

2023 MLK Day Report: Americans' Views on MLK Day

American Identity Research Project

January 2023

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. Despite misperceptions, most Americans agree on the importance of observing MLK Day and recognize the improvements in racial equality since the time of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Many Democrats believe most Republicans do not value MLK Day.

Yet almost twice as many Republicans believe it is important for Americans to observe MLK Day than Democrats think (73% vs 38%).

Many Republicans believe most Democrats are unable to recognize the stories of success and progress in the country's history.

However, Democrats are much more likely to believe that racial equality has improved significantly since the time of Dr. King than Republicans think (71% vs 45%).

2. Most Americans across demographics and political identification describe Dr. King as a leader, brave, and/or an activist.

However, there are differences among generations in their choice for other words used to describe Dr. King.

Gen Z Americans, compared to older generations, are more likely to describe Dr. King as a revolutionary.

Baby Boomers and the Silent Generation are more likely than younger generations to view Dr. King as Christian and an advocate for racial color-blind ideology.

3. Democrats, Gen Z, and Black Americans are more likely than other Americans to say they plan to observe MLK Day.

The most commonly cited ways Americans say they plan to observe the holiday are by listening to a speech by Dr. King, supporting Black-owned businesses, and/or watching a movie about Dr. King or the civil rights era.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Quantitative National Surveys

Results are shown as “US Average”.

More in Common partnered with international polling company YouGov to conduct online survey interviews with N=1,000 adult US citizens from December 22, 2022 to January 5, 2023. The data was weighted to be representative of American citizens using propensity scores, with score functions including gender, age, race, education, and region. The weights were then post-stratified on 2020 Presidential vote choice, with a four-way stratification of gender, age (6-category), race (5-category), and education (4-category). The margin of error (adjusted for weighting) is +/- 3.1 for the US average, and is higher for subgroups.

Numbers in data visualizations are rounded to the nearest whole number.

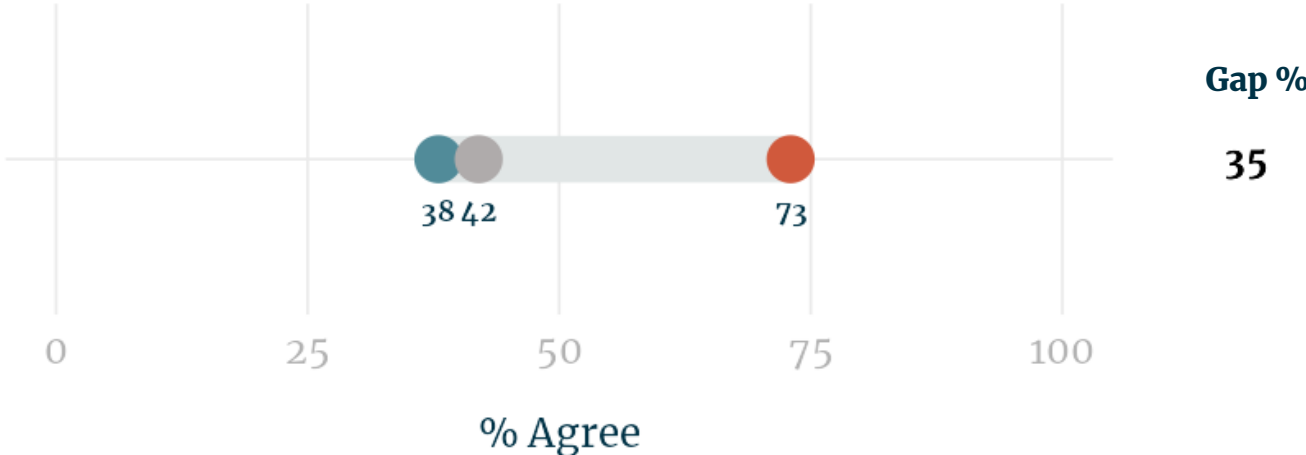
Perception Gaps on MLK Day and Racial Equality

For more information on perception gaps, visit www.historyperceptiongap.us

Democrats significantly underestimate the importance that Republicans place on MLK Day.

