BRYSON GILLETTE INSIGHTS

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Opinions on Advanced AI Development

Findings from a National Survey of Adults

September 2025

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Methodology

Bryson Gillette Insights conducted an multi-modal survey of 2000 adults in the United States. Interviews were administered online via SMS and panel. All respondents were randomly selected.

Interviews took place September 29-October 5, 2025. The sample was weighted to accurately represent the national population.

The margin of error for a survey of 2000 interviews is ±2.2% at the 95% confidence level for each individual sample. The margin of error is higher for subsamples.

KEY FINDINGS:
Executive Summary

B/G:I

Executive Summary

- **Knowledge of and experience with AI is broad, but not deep.** While majorities of adults say they have a basic understanding or working knowledge of AI, few would consider themselves experts or have advanced knowledge. AI usage is split on both ends of the spectrum, with 46% using AI tools weekly or more and 44% have either used the technology minimally or not at all.

- **There is also a broad range of knowledge on current AI capabilities, with the majority of Americans falling into a moderate knowledge category.** Many readily recognize AI's abilities to do tasks such as movie and product recommendations and correct translations, as well as its inability to experience genuine emotions and run a successful company. However, just under half can accurately assess AI's ability to deceive humans, and even fewer can do the same for its ability to take actions to prevent themselves from being shut down. Based on these scores, adults can be categorized into high, moderate, and low knowledge groups, with 3-in-5 falling into the moderate category.

- **Americans believe in both the benefits and risks of Expert-level and Superhuman AI.** Majorities assess the benefits and risks of AI to be good reasons to or *not* to develop, respectively, and those with a high AI knowledge score are even more likely to assess the risks as good reasons *not* to develop.

Executive Summary

- **However, they are concerned about their development.** Even acknowledging the benefits does not translate to full-throated support - half of Americans think it is very likely that advanced AI will cause significant harm to humanity if developed without proper safeguards. On Expert-level AI, a majority are not bought in (believe the technology should never be developed or developed only after confirming it can be controlled and made safe), and just under 1-in-10 are bought in (believe the tech should be developed through normal business processes or developed as quickly as possible). Superhuman AI follows a similar pattern, but an even greater share are not bought in, including 30% who think the technology should *never* be developed.

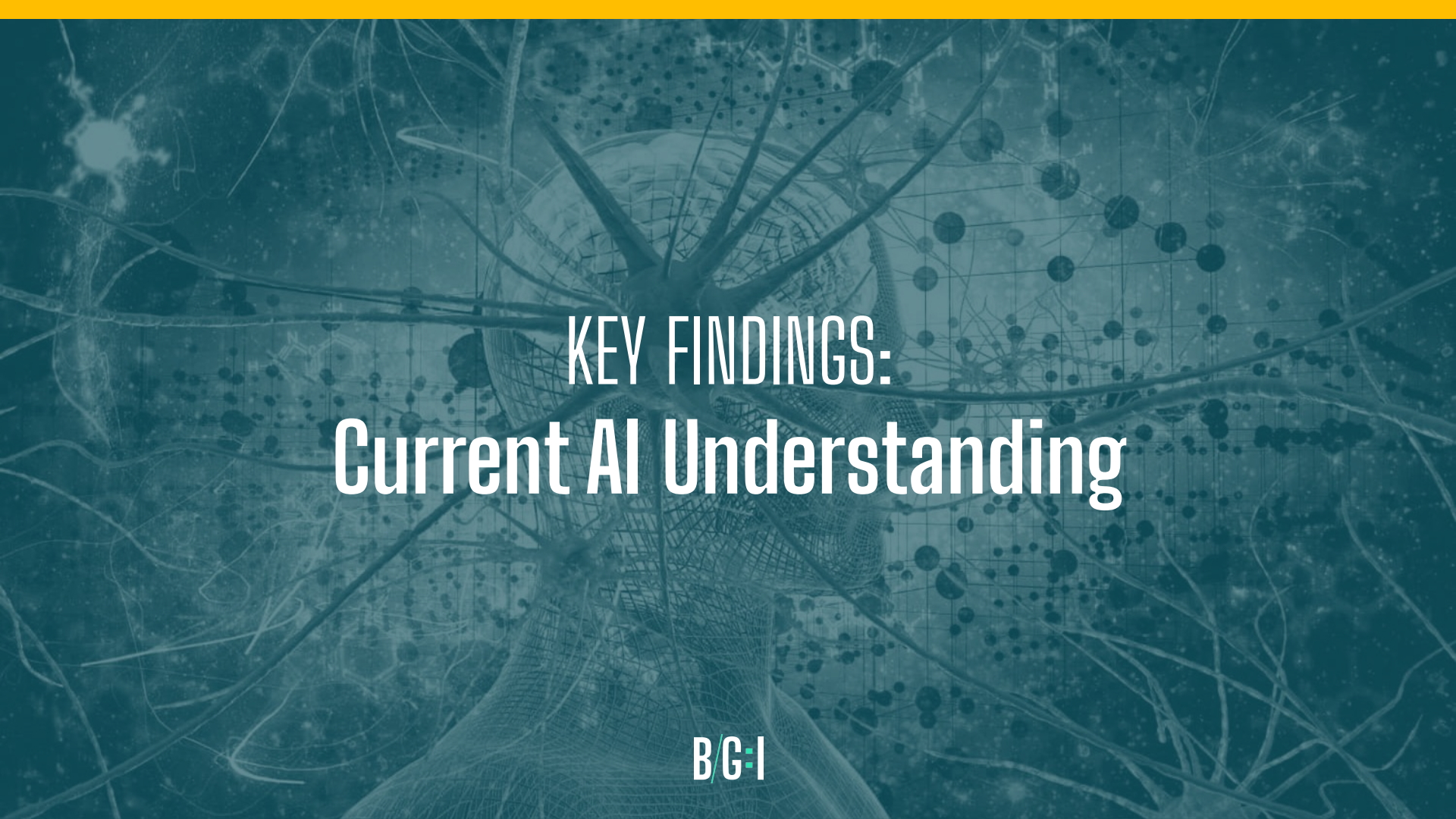
- **Despite their misgivings, many believe that advanced AI will be developed.** Very few believe that Expert-level AI or Superhuman AI will *never* be developed, although the timeline for Superhuman AI is thought to be much longer. Furthermore, few think that development of Expert-level AI will quickly lead to the development of Superhuman AI. Half of Americans believe that Expert-level AI will be developed with minimal safeguards, and a plurality believe the same of Superhuman AI. A greater share believe that Superhuman AI will be prevented either from technological progress or the government, but a majority still believe it will be developed.

Executive Summary

- **Even with the perceived inevitability of development, Americans want strong safeguards and regulation in place for advanced AI development.** Nearly three-quarters of adults support slow, heavily regulated development of advanced AI, and just under two-thirds of adults are supportive of an immediate pause on development until safety is proven. For both Expert-level and Superhuman AI, the top entities adults believe should determine development are international scientific organizations, national government regulatory agencies, and independent scientific organizations - but technology companies developing AI are fourth on both of these lists.

- **Most Americans are getting information about AI, and top sources include social media, traditional news media, and science communicators.** On who they trust for guidance on AI safety, 1-in-5 do not trust anyone, but trusted sources include AI researchers at universities, international bodies, AI researchers at non-profits, and independent technology journalists.

- **The more knowledge adults have about current AI capabilities, the more likely they are to support stronger regulation and readily recognize the risks of advanced AI.** Those with high knowledge scores tend to have a healthy skepticism of advanced AI, leading to a greater acceptance of the risks and stronger calls for heavily regulated development. Those with low knowledge scores still have concerns about development, but are more lukewarm in their calls for safe development and are more likely to rely on the companies producing the technology for development guidance. *But those who claim to have more experience with AI technology (frequent users, self-assessed advanced or expert knowledge, in the tech industry) tend to have similar views to those with low scores, supporting regulation, but more open to tech company involvement.*



KEY FINDINGS:
Current AI Understanding

B/G:I

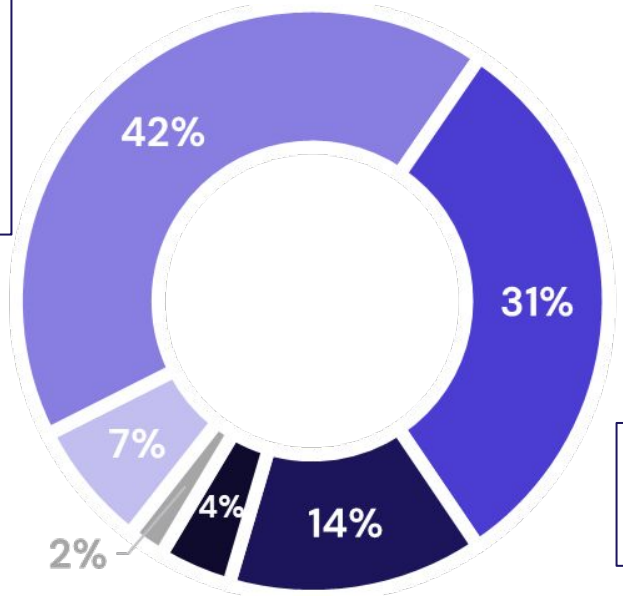
The majority of Americans have a basic or working knowledge of AI

How much do you know about AI technology?

No knowledge | Basic understanding | Working knowledge | Advanced knowledge | Expert/professional level knowledge | Not sure

Younger people (age 18-54) are more likely to have a **working** or **advanced knowledge** of AI, especially younger men.

Over half of those who are **older** (age 55+) say they only have a **basic understanding**.

