreational activities (e.g., hiking, biking, beaches, etc.)	12.8%	11.6%	13.9%	11.2%	13.6%
Education (e.g., the quality of schools in the area)	12.6%	14.2%	15.0%	12.0%	10.4%
Entertainment options (art, music, attractions, etc.)	10.3%	14.0%	13.5%	8.7%	7.5%
Political climate	6.4%	7.0%	7.8%	5.5%	5.7%
NONE OF THESE	16.3%	15.3%	14.0%	18.0%	17.2%

(Base: n=4,000; Gen Z n=299, Millennials n=1,185, Gen X n=1,202, Boomers+ n=1,314. Data collected October 15-28, 2026.)

Survey respondents were asked to think about their community's tourism industry and its impact on their community, then rate how much they agree with several statements.

Residents see tourism’s economic upside: nearly three-quarters say it helps support local businesses.

Question:
Thinking about tourism and its impact on your community, how much do you agree or disagree with the following statements? (% Agree or Strongly agree)



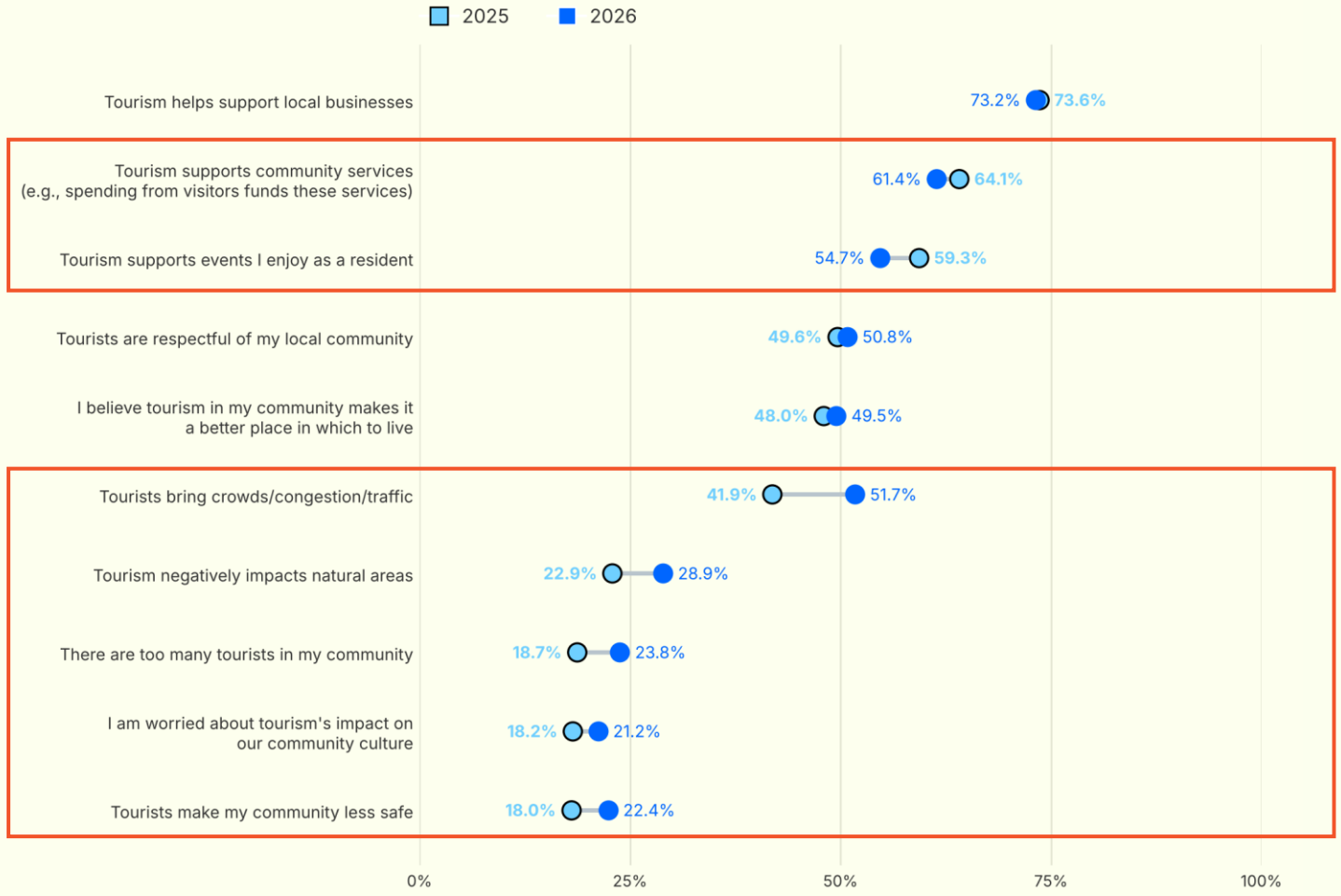
(Base: All respondents, 4,000 completed surveys. Data collected October 15-28, 2026.)

Crowding concern rose 9.8 points to 51.7%.

Question: Thinking about tourism and its impact on your community, how much do you agree or disagree with the following statements? (% Agree or Strongly agree)

Changes in Residents' Attitudes Toward Tourism. 2025-2026

Percentage of respondents who agree with each statement



(Base: All respondents, 4,000 completed surveys. Data collected October 15-28, 2026.)

Gen Z and Millennials are more likely to feel tourism's downsides, from crowding to cultural impacts.

