

Pew Research Center polling on public attitudes towards workforce automation

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Beyond elites, how do average Americans view workplace automation and the future?

<http://www.pewinternet.org/2017/10/04/automation-in-everyday-life/>

Methodology

- Nationally representative survey of 4,135 U.S. adults, conducted May 1-15, 2017 using our American Trends Panel

Research objectives

- Examine how automation (and technology more broadly) is currently impacting American workers
- Test awareness of idea that machines might be able to do many jobs currently done by humans, and the likely outcomes
- Gauge the jobs that the public views as being most at risk
- Test responses to common policy prescriptions
- Also included Q's on driverless vehicles, robot caregivers, and hiring algorithms

Workers express more positive than negative views on the overall impact of technology on their careers – to date

Technology has __ for career advancement

Decreased their opportunities

Increased their opportunities

Had no impact either way

13%

46%

40%

% of U.S. workers who say the following

Technology has generally made their work ...

Less interesting

More interesting

Had no impact either way

12

53

34

Technology has generally made their work ...

Less demanding

More demanding

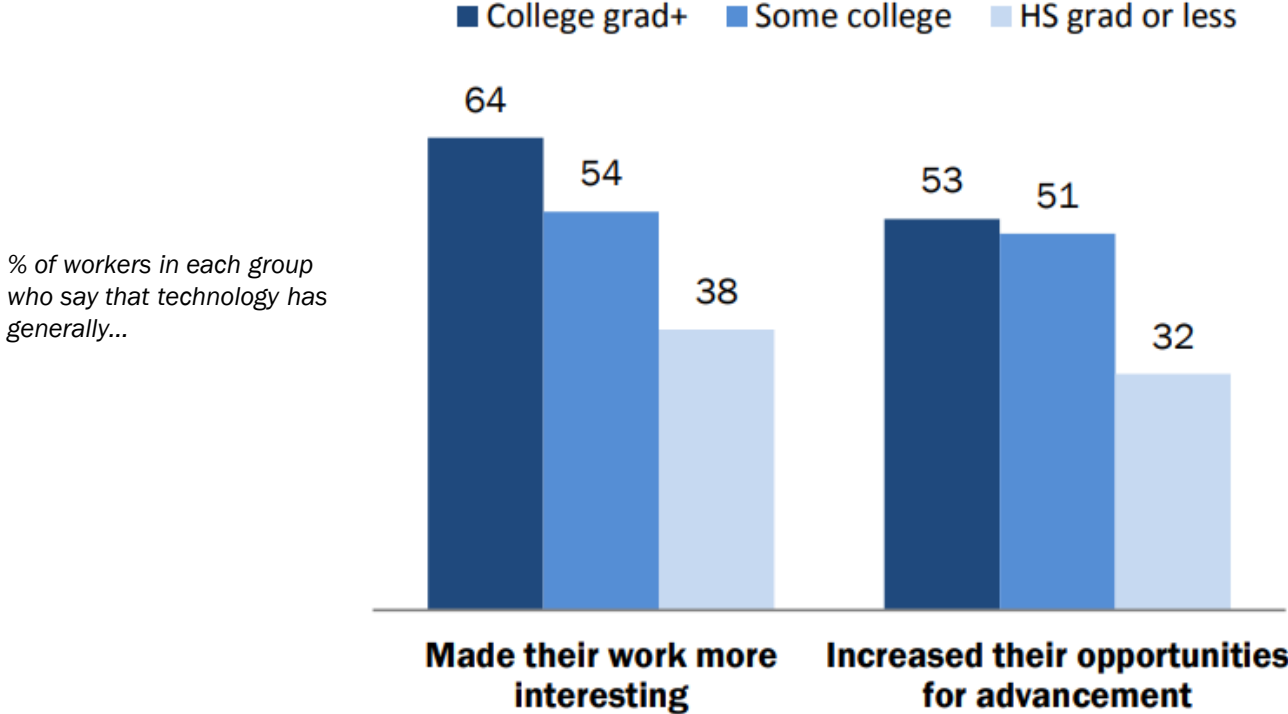
Had no impact either way

29

39

32

Workers w/ a college degree see more positive impacts from technology

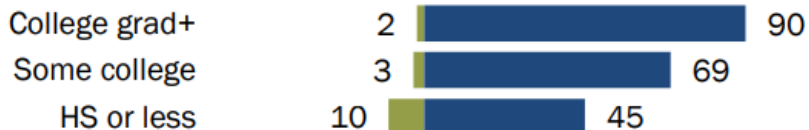


Source: Survey conducted May 1-15, 2017.