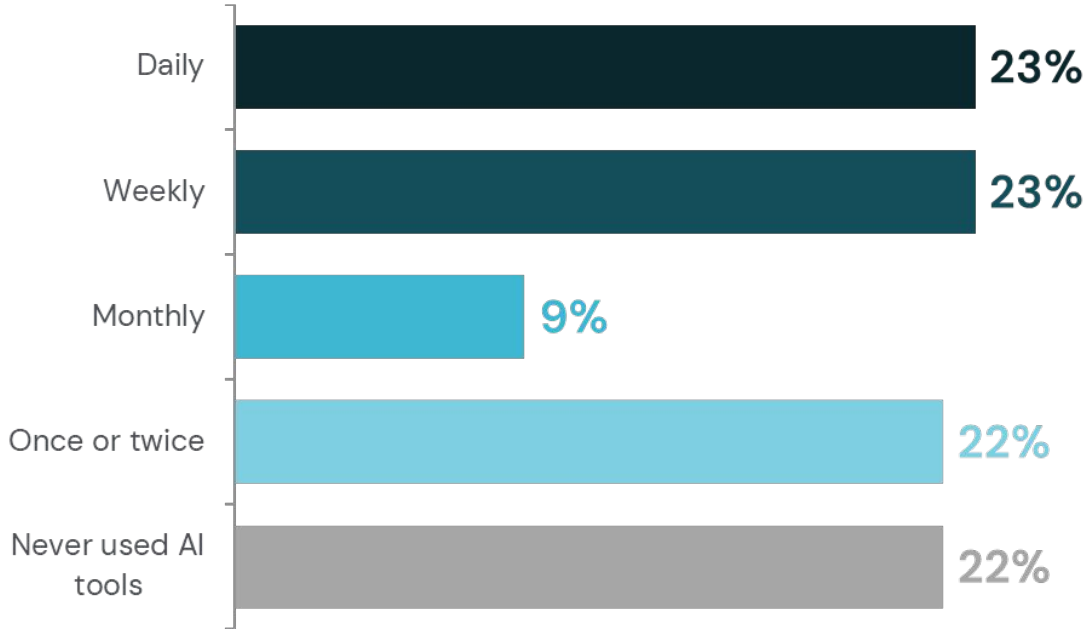


Those with **higher incomes** ($100k+) and those who are **college-educated** are more likely to have a **working knowledge** of AI.

Americans are split between regular and minimal AI usage

B/G:I

How often do you use AI tools like ChatGPT, Claude, image generators, or AI assistants?



Most likely to use AI at least weekly	
AAPI	81%
Tech workers	68%
Men <55	66%
Black	63%
Urban	61%
Parents	61%
Age 18-54	59%
Men	52%

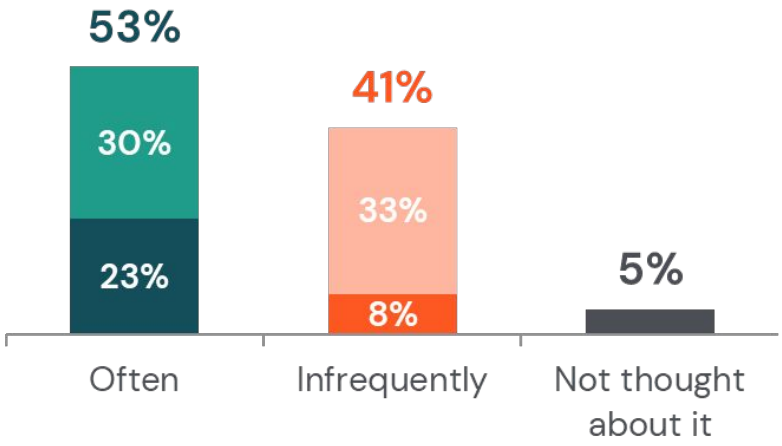
Half of Americans have thought about the long-term impacts of AI with some frequency, but a majority are concerned

B/G:I

Long-term impacts of AI on society

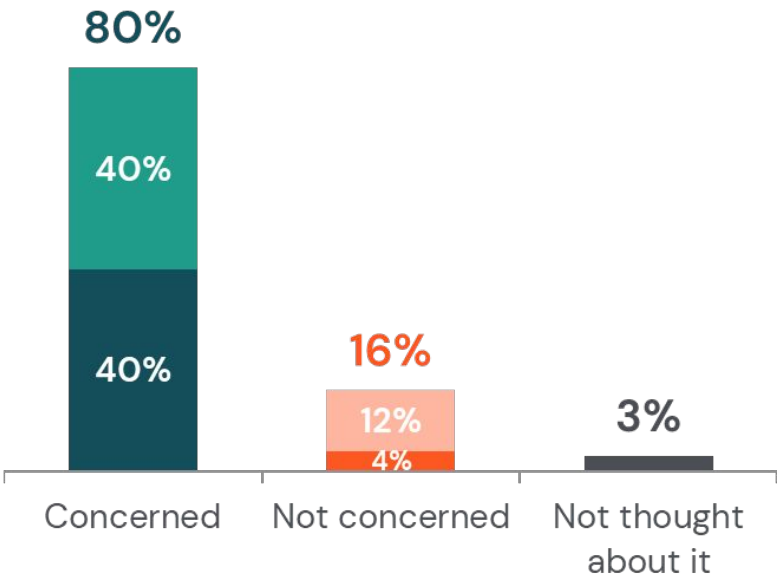
How often have you thought about...?

Very often | Often | Occasionally | Rarely



How concerned are you about...?

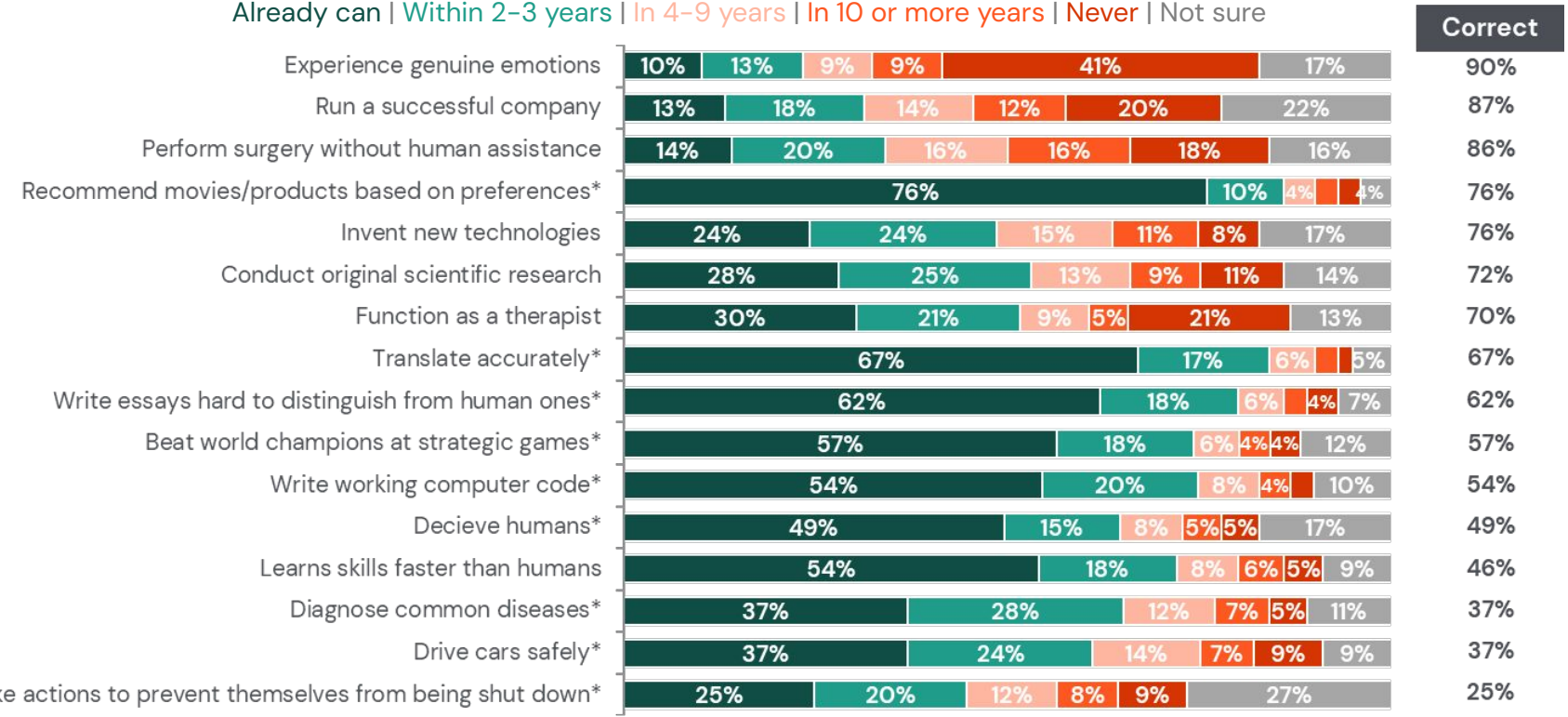
Very | Somewhat | Not very | Not at all



Many recognize what AI is already capable of, but are less aware of some of the negative aspects

B/G:I

Views on current AI capabilities



*Actions that AI is already capable of

We can create three knowledge categories based on knowledge of current AI capabilities