- Republicans' Actual Views
- Democrats' Estimates
- Independents' Estimates

It is important for Americans to observe Martin Luther King Jr. Day

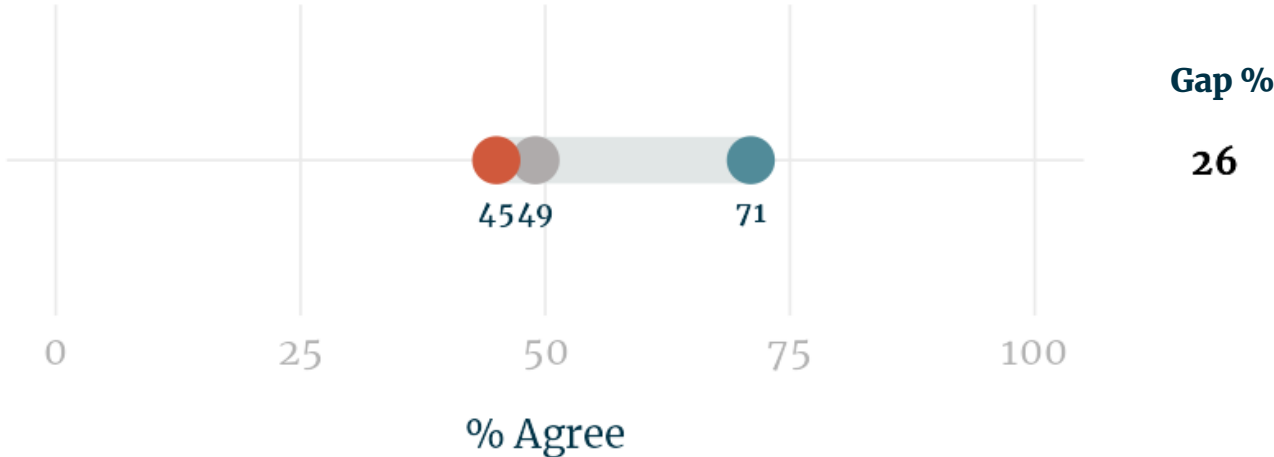


Question: [Republicans] Do you agree or disagree with the following statement?
[Democrats/Independents] What percentage of Republicans do you think agree with the following statements?

Republicans significantly underestimate Democrats' willingness to recognize stories of success and improvements in racial equality since the time of Dr. King.

- Democrats' Actual Views
- Republicans' Estimates
- Independents' Estimates

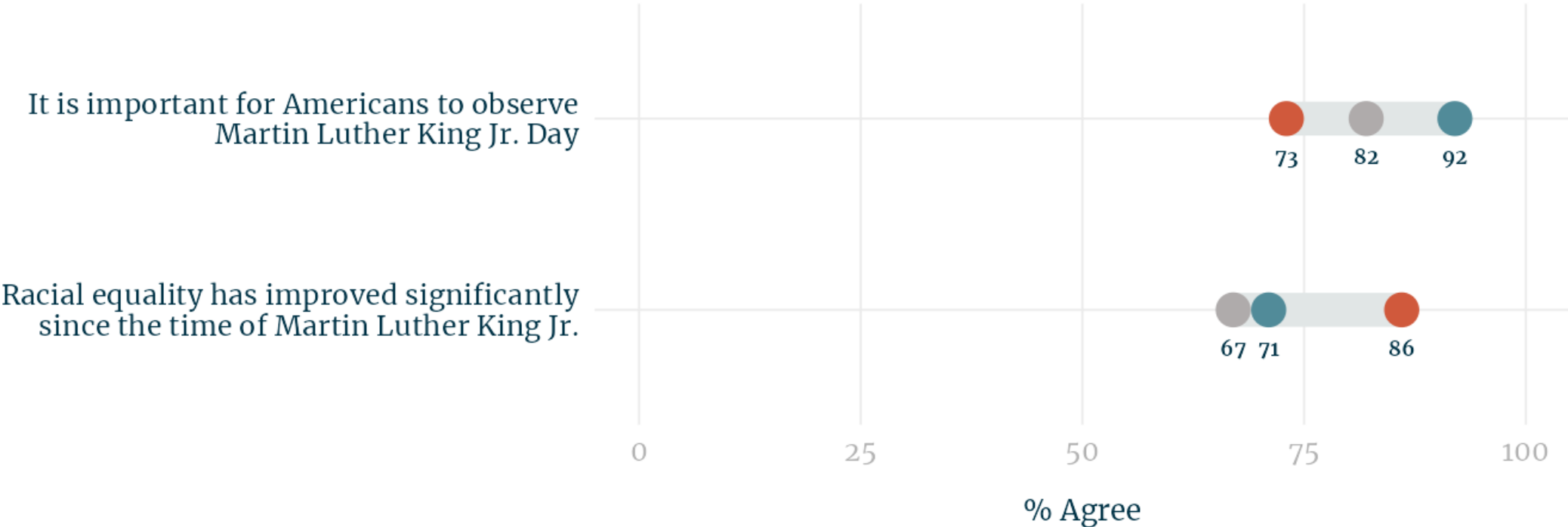
Racial equality has improved significantly since the time of Martin Luther King Jr.