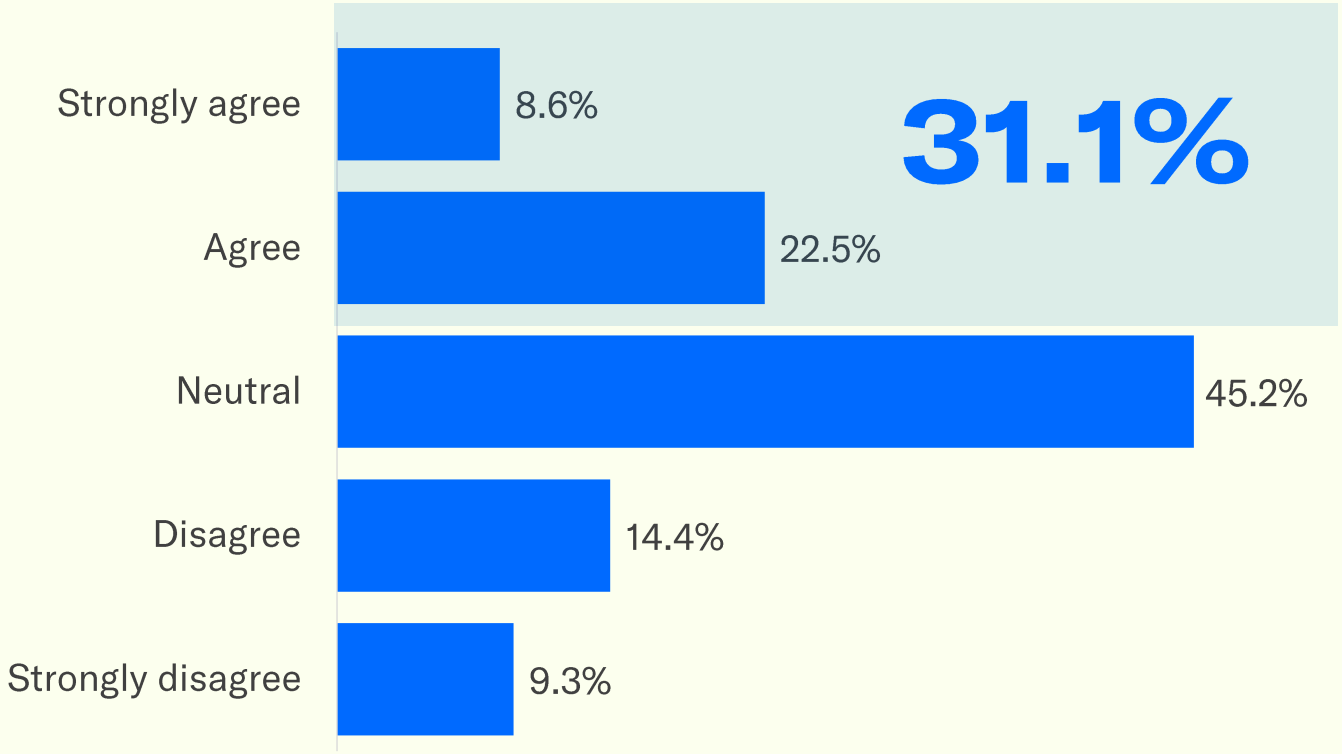
Question: Thinking about tourism and its impact on your community, how much do you agree or disagree with the following statements? (% Agree or Strongly agree)

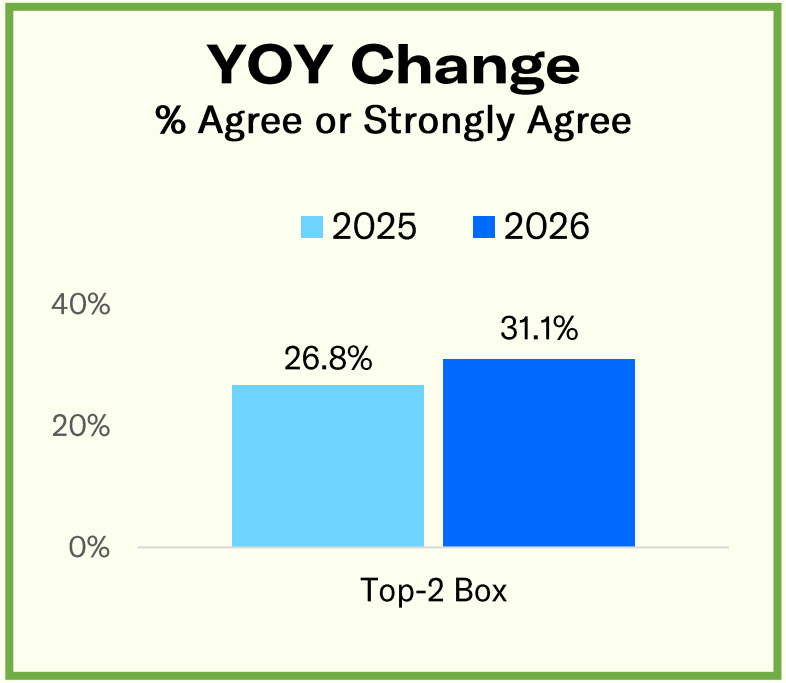
	Total	Gen Z	Millennials	Gen X	Boomers+
Tourism helps support local businesses	73.2%	65.8%	70.5%	74.8%	76.7%
Tourism supports community services (e.g., spending from visitors funds these services)	61.4%	51.4%	61.6%	60.8%	65.1%
Tourism supports events I enjoy as a resident	54.7%	54.7%	59.8%	54.3%	50.2%
Tourists bring crowds/congestion/traffic	51.7%	52.8%	55.6%	53.3%	46.2%
Tourists are respectful of my local community	50.8%	51.5%	53.9%	47.5%	50.7%
I believe tourism in my community makes it a better place in which to live	49.5%	52.4%	53.8%	46.6%	46.9%
Tourism negatively impacts natural areas	28.9%	35.8%	34.1%	27.8%	22.7%
There are too many tourists in my community	23.8%	37.2%	30.5%	22.3%	14.6%
Tourists make my community less safe	22.4%	30.9%	28.8%	21.4%	14.4%
I am worried about tourism's impact on our community culture	21.2%	31.6%	27.5%	20.0%	13.0%

(Base: n=4,000; Gen Z n=299, Millennials n=1,185, Gen X n=1,202, Boomers+ n=1,314. Data collected October 15-28, 2026.)

Nearly one-third of Americans plan to do more to reduce their travel's environmental impact.

Question: In the NEXT TWELVE (12) MONTHS, I'll be more proactive in reducing the impact of my travel on the environment.