Workers with a college degree see more positive impacts from technology

% of workers in each group who say these technologies have had a ___ impact on their job or career

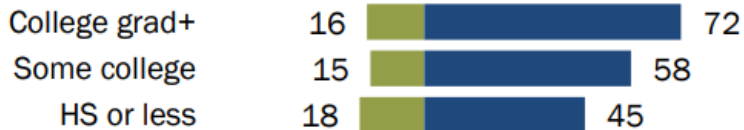
Word processing or spreadsheet software



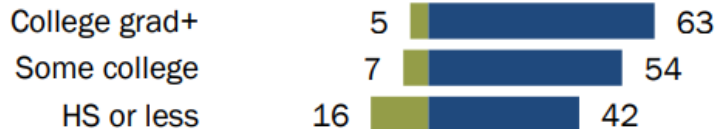
Smartphones



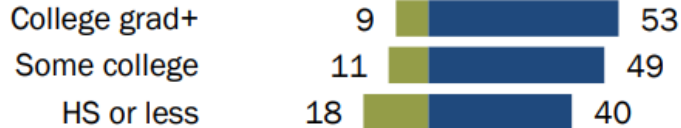
Email or social media



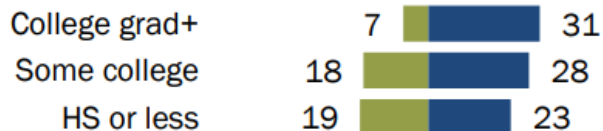
Software that manages daily schedules



Customer self-service technologies



Industrial robots



■ Negative impact ■ Positive impact

The framing scenario for our “future of automation and jobs” questions

“New developments in robotics and computing are changing the nature of many jobs. Today, these technologies are mostly being used in certain settings to perform routine tasks that are repeated throughout the day. But in the future, robots and computers with advanced capabilities may be able to do most of the jobs that are currently done by humans today.”

Mixed levels of awareness, sense that this outcome is likely

% of U.S. adults who say they have heard, read or thought ___ about the idea that robots and computers may be able to do many jobs currently done by humans