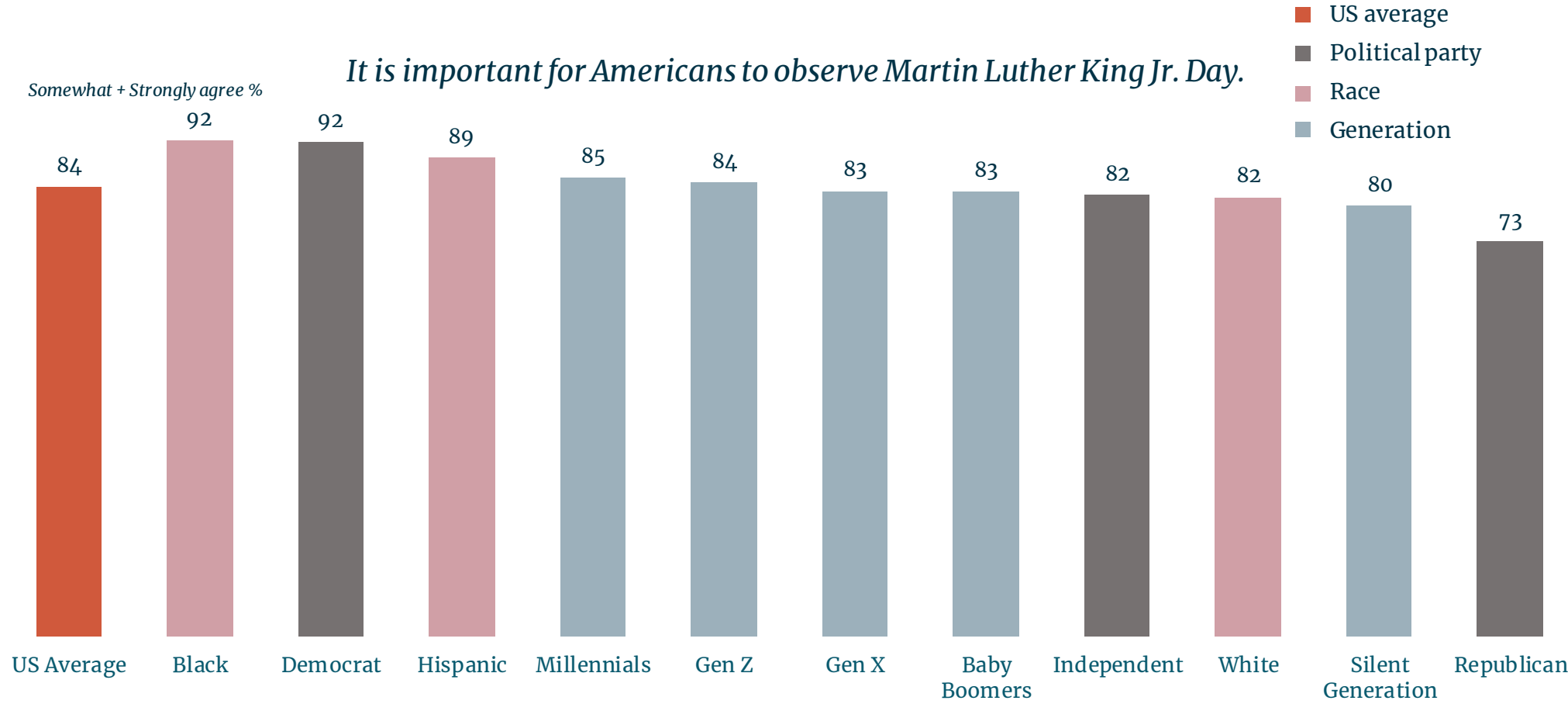
Question: [Democrats] Do you agree or disagree with the following statement?
[Republicans/Independents] What percentage of Republicans do you think agree with the following statement?

Contrary to perceptions, most Americans, regardless of political affiliation, agree on the importance of MLK Day and recognize improvements in racial equality since the time of Dr. King.