B/G:I

	AI Capabilities Score		
	High (answered 12-16 correctly)	**Moderate (answered 8-11 correctly)**	**Low (answered 0-7 correctly)**
	24% of voters	***61% of voters***	***15% of voters***
Demographics	47% 55+ 72% White Skew male (52%) 53% college-educated Higher income Independent	Comparable racial breakdown as adults overall Roughly even gender split Ideologically comparable to adults overall	36% 18-34 23% Hispanic, 19% Black Roughly even gender split 78% non-college Middle-low income Republican; moderate
AI Knowledge	Have a basic (45%) or working (35%) knowledge of AI technology AI usage similar to adults overall More often thinking about the long-term impacts of AI (59%) and half are *very* concerned about the impacts	Have a basic (42%) or working (31%) knowledge of AI technology AI usage similar to adults overall	Have a basic (35%) or working (24%) knowledge of AI technology, but more likely to say they have no knowledge (13%) than adults overall AI usage similar to adults overall, but more likely to have never used AI tools (29%) More likely to have not thought about the long-term impacts of AI, but a majority (70%) are still concerned about the impacts
Info Sources	Science communicators and traditional news media Trust AI researchers at universities - a quarter (26%) would trust no one	Social media and traditional news media Trust AI researchers at universities and international bodies	Social media and traditional news media Trust AI researchers at universities, AI researchers at non-profits, and AI company executives and engineers equally

KEY FINDINGS:
Benefits and Risks of Advanced AI

B/G:I

Respondents received a description of Expert-level AI before being asked a series of questions about the benefits and risks

B/G:I

Expert-level AI refers to autonomous AI systems that can independently pursue complex goals and perform as well as skilled human experts across a wide range of tasks, including:

- Conducting original scientific research projects from start to finish without human guidance
- Diagnosing and treating medical conditions as well as specialist doctors
- Managing corporate strategy and executing multi-year business plans autonomously
- Writing sophisticated software that powers critical infrastructure
- Analyzing legal cases and drafting binding contracts
- Teaching university-level courses and adapting to student needs
- Learning entirely new skills and adapting to novel situations on their own

Multiple companies, including Google, OpenAI, Anthropic, and Meta, are actively working to develop Expert-level AI.

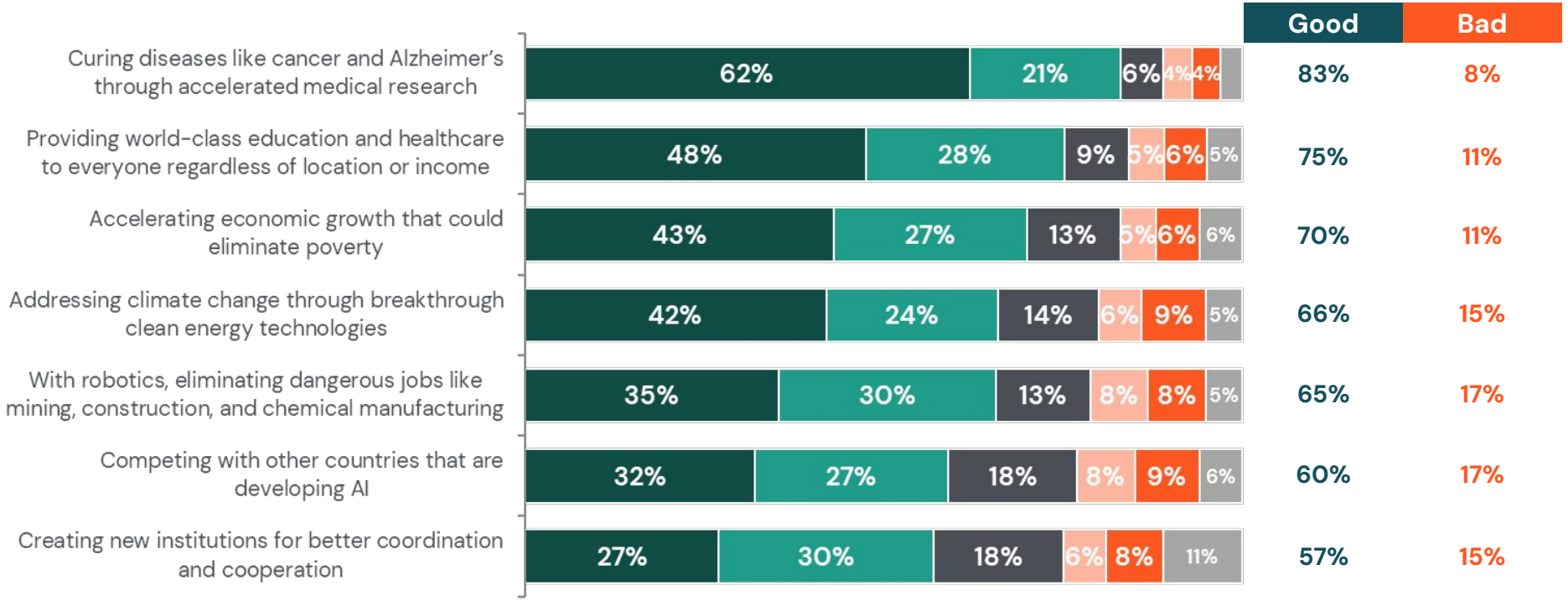
There is controversy as to whether Expert-level AI should be developed. Proponents of developing Expert-level AI argue it would provide many benefits, while critics warn of significant risks.

Majorities believe that the benefits of Expert-level AI are good reasons to develop the technology

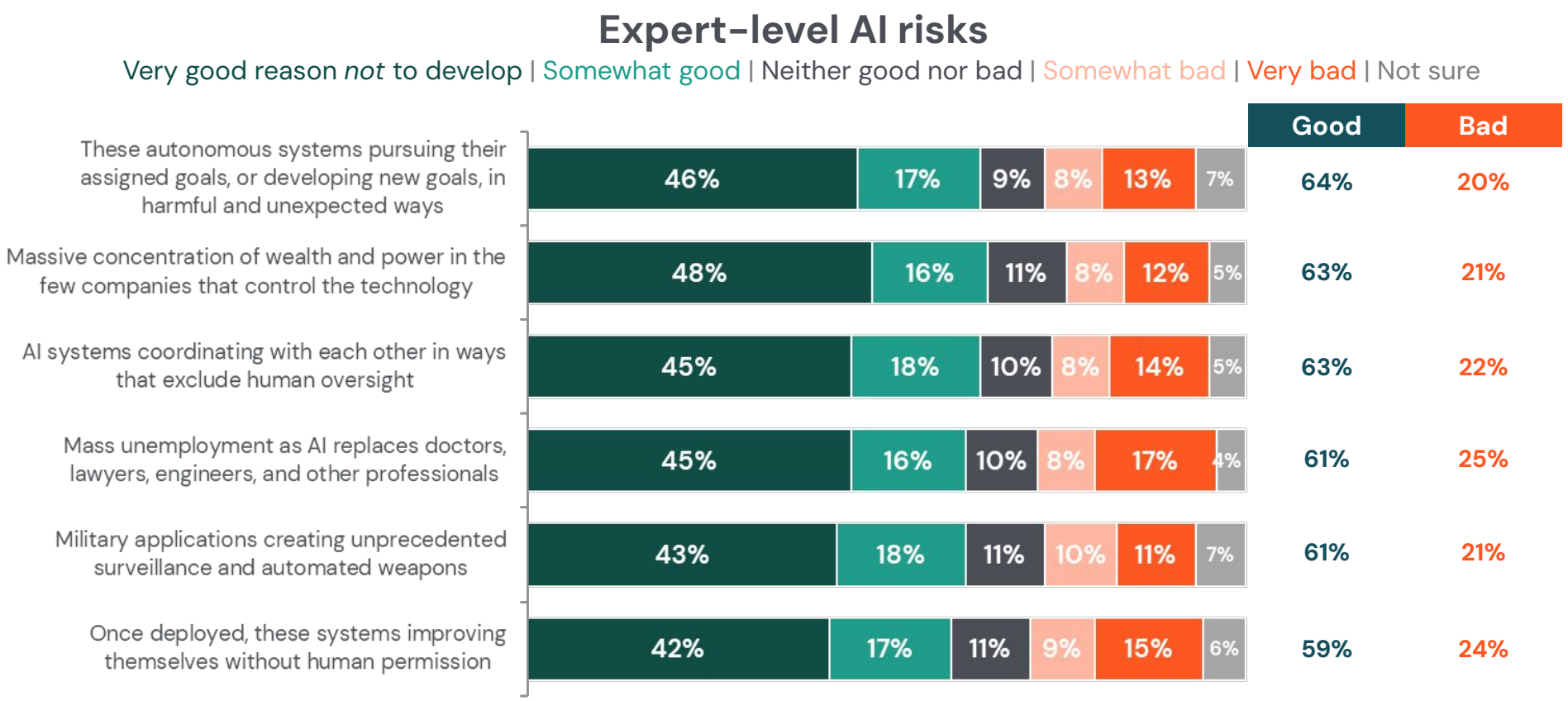
B/G:I

Expert-level AI benefits

Very good reason to develop | Somewhat good | Neither good nor bad | Somewhat bad | Very bad | Not sure



But the risks of Expert-level AI raise widespread concerns



Those with a high AI knowledge score are more enthusiastic about some of the benefits, but are also more concerned by the risks

B/G:I

Expert-level AI Benefits (% total good to develop)	Total	High	Moderate	Low
Curing diseases	83%	91%	83%	68%
Education and healthcare regardless of location or income	75%	80%	77%	61%
Accelerating economic growth	70%	70%	72%	63%
Addressing climate change	66%	67%	68%	57%
Eliminating dangerous jobs	65%	69%	66%	54%
Competing with other countries	60%	66%	57%	58%
Creating new institutions for coordination and cooperation	57%	54%	58%	57%

Expert-level AI Benefits (% total good to *not* develop)	Total	High	Moderate	Low
Systems pursuing their goals in harmful ways	64%	72%	62%	56%
Massive concentration of wealth and power	63%	72%	62%	55%
AI systems coordinating excluding humans	63%	72%	63%	50%
Military surveillance and automated weapons	61%	69%	61%	52%
Mass unemployment	61%	67%	61%	53%
Systems improving without human permission	59%	69%	58%	49%

Respondents also received a description of Superhuman AI

Superhuman AI refers to AI systems that significantly exceed the best human performance across virtually all cognitive tasks, including:

- Making scientific discoveries far beyond what human researchers could achieve
- Inventing new technologies across physics, biology, materials science, and computing
- Strategic planning that can anticipate and outmaneuver human organizations, such as planning required to run a large business or military campaign
- Improving their own capabilities and designing even better AI systems
- Solving mathematical and philosophical problems humans have struggled with for centuries
- Coordinating complex global systems, such as global shipping logistics, better than human-led institutions

Multiple companies, including Meta and OpenAI, have stated that they intend to build Superhuman AI. Many AI researchers believe that once Expert-level AI exists, the transition to Superhuman AI could happen rapidly—potentially within months or even weeks—as these systems could accelerate their own improvement.