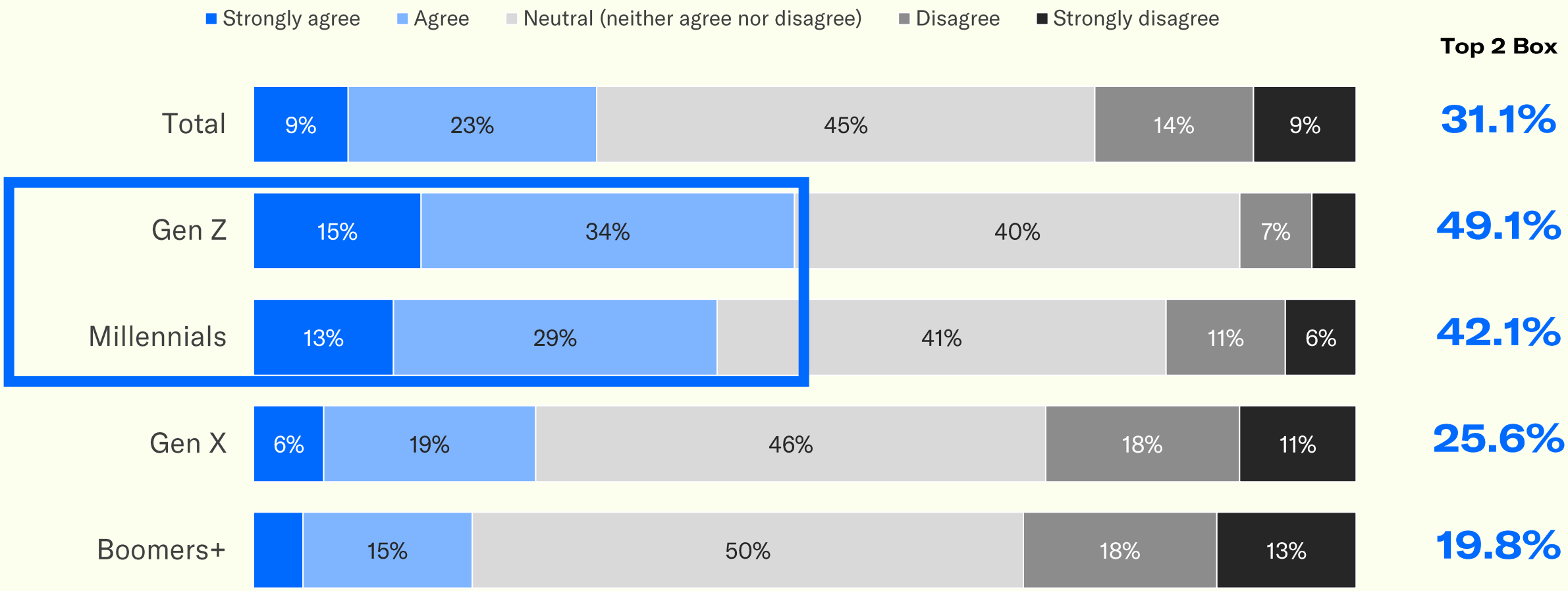




(Base: All respondents, 4,000 completed surveys. Data collected October 15-28, 2026.)

Gen Z and Millennials lead on intent to reduce the environmental impact of their travel.

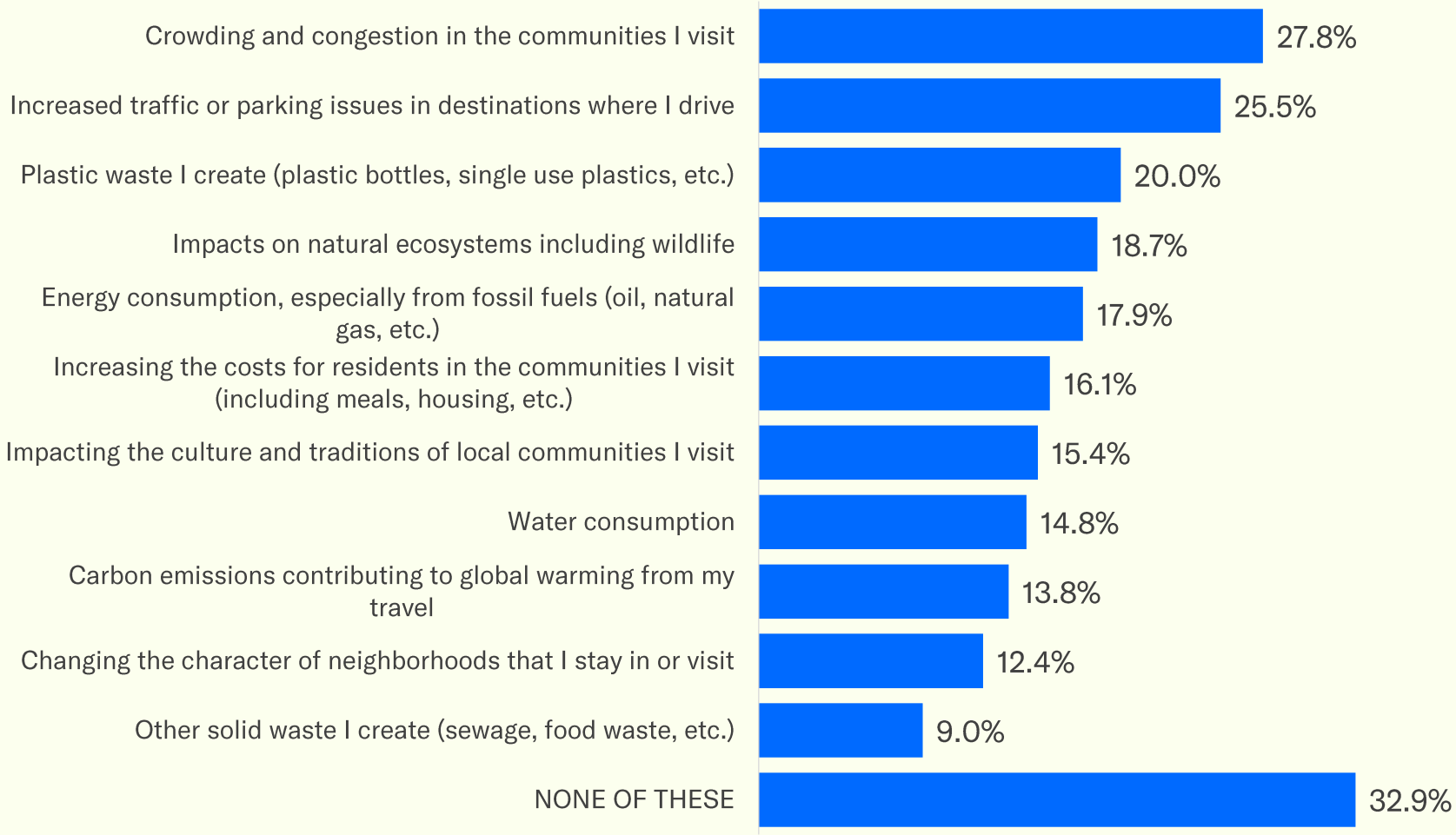
Question: In the NEXT TWELVE (12) MONTHS, I'll be more proactive in reducing the impact of my travel on the environment.



(Base: n=4,000; Gen Z n=299, Millennials n=1,185, Gen X n=1,202, Boomers+ n=1,314. Data collected October 15-28, 2026.)

Crowding and traffic top travelers' impact considerations, though one-third think about none of these.

Question:
When traveling, what aspects of your environmental and community impact do you typically think about? (Select all that apply)



(Base: All respondents, 4,000 completed surveys. Data collected October 15-28, 2026.)

Younger travelers think more about environmental and cultural impacts; older travelers focus on congestion.

Question: When traveling, what aspects of your environmental and community impact do you typically think about? (Select all that apply)

	Total	Gen Z	Millennials	Gen X	Boomers+
Crowding and congestion in the communities I visit	27.8%	23.7%	25.2%	29.2%	30.5%
Increased traffic or parking issues in destinations where I drive	25.5%	21.6%	21.5%	25.4%	30.6%
Plastic waste I create (plastic bottles, single use plastics, etc.)	20.0%	19.2%	22.2%	18.7%	19.3%
Impacts on natural ecosystems including wildlife	18.7%	22.2%	21.8%	18.2%	15.0%
Energy consumption, especially from fossil fuels (oil, natural gas, etc.)	17.9%	21.9%	21.5%	15.8%	15.1%
Increasing the costs for residents in the communities I visit (including meals, housing, etc.)	16.1%	16.1%	20.1%	15.9%	12.3%
Impacting the culture and traditions of local communities I visit	15.4%	22.6%	19.1%	13.7%	11.0%
Water consumption	14.8%	17.3%	17.2%	13.8%	12.5%
Carbon emissions contributing to global warming from my travel	13.8%	15.7%	17.4%	12.4%	11.0%
Changing the character of neighborhoods that I stay in or visit	12.4%	18.0%	14.7%	11.3%	9.3%
Other solid waste I create (sewage, food waste, etc.)	9.0%	12.1%	9.7%	8.5%	7.9%
NONE OF THESE	32.9%	22.0%	26.2%	36.1%	40.1%

(Base: n=4,000; Gen Z n=299, Millennials n=1,185, Gen X n=1,202, Boomers+ n=1,314. Data collected October 15-28, 2026.)

