“Know Your Army”

National Consumer Survey

Key Findings & Detailed Results

3 MAY 2022

Executive Summary

Army Enterprise Marketing conducted a national consumer survey in support of the U.S. Army's "Know Your Army" campaign to assess career/life priorities and knowledge of the Army across generations with a focus on Gen Z. From a sample of 3,000 U.S. adults ages 18-76, key findings include:

Career/Benefits

- Gen Z is least satisfied with and least confident in their career path compared to older generations
- Gen Z wants to "do good" for a good organization and cares most about traditional job benefits (e.g., desired salary, health insurance, paid time off) as well as diversity

Army Knowledge

- Gen Z has the highest self-proclaimed level of familiarity with the Army, yet they have many misperceptions about what it's like to serve
- In addition, many are unfamiliar with the job benefits the Army provides to Soldiers (e.g., parental leave, healthcare, education, training)
- However, after learning more about the Army, Gen Z feels "surprised" and is more likely to see it as a good career option
- Americans who describe themselves as "patriotic" or "conservative" are more likely to be familiar with the Army and the benefits of serving

Health & Wellness

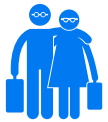
- Gen Z cites mental and physical health as the most important aspects of health but also as the areas most in need of improvement

Survey Methodology

- n=3,000 U.S. adults ages 18-76 (covering Gen Z through Baby Boomer generations, per Pew Research Center's definitions) with an oversample of Gen Z respondents
    - Respondents who indicated they are serving or have served in any military branch were screened out of the survey
- Field dates: 7-15 MAR 2022
- Mode: online
- Length of survey: ~14 minutes
- Data has been weighted by age, gender, and U.S. Census region to be representative of the national population

Reading This Report

Results in total and by generation are included throughout this report:

TOTAL		n=3,000
Generation Z (18-25)		n=1,003
Millennials (26-41)		n=666
Generation X (42-57)		n=665
Baby Boomers (58-76)		n=666

Statistically significant differences are noted throughout this report:

Black up arrows note significantly higher percentages among generations*

Men: 24%

Text boxes note significantly higher percentages within a group (e.g., within Total, within Gen Z, etc.)*

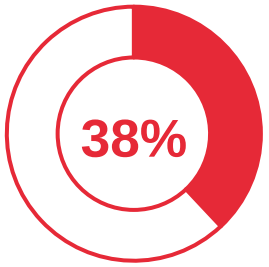
**At a minimum 95% confidence level*

Percentages in this report may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Key Findings

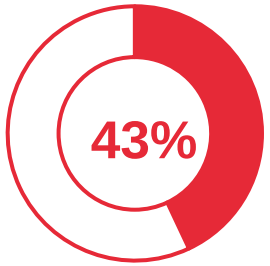
Gen Z is least satisfied with and least confident in their career path

Extremely/Very Satisfied



Gen Z is significantly less likely to be satisfied with their current career path than the general population (44%)…

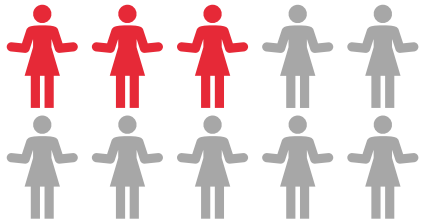
Extremely/Very Confident



…and not even half of Gen Z is confident that they know the steps to achieving their career goals

Why the lack of confidence? The reasons abound:

I don't know what I want in a career	52%
There are many paths to reaching my goals, and I don't know which is best for me	45%
It feels impossible to achieve my goals	43%
I don't have anyone to mentor or guide me	39%
My goals are changing	32%
I don't know what education or experience level I need	25%
I don't know how to get the training I need	24%



3 in 10 Gen Z respondents (31%) admit they may have picked the wrong career for them

See Q10, Q11, Q12 and Q13

Gen Z wants to “do good” for a good organization and cares most about traditional benefits as well as diversity

Top Industries of Interest:

Arts / Design, Entertainment, or Media
20%*

Medical (e.g., Physician, Dentist, Nurse)
17%*

Technology / Computer Science
15%

**Significantly higher than Total*

Most Important Benefits:

85% Desired wage/salary

82% Health insurance

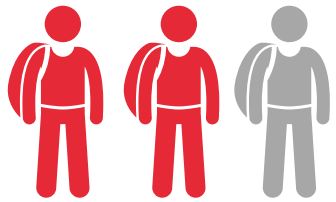
80%* Paid time off

**Significantly higher than Total*

I want to work for a company or organization that has a **good reputation** (91% agree)

I want to work for a company or organization that has a **positive impact** on society (90%)

I need work to have **meaning** (75%)



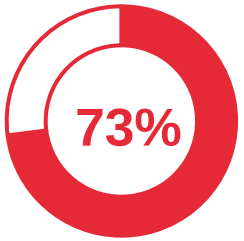
2 in 3 Gen Z respondents (66%) agree that if a company or organization didn’t have a diverse workforce, they wouldn’t want to work there – this is significantly higher than the general population, and highest among generations

See Q9, Q12 and Q16

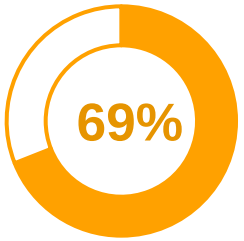
Gen Z has the highest self-proclaimed level of familiarity with the U.S. Army, yet has many misperceptions

Almost 3 in 4 Gen Z say they're at least somewhat familiar with the U.S. Army, but…

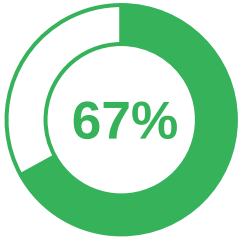
Gen Z



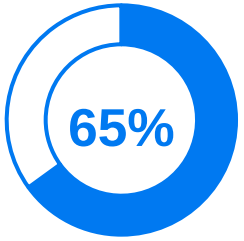
Millennials



Gen X



Boomers



…they're the *least* likely to know anyone who's served in the military*

…they're the *least* likely to consider joining the U.S. Army to be a good career option for today's young adults*

…1 in 4 (26%) think Soldiers join the Army because they can't find a job

…they're the *least* likely to think Soldiers have work-life balance*, and only half (51%) think the Army allows time for recreation and hobbies

…two-thirds think they wouldn't be able to express themselves (67%) or explore their personal interests (66%) if they were in the Army

See Q19, D1, Q20, Q21, Q22, Q23 and Q26

**As compared to both Total and all other generations*

In addition, many are unfamiliar with the benefits the Army provides to Soldiers

A solid proportion of Gen Z is aware that the Army provides:

53%†	Tuition assistance
53%†	Earn up to full college tuition
47%	Good wage/salary
45%†	Travel/global opportunities
44%†	Free healthcare for those who quality
43%†	Financial education programs
42%†	Complete healthcare coverage

Yet fewer know the Army offers the following:

36%†	Advanced training certificates	26%†	Access to cutting-edge technology
34%†	Home-buying benefits	25%†	Paid time off
32%	Ability to join/serve with friends	23%†	Affordable childcare
31%†	Early retirement	21%	Paid parental leave
31%†	Relocation assistance	15%	Flexibility to choose where you live/work
26%†	Athletic programs	8%	Telework opportunities*

†Significantly lower awareness than Total

**Increased temporarily due to COVID-19; ongoing teleworking opportunities subject to Army career*

See Q25

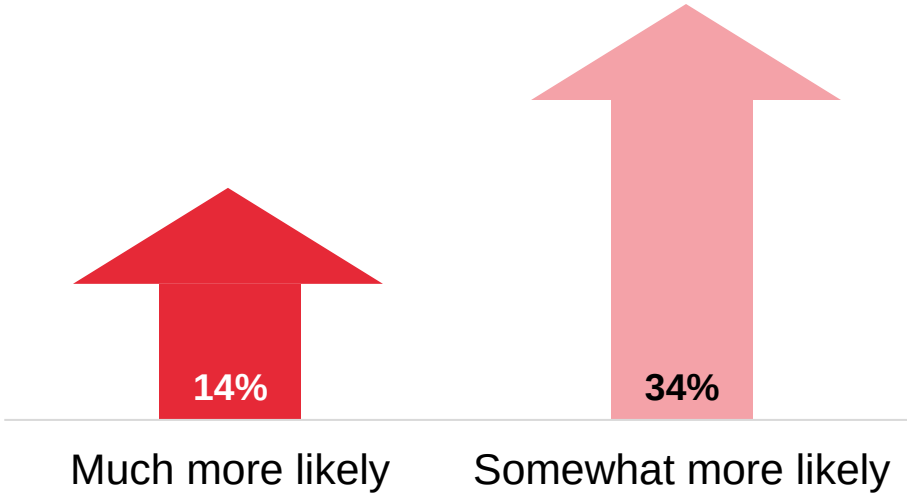
However, after learning more about the Army, Gen Z feels “surprised,” is more likely to see it as a good career option

“*In addition to job benefits like free healthcare, tuition assistance, paid time off, and early retirement, the Army offers jobs of all kinds, from medical/healthcare to tech and computer science. What’s more, Soldiers have the opportunity and support/training they need to change careers in the Army so they can find their passion.*

How does learning these facts about the Army make you feel?”

Initially, only **31%** of Gen Z respondents considered joining the U.S. Army to be a good career option for today’s young adults.

However, after reading the description at left, nearly half (47%) say they’re more likely to see joining as a good career option:

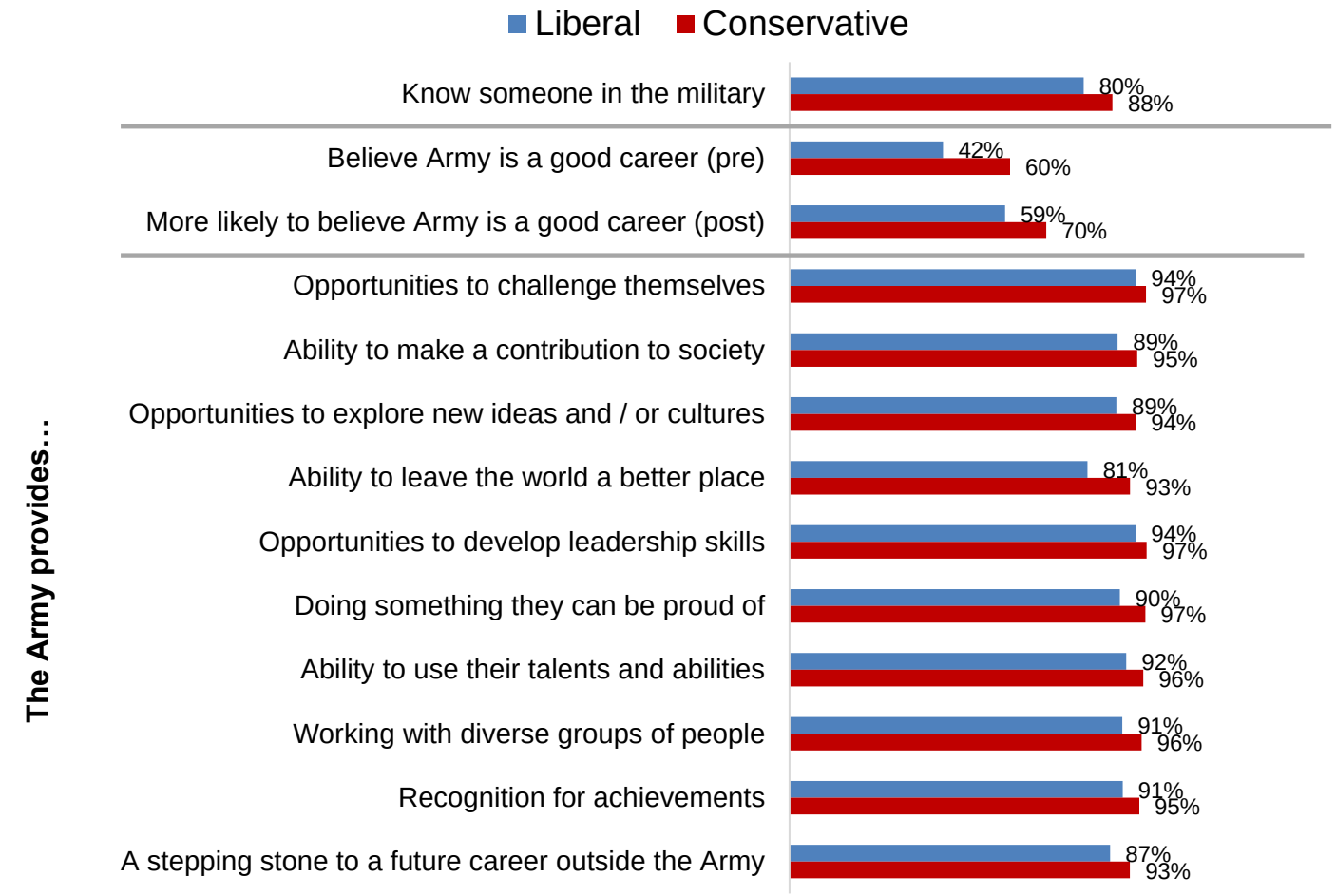


See Q27 and Q28

In general, self-described liberals have less knowledge about the Army than self-described conservatives

Respondents who self-identify as liberal are more likely to place importance on many of the traits and benefits provided by the U.S. Army.

However, respondents who self-identify as conservative are more likely to be familiar with the U.S. Army and believe that it presents a good career option for today's young adults. They are also more likely to believe that a career in the Army would provide the benefits that liberal audiences deem important.

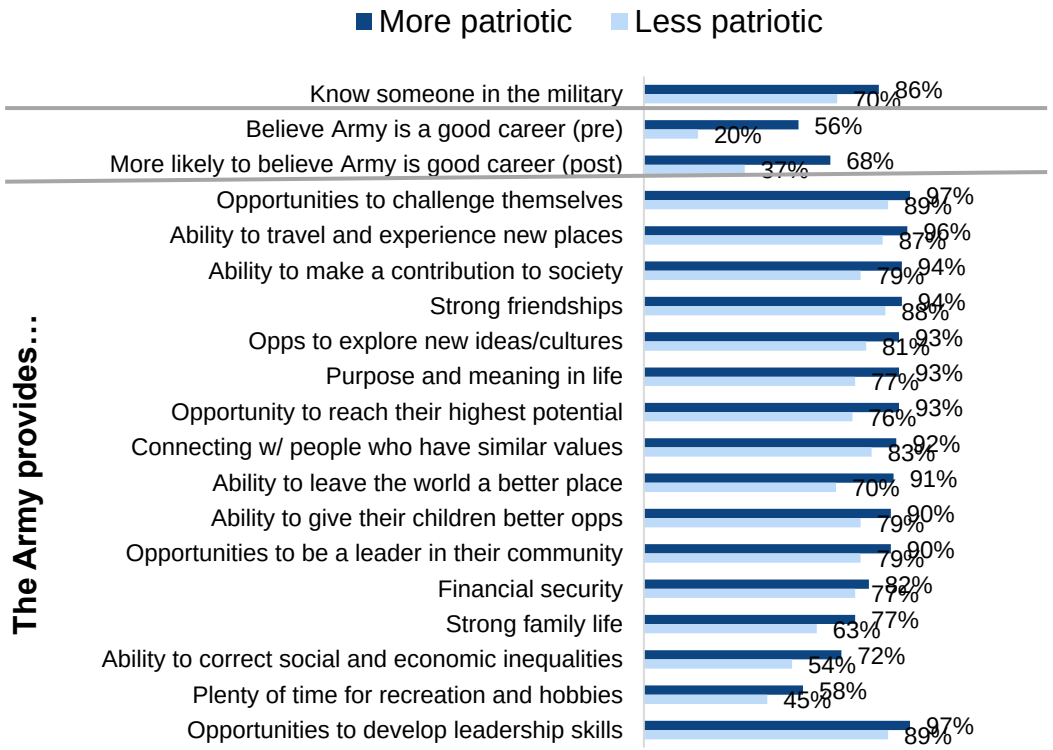


Conservatives are statistically significantly higher than Liberals for all items listed above

See D1, Q20, Q23, Q24 and Q28

Similarly, those who don't see themselves as strongly patriotic are less familiar with the Army and its benefits

In nearly every instance, respondents who identify as "very" or "somewhat" patriotic are significantly more likely to agree that a career in the U.S. Army would provide the life and career benefits listed in the survey, as compared to those who identify as "not very" or "not at all" patriotic. The only listed benefit that did *not* see significantly higher levels of agreement among more patriotic respondents was the ability to live close to parents and relatives.