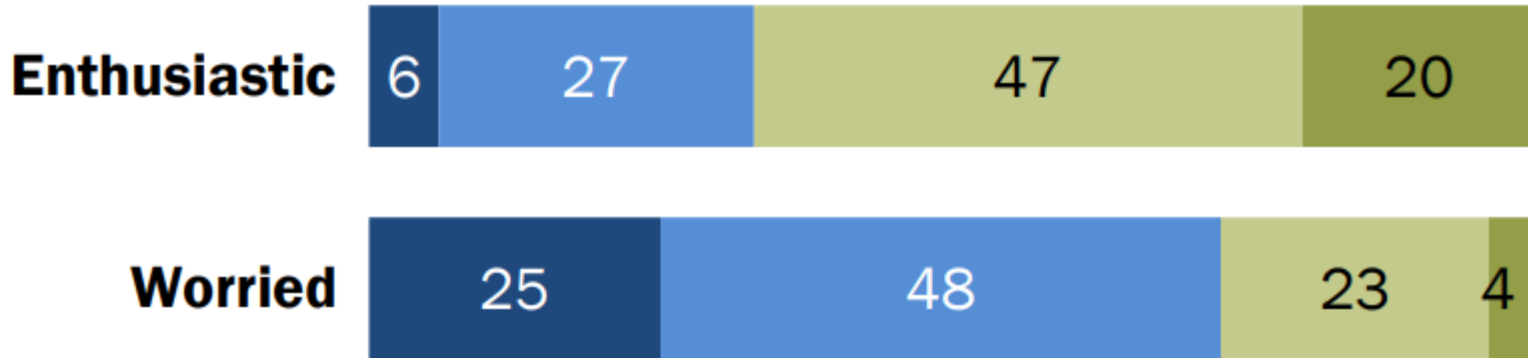


% who say this concept seems ___ realistic

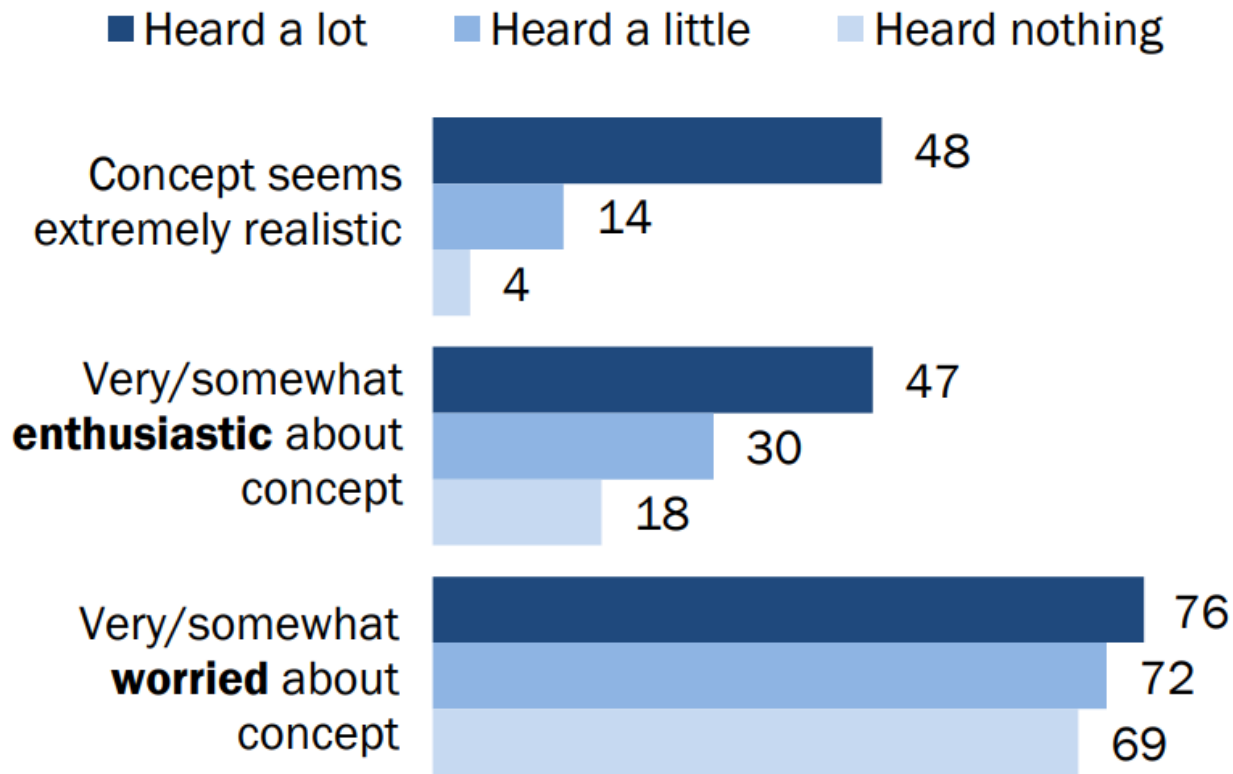


Much more worry than enthusiasm about this concept

■ Very ■ Somewhat ■ Not too ■ Not at all



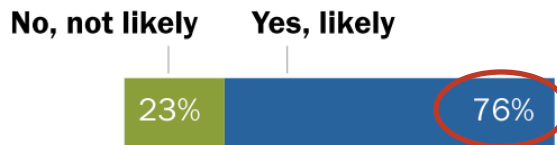
More awareness = concept seems more realistic



Top expected outcomes: greater inequality, no new job explosion

POSSIBLE NEGATIVE OUTCOMES

Inequality between rich and poor will be much worse than today



People will have a hard time finding things to do with their lives



POSSIBLE POSITIVE OUTCOMES

Economy as a whole will be much more efficient



People can focus less on work and more on what really matters



Humans would find jobs more meaningful and appealing



Economy will create many new, better-paying human jobs



Side note -- job loss concerns also present re: driverless vehicles

POSSIBLE POSITIVE OUTCOMES

Elderly and disabled people will be able to live more independently



There would be much less traffic in major cities



POSSIBLE NEGATIVE OUTCOMES

Many people who drive for a living would lose their jobs



OUTCOMES THAT ARE NEITHER POSITIVE NOR NEGATIVE

Most people would never learn how to drive on their own



Owning a car would become much less important to people



% of U.S. adults who think the following outcomes are likely in the event that driverless vehicles become widespread

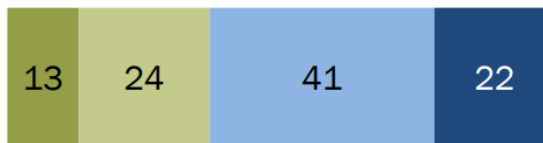
Strong support for policies that limit impact of automation

■ Strongly oppose ■ Oppose ■ Favor ■ Strongly favor

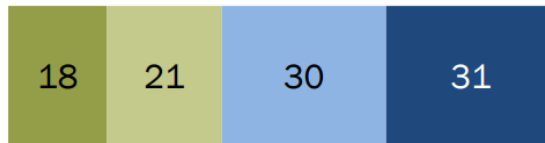
If machines were limited to doing dangerous or unhealthy jobs



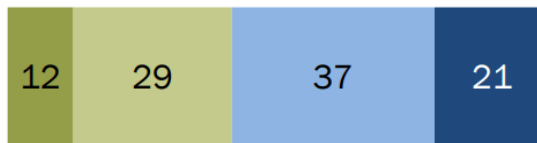
If people could pay extra to interact with a human when buying something



If the govt offered all Americans a guaranteed income that would meet their basic needs