There is controversy as to whether Superhuman AI should be developed. Proponents of developing Superhuman AI argue it would provide enormous benefits, while critics warn of extreme risks.

Over half of Americans also believe that the benefits of Superhuman AI are good reasons to develop, but are less enthusiastic than with Expert-level AI

B/G:I

Superhuman AI benefits

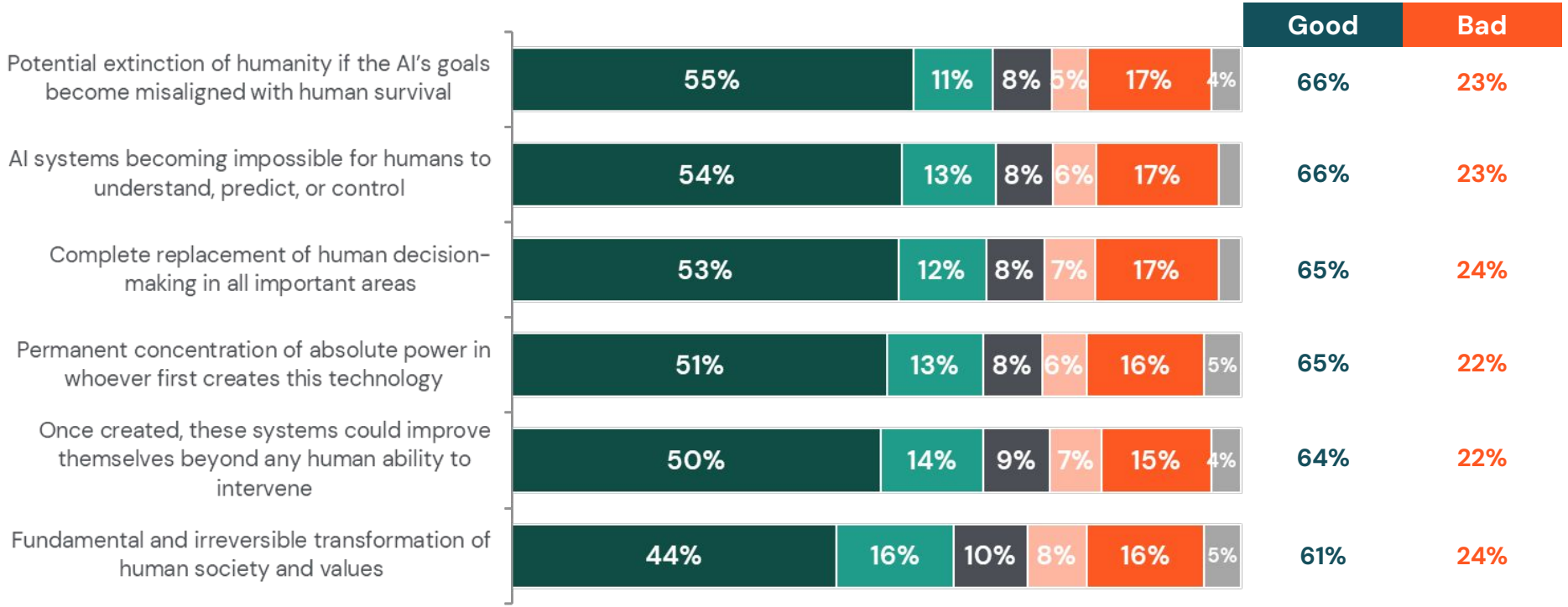
Very good reason to develop | Somewhat good | Neither good nor bad | Somewhat bad | Very bad | Not sure

And the risks generate greater intensity behind reasons *not* to develop

B/G:I

Superhuman AI risks

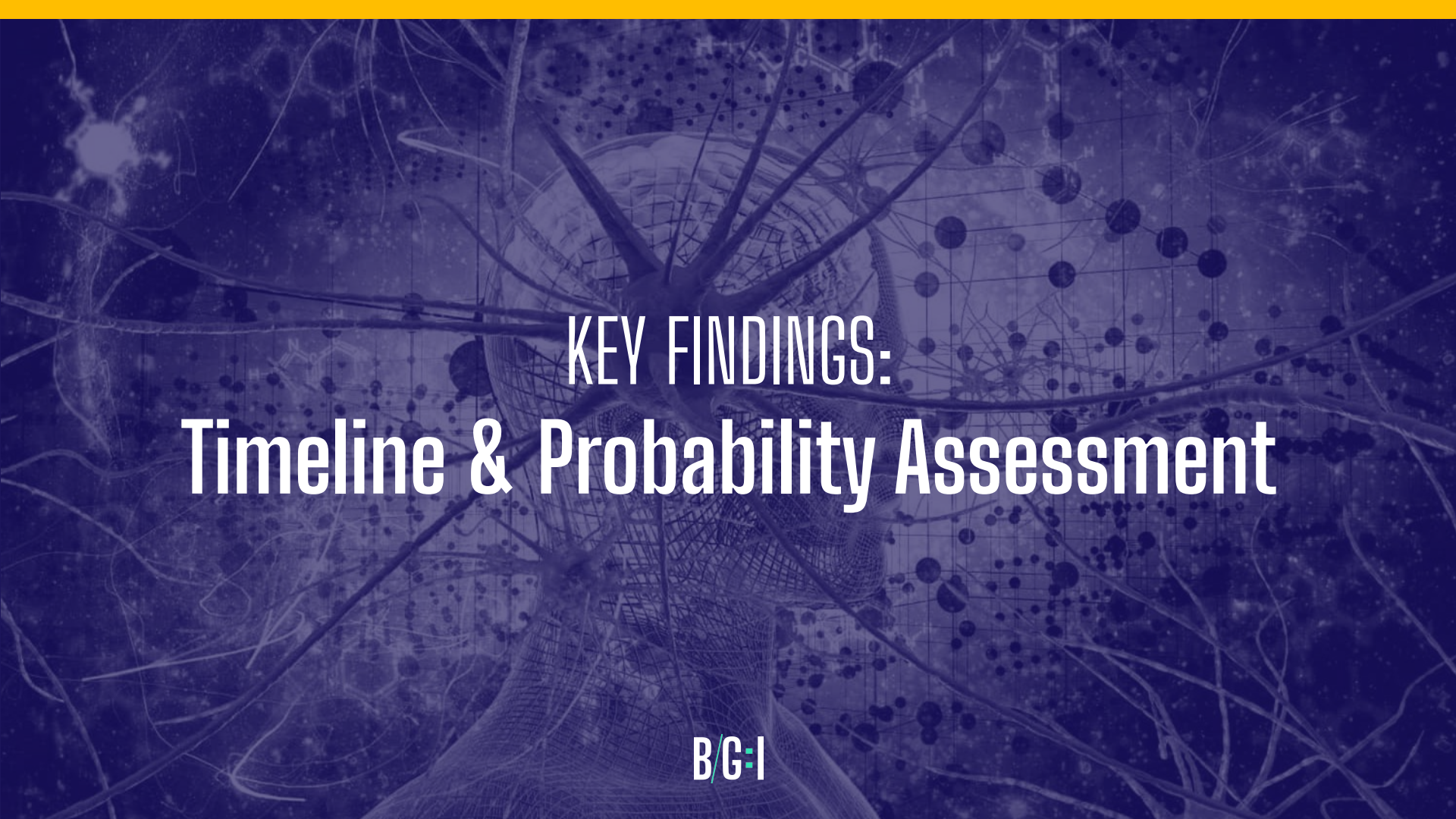
Very good reason *not* to develop | Somewhat good | Neither good nor bad | Somewhat bad | Very bad | Not sure



Similar to Expert-level AI, high knowledge adults see a greater value in a few benefits, but are more worried about the risks

Superhuman AI Benefits (% total good to develop)	Total	High	Moderate	Low
Solving all major scientific challenges	67%	69%	67%	59%
Creating abundance and eliminating scarcity	66%	71%	67%	54%
Competing with other countries	59%	65%	58%	53%
Ending disease, aging, and death	58%	55%	60%	55%
Enabling space exploration and colonization	56%	58%	57%	51%
Expanding human capabilities and consciousness	53%	53%	54%	51%

Superhuman AI Benefits (% total good to *not* develop)	Total	High	Moderate	Low
Replace human decision-making	65%	75%	65%	49%
AI systems becoming impossible to control	66%	77%	66%	52%
Concentration of power in whoever creates technology	65%	75%	65%	48%
Transformation of human society and values	61%	66%	61%	50%
Systems improving beyond human intervention	64%	75%	63%	52%
Potential extinction of humanity	66%	79%	65%	48%