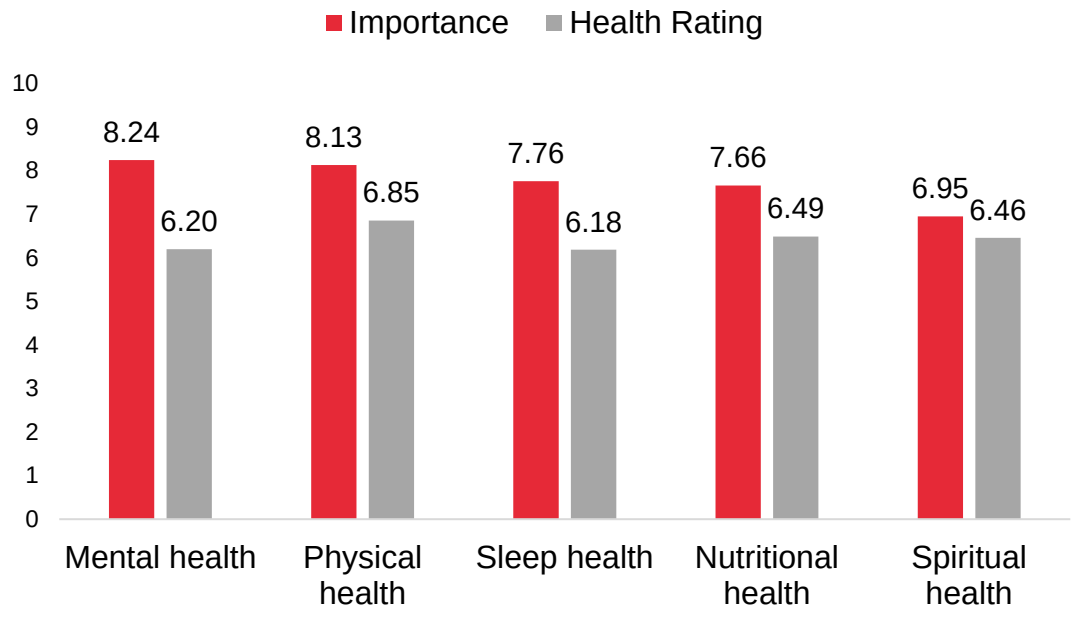


See D1, Q20, Q23, Q24 and Q28

Gen Z cites mental and physical health as most important, but also most in need of improvement

Mental health and **physical health**, followed by sleep, nutritional, and spiritual health, are most important to Gen Z.

Despite rating these aspects of health highly in *importance*, Gen Z often rates their *actual health* in these aspects much lower.



Most Gen Z respondents are prioritizing their **mental health** (65%) and **physical health** (63%) this year and are most interested in:

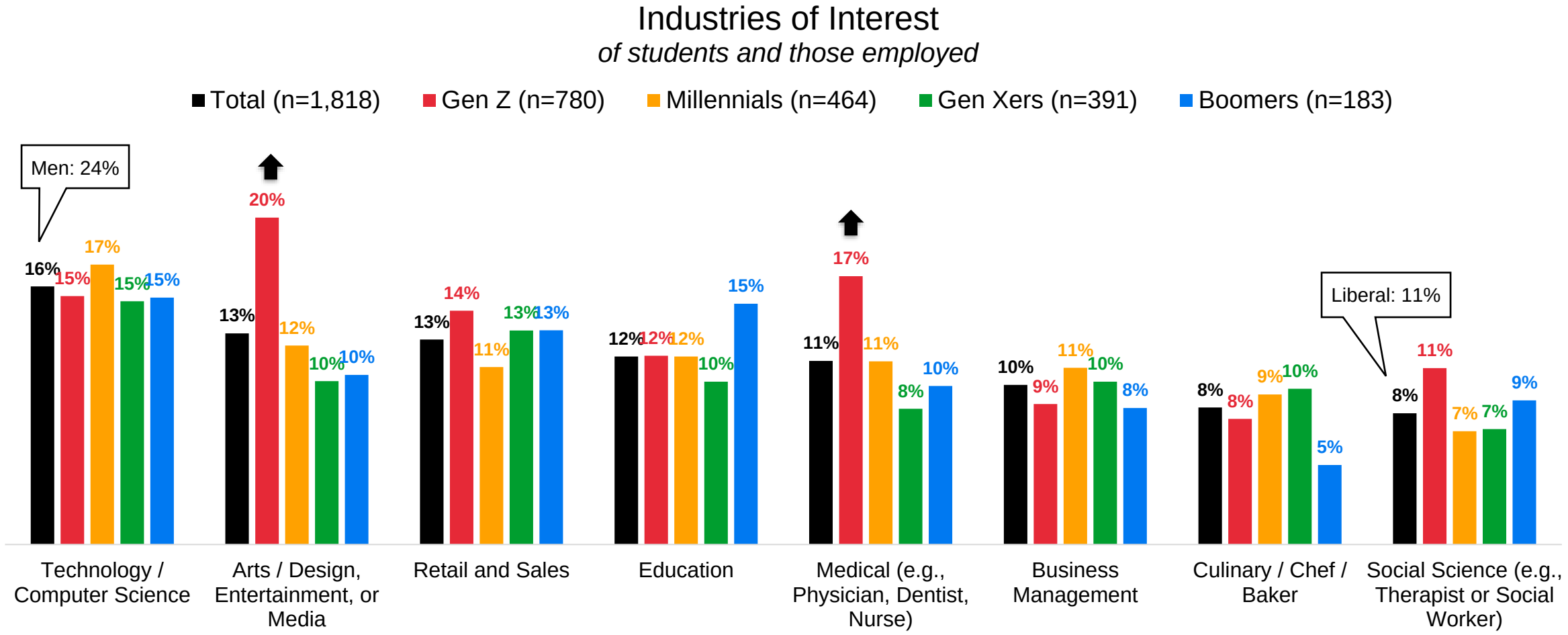
- Reducing stress **(70%)**
- Moving/exercising more **(64%)**
- Eating healthier meals **(60%)**
- Improving relationships **(52%)**
- Developing a better sleep schedule **(51%)**

See Q4, Q5, Q6 and Q7

Detailed Findings

1. Career

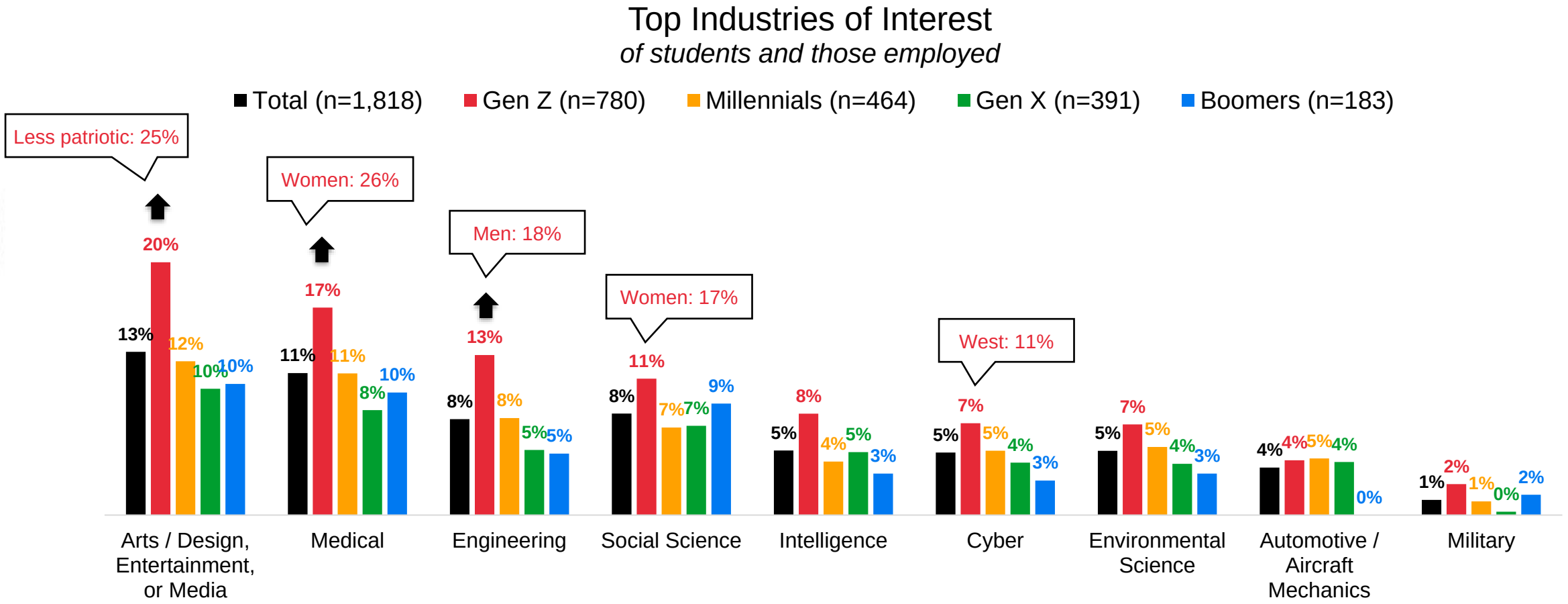
The most popular career industries include tech, arts & entertainment, and retail



Q9. Which industry or industries are you most interested working in? Select all that apply.

Significantly higher than other generations

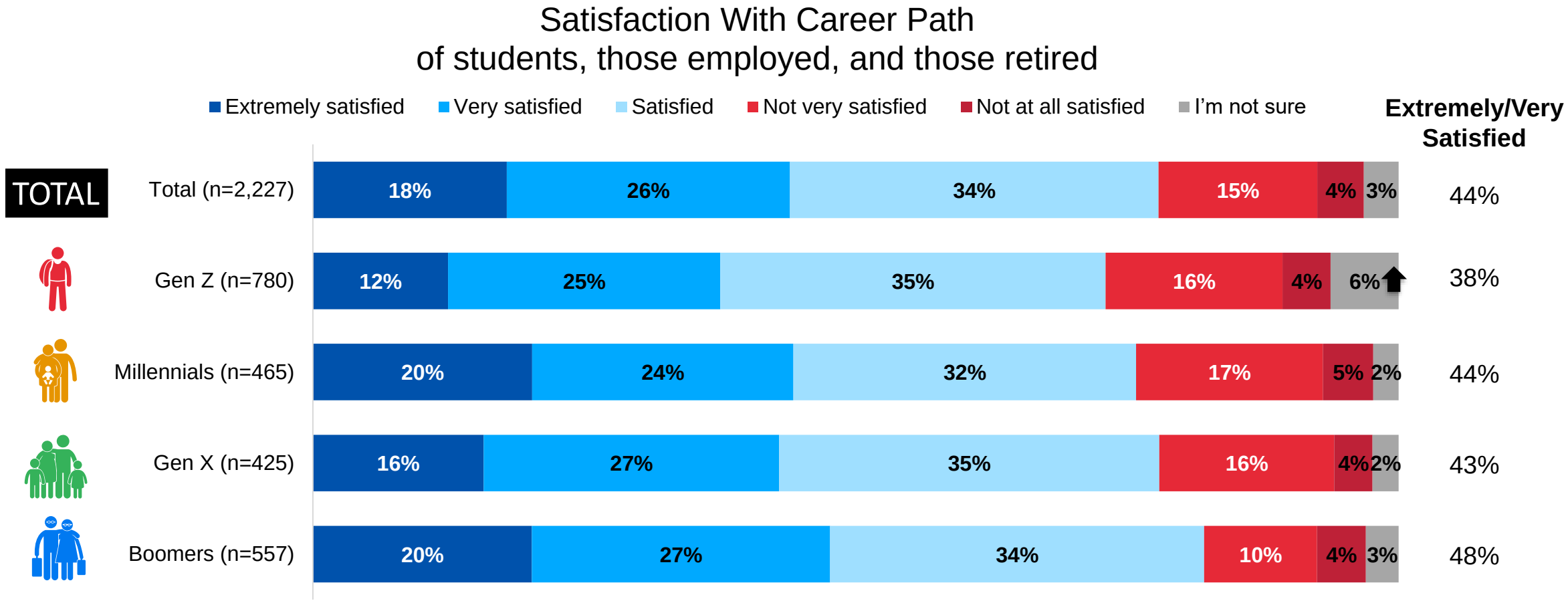
Compared to older generations, Gen Z is most interested in the arts and entertainment industry, followed by medical



Q9. Which industry or industries are you most interested working in? Select all that apply.

⬆ *Significantly higher than other generations*

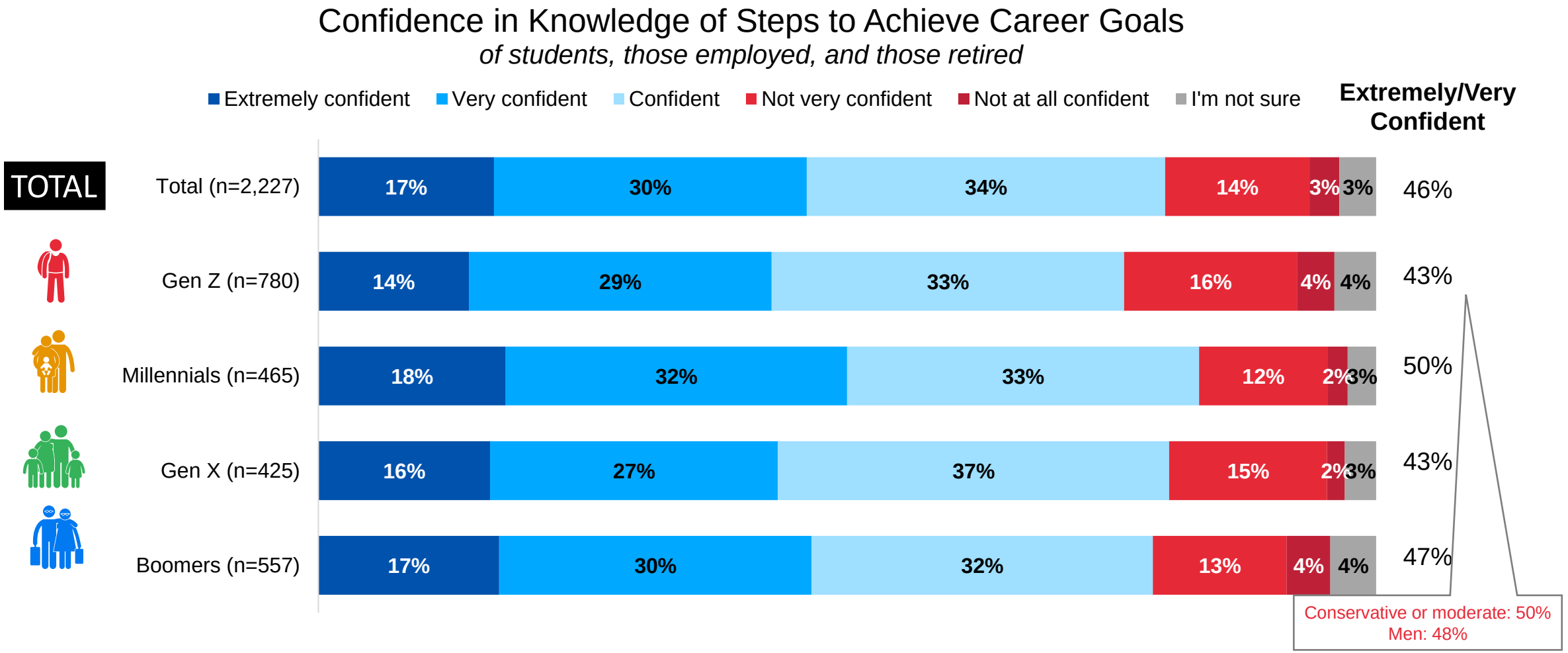
Boomers are the most satisfied with their career paths while Gen Z is the least satisfied



Q10. Overall, how satisfied [are / were] you with your [current / former] career path?