Residents still see tourism's economic value, with 73.2% saying it helps local businesses, but crowding (51.7%) and generational pushback are growing. 37.2% of Gen Z say there are too many tourists, versus 14.6% of Boomers.

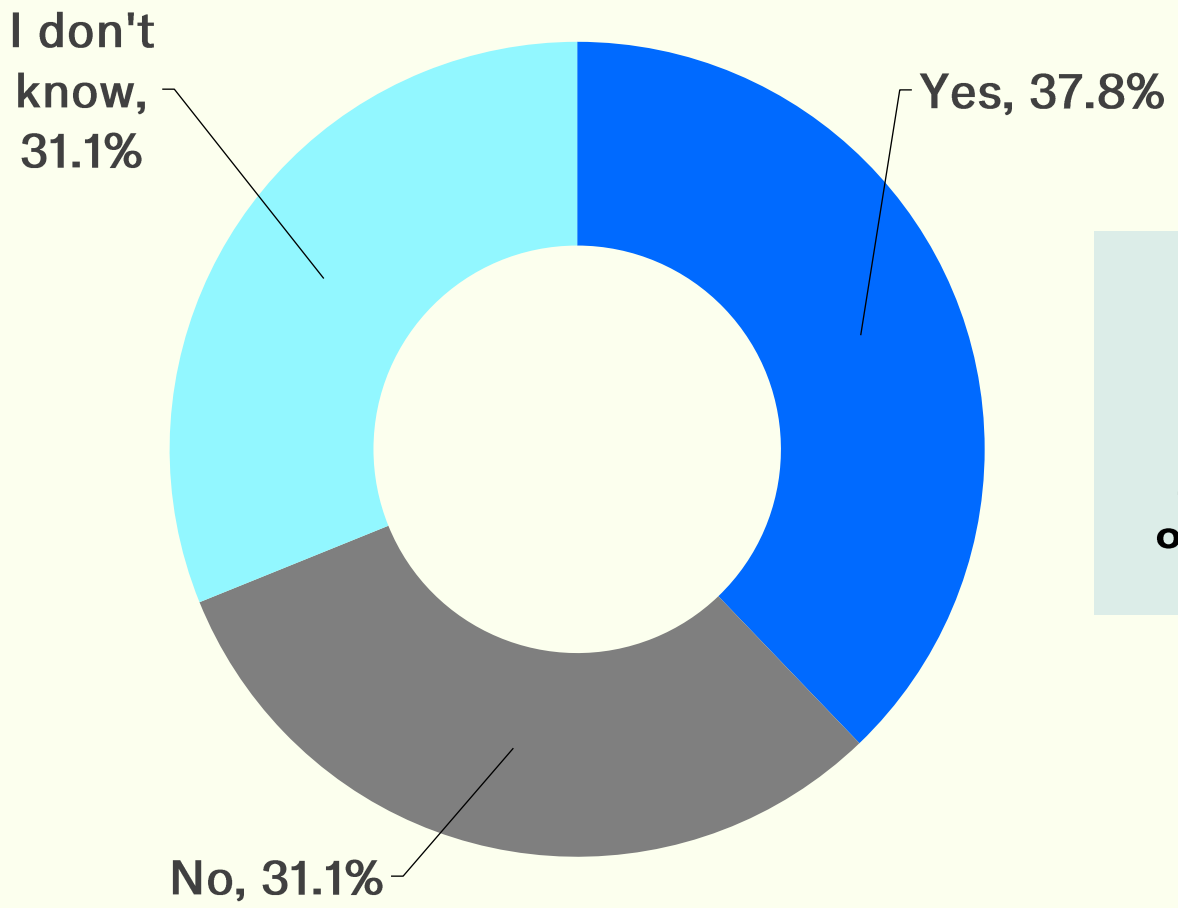
DMOs + Local Communities and Their Roles in Destination Development



Future Partners

Fewer than four in ten Americans know their community has an official DMO.

Question:
To the best of your knowledge, does your local community have an OFFICIAL DESTINATION MARKETING ORGANIZATION (i.e., one that promotes travel to your community, like an official visitors' office, convention and visitors' bureau, etc.)?



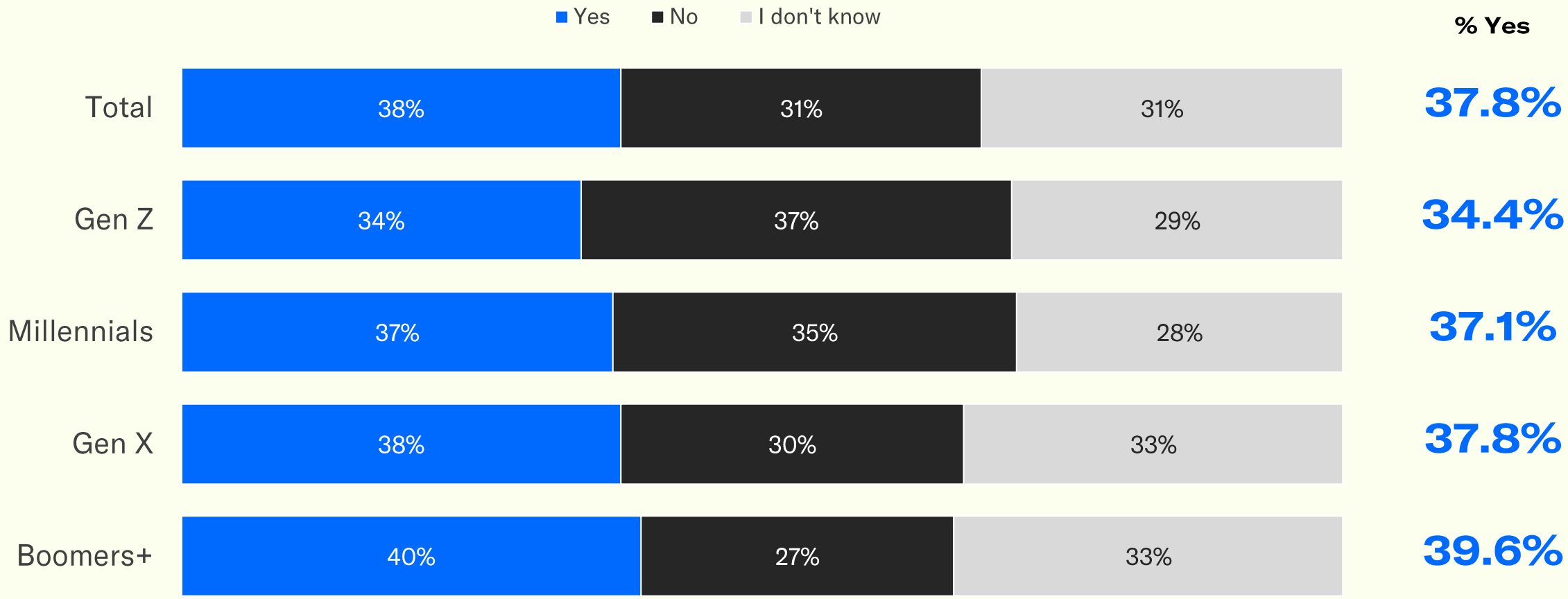
vs. 36%

Who say their community has an official DMO in 2025

(Base: All respondents, 4,000 completed surveys. Data collected October 15-28, 2026.)