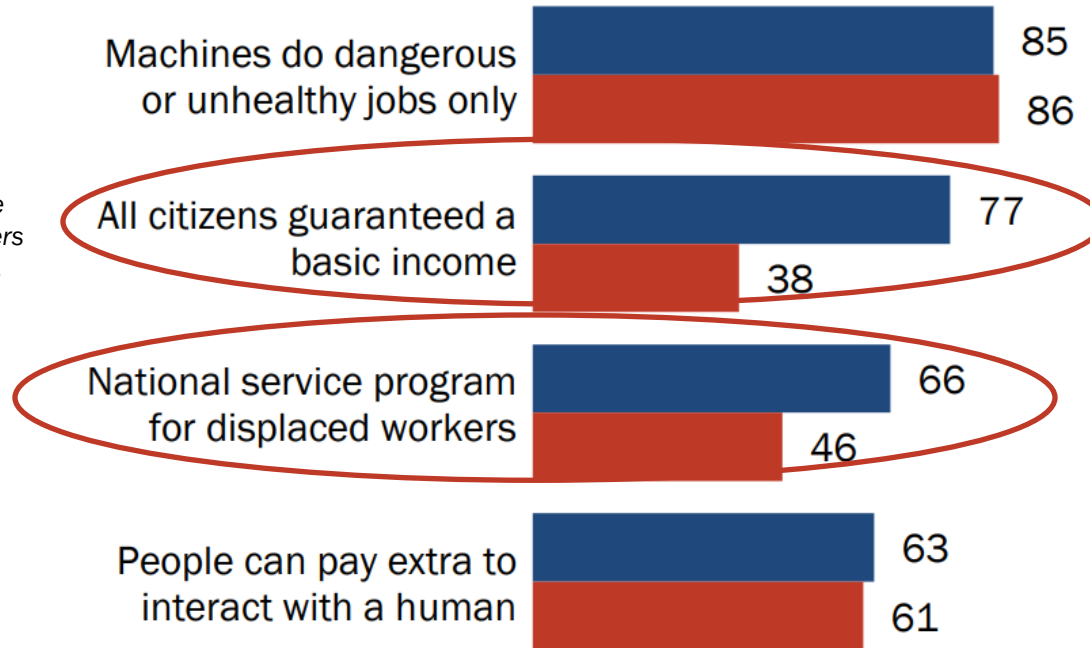
If the govt created a national service program that would pay people to perform tasks



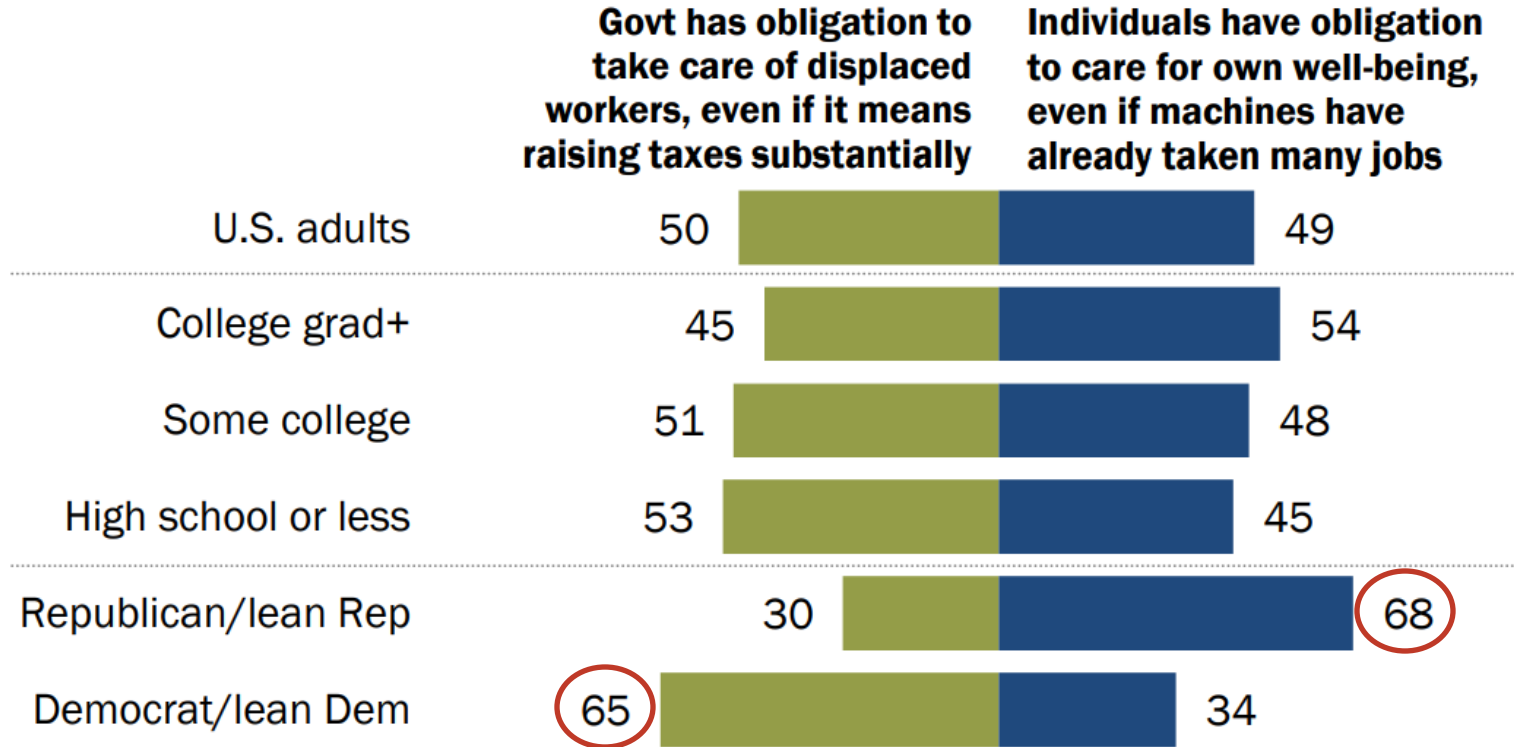
Strong partisan differences on some – but not all – of these policies and regulations