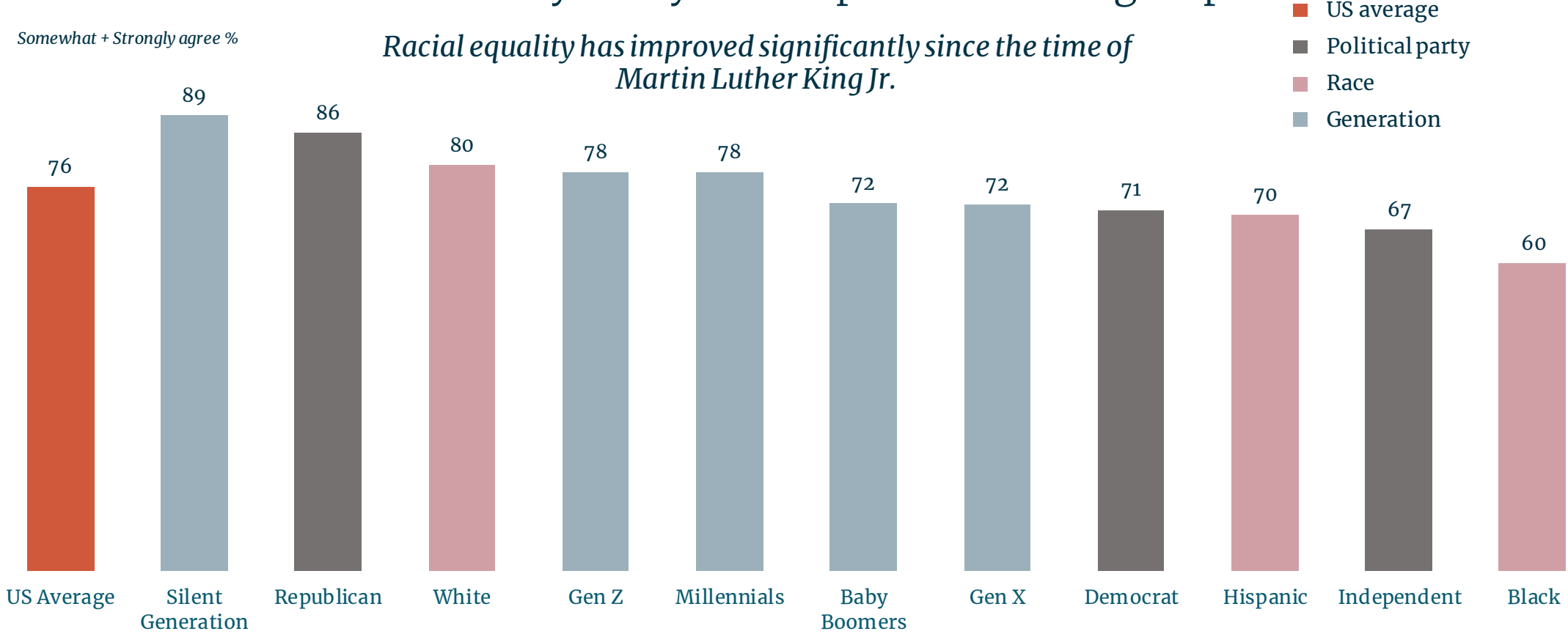
- Democrats
- Republicans
- Independents



Most Americans across race and generations also believe it is important to observe MLK Day.