Significantly higher than other generations

Gen Z and Gen X are tied for having the lowest level of confidence in knowing how to achieve their career goals

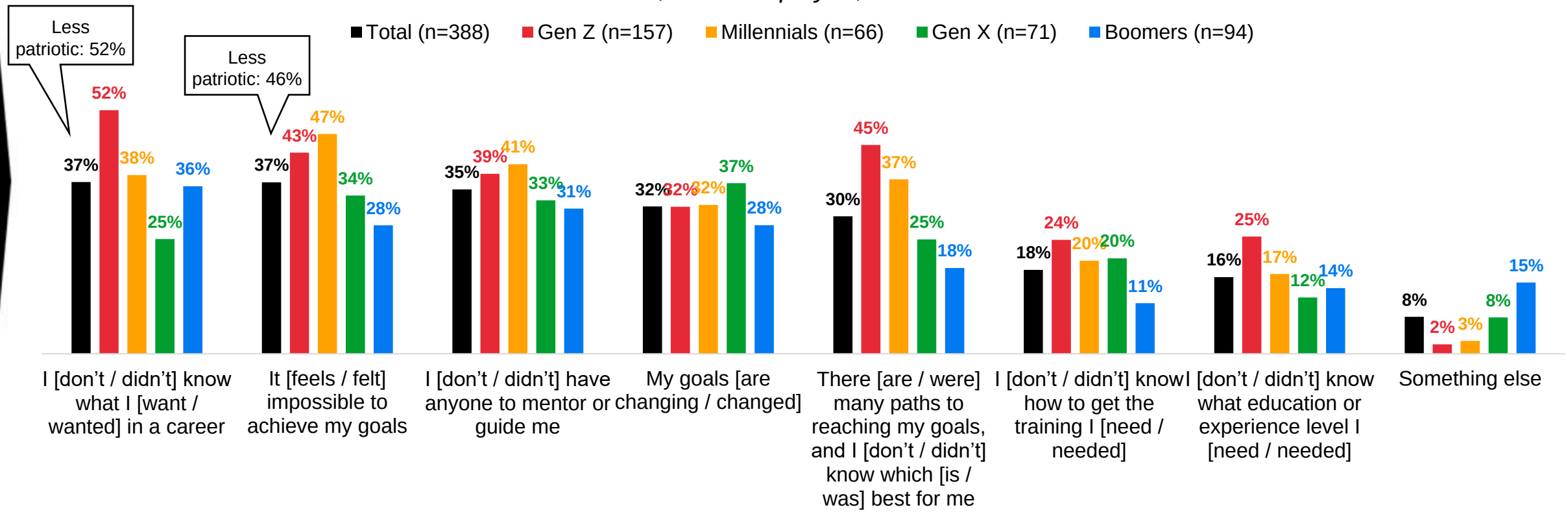


Q11. How confident [are / were] you that you [know / knew] the steps to achieving your career goals?

Gen Z is unsure of what they want in a career, or what steps are best for them to reach their goals

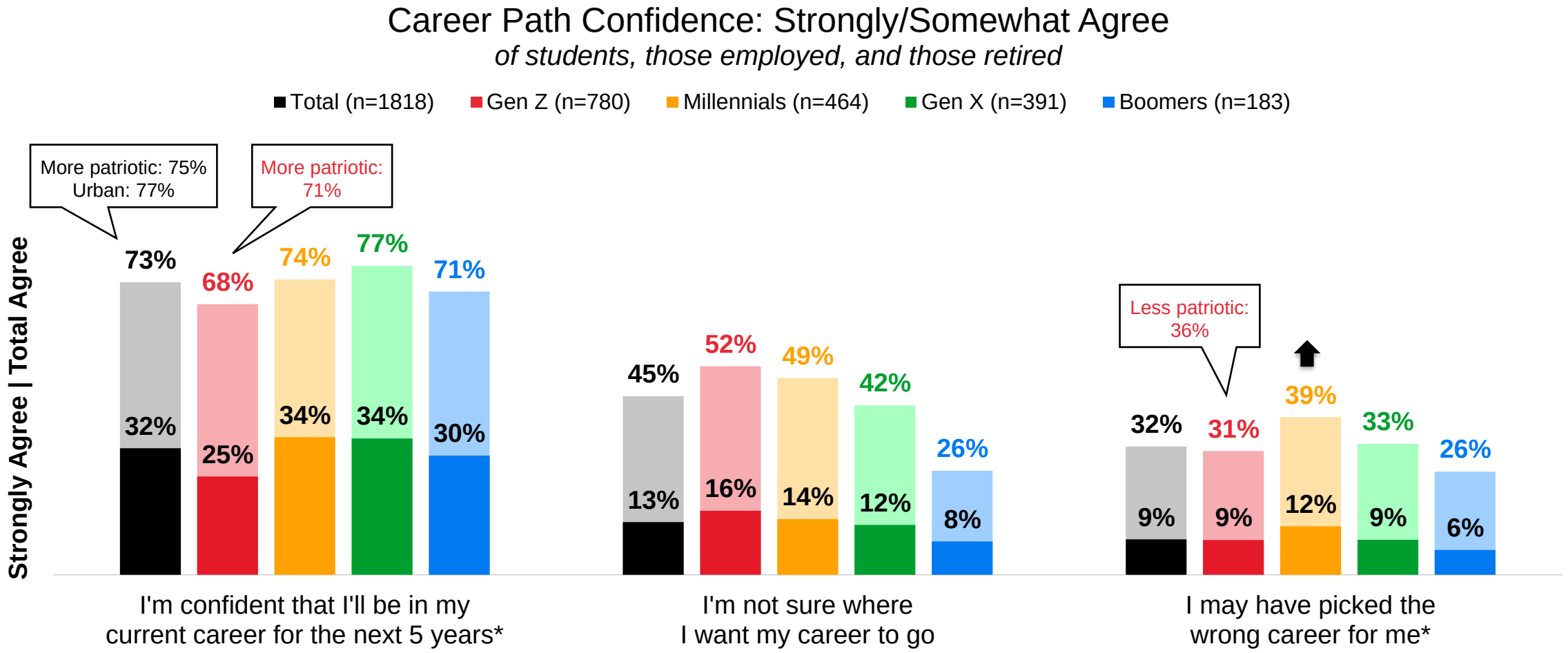
Reasons for Lack of Confidence in Knowledge of Steps to Achieve Career Goals

of students, those employed, and those retired



Q12. For what reason(s) [are / were] you not confident in knowing the steps to achieving your career goals? Select all that apply.

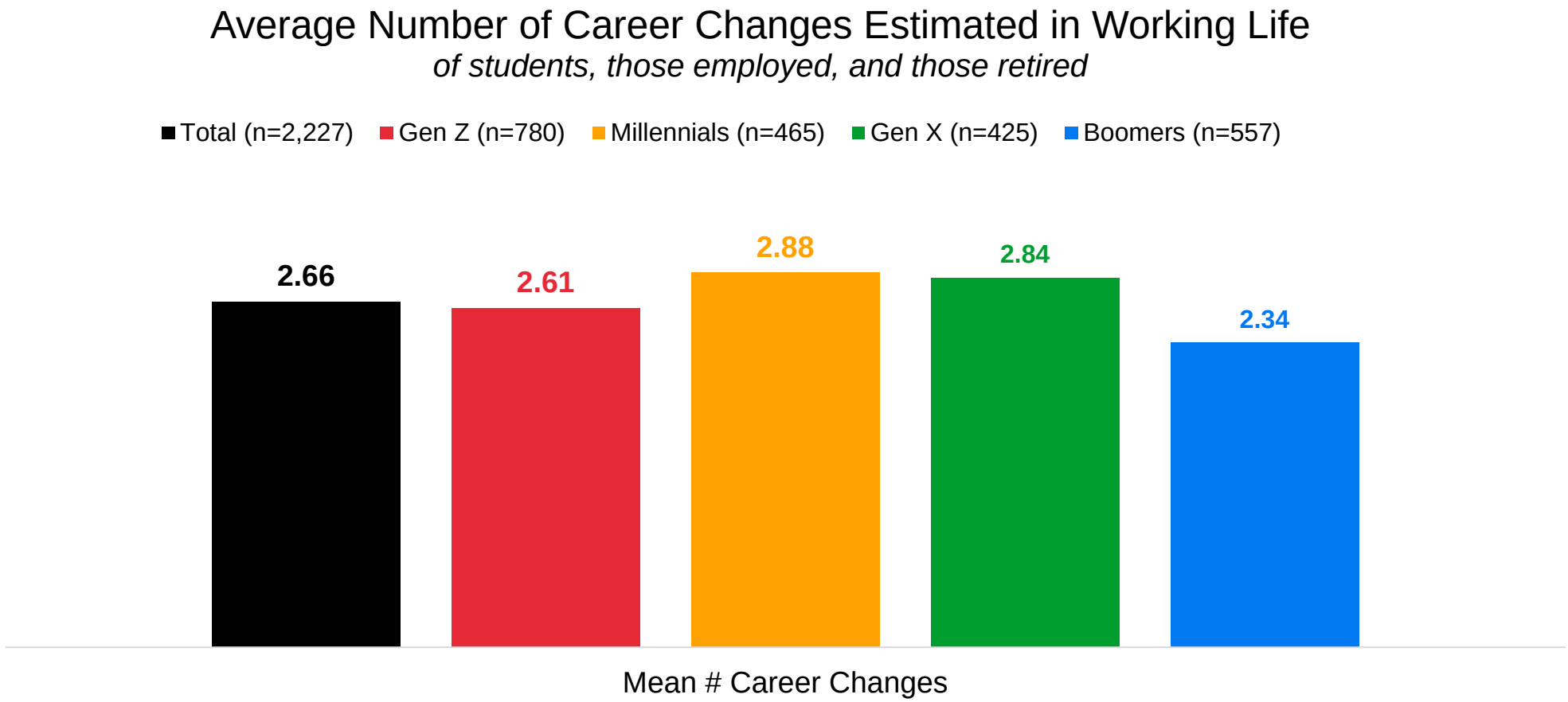
Over half of Gen Z is unsure where they want their career to go, a sentiment that decreases with age



Q13. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?
**Asked only of students and those employed*

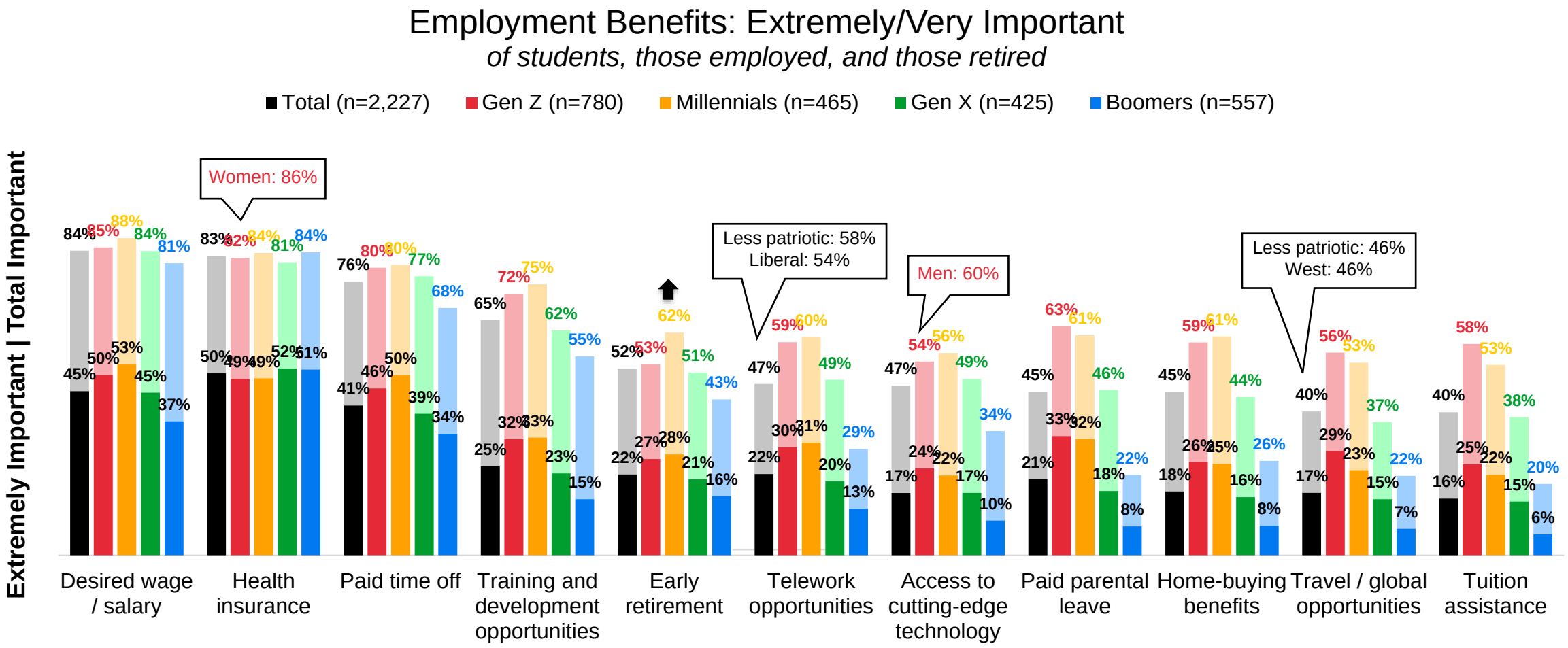
⬆ *Significantly higher than other generations*

Regardless of age, Americans think they will change careers two to three times in their working life



Q14. Approximately how many times [do you think you will / did you] change careers in your working life?