■ Democrat/lean Dem ■ Republican/lean Rep

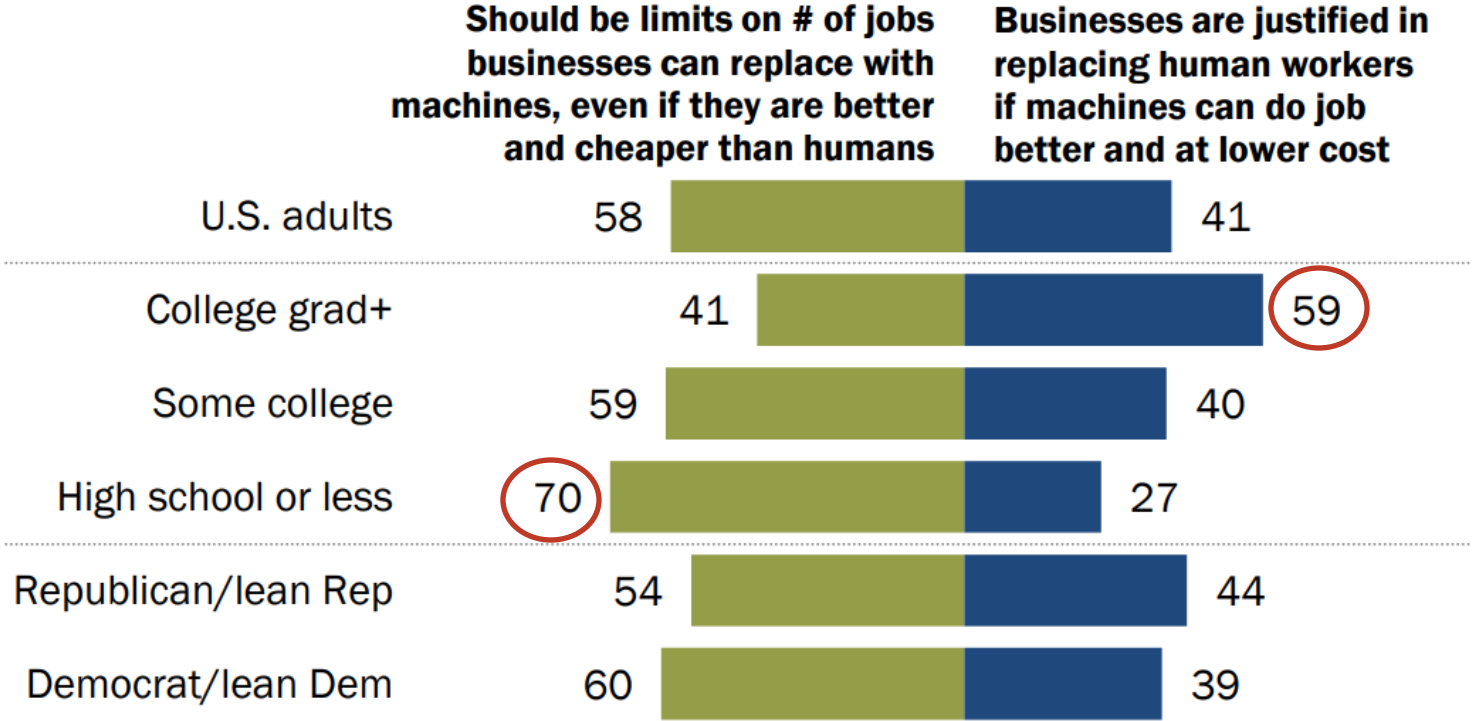
% in each group who favor the following policies in the event that robots/computers can do many human jobs...



Public split on who should be responsible for displaced workers



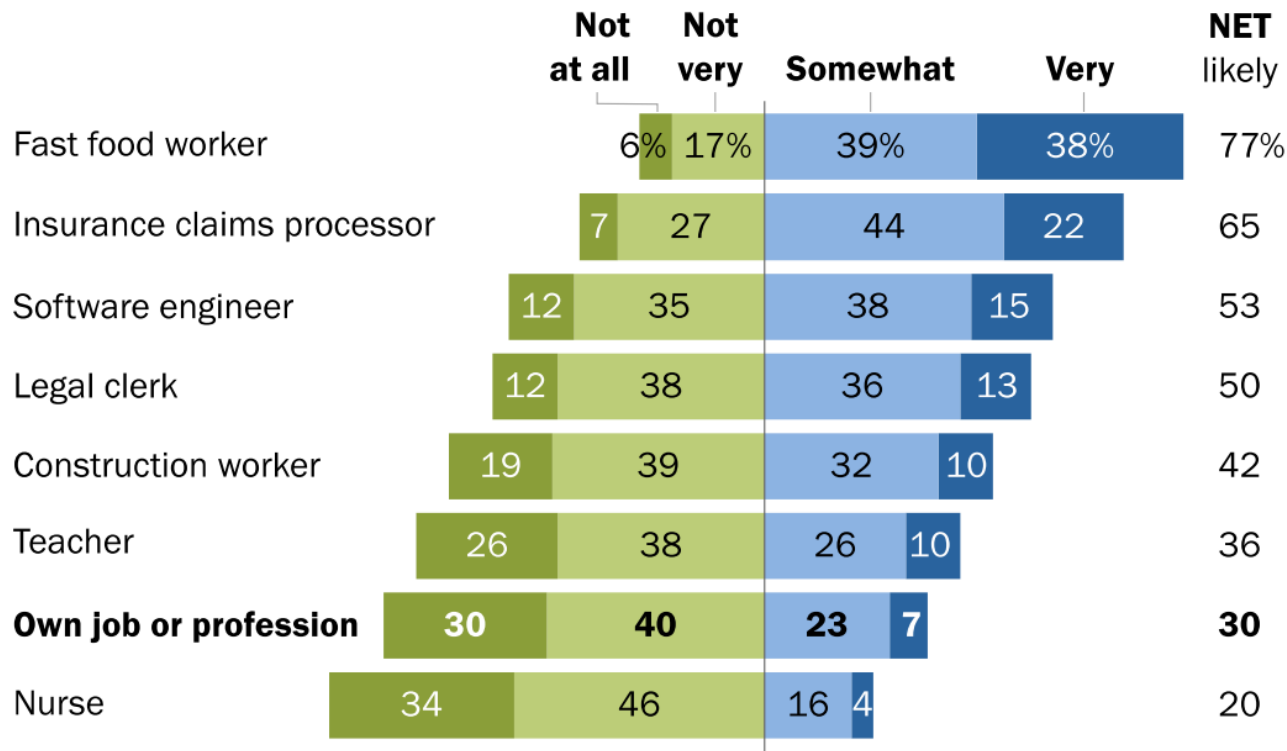
But is more supportive on limits to # of jobs replaced