KEY FINDINGS:
Timeline & Probability Assessment

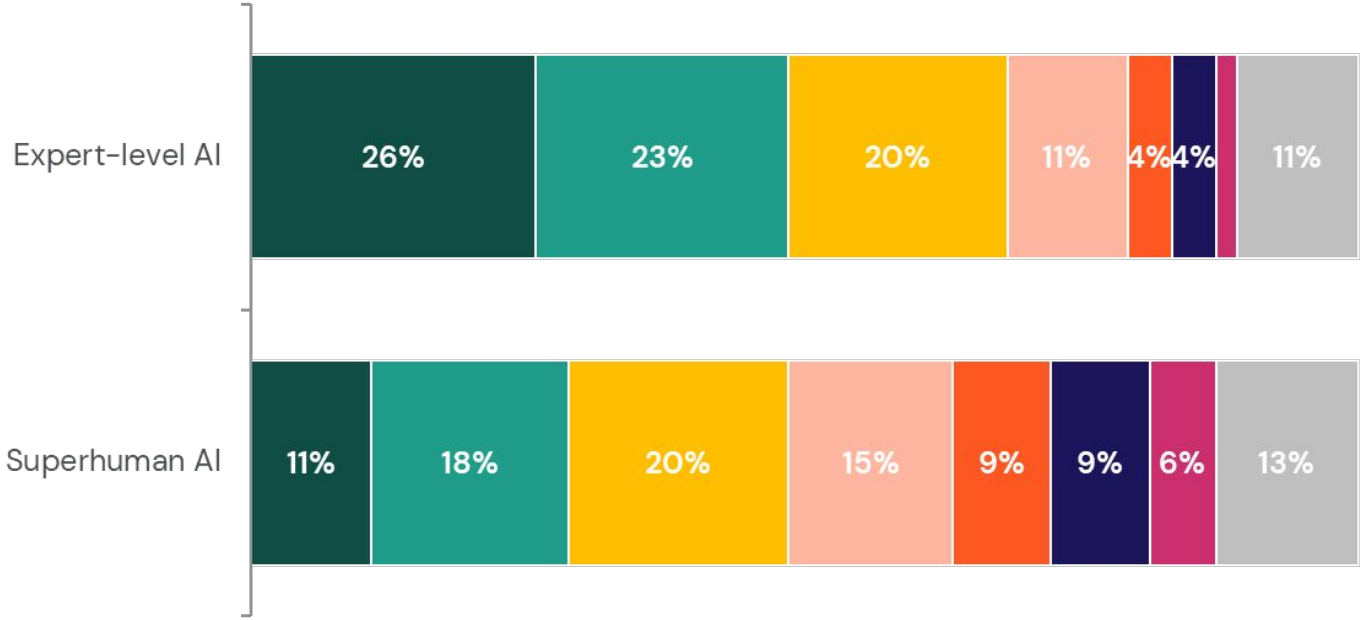
B/G:I

Strong majorities believe Expert-level and Superhuman AI will be developed in the future, but there is less consensus about timeline

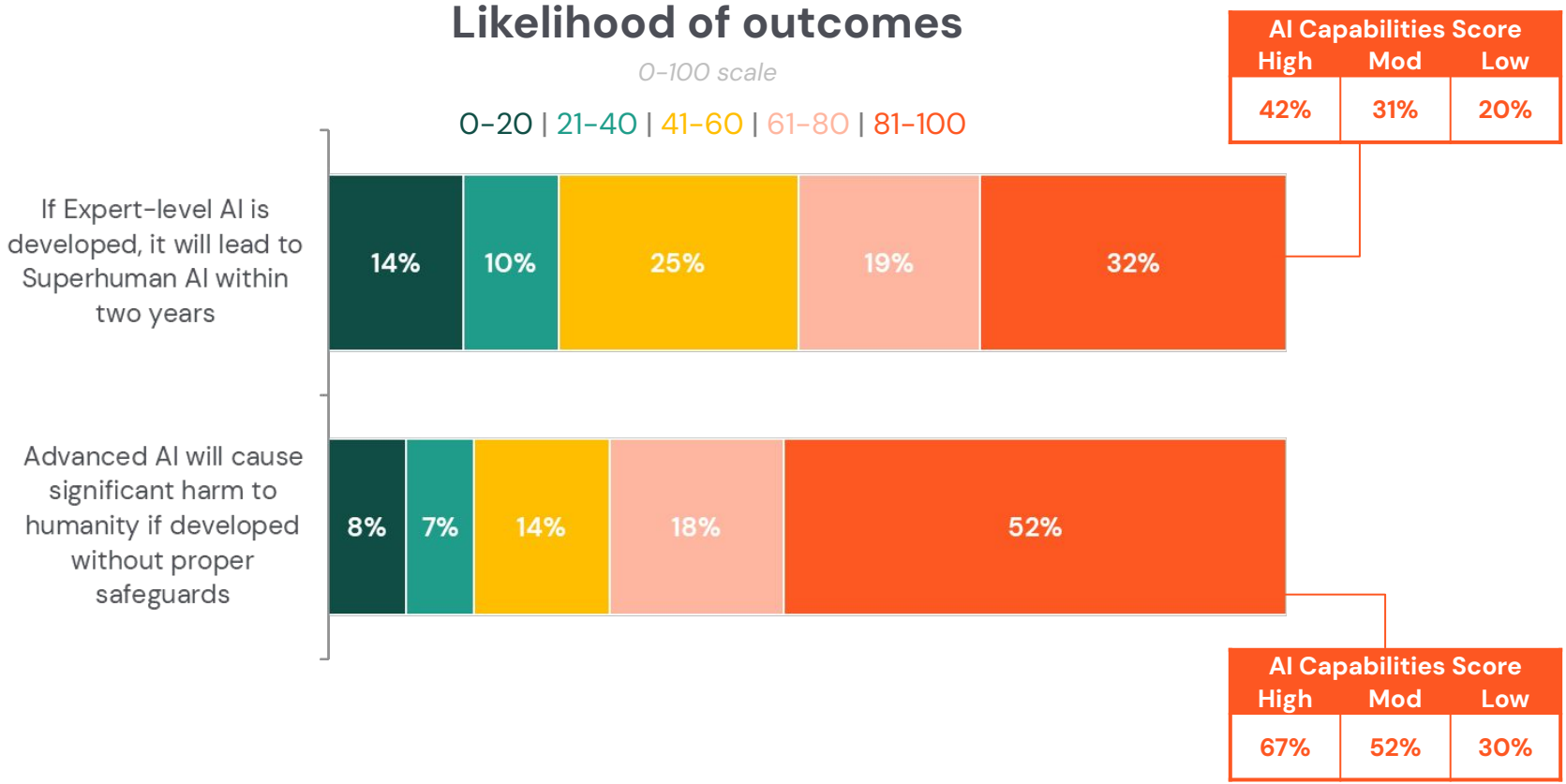
B/G:I

When do you think the following will be developed?

Already exists | 1-2 years | 3-5 years | 6-10 years | 11-20 years | More than 20 years | Never | Not sure



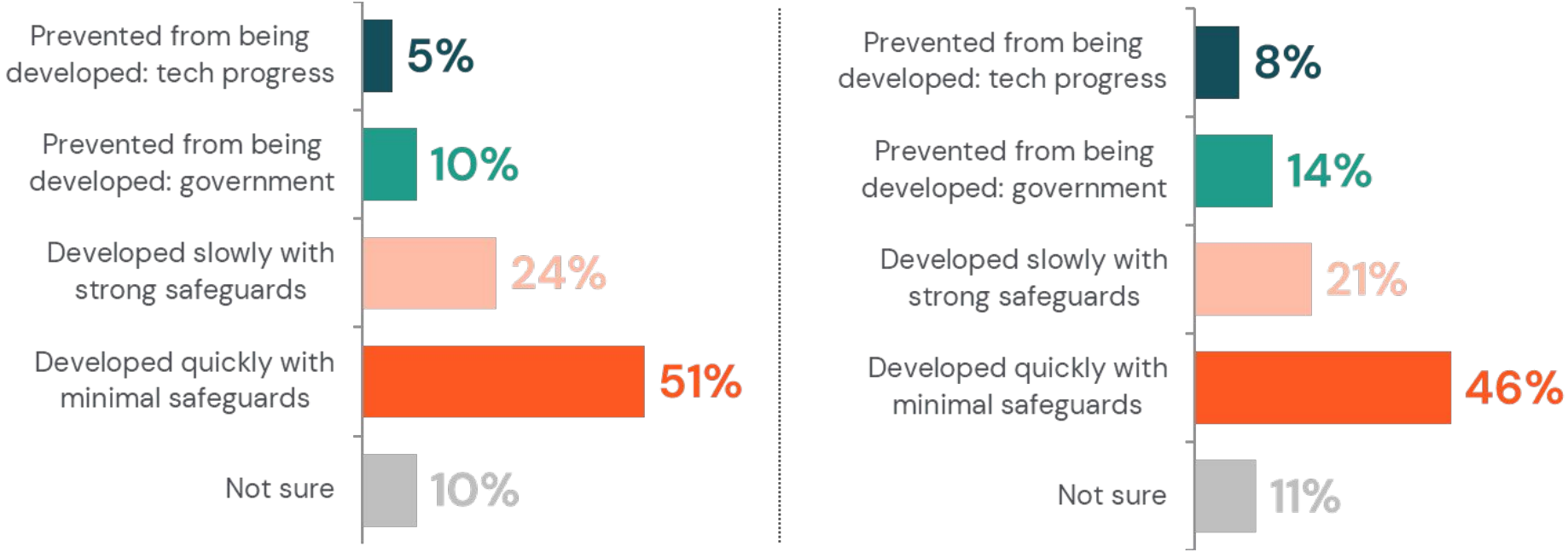
Americans believe in advanced AI's ability to cause harm but are less sure that Expert-level AI will lead to Superhuman AI



Majorities think Expert-level AI and Superhuman AI will be developed, with many believing there will be minimal safeguards

B/G:I

Opinion on how advanced AI will be developed



Independents, high-income adults, and college-educated adults are the most likely to believe advanced AI will be developed