Awareness of a local DMO rises with age, while Gen Z is most likely to believe there is none.

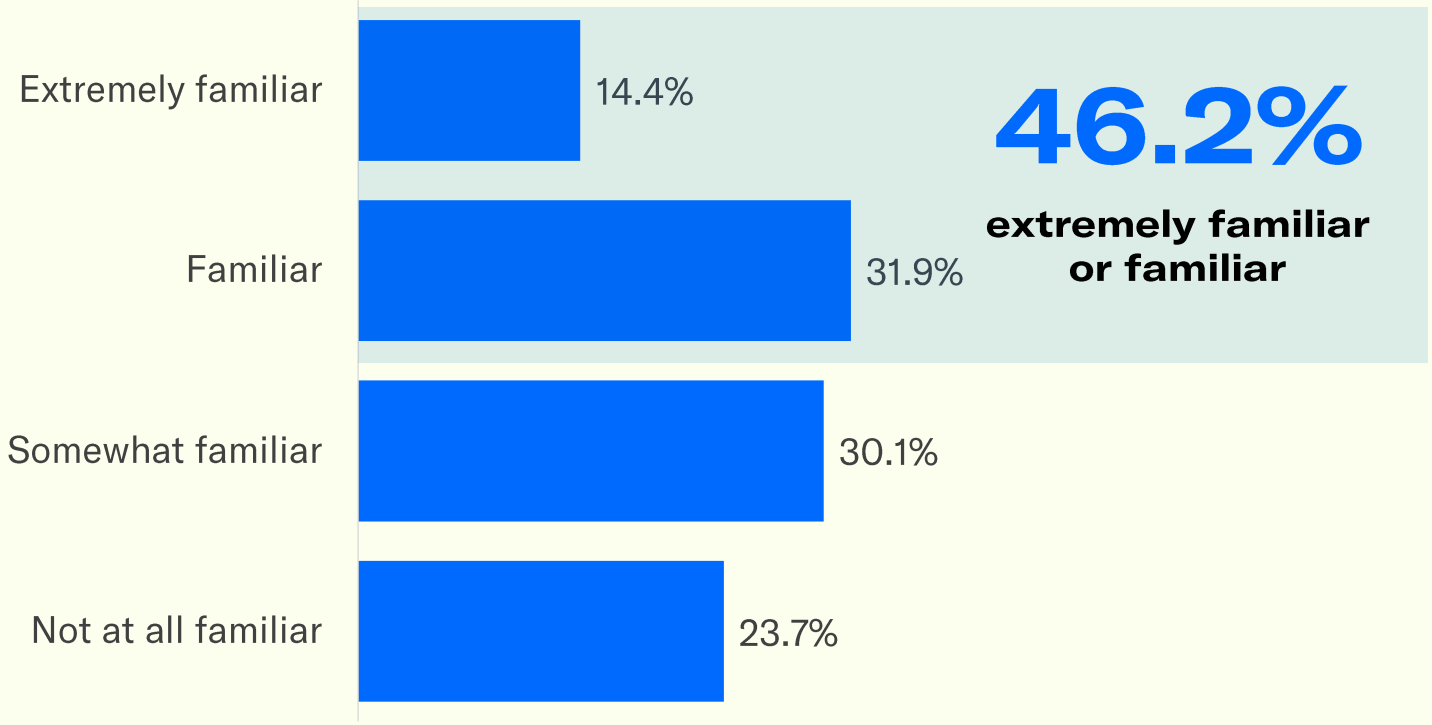
Question: To the best of your knowledge, does your local community have an OFFICIAL DESTINATION MARKETING ORGANIZATION (i.e., one that promotes travel to your community, like an official visitors' office, convention and visitors' bureau, etc.)?

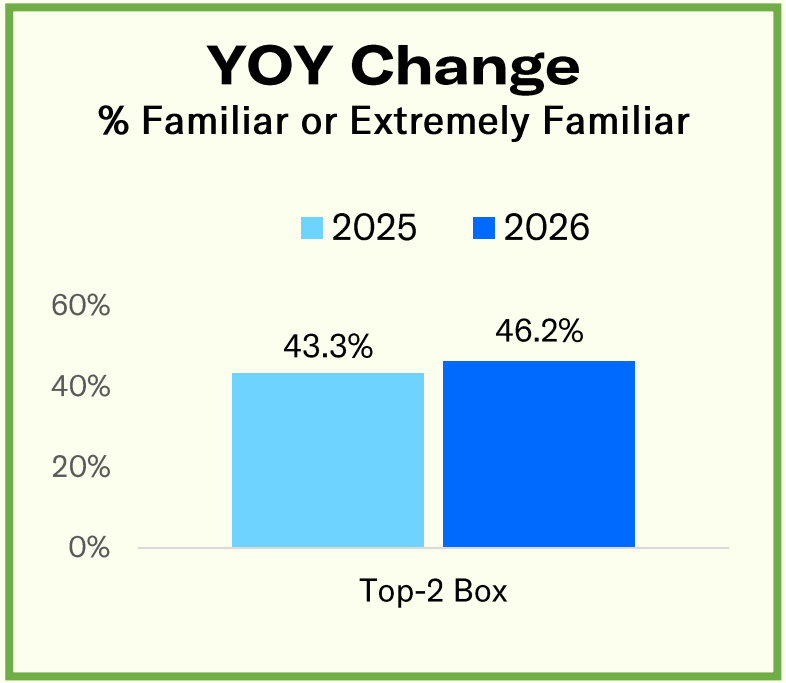


(Base: n=4,000; Gen Z n=299, Millennials n=1,185, Gen X n=1,202, Boomers+ n=1,314. Data collected October 15-28, 2026.)

More Americans (who are aware of their local DMO) now say they are familiar with this organization's work.

Question: How familiar are you with Convention & Visitors Bureaus (CVBs) — also referred to as Destination Marketing Organizations (DMOs)?