Source: Survey conducted May 1-15, 2017.

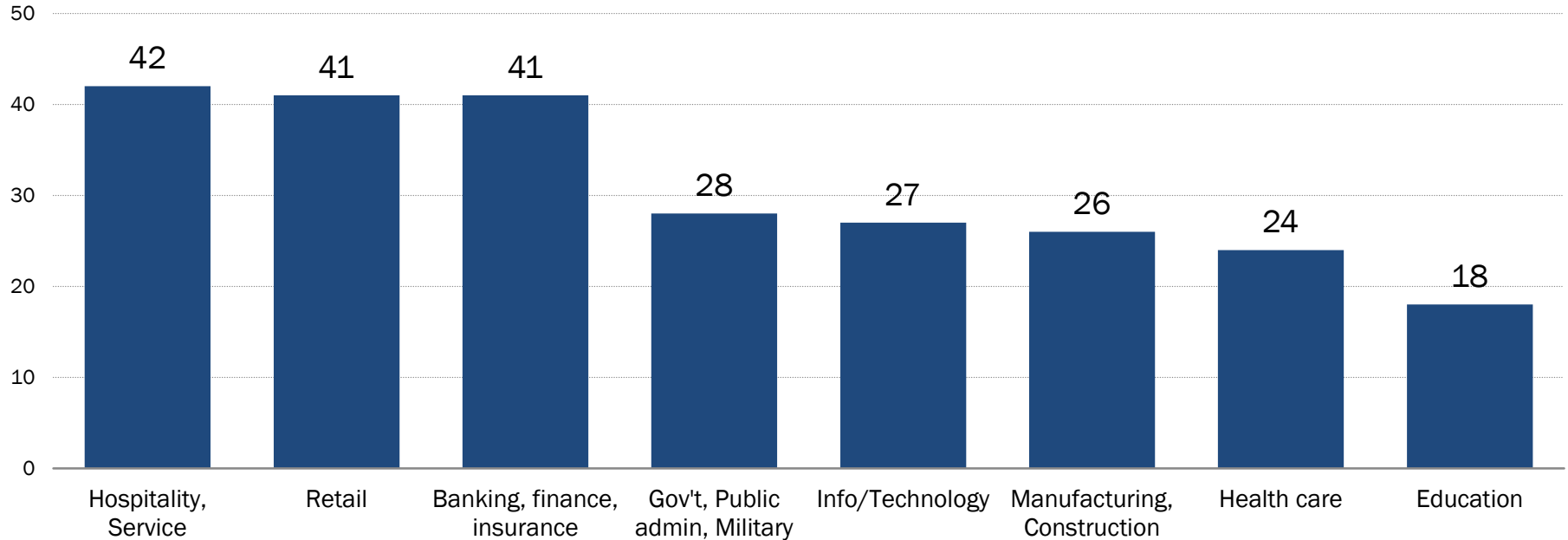
Certain occupations viewed as more at risk than others

% of U.S. adults who think it likely that the following jobs will be replaced by robots or computers in their lifetimes