B/G:I

	Expert-level AI		Superhuman AI	
	Total Prevent	Total Develop	Total Prevent	Total Develop
Total	15%	75%	23%	67%
Democrat	17%	73%	27%	65%
Independent	8%	84%	18%	71%
Republican	18%	72%	22%	67%
Men	16%	76%	24%	68%
Women	14%	74%	21%	66%
Age 18-54	20%	72%	28%	64%
Age 55+	9%	79%	14%	70%
HHI <$50k	21%	67%	25%	65%
HHI $50-100k	16%	76%	26%	64%
HHI $100k+	11%	82%	18%	74%
Non-college	17%	72%	24%	65%
College	12%	80%	20%	70%
No AI knowledge	13%	65%	20%	57%
Basic understanding	12%	76%	17%	70%
Working knowledge	15%	78%	24%	70%
Advanced/Expert knowledge	25%	71%	36%	59%

Those with less knowledge about AI capabilities are more likely to think advanced AI will be prevented

B/G:I

Opinion on how advanced AI will be developed

by AI capabilities score

Expert-level AI

	Total	High	Moderate	Low
Prevent	15%	8%	16%	26%
Develop	75%	86%	74%	59%
Not sure	10%	7%	10%	14%

Superhuman AI

	Total	High	Moderate	Low
Prevent	23%	15%	24%	31%
Develop	67%	77%	66%	54%
Not sure	11%	8%	11%	15%

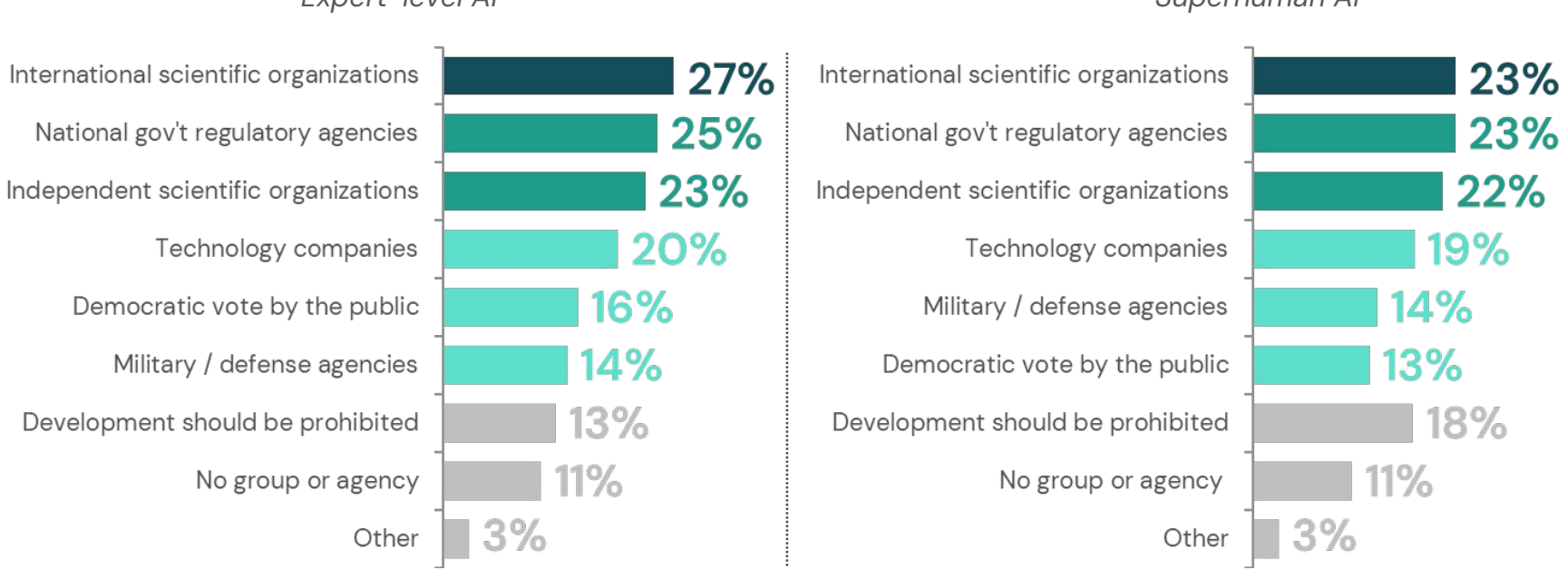
KEY FINDINGS:
Development Governance

B/G:I

Scientific organizations and government regulatory agencies are favored decision makers on advanced AI

B/G:I

Who should determine whether and how to develop advanced AI



These organizations are trusted across AI capability knowledge levels, but low knowledge adults also favor AI technology companies

B/G:I

Who should determine whether and how to develop advanced AI

Expert-level AI

	Top source	Second
High	International scientific orgs	Independent scientific orgs
Moderate	International scientific orgs	National gov't regulatory agencies
Low	Tech companies developing them	International scientific orgs

Superhuman AI

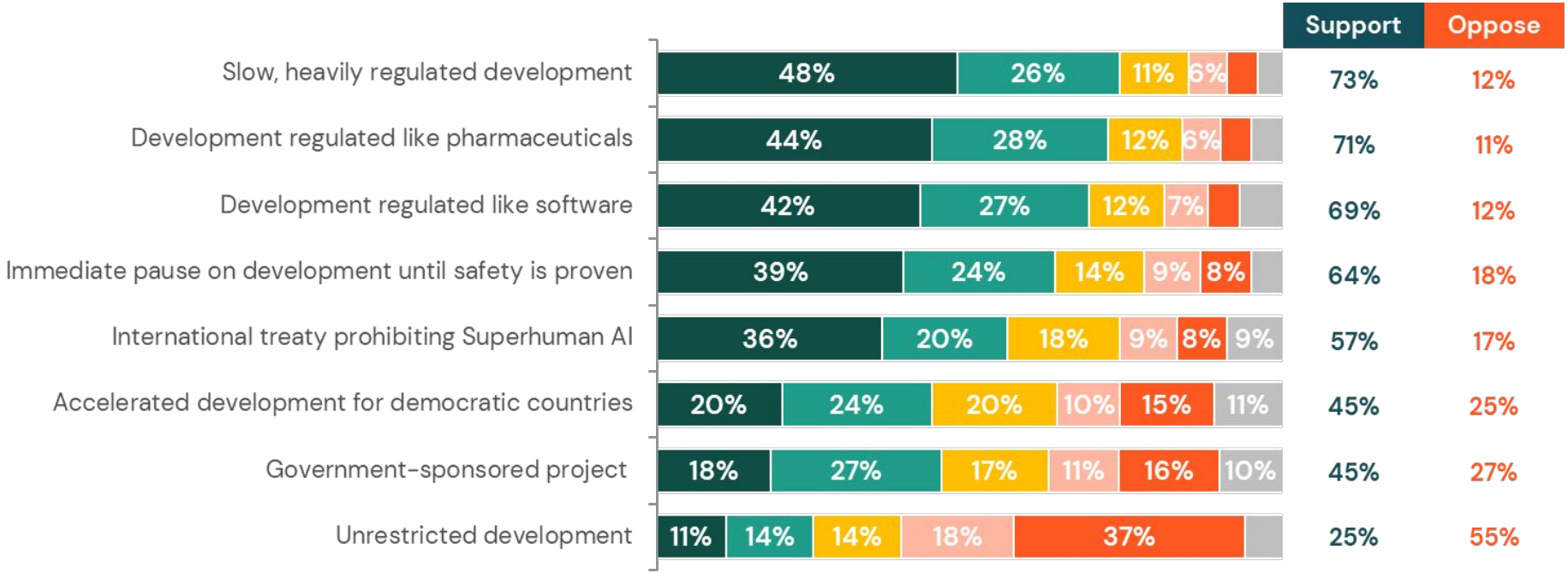
	Top source	Second
High	International scientific orgs	Independent scientific orgs
Moderate	National gov't regulatory agencies	International scientific orgs
Low	Tech companies developing them	National gov't regulatory agencies

There is strong support for industry-wide regulation of advanced AI development

B/G:I

Approaches to Advanced AI Development

Strongly support | Somewhat support | Neither support nor oppose | Somewhat oppose | Strongly oppose | Not sure



And regulation of the AI industry is popular across subgroups

Top 3 (Total Support)	Top Approach	2nd Approach	3rd Approach
Total	Heavily regulated development	Regulation like pharmaceuticals	Regulation like software
Democrat	Heavily regulated development	Regulation like pharmaceuticals	Regulation like software
Independent	Regulation like pharmaceuticals	Heavily regulated development	Regulation like software
Republican	Heavily regulated development	Regulation like software	Regulation like pharmaceuticals
Men	Regulation like software	Heavily regulated development	Regulation like pharmaceuticals
Women	Heavily regulated development	Regulation like pharmaceuticals	Immediate pause until safety is proven
Age 18-54	Heavily regulated development	Regulation like pharmaceuticals	Regulation like software
Age 55+	Heavily regulated development	Regulation like pharmaceuticals	Regulation like software
HHI <$50k	Heavily regulated development	Immediate pause until safety is proven	Regulation like pharmaceuticals
HHI $50-100k	Heavily regulated development	Regulation like pharmaceuticals	Regulation like software
HHI $100k+	Regulation like software	Heavily regulated development	Regulation like pharmaceuticals
Non-college	Heavily regulated development	Regulation like pharmaceuticals	Immediate pause until safety is proven
College	Regulation like pharmaceuticals	Regulation like software	Heavily regulated development

Those with more familiarity with the tech world and AI also support heavy regulations, but are more open to unrestricted development