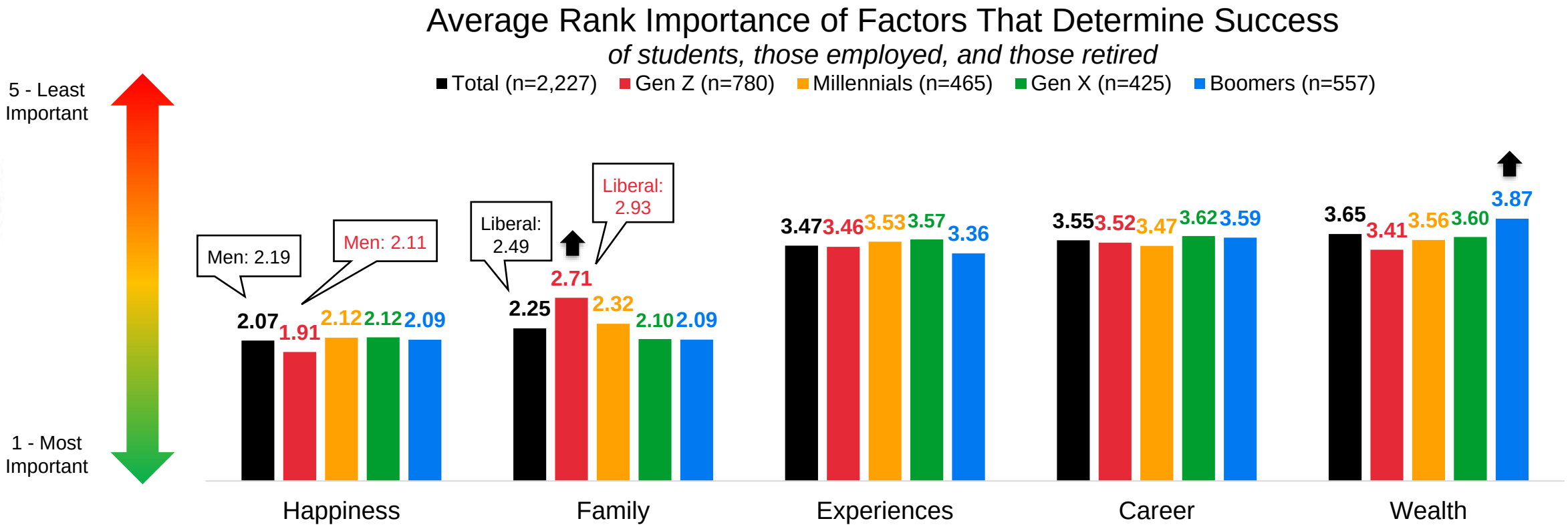
When considering a new job, Gen Z finds salary, health insurance, and PTO to be the most important benefits



Q16. How important [are / were] the following employment benefits when considering a new job?

⬆ *Significantly higher than other generations*

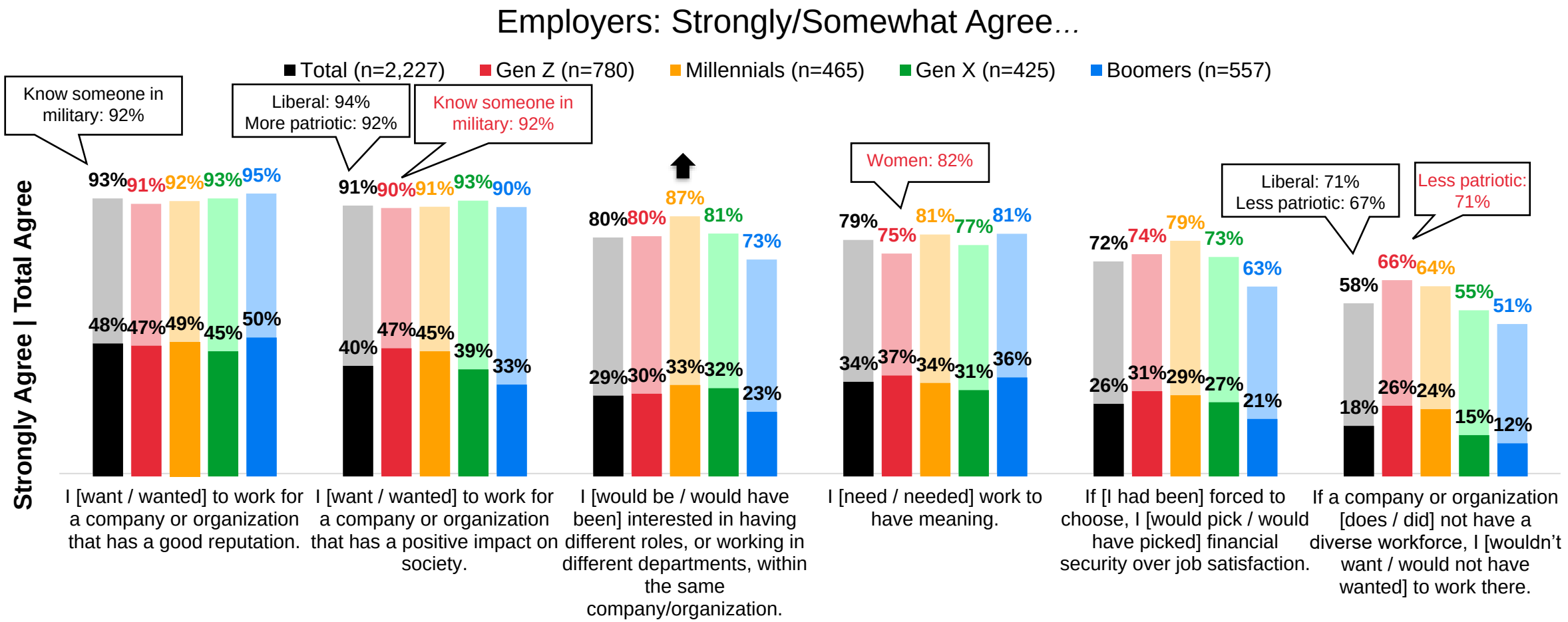
Regardless of age, Americans deem happiness and family to be the most important factors in determining "success"



Q17. In your opinion, which factors are the most important in determining what "success" [looks / looked] like for you? Please rank the items below, with "1" being the most important and "5" being the least important.

⬆ *Significantly higher than other generations*

Americans want to work for an organization that has a good reputation and a positive impact on society



Q18. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

Significantly higher than other generations

Differences by Gender and Race/Ethnicity

Gender

- Men are more confident and satisfied with their career path, whereas women are more unsure.
- Men place greater importance on having their own business and designing/creating new things, while women place greater importance on helping others and having a positive impact on society.
- Women are more likely to say family, happiness, and experience determine “success,” while men are more likely to say career and wealth.

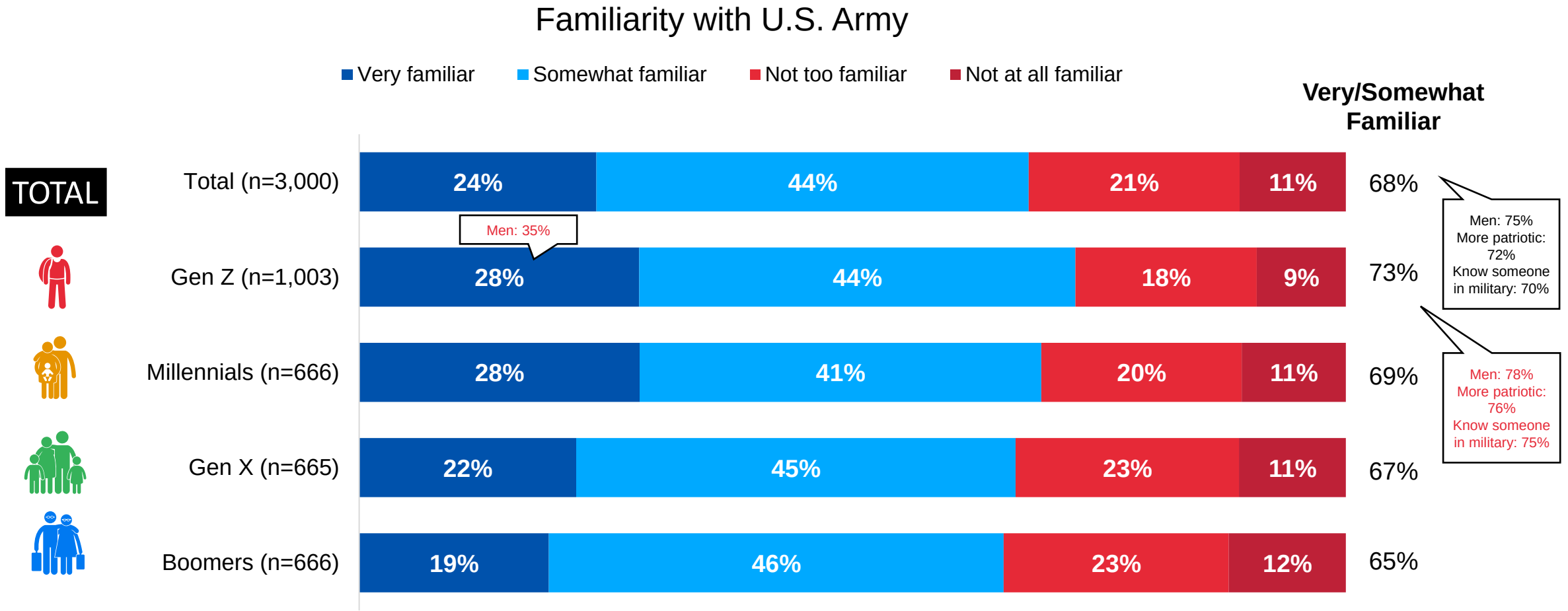
Race/Ethnicity

- White Americans are more confident and satisfied with their career path, whereas non-whites are more unsure.
- Whether it comes to life values or work benefits, non-whites tend to rate these items equally important or more important than whites.
- Non-white Americans are more likely to say wealth determines success, while white Americans are more likely to say family and experiences.
- Non-white Americans are more likely than whites to agree that, if a company/organization didn’t have a diverse workforce, they wouldn’t want to work there. However, these racial differences do not hold true among Gen Z, who agree with these statements at similar levels.

Detailed Findings

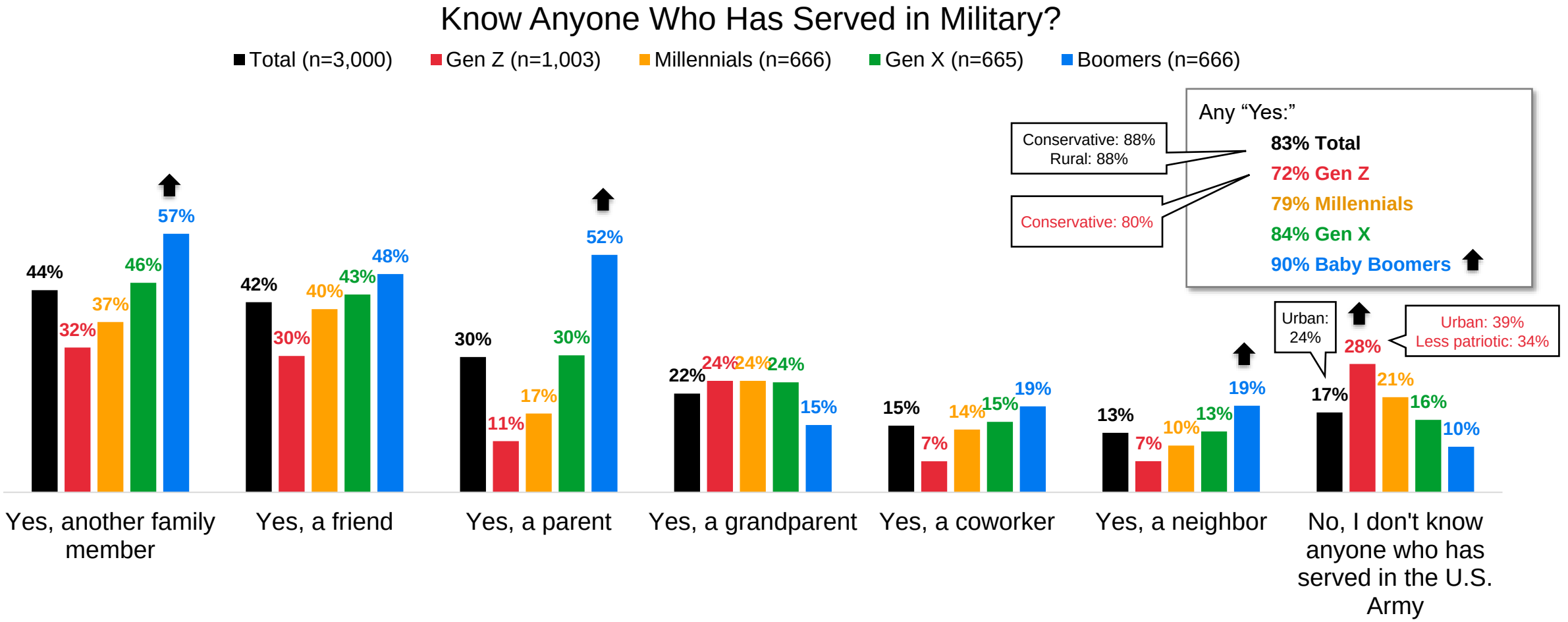
2. Army

Surprisingly, the youngest generations are more likely to say they are “very familiar” with the Army



Q19. How familiar or unfamiliar are you with the following branches of the U.S. military?

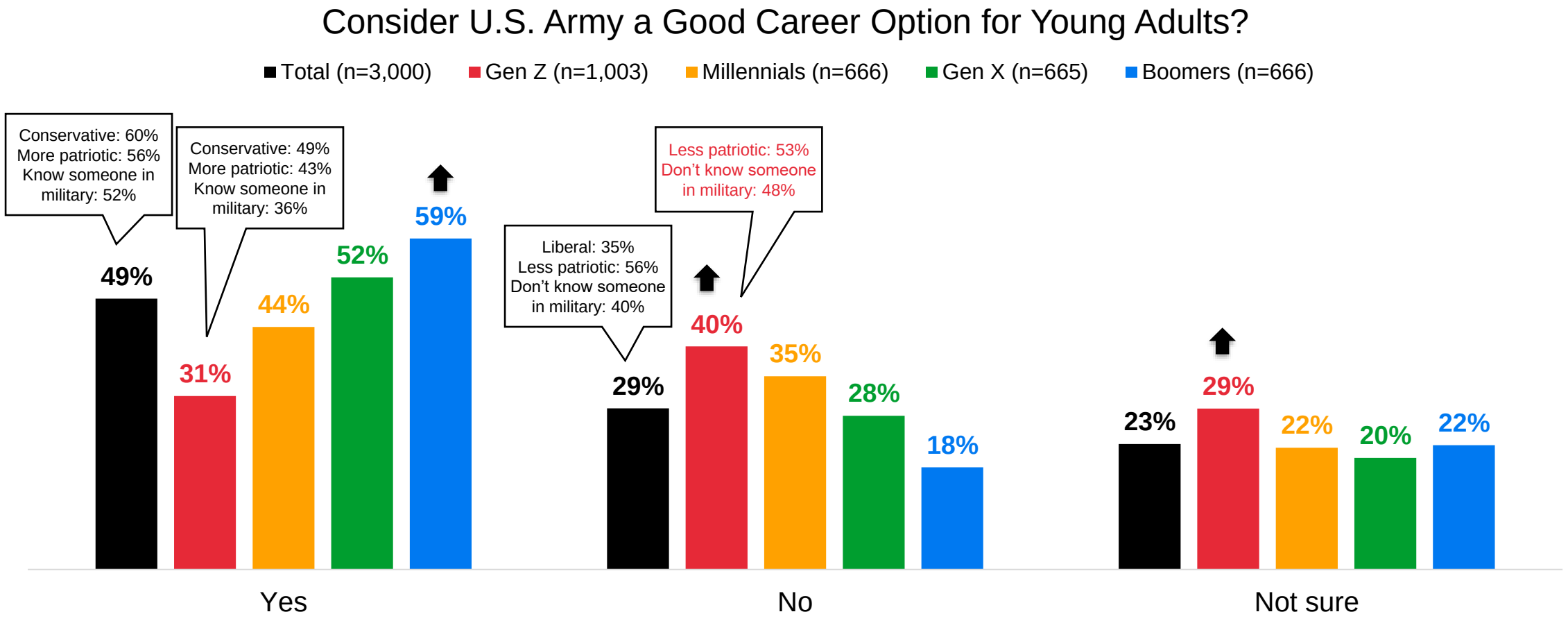
Gen Z is the least likely to know anyone who has served in the military



D1. Do you personally know anyone who has served in the U.S. military? Select all that apply.