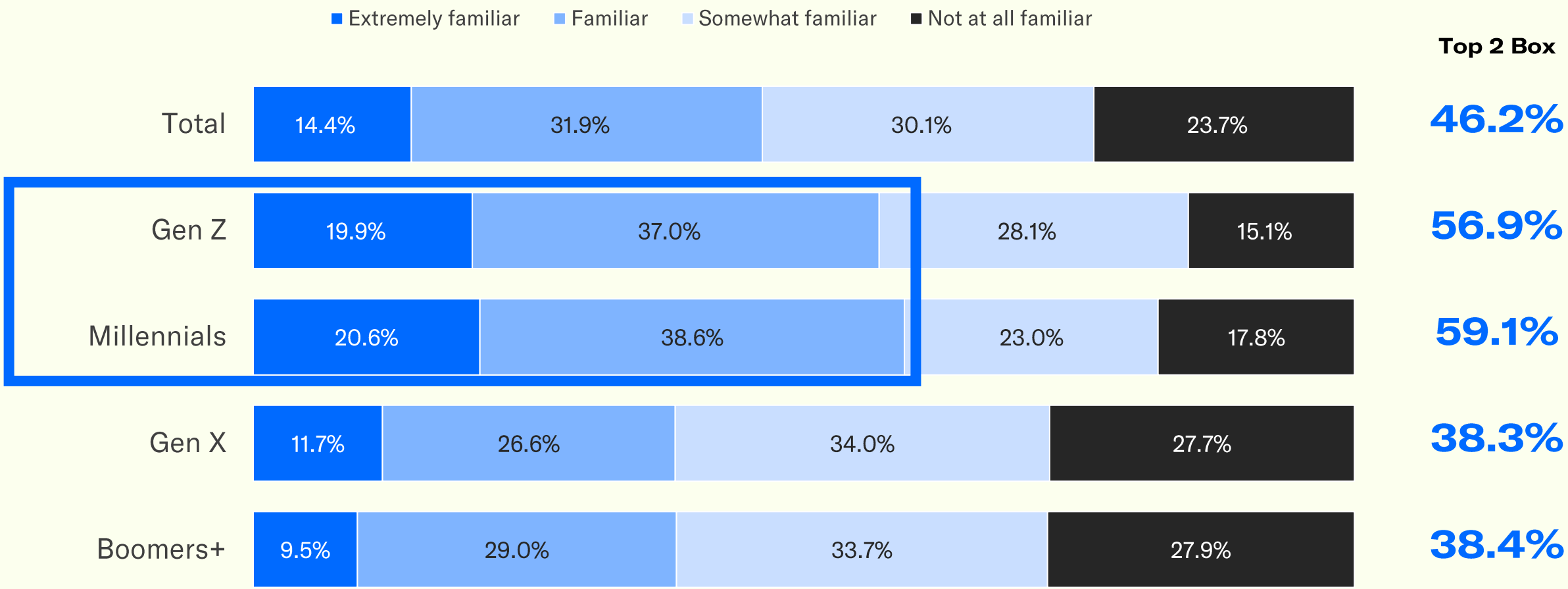




(Base: Respondents who are aware of their local community's DMO, 1,499 completed surveys. Data collected October 15-28, 2026.)

DMO-aware Gen Z and Millennials report greater familiarity with CVBs/DMOs than older generations.

Question: How familiar are you with Convention & Visitors Bureaus (CVBs) — also referred to as Destination Marketing Organizations (DMOs)?



(Base: Respondents who are aware of their local community's DMO, Gen Z n=109, Millennials n=441, Gen X n=447, Boomers+ n=509. Data collected October 15-28, 2026.)

Promoting the community to visitors is the most widely recognized DMO responsibility, but understanding this work generates tax revenue is less known.

Question:
To your knowledge, what are the role and responsibilities of your local Destination Marketing Organization? (e.g., CVB, Chamber, Tourism Board) (Select all that apply)



(Base: All respondents, 4,000 completed surveys. Data collected October 15-28, 2026.)

Older generations recognize more DMO roles, especially generating tax revenue for the community.

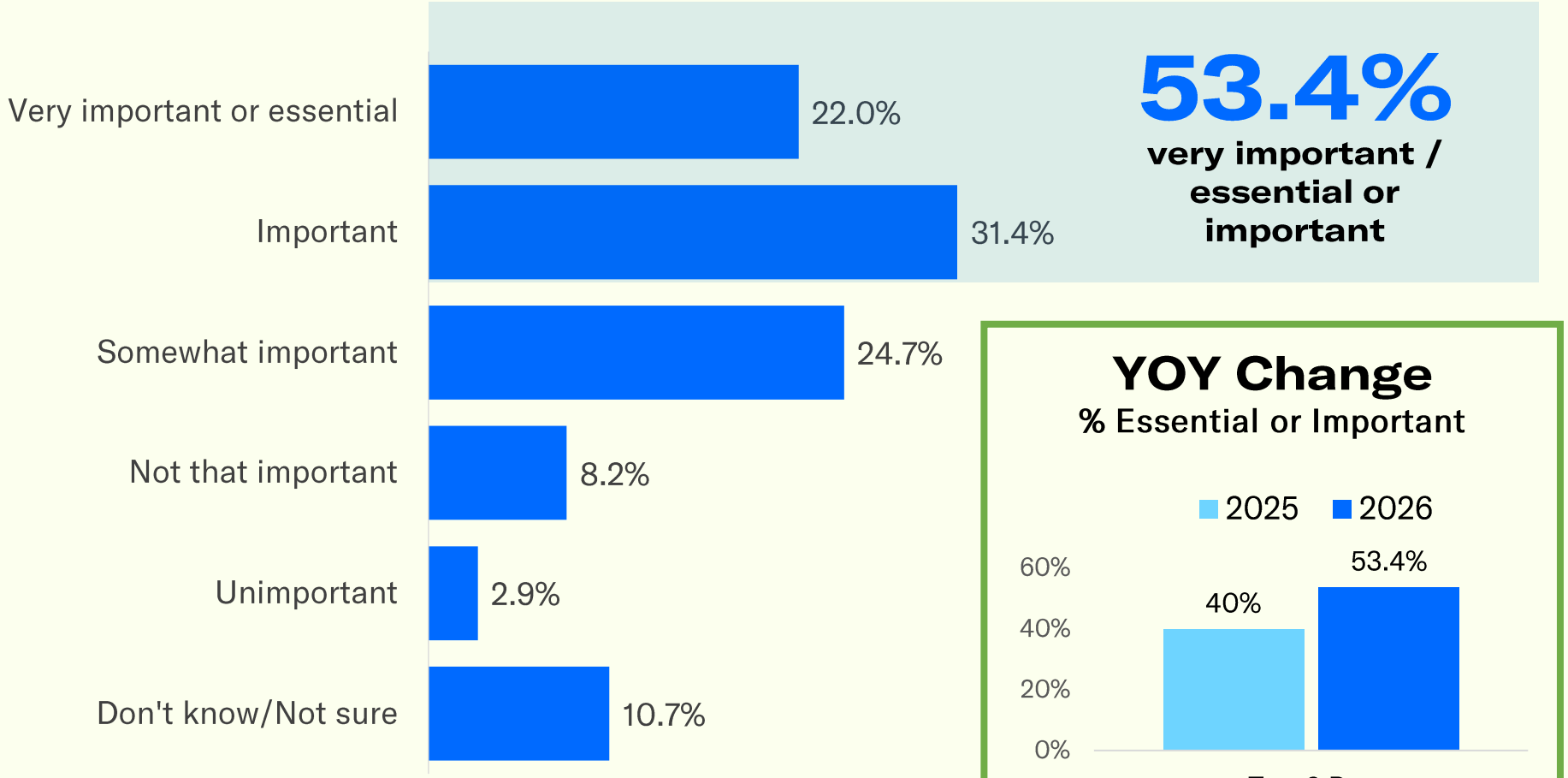
Question: To your knowledge, what are the role and responsibilities of your local Destination Marketing Organization? (e.g., CVB, Chamber, Tourism Board) (Select all that apply)