Top 3 (Total Support)	Top Approach	2nd Approach	3rd Approach
Total	Heavily regulated development	Regulation like pharmaceuticals	Regulation like software
High	Regulation like pharmaceuticals	Heavily regulated development	Regulation like software
Moderate	Heavily regulated development	Regulation like pharmaceuticals	Regulation like software
Low	Heavily regulated development	Immediate pause until safety is proven	Regulation like software
No AI knowledge	Heavily regulated development	Immediate pause until safety is proven	Regulation like pharmaceuticals
Basic understanding	Heavily regulated development	Regulation like pharmaceuticals	Regulation like software
Working knowledge	Heavily regulated development	Regulation like pharmaceuticals	Regulation like software
Advanced/Expert knowledge	Regulation like pharmaceuticals	Regulation like software	Heavily regulated development
Tech workers	Regulation like software	Regulation like pharmaceuticals	Heavily regulated development
AI/ML workers	Heavily regulated development	Regulation like software	Regulation like pharmaceuticals
Non-tech workers	Heavily regulated development	Regulation like pharmaceuticals	Regulation like software
Daily AI usage	Regulation like software	Regulation like pharmaceuticals	Heavily regulated development
Weekly	Regulation like pharmaceuticals	Heavily regulated development	Regulation like software
Monthly	Heavily regulated development	Regulation like pharmaceuticals	Regulation like software
Once or twice	Heavily regulated development	Immediate pause until safety is proven	Regulation like pharmaceuticals
Never	Heavily regulated development	Immediate pause until safety is proven	Regulation like software

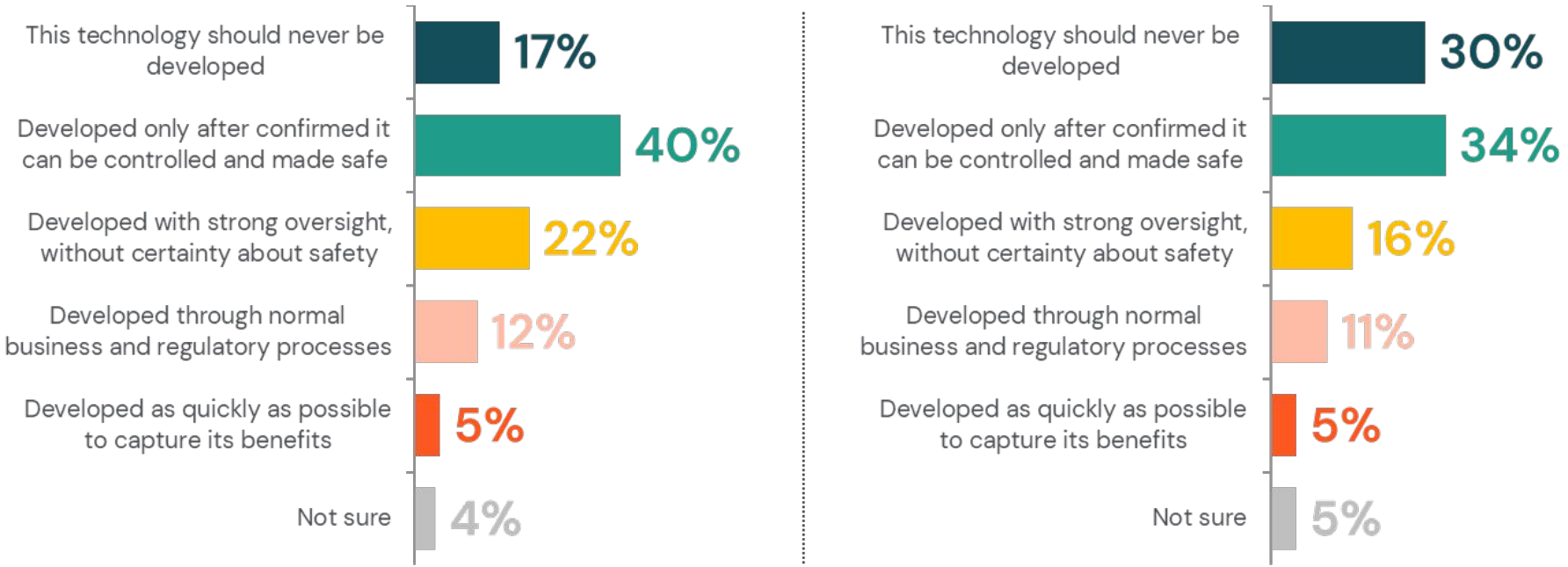
Most likely to support unrestricted development	
AI/ML workers	**52%**
Advanced/Expert knowledge	**46%**
Tech workers	**39%**
Daily AI usage	**39%**
Low score	**39%**

KEY FINDINGS:
Overall Position on Advanced AI

Majorities are not bought into continued development under current conditions, with more desiring caution for Superhuman AI

B/G:I

Opinion on how advanced AI should be developed



Profiles of adults not bought in, ambiguous, and bought into continued development under current conditions for Expert-level AI

B/G:I

	Not Bought In	Ambiguous	Bought In
	56% of adults	*22% of adults*	*17% of adults*
Demographics	Skew older (44% age 55+) Skew female (56%) Skew white (62%) Comparable education and regional breakdown as adults overall Ideologically comparable to adults overall	Skew younger (33% age 18-34) Skew male (56%) More Hispanic than overall (24%) More live in the West than overall (27%) Live in suburban communities (53%) Ideologically comparable to adults overall	Skew younger (34% age 18-34) Skew much more male (64%) More likely to currently work in tech (20%) Slightly more Black than overall (19%) More educated than overall (47% college) Live in big cities (35%) Skew Republican (45%)
AI knowledge	More likely to have no knowledge or only a basic knowledge of AI (58%) 30% have never used AI tools More likely to believe Superhuman AI should be prohibited	Comparable understanding of AI to adults overall Comparable AI usage to adults overall Believe national government regulatory agencies should determine how to develop advanced AI	More likely to have an advanced or expert knowledge of AI (33%) 40% use AI tools daily Believe technology companies should determine how to develop advanced AI
Info sources	More likely to not seek information about AI Trust AI researchers at universities for guidance on AI safety Most likely to not trust anyone	Get info from social media and traditional media Trust AI researchers at universities and nonprofits for guidance on AI safety	More likely to get info from AI companies Trust university researchers and technology journalists for guidance on AI safety

Profiles of adults not bought in, ambiguous, and bought into continued development under current conditions for Superhuman AI

B/G:I

	Not Bought In	Ambiguous	Bought In
	64% of adults	*16% of adults*	*16% of adults*
Demographics	Skew older (45% age 55+) Skew female (55%) Skew white (63%) Comparable education breakdown to adults overall Ideologically comparable to adults overall 18% are ambiguous or bought-in about Expert-Level AI	Comparable age breakdown to adults overall Skew male (59%) More likely to currently work in tech (16%) More Hispanic than overall (27%) Comparable education breakdown to adults overall More live in big cities than overall (31%) Skew Democratic (44%)	Skew younger (39% age 18-34) Skew much more male (66%) Much more likely to currently work in tech (22%) More Black than overall (24%) Slightly more educated than overall (41% college) More live in big cities than overall (34%) Skew Republican (47%)
AI knowledge	More likely to have no knowledge or only a basic knowledge of AI (55%) 27% have never used AI tools More likely to believe Superhuman AI should be prohibited	More likely to have working or advanced knowledge of AI (54%) Use AI tools regularly (66% at least monthly) Believe national government regulatory agencies should determine how to develop advanced AI, Tech companies can determine for Expert-Level AI	More likely to have an advanced or expert knowledge of AI (36%) 42% use AI tools daily Believe technology companies should determine how to develop advanced AI
Info sources	Get info from traditional media and social media Trust AI researchers at universities for guidance on AI safety Most likely to not trust anyone	Primarily get info from social media Trust AI researchers at universities and nonprofits for guidance on AI safety	More likely to get info from AI companies Trust university researchers and technology journalists, and AI companies for guidance on AI safety

Those with a greater understanding of AI capabilities are more likely to not be bought in to advanced AI