⬆ *Significantly higher than other generations*

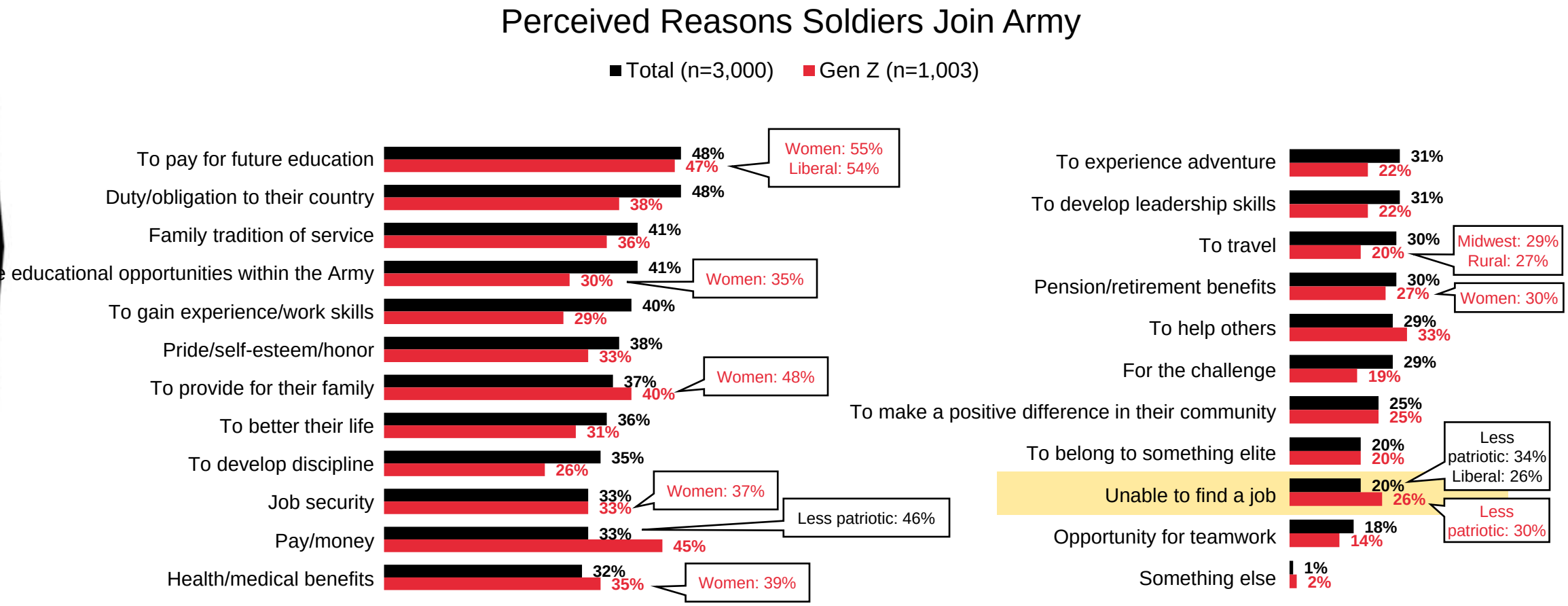
Considering the Army to be a good career option for young adults increases with age



Q20. Generally speaking, do you consider joining the U.S. Army to be a good career option for today's young adults?

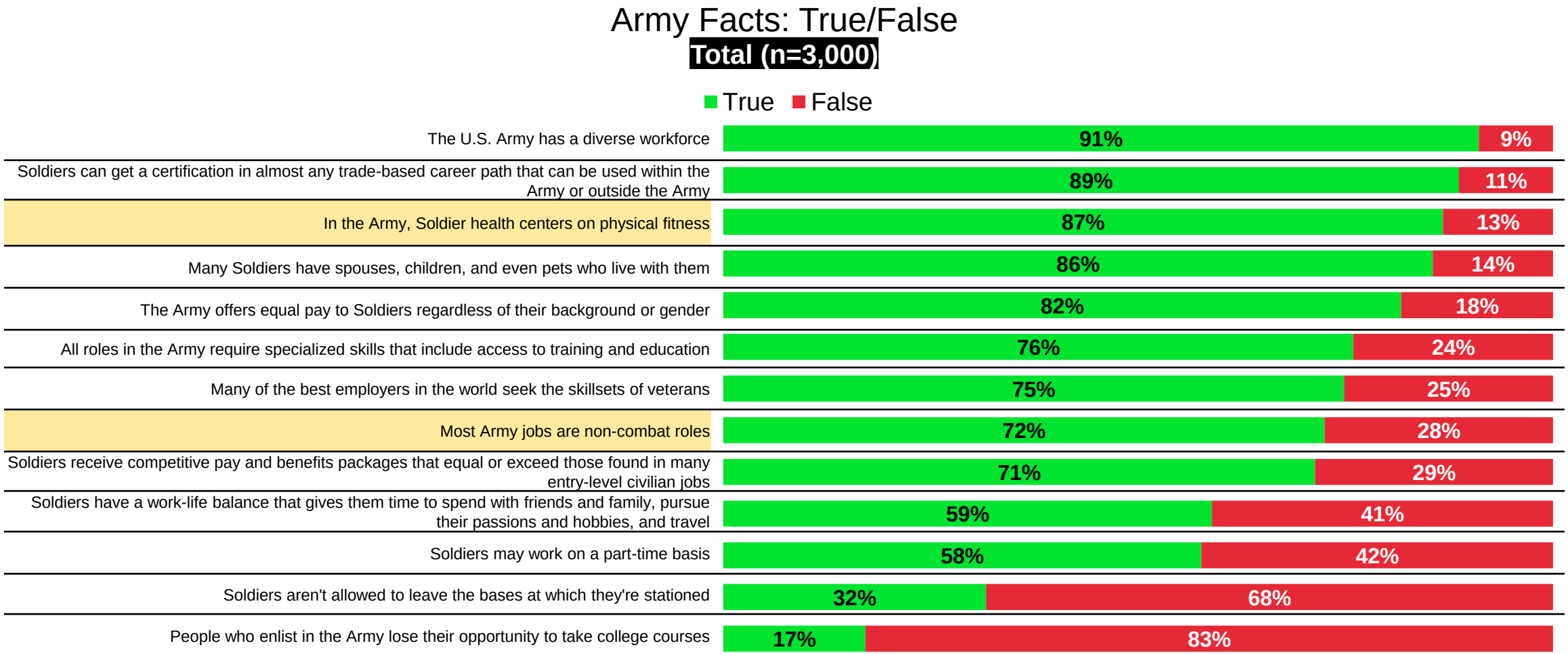
↑ *Significantly higher than other generations*

One-fourth of Gen Z respondents think Soldiers join the Army because they can't find a job



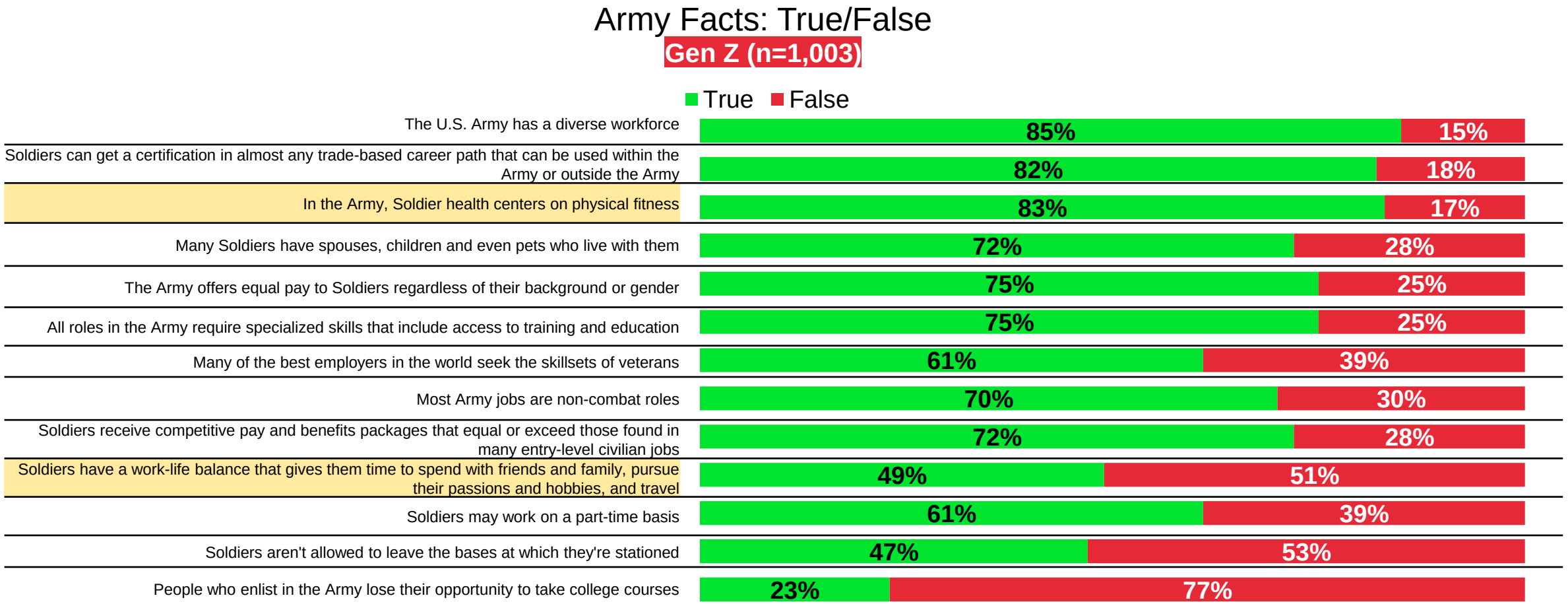
Q21. What are the main reason(s) you think most Soldiers want to join the Army? Select all that apply.

Over one-in-four Americans mistakenly believe most Army jobs are combat roles; most believe health centers on physical fitness



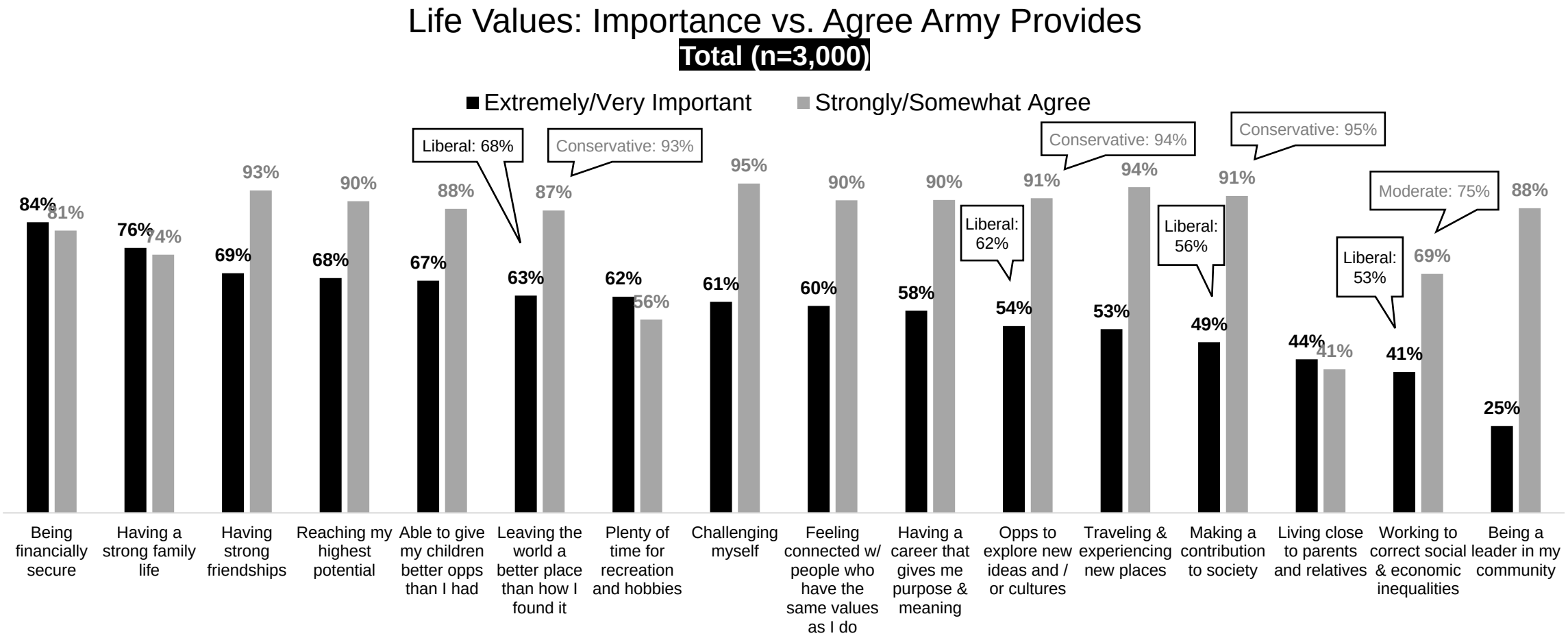
Q22. To the best of your knowledge, which of the following statements about the Army are true, and which are false?

Gen Z also thinks that Soldier health centers on physical fitness, and a slim majority do not think Soldiers have a work-life balance



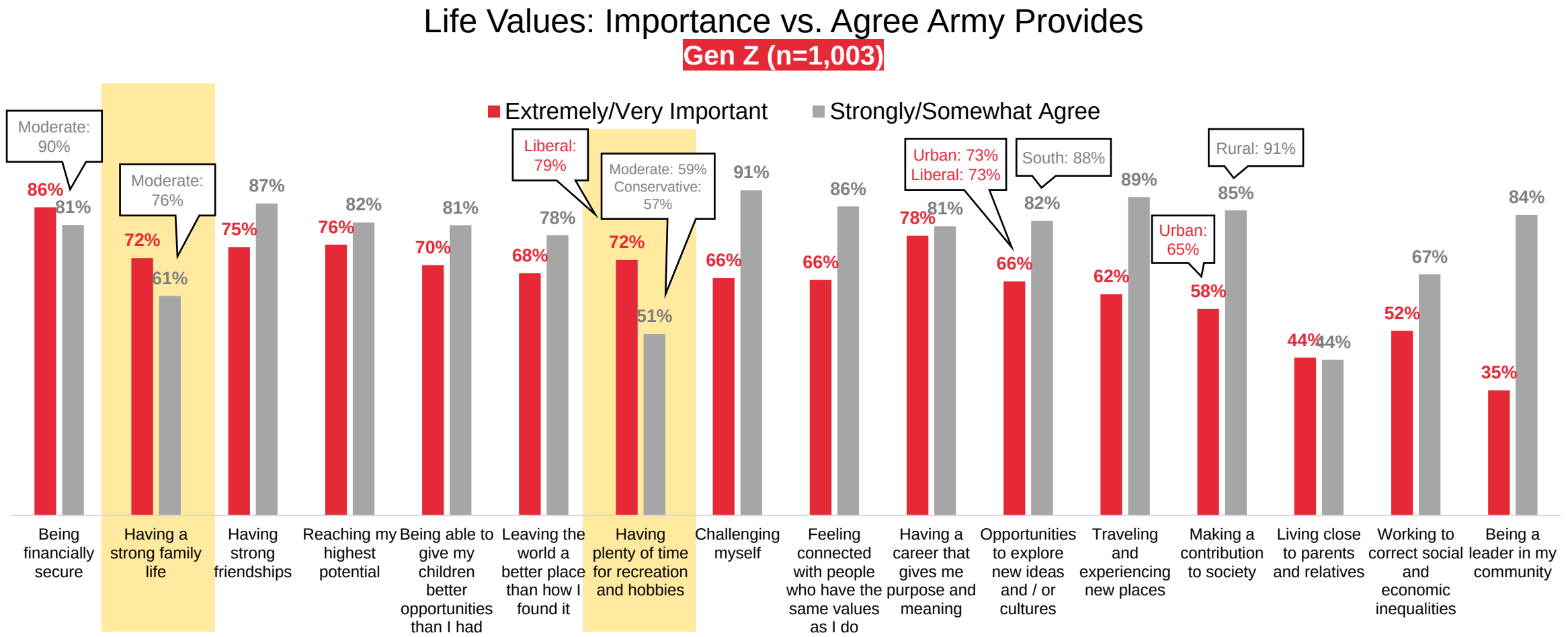
Q22. To the best of your knowledge, which of the following statements about the Army are true, and which are false?