	Total	Gen Z	Millennials	Gen X	Boomers+
Promote and market your community to visitors	58.9%	45.3%	51.3%	61.2%	68.4%
Support and/or promote festivals and events in your community	44.2%	38.5%	43.4%	41.7%	49.1%
Help manage tourism in your destination & community	40.5%	32.8%	40.5%	42.7%	41.0%
Attract conferences & meetings to your community	38.2%	31.3%	36.5%	37.5%	42.8%
Operate the convention center and/or other event venues	26.5%	24.4%	26.1%	27.6%	26.7%
Generate tax revenue from visitors to invest in your community	24.3%	11.2%	20.0%	26.0%	31.1%
Other	4.3%	4.1%	3.7%	4.0%	5.1%

(Base: n=4,000; Gen Z n=299, Millennials n=1,185, Gen X n=1,202, Boomers+ n=1,314. Data collected October 15-28, 2026.)

More residents now say it is important for tourism organizations to consult locals on development and tourism management.

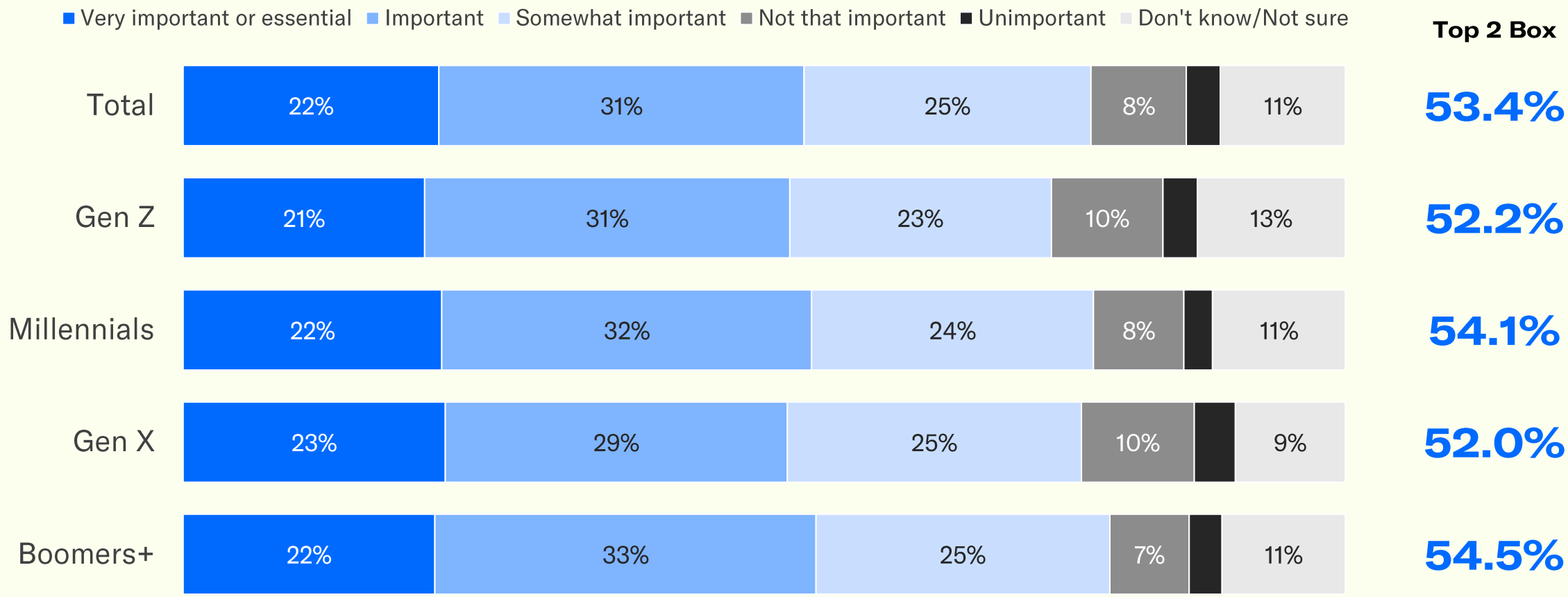
Question:
How important is it that the Official Tourism Organization (e.g., CVB, Chamber, Tourism Board) consults local residents on the development and management of tourism in your community?



(Base: All respondents, 4,000 completed surveys. Data collected October 15-28, 2026.)

Support for resident consultation is consistent across every generation.