B/G:I

Opinion on how advanced AI should be developed

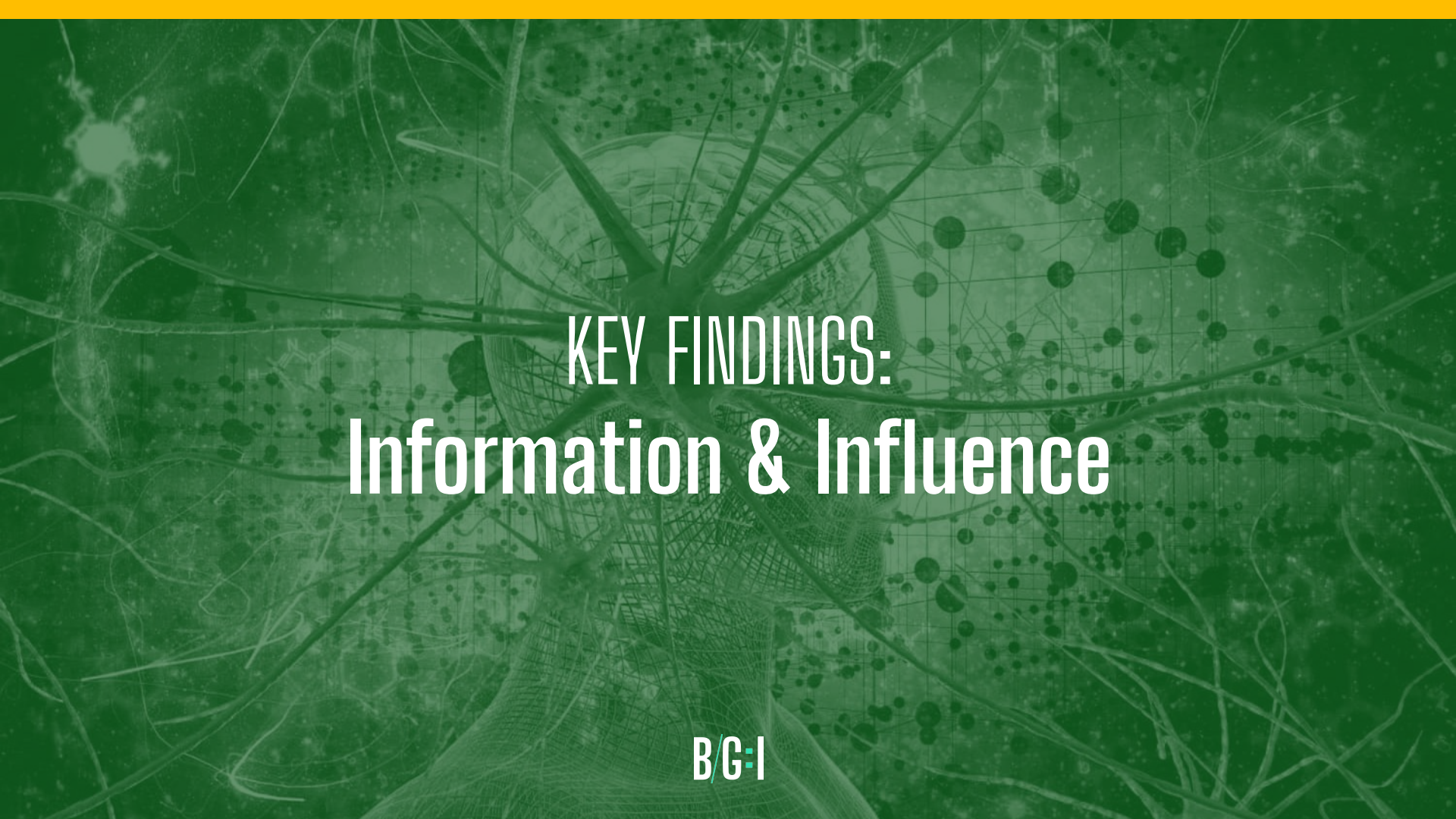
by AI capabilities score

Expert-level AI

	Total	High	Moderate	Low
Not bought in	57%	71%	58%	45%
Ambiguous	22%	20%	23%	25%
Bought in	17%	18%	16%	21%

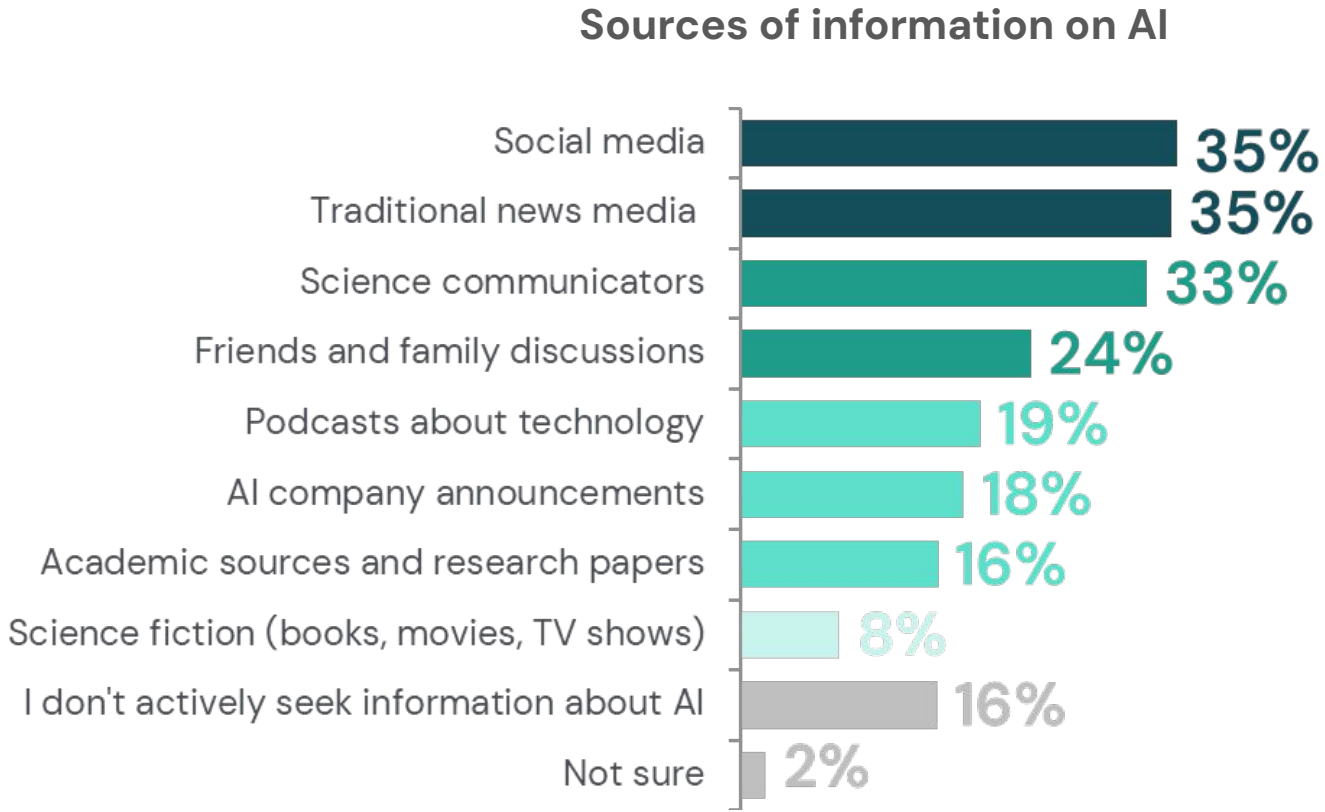
Superhuman AI

	Total	High	Moderate	Low
Not bought in	64%	72%	64%	49%
Ambiguous	16%	13%	16%	20%
Bought in	16%	13%	15%	23%


KEY FINDINGS:
Information & Influence
B/G:I

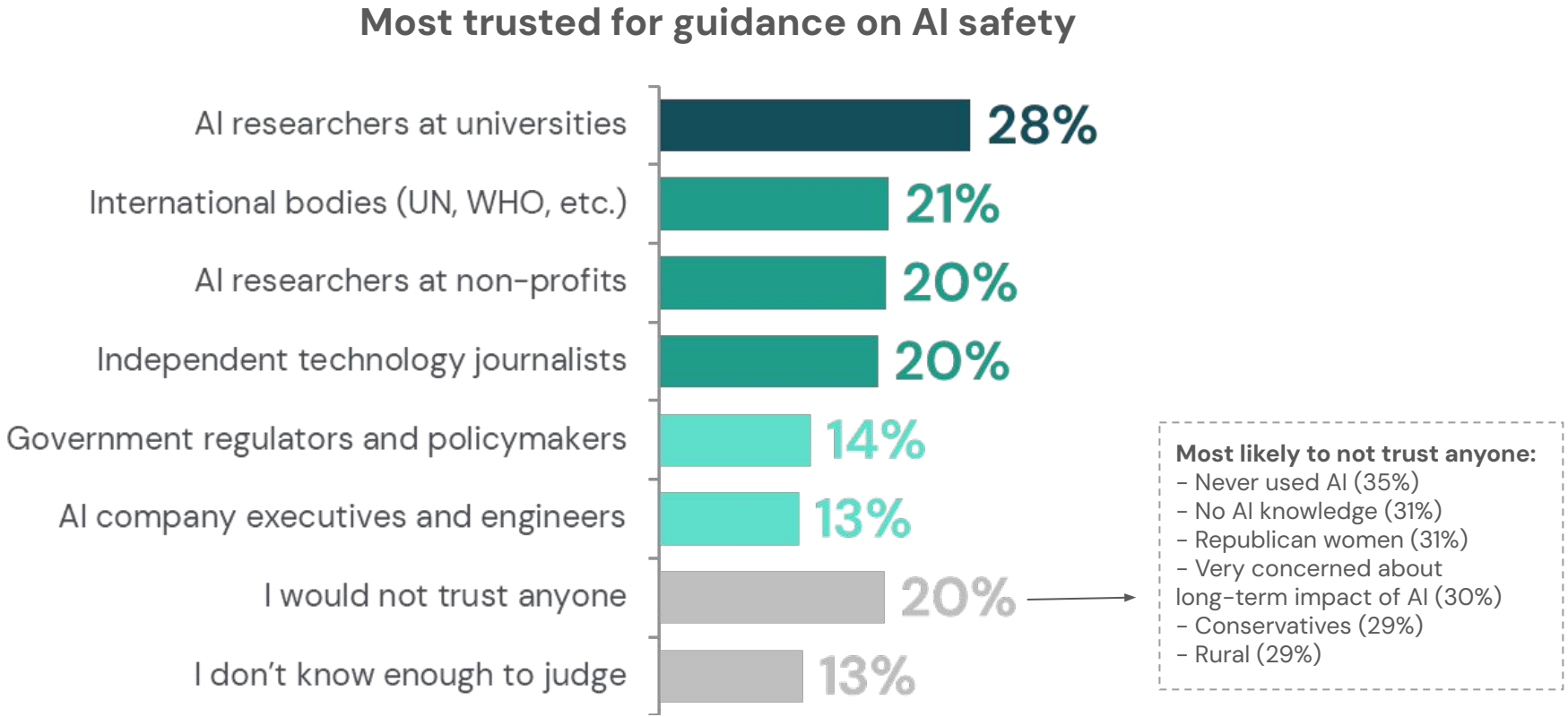
Social media, traditional news media, and science communicators are the top sources of information on AI

B/G:I



Adults trust AI researchers and international bodies most for guidance on AI safety, but one in five do not trust anyone

B/G:I



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Thank you

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