Most believe the Army can deliver on most benefits, including less-important ones



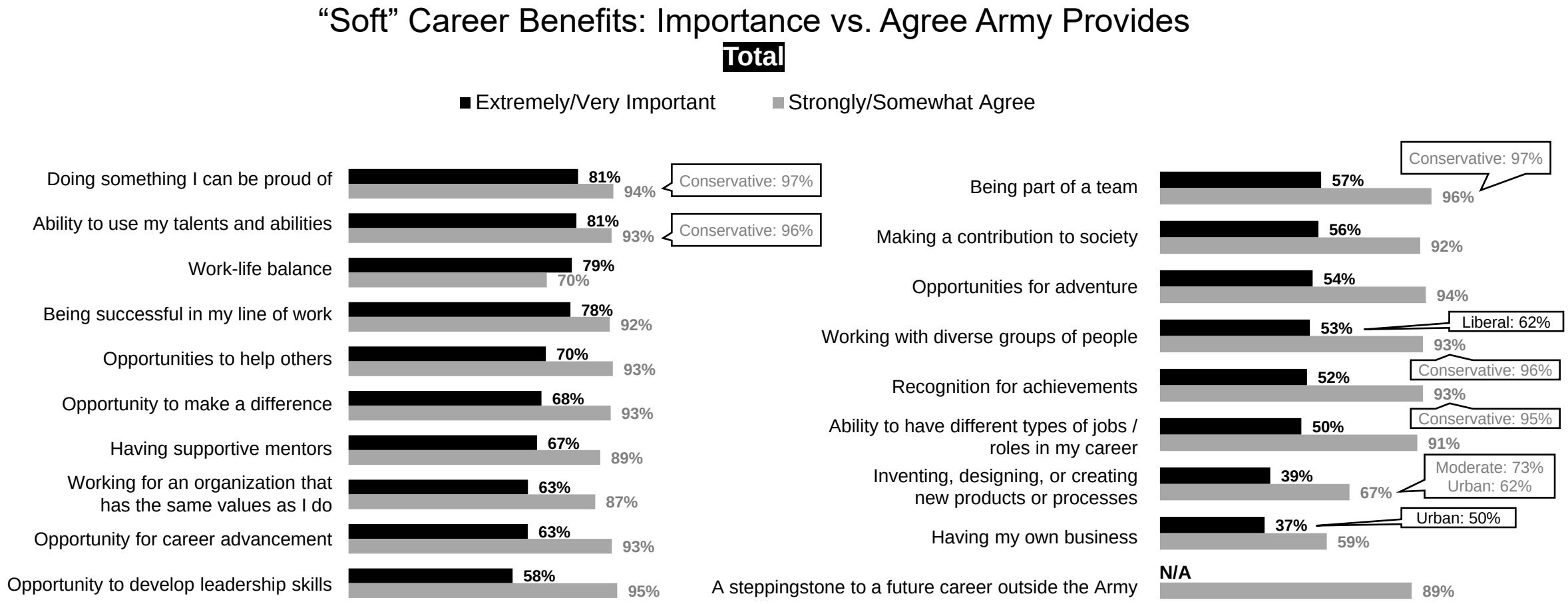
Q8. How important or unimportant is each of the following to you in your overall life? *Q23. Based on what you know or have heard, how much do you agree or disagree that a career in the U.S. Army provides each of the following for a Soldier's overall life?*

Gen Z does not perceive the Army to quite deliver on “strong family life” and “time for recreation and hobbies”



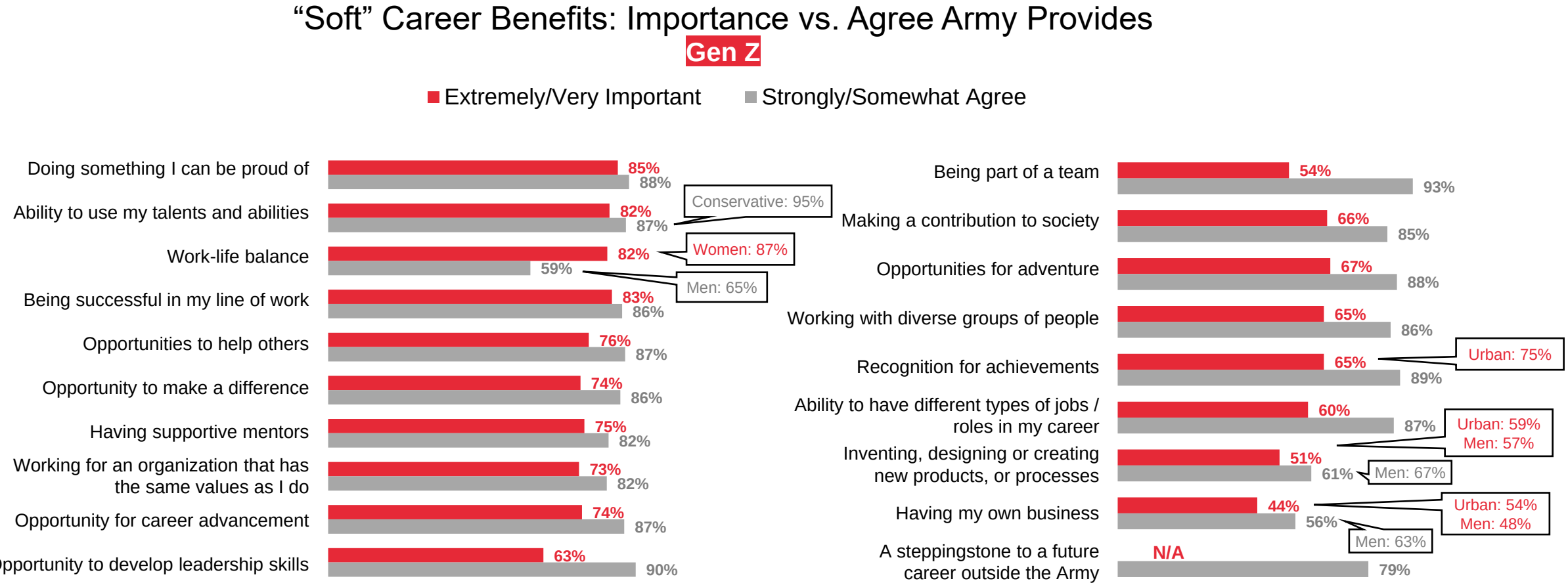
Q8. How important or unimportant is each of the following to you in your overall life? Q23. Based on what you know or have heard, how much do you agree or disagree that a career in the U.S. Army provides each of the following for a Soldier’s overall life?

Most Americans think that the Army can provide every listed “soft” benefit



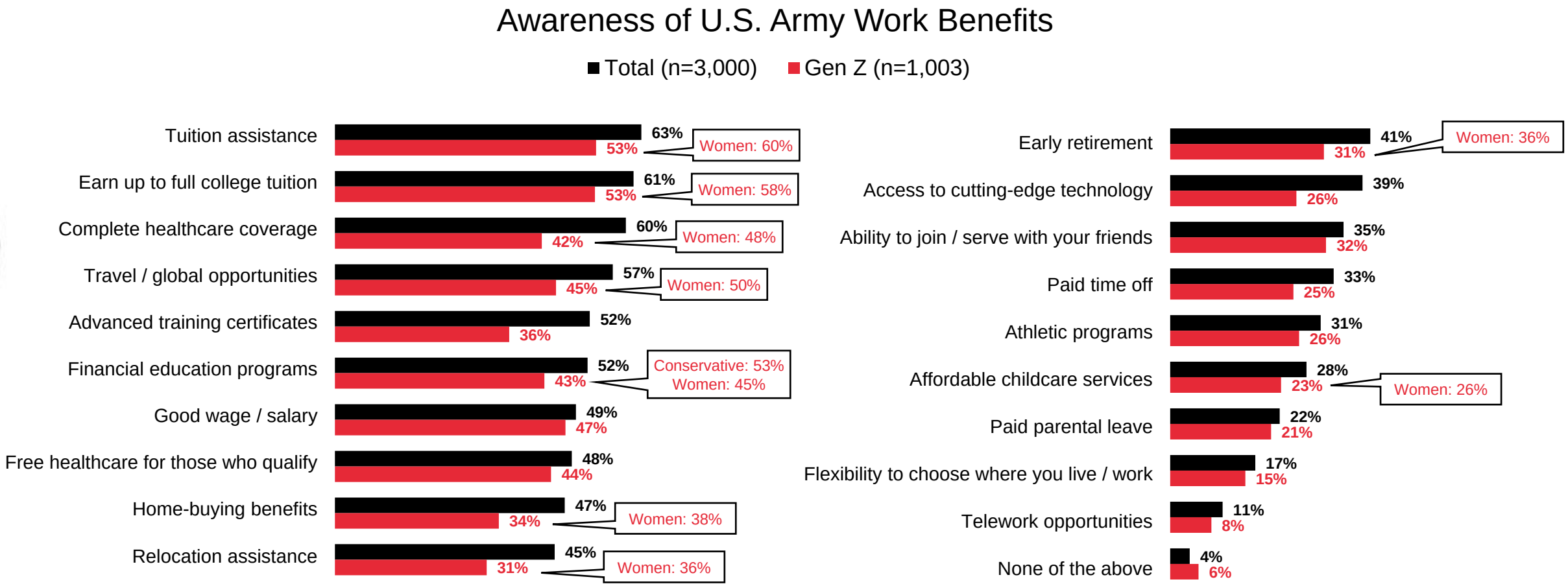
Q15. How important [is / was] the following to you in your work life? [Asked of students, those employed, and those retired; n=2,227]
Q24. Based on what you know or have heard, how much do you agree or disagree that the U.S. Army provides each of the following for a Soldier’s overall life in the Army? [n=3,000]

Gen Z wants a good work-life balance, but doesn't agree that the Army would provide that



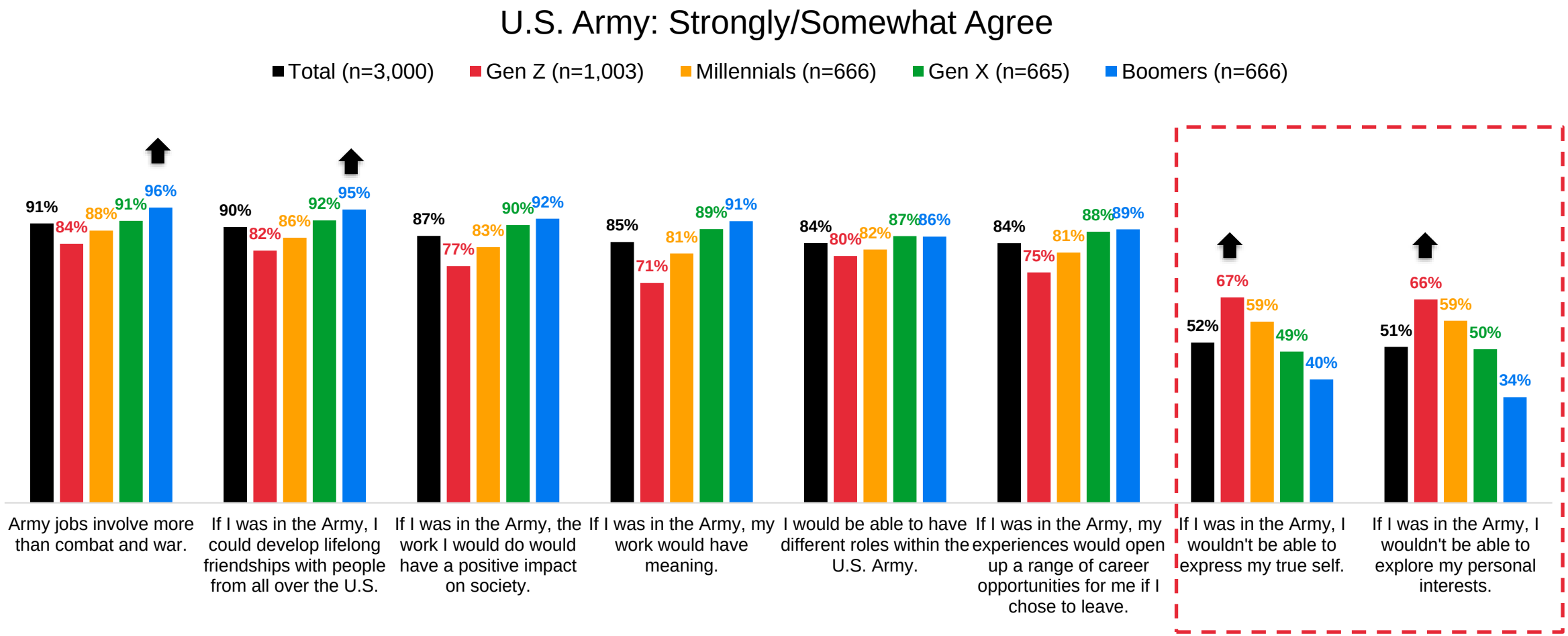
Q15. How important [is / was] the following to you in your work life? [Asked of students, those employed and those retired; n=780]
Q24. Based on what you know or have heard, how much do you agree or disagree that the U.S. Army provides each of the following for a Soldier's overall life in the Army? [n=1,003]

Gen Z tends to be less familiar with Army benefits than the average American



Q25. To the best of your knowledge, which of the following work benefits (if any) does the U.S. Army offer? Select all that apply.

Gen Z sees the positive impacts of joining the Army, but believes they could lose their individuality in doing so

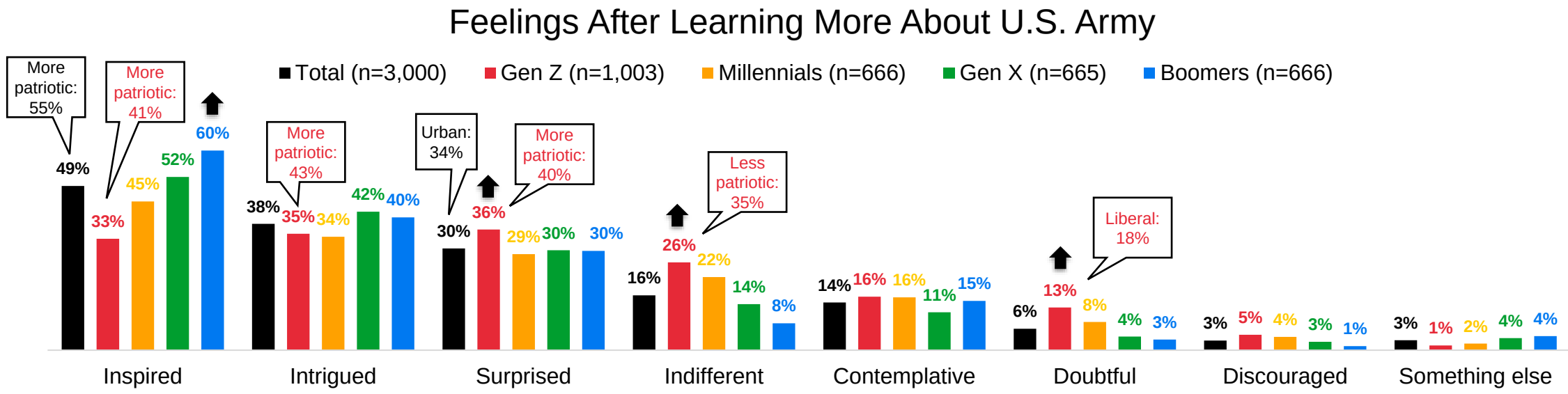


Q26. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about having a career in the U.S. Army?