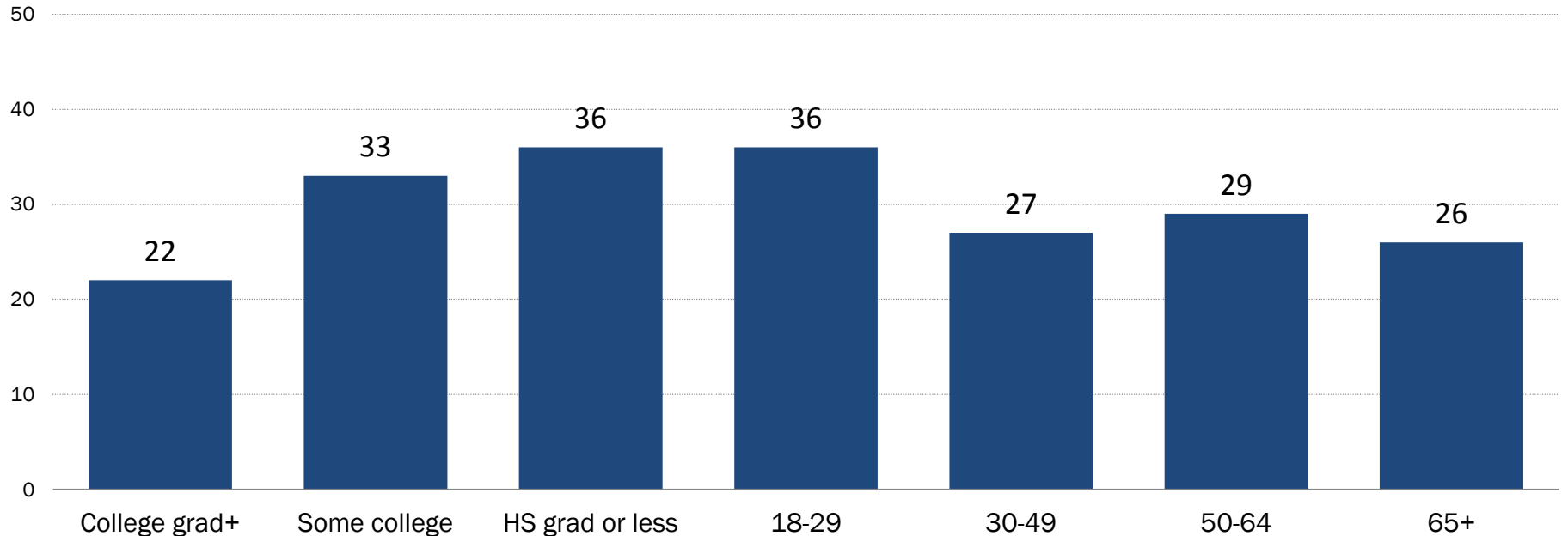
Across some job categories, modest numbers think their own job will be automated in the future

% of workers in each sector who think it very/somewhat likely that their job will be replaced by machines their lifetime



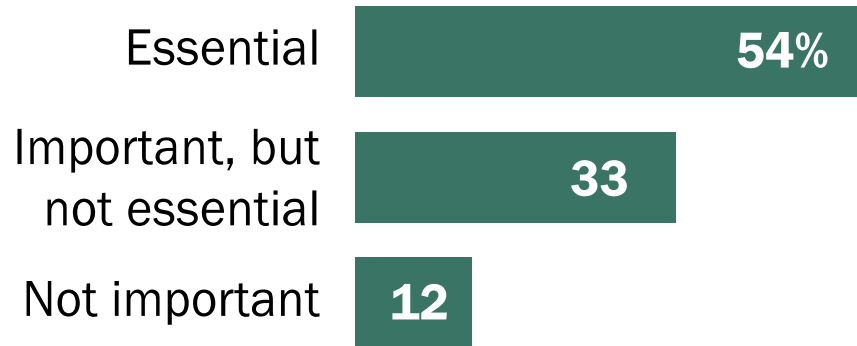
Across some demographic groups, modest numbers think their own job will be automated in the future

% of workers in each group who think it very/somewhat likely that their job will be replaced by machines their lifetime