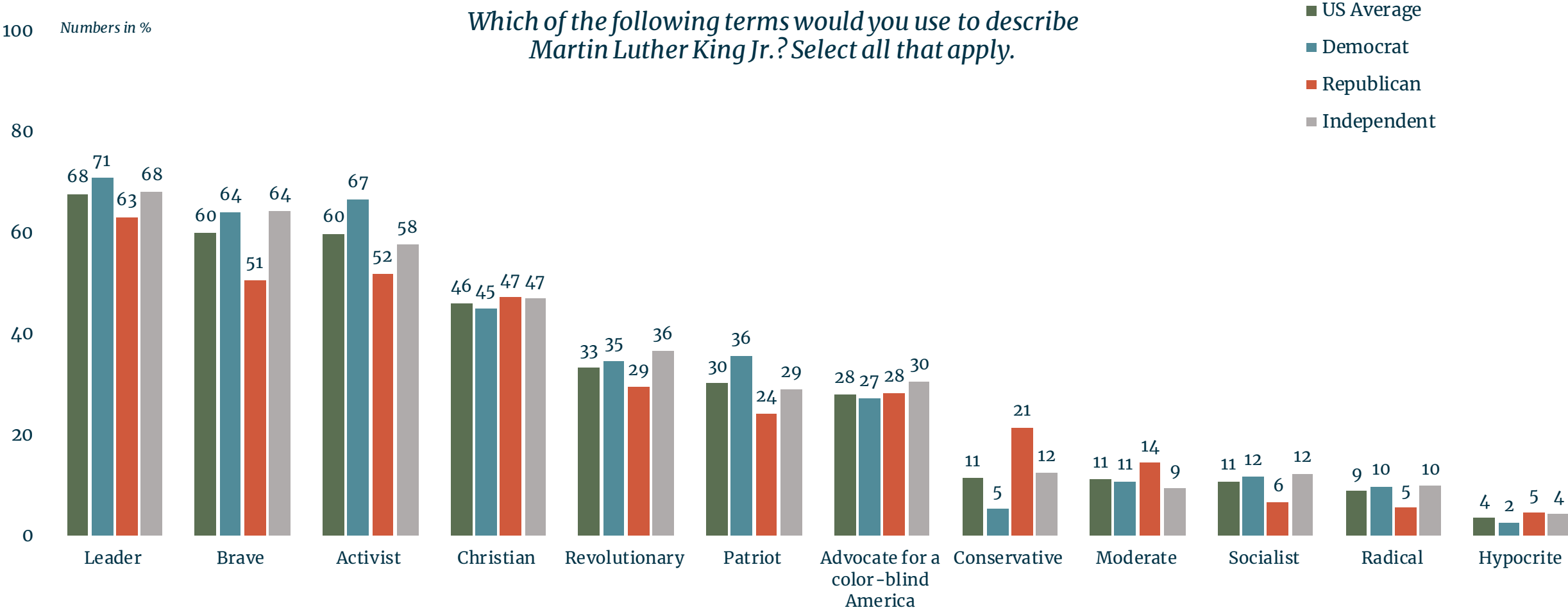


The majority of Americans across generations and racial groups agree that racial equality has improved since the time of Dr. King, although Independents and Black Americans are less likely to say so compared to other groups.