After learning more about Army benefits, Americans are most likely to feel “inspired,” Gen Z is most likely to feel “surprised”

“In addition to job benefits like free healthcare, tuition assistance, paid time off, and early retirement, the Army offers jobs of all kinds, from medical/healthcare to tech and computer science. What’s more, Soldiers have the opportunity and support/training they need to change careers in the Army so they can find their passion.

How does learning these facts about the Army make you feel?”



Q27. How does learning these facts about the Army make you feel? Would you say… Select all that apply.

⬆ *Significantly higher than other generations*

After learning more about Army benefits, the likelihood to perceive the Army as a good career option increases with age

"And, now that you know a little more about the Army, are you more likely or less likely to believe that joining the U.S. Army is a good career option for today's young adults?"

Much/Somewhat More Likely:

61% Total

47% Gen Z

56% Millennials

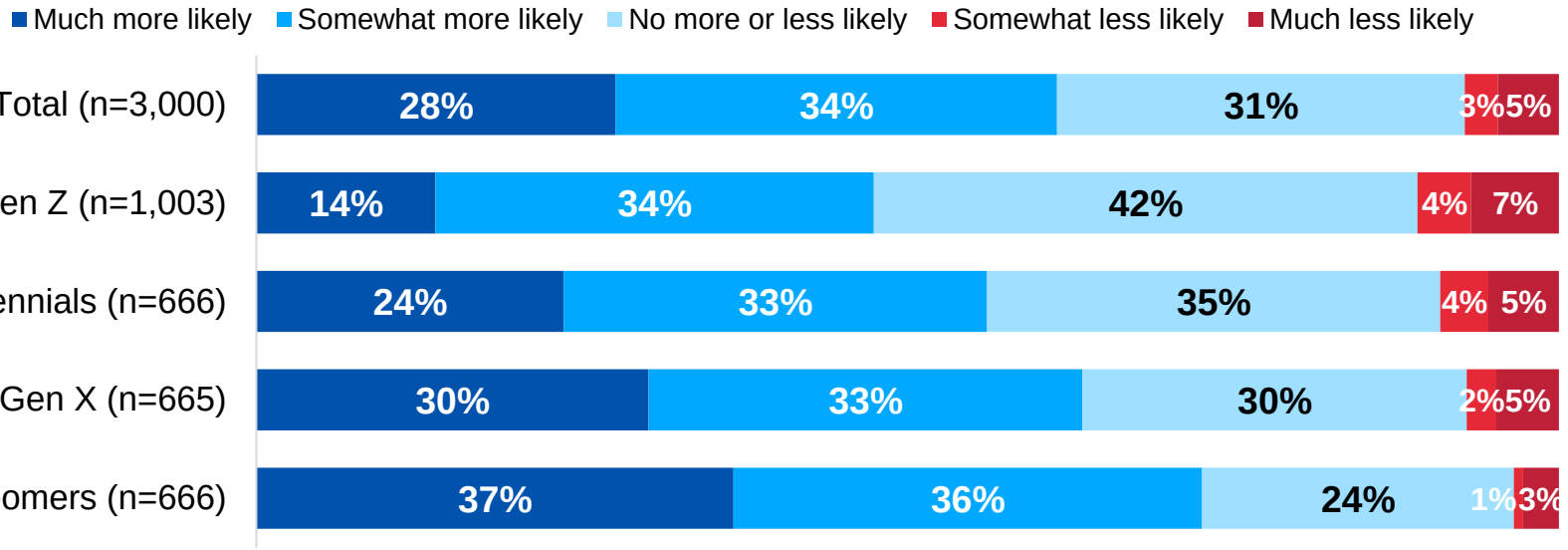
63% Gen X

73% Baby Boomers

Conservative: 70%
More patriotic: 68%

More patriotic: 60%
Conservative: 59%
Men: 54%

More or Less Likely to Perceive U.S. Army as a Good Career Option for Young Adults



Q28. How does learning these facts about the Army make you feel? Would you say… Select all that apply.

Differences by Gender and Race/Ethnicity

Gender

- Despite men being more familiar with the Army (and every other branch of the military) than women, they are also more likely to agree they wouldn't be able to express themselves or explore their personal interests if they were in the Army. Men are more likely than women to feel inspired and intrigued after learning more about the Army.

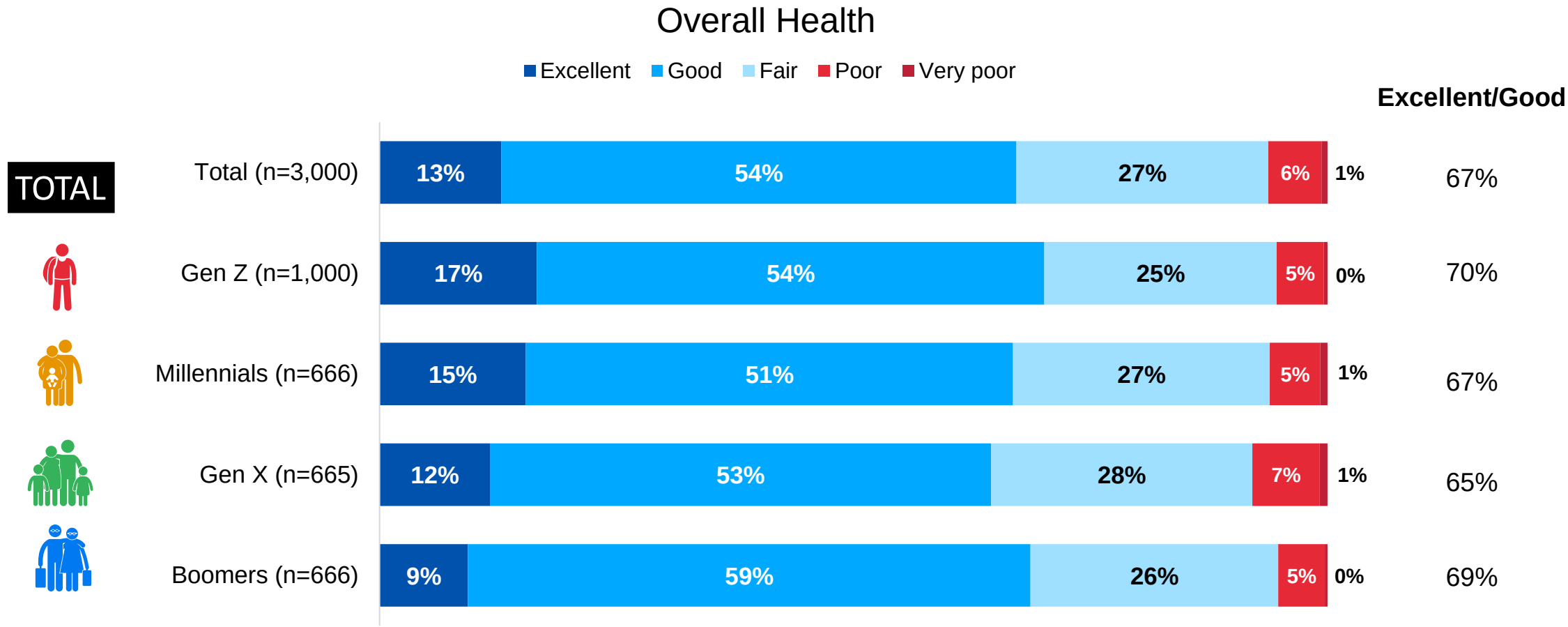
Race/Ethnicity

- Despite non-white Americans being more likely than whites to be "very familiar" with the Army, they are less likely to consider the Army a good career option (though this racial difference does not hold true among Gen Z). Additionally, non-white Americans often have more misperceptions of the Army compared to whites.
    - For example, non-white Americans are more likely to mistakenly believe that people who enlist lose their opportunity to take college courses (this is true within Gen Z as well). Non-white Americans are also more likely to mistakenly believe that Soldiers aren't allowed to leave the bases at which they're stationed (this is again true within Gen Z).
- Non-white Americans are more likely to believe Soldiers want to join the Army for practical benefits such as providing for their family, for the pay/money, or because they can't find a job elsewhere. White Americans, on the other hand, are more likely to believe Soldiers join for intrinsic motivations such as duty/obligation to their country, family tradition of service, pride/self-esteem/honor, or for the challenge.
    - There is a similar pattern among Gen Z. Non-white Gen Z is more likely to believe Soldiers join to gain experience/work skills, whereas white Gen Z is more likely to say for duty/obligation to country, family tradition of service, and pride/self-esteem/honor.
- White Americans are more likely to agree that Army jobs involve more than combat and war; they could develop lifelong friendships in the Army; and their work would have meaning if they were in the Army. On the other hand, non-white Americans are more likely to believe they wouldn't be able to explore their personal interests or express their true self if they were in the Army. Interestingly, however, there is no significant difference in agreement with these statements among white vs. non-white Gen Z.
- Though white Americans are more likely to think that joining the U.S. Army is a good career option for young adults after learning more about Army benefits, this racial difference is not seen among Gen Z.

Detailed Findings

3. Health & Wellness

Most Americans describe their health as at least good, regardless of generation



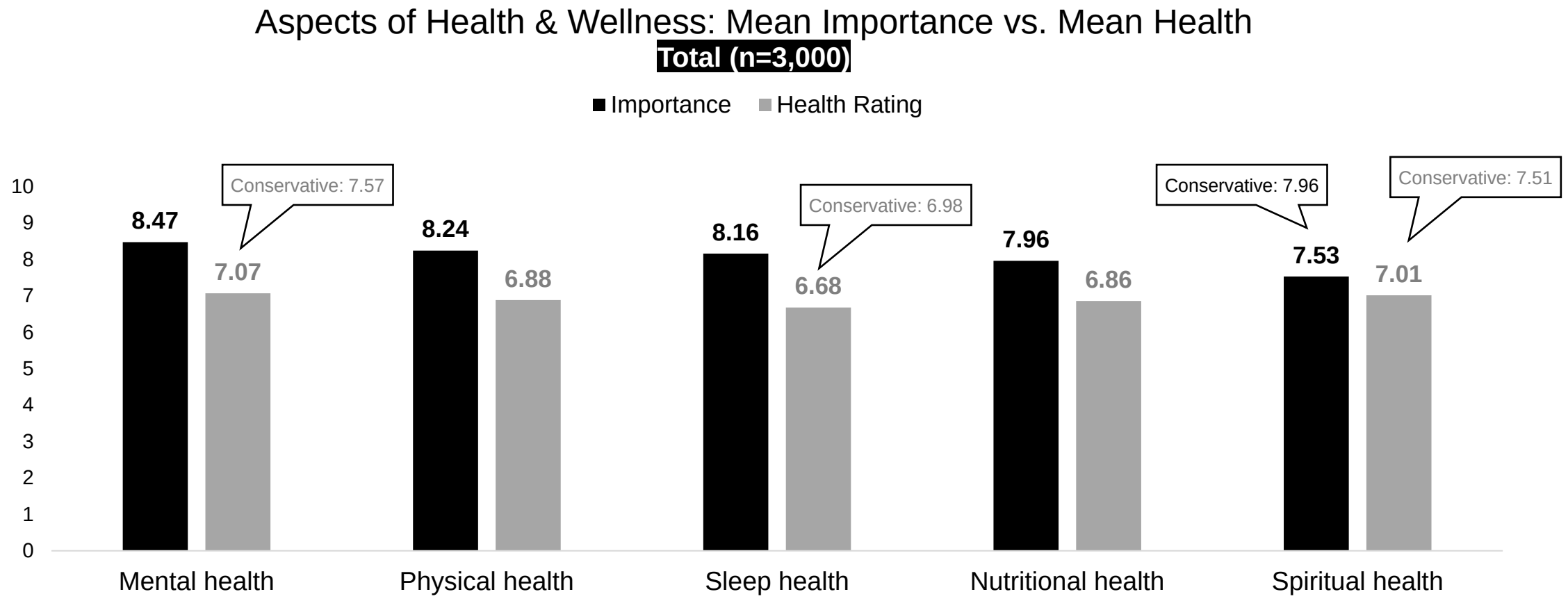
Q1. How would you describe your overall health?

Americans drink water, exercise regularly, and eat right – their unhealthy habits are junk food, cigarettes, and alcohol

Healthy Habits	Unhealthy Habits
"I drink tons of water and take multivitamins and probiotics." – Gen Z	"I eat a lot of candy and sweets. The meals I eat aren't always the most balanced. I've been starting to eat out more which is a bit unhealthy." – Gen Z
"I exercise twice a week, I eat healthy and try to keep a balanced diet, and I stay on a sleep schedule." – Gen Z	"My unhealthy habits would be smoking and I would definitely wish to overcome it." – Gen Z
"Eat healthy and exercise three times per week." – Millennial	"I smoke, I drink, and I'm not exercising." – Millennial
"Run 5-6 days per week, maintain an active lifestyle, try to eat healthy for most meals." – Millennial	"Eating and workout habits are subpar." – Millennial
"I do not smoke or drink, I eat healthy and exercise as well as have regular doctor and dental checkups" – Gen X	"I often eat food that's not very nutritious but tastes very good." – Gen X
"Drink plenty of water, watch sweet intake, portion control. Strive to eat fruits/veggies. Exercise 3 days a week." – Gen X	"Smoking cigarettes." – Gen X
"Healthy meals, low-salt, fat, and sugar, exercise daily, and see doctors regularly, take my medication." – Baby Boomer	"I like to snack on salty and sugary foods." – Baby Boomer
"I do not smoke or take drugs. I try to go to bed at the same time every night and I eat 3 meals a day." – Baby Boomer	"I think I should probably cut down on the amount of wine/alcohol that I drink in a given week. I also should stop biting my nails when I am stressed." – Baby Boomer

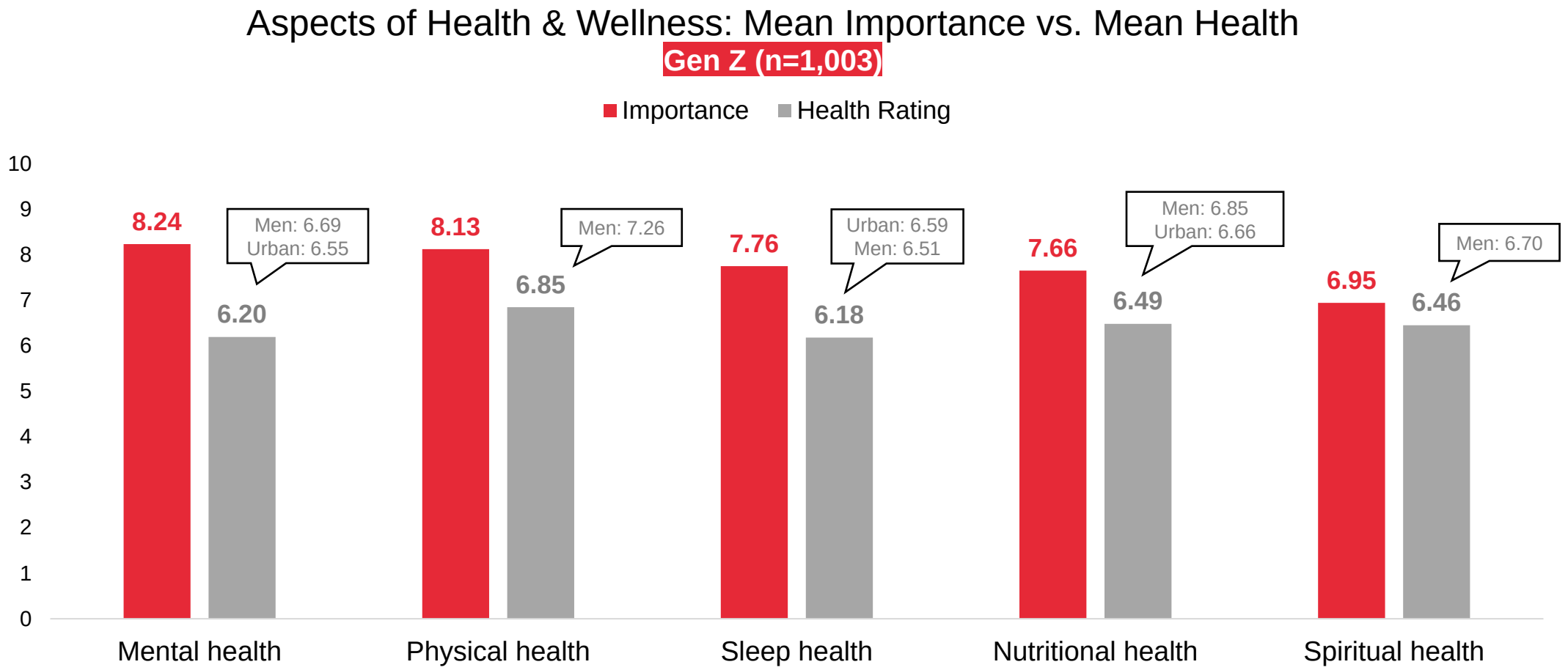
Q2. In what ways are you generally "healthy"? Or what would you say are some of your "healthy" habits?
Q3. On the other hand, do you think you have any "unhealthy" habits that you wish to overcome?