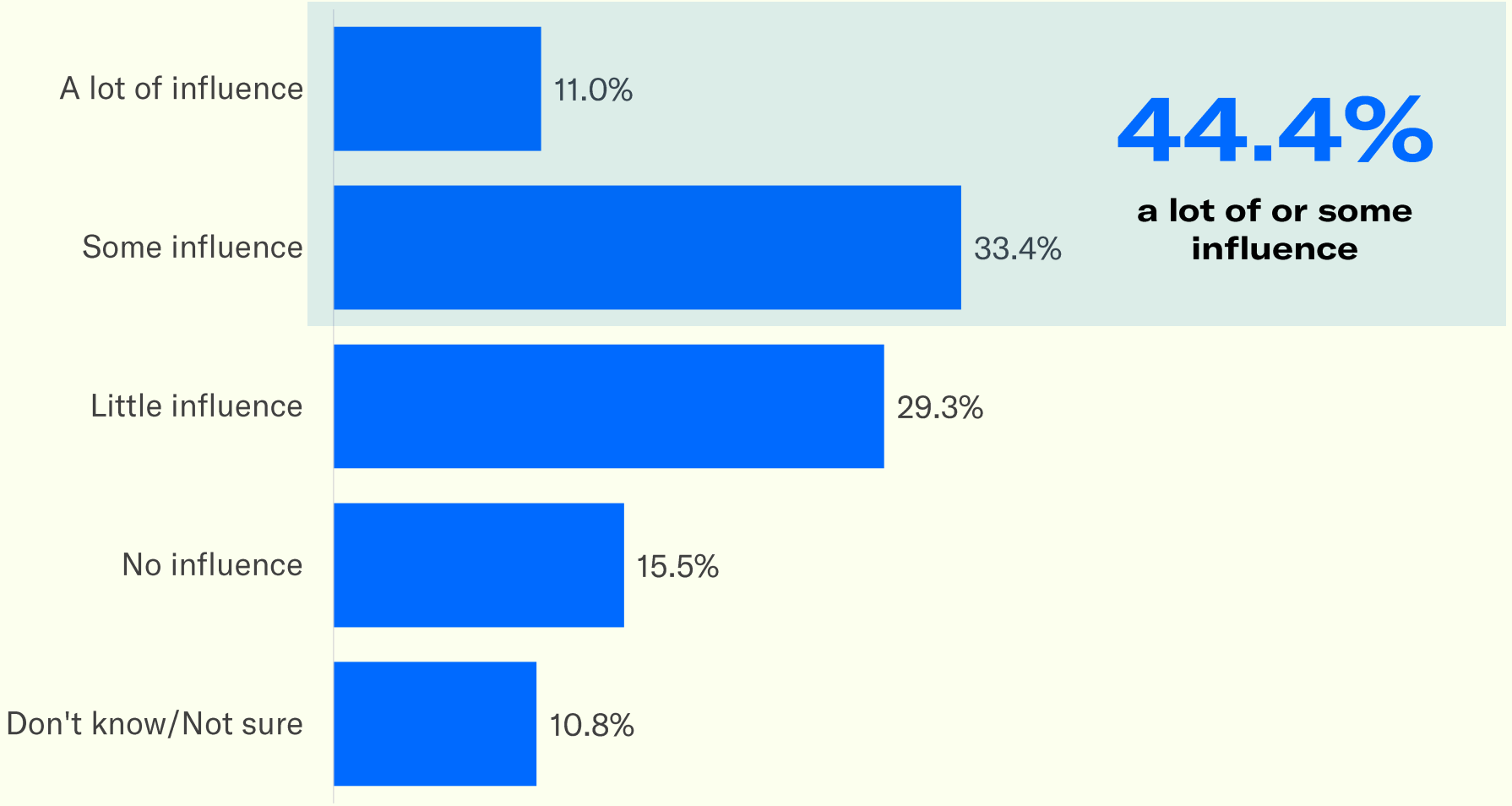
Question: How important is it that the Official Tourism Organization (e.g., CVB, Chamber, Tourism Board) consults local residents on the development and management of tourism in your community?



(Base: n=4,000; Gen Z n=299, Millennials n=1,185, Gen X n=1,202, Boomers+ n=1,314. Data collected October 15-28, 2026.)

Fewer than half of residents feel they have influence over how tourism is managed in their community.

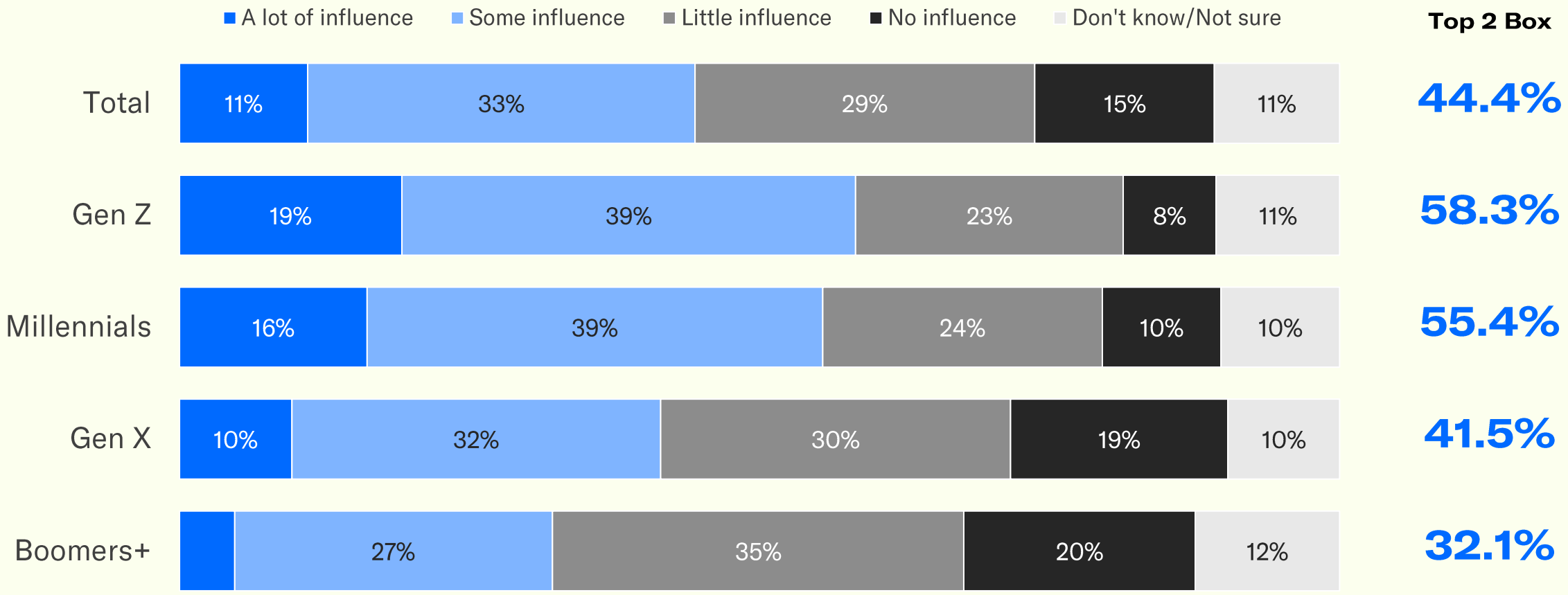
Question:
Please rate the level of influence that you believe you and other residents like you have in the development & management of tourism in your community.



(Base: All respondents, 4,000 completed surveys. Data collected October 15-28, 2026.)

Perceived influence drops sharply with age: 58% of Gen Z vs. 32% of Boomers.

Question: Please rate the level of influence that you believe you and other residents like you have in the development & management of tourism in your community.



(Base: n=4,000; Gen Z n=299, Millennials n=1,185, Gen X n=1,202, Boomers+ n=1,314. Data collected October 15-28, 2026.)

Key Takeaways

1. *Close the resident voice gap. 53.4% say it's important that DMOs consult residents, up 13.6 points, but only 44.4% feel they have any influence and just 37.8% know their DMO exists. Build consultation into how tourism is managed.*

2. *Manage crowding before it becomes backlash. Crowding concern rose 9.8 points to 51.7% in a year. Prioritize dispersal, off-peak and shoulder-season campaigns, and lesser-known areas.*

3. *Lead on responsible travel with younger audiences. 49.1% of Gen Z and 42.1% of Millennials plan to reduce their travel's impact. They are your most critical residents and most engaged travelers; build stewardship programs around them.*