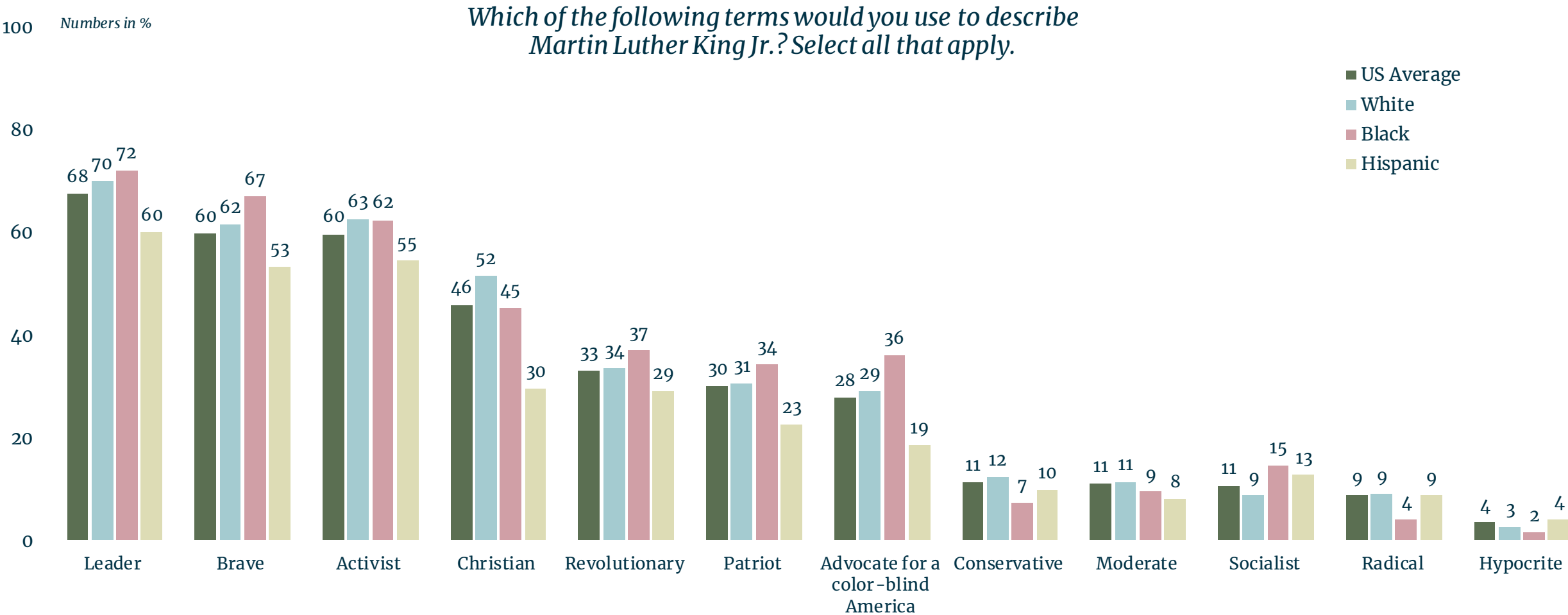


Americans' Views on Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

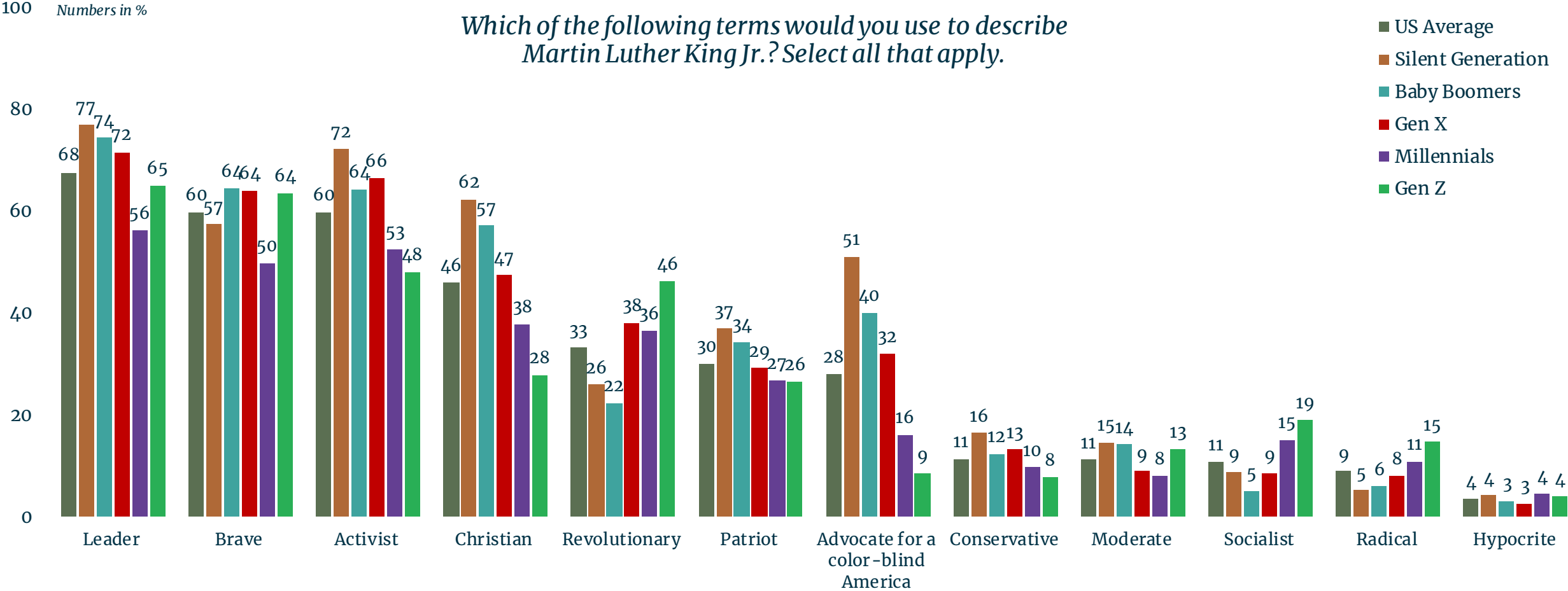
When asked to describe Dr. King, most Americans chose the terms leader, brave, and/or activist. Close to one third see him as a patriot.



The majority of Americans across racial groups also describe Dr. King as a leader, brave, and/or an activist.



Gen Z Americans are more likely than older generations to see Dr. King as a revolutionary and significantly less likely to describe him as a Christian or an advocate for racial color-blind ideology.