There is a consistent gap in the importance of the five aspects of health and Americans' self-reported health level



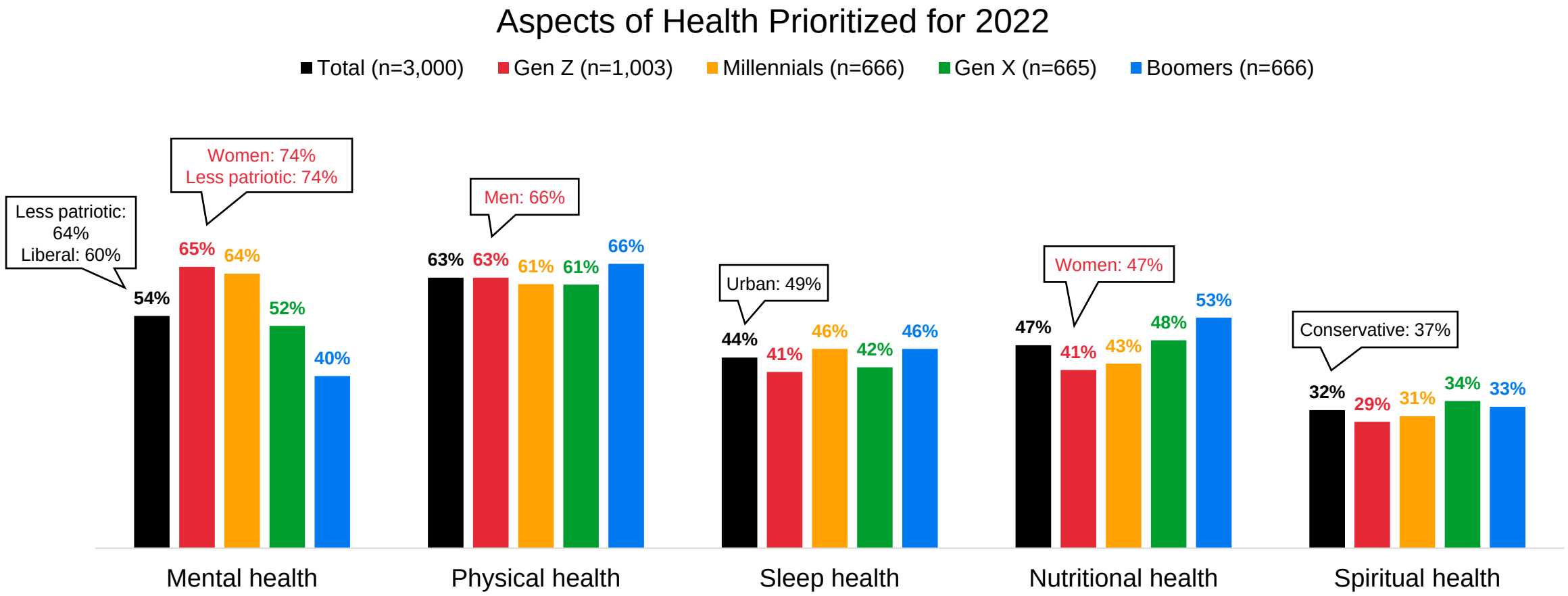
Q4. On a scale of 0 to 10, how important are the following for you, personally, in terms of how "healthy" or "well" you feel?
Q5. On a scale of 0 to 10, how would you rate your overall health in the following areas?

Gen Z places importance on both mental and physical health, but ranks their health in these areas much lower



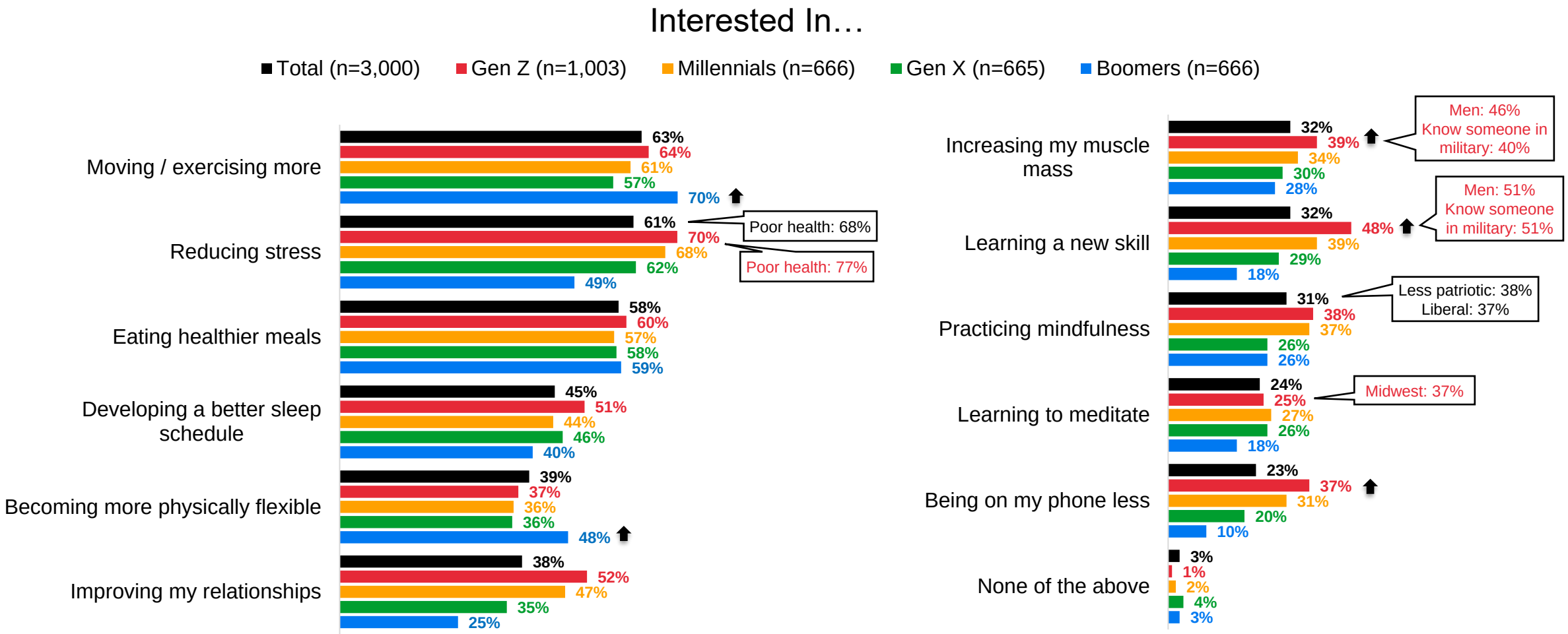
Q4. On a scale of 0 to 10, how important are the following for you, personally, in terms of how "healthy" or "well" you feel?
Q5. On a scale of 0 to 10, how would you rate your overall health in the following areas?

Gen Z and Millennials are prioritizing their mental and physical health, while Gen X and Boomers are more focused on prioritizing just physical health



Q6. Which aspects of health are you prioritizing this year, if any? Select all that apply.

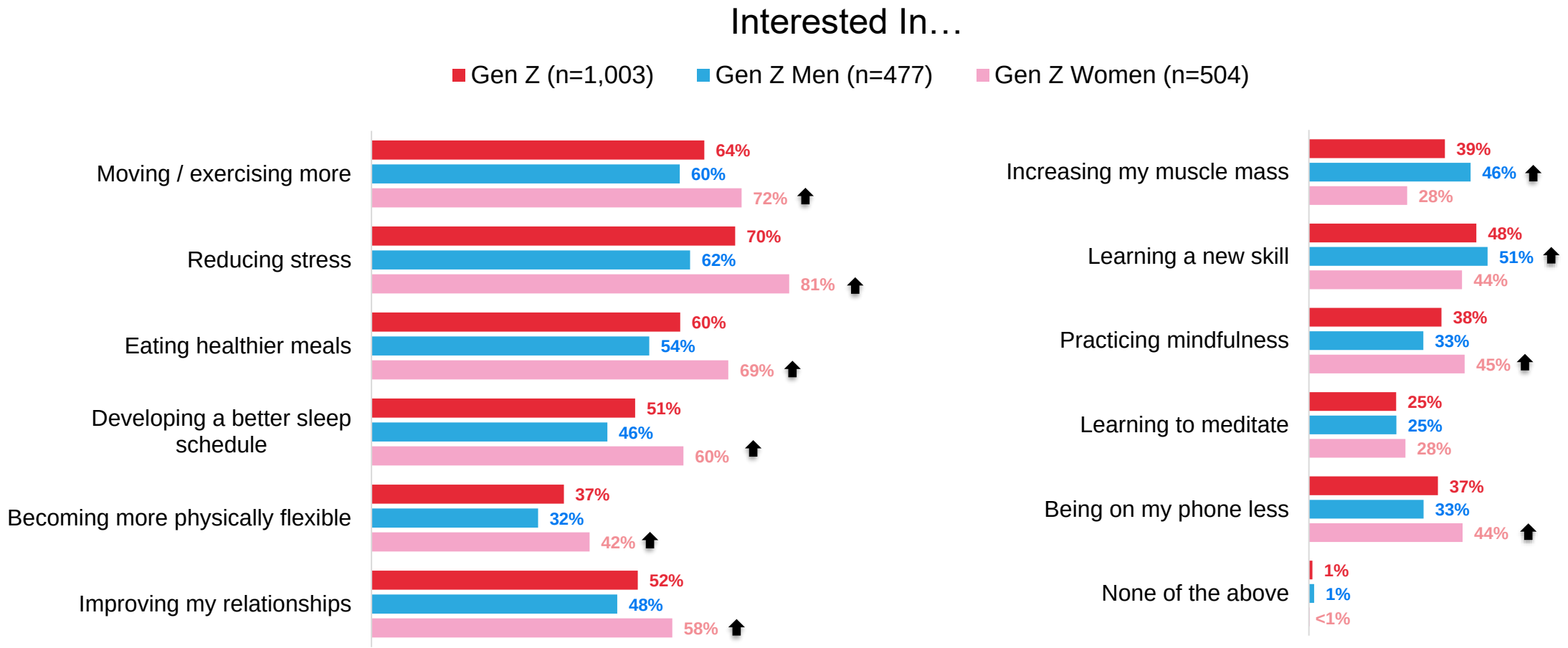
Americans—including Gen Z and Millennials—are most interested in reducing stress and exercising more



Q7. Which of the following, if any, are you interested in?

Significantly higher than other generations

Gen Z women want to develop healthier habits, while Gen Z men want to increase muscle mass and learn a new skill



Q7. Which of the following, if any, are you interested in?

⬆ *Significantly higher than other gender*

Differences by Gender and Race/Ethnicity

Gender

- Men are significantly more likely than women to rate their health “excellent” or “good.” This pattern holds true among white men and women, but not non-white men and women.
- On average, women rate **mental health** as being more important than men. This holds true among non-white men and women, but not among white men and women. Additionally, though white men rate mental health as more important than non-white men, there is little difference between white women and non-white women.
- Women also rate **sleep health** as being more important, on average. Non-white women rate sleep health more important than non-white men, but there is little difference in gender among whites. Among men, whites rate sleep health more important than non-whites.
- Women also rate **spiritual health** as being more important, on average, than men. This pattern holds true among both whites and non-whites. Spiritual health is most important to non-white women, who rate it higher on average than white women.
- On average, men rate their physical, mental, nutritional, and sleep health higher than women. White men and non-white men rate their health similarly, but non-white women rate their physical health higher than white women.
- Women are more likely than men to prioritize their mental, nutritional, and spiritual health this year. Non-white women are more likely to prioritize spiritual health than both white women and non-white men.
- Women are more likely to be interested in moving/exercising more; reducing stress, eating healthier meals, developing a better sleep schedule, becoming more physically flexible, and practicing mindfulness, while men are more interested in increasing muscle mass and learning a new skill.

Race/Ethnicity

- On average, white Americans rate the importance of **mental health** higher than non-white Americans.
- On average, non-white Americans rate their physical health higher than white Americans. This pattern holds true among Gen Z.
- Compared to white Gen Z, non-white Gen Z also rate their **mental health** and sleep health higher, on average.
- Non-white Americans are more likely than white Americans to prioritize their **spiritual health** this year. However, this pattern does not hold true for Gen Z, where whites are just as likely as non-whites to prioritize spiritual health.
- Even though non-white Gen Z rates their **sleep health** higher on average, they are more likely to prioritize their sleep health this year than white Gen Z.
- Non-white Americans are more likely than white Americans to be interested in increasing muscle mass, learning a new skill, and learning to meditate. This pattern does not hold true with Gen Z; among this generation, whites are more interested in reducing stress and improving relationships compared to non-whites.

Appendix

Respondent Demographics

Gen Z (18 to 25)	15%
Millennials (26 to 41)	29%
Gen X (42 to 57)	28%
Baby Boomers (58 to 76)	28%
Man	49%
Woman	50%
Some other identity	1%
Northeast	17%
Midwest	21%
South	38%
West	24%

Employed full time	35%
Employed part time	9%
Self-employed	7%
Not employed	11%
Retired	17%
Disabled, unable to work	9%
Stay-at-home parent	5%
Student	4%
Prefer not to say	1%
Parent/guardian of children <18 in household	27%

n=3,000
Showing weighted percentages

Respondent Demographics (continued)

White	79%
Black or African-American	10%
Asian	5%
American Indian or Alaska Native	1%
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	<1%
Two or more races	3%
Some other race	2%
Prefer not to say	1%
Hispanic/Latino origin	9%

Urban	27%
Suburban	44%
Small town	13%
Rural area	16%
High school graduate, GED or less	29%
Some college/associate degree/technical school	35%
Undergraduate degree	18%
Graduate degree or beyond	18%
Prefer not to say	1%

n=3,000
Showing weighted percentages

Respondent Demographics (continued)

Very liberal	11%
Somewhat liberal	11%
Moderate, but lean liberal	7%
Moderate	27%
Moderate, but lean conservative	6%
Somewhat conservative	15%
Very conservative	13%
None of these/Prefer not to say	10%

Very patriotic	41%
Somewhat patriotic	38%
Not very patriotic	10%
Not patriotic at all	6%
Prefer not to say	5%

n=3,000
Showing weighted percentages

For media inquiries related to the Know Your Army National Consumer Survey, contact laura.l.defrancisco.civ@army.mil.