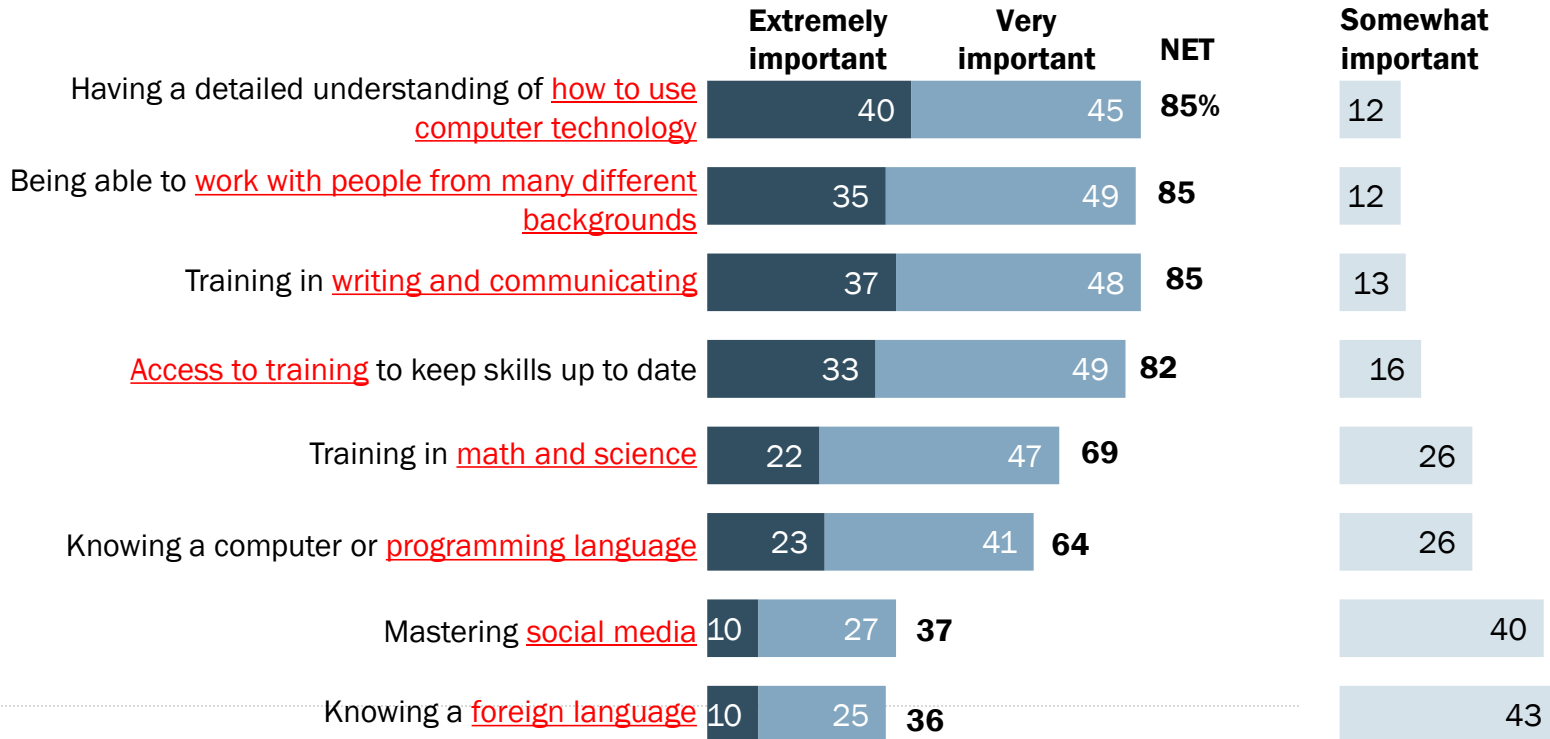
Training is now seen as essential

% saying training/skills development throughout their work life will be ...



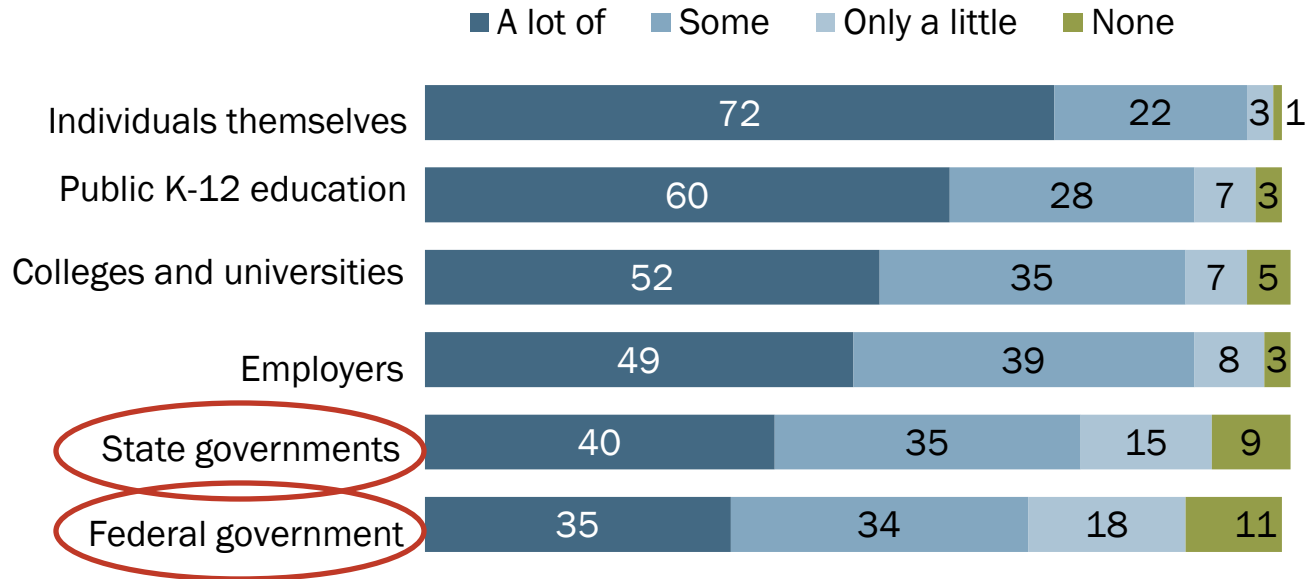
People think knowledge of computers, social dexterity, communications skills and access to training are key to success

% saying these traits are _____ for workers to be successful in today's economy



Americans think individuals and public schools should have the most responsibility to make sure workers have the right skills

% saying these groups should have ___ responsibility in making sure the American workforce has the right skills and education to be successful in today's economy



Thank you!

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