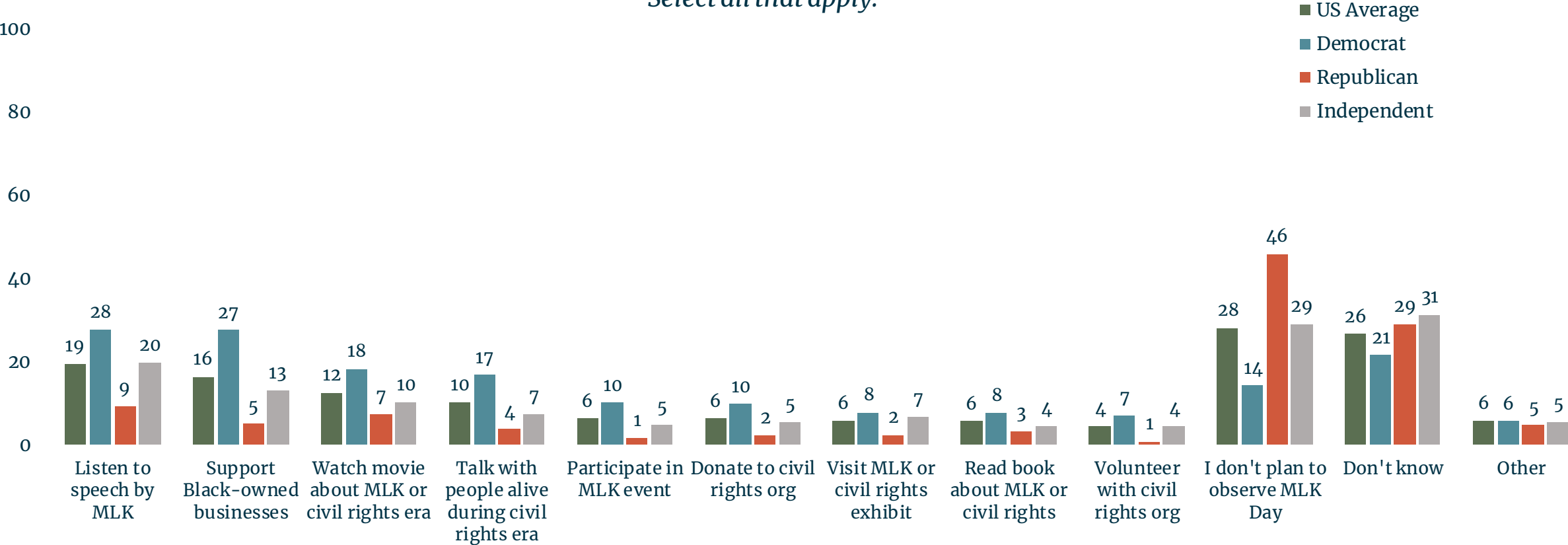


How Americans Plan to Observe MLK Day

Many Americans plan to observe MLK Day, although Democrats are much more likely than Republicans and Independents to do so.

*Martin Luther King Jr. Day is on January 16 in 2023.
How will you observe the upcoming Martin Luther King Jr. Day in 2023?
Select all that apply.*

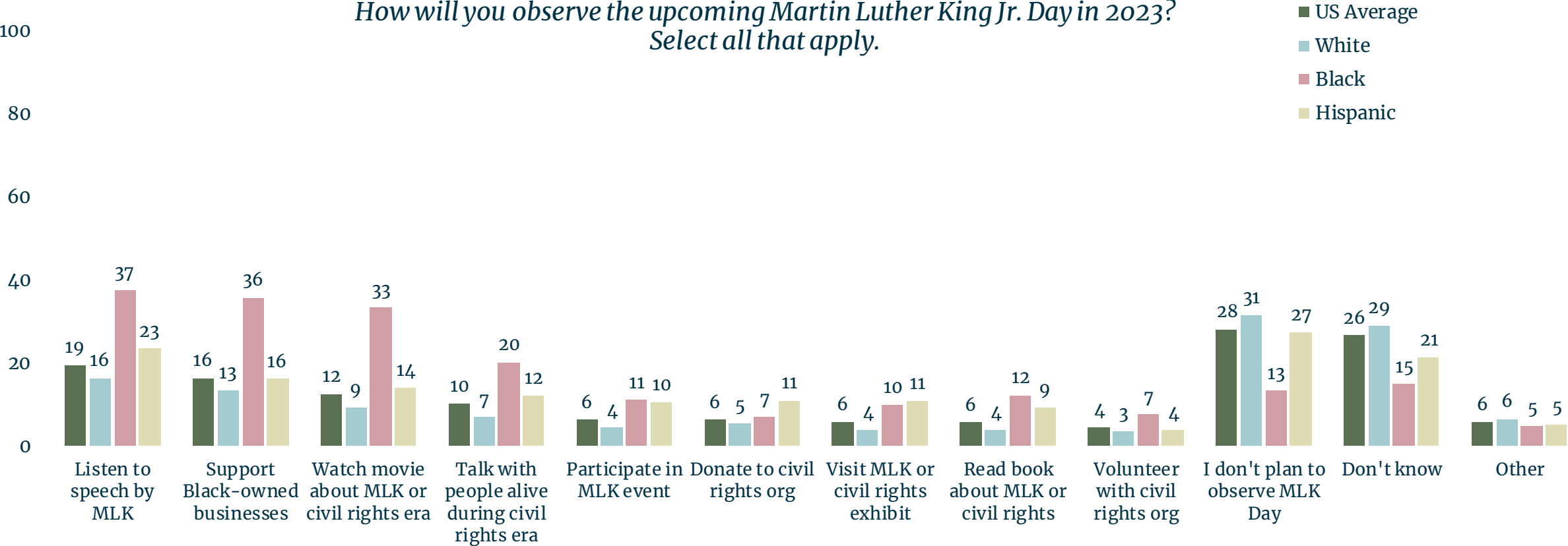
Numbers in %



Black Americans are more likely than other racial groups to observe MLK Day. Over one third plan to listen to Dr. King’s speeches, support Black-owned businesses, and/or watch movies about Dr. King or the civil rights era.

Numbers in %

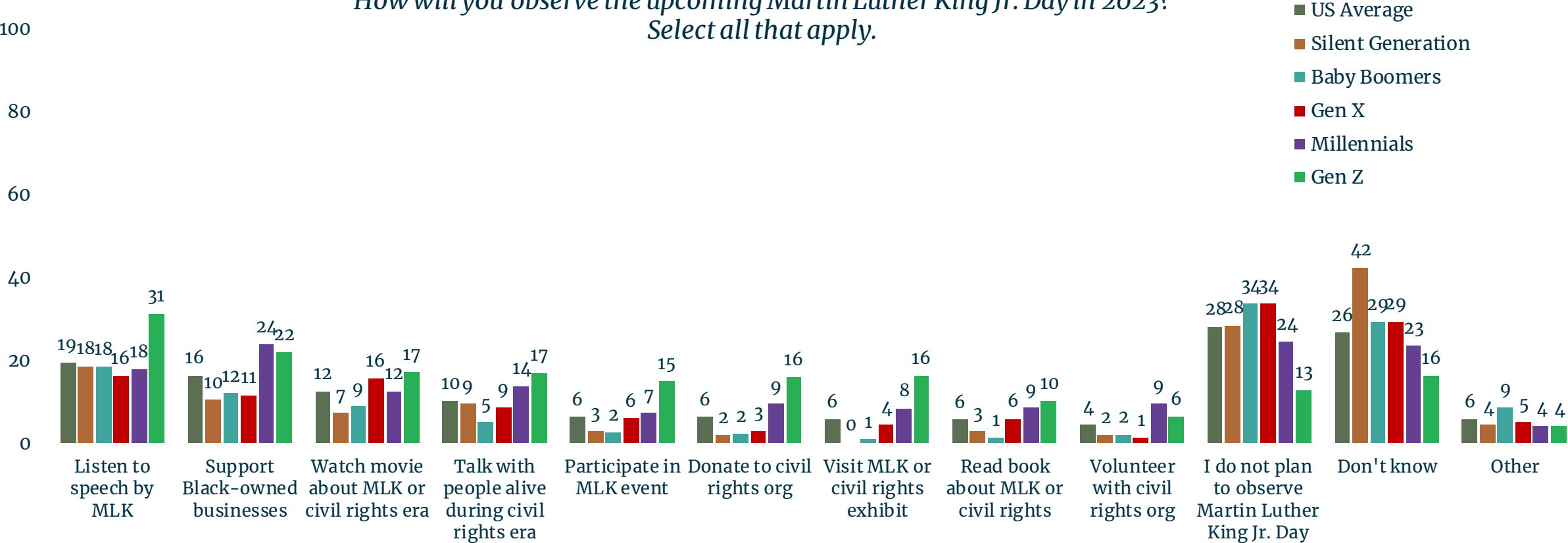
*Martin Luther King Jr. Day is on January 16 in 2023.
How will you observe the upcoming Martin Luther King Jr. Day in 2023?
Select all that apply.*



Compared to other generations, Gen Z Americans are much more likely to observe MLK Day, with almost one third planning to listen to Dr. King’s speeches. Over one fifth of Millennials and Gen Z plan to support Black-owned businesses on MLK Day.

Numbers in %

*Martin Luther King Jr. Day is on January 16 in 2023.
How will you observe the upcoming Martin Luther King Jr. Day in 2023?
Select all that apply.*



Thank you

American Identity Research Project
January 2023

