

ENERGY

Executive Summary

New York voters prioritize affordable energy and show limited support for energy and climate policies that could increase costs. The survey finds broad opposition to home-heating electrification and climate-related lawsuits against oil companies, closely divided views on Cap-and-Invest with a large share of respondents unsure, and majority support for allowing data centers if they take steps to prevent higher electricity prices.

When asked to **choose between lower energy prices and lower greenhouse gas emissions**, 24 percent of respondents prioritize lower energy prices, 24 percent prioritize reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and 42 percent support emissions reductions only if they do not lead to higher energy prices.

Home-heating electrification is opposed by 63 percent of respondents and supported by 30 percent. Opposition exceeds support across most demographic groups, including Republicans, upstate respondents, all income groups, nearly all age groups, and voters with no party affiliation.

Opinion on Cap-and-Invest is closely divided, with roughly one in five respondents remaining unsure statewide. Support is strongest among younger adults, Democrats, and New York City residents, while Republicans, older voters, and respondents outside New York City are more likely to oppose the proposal. In some groups, the unsure share reaches nearly 30 percent.

Most respondents **oppose suing energy companies over their contribution to climate change**. Statewide, 60 percent oppose such lawsuits and 21 percent support them. Adults ages 18 to 39 are the only notable exception, with 48 percent supporting the policy and 41 percent opposing it.

New Yorkers want **data centers to take measures to prevent energy price increases**, rather than face an outright prohibition. Forty-three percent would require data centers to build their own power sources rather than draw electricity from the grid, and 16 percent would allow partial grid access if data centers invested in local grid upgrades. Only one-third of respondents would not allow data centers under any circumstances.

New Yorkers Prioritize Lower Energy Prices Over Lower Emissions

Two groups hold opposite preferences: 24 percent of respondents prioritize lower energy prices, while another 24 percent prioritize greenhouse gas emissions reductions. The largest group, 42 percent, supports emissions reductions, but only if doing so does not lead to higher energy prices.

Political affiliation is the clearest dividing line. Democratic-leaning respondents are more likely to support reducing emissions even if prices rise, while Republican-leaning respondents are more likely to prioritize lower energy costs.

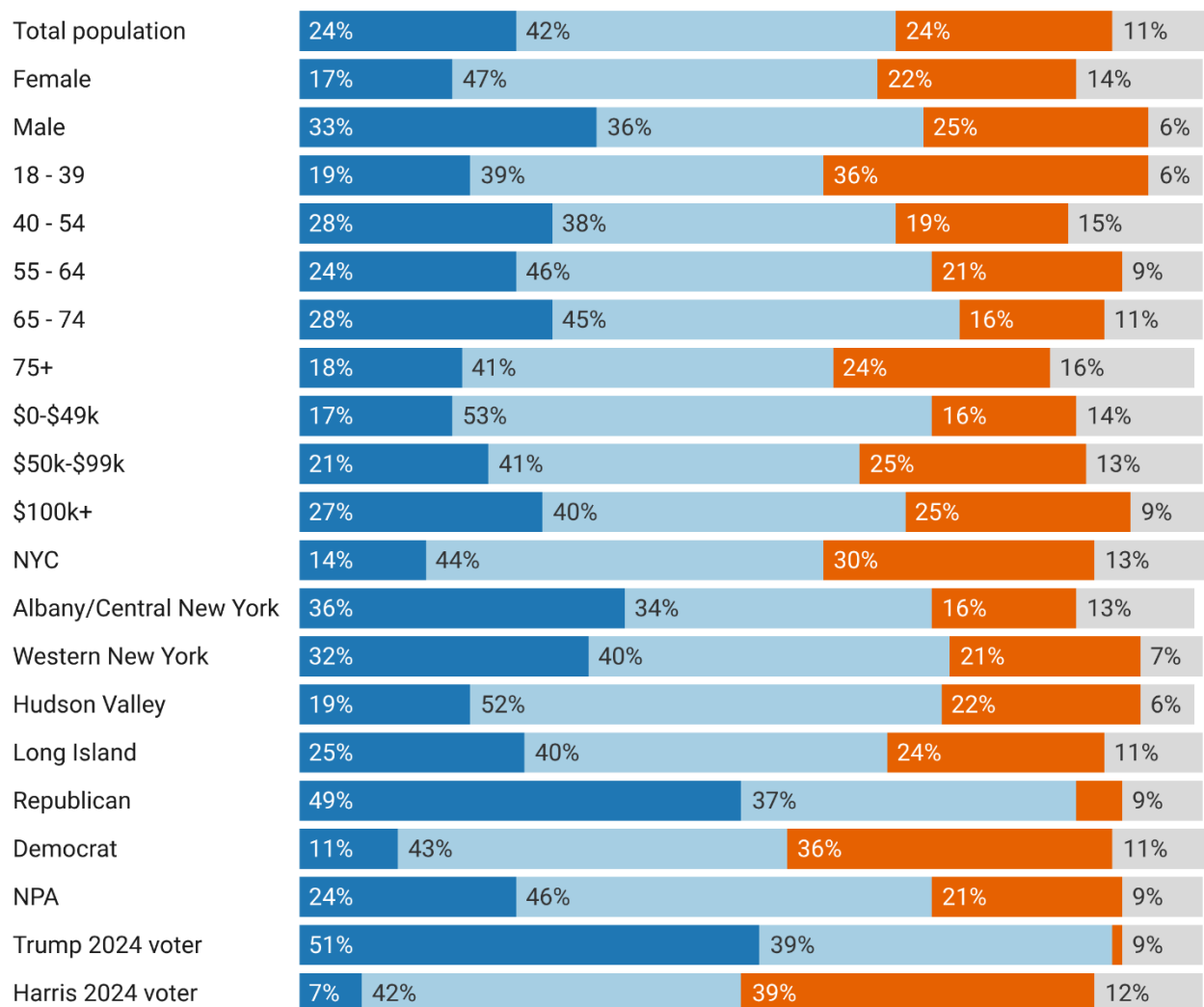
The middle position dominates nearly every demographic group. Republicans and Trump voters are the exceptions, with more respondents prioritizing lower energy prices. Harris voters and adults ages 18 to 39 are the most receptive to faster emissions reductions, even if doing so leads to higher energy costs.

These findings are consistent with a 2025 [Empire Center poll](#), which found little appetite for climate policies that increase energy prices.

Lower Energy Prices or Lower Greenhouse Gas Emissions?

Survey question: New York is currently behind on its plans to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Which of the following comes closest to your opinion, even if none is exactly right?

- Focus on lowering energy prices, even if that means higher greenhouse gas emissions
- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions, but only if it does not increase energy prices
- Focus on reducing greenhouse gas emissions, even if that means higher energy prices
- Unsure



N=600, margin of error $\pm 4.0\%$. Percentages are calculated within each demographic group and may not sum to exactly 100% due to rounding. Party identification includes Republican, Democrat, and No Party Affiliation (NPA). Geographic categories follow the survey definitions: Albany/Central New York, Western New York, Hudson Valley, Long Island, and New York City.

Source: Empire Center, Cygnal • Created with Datawrapper

New Yorkers Oppose Home-Heating Electrification

Home-heating electrification is one of the least popular energy policies tested in the survey. Statewide, 63 percent of respondents oppose the proposal, compared with 30 percent who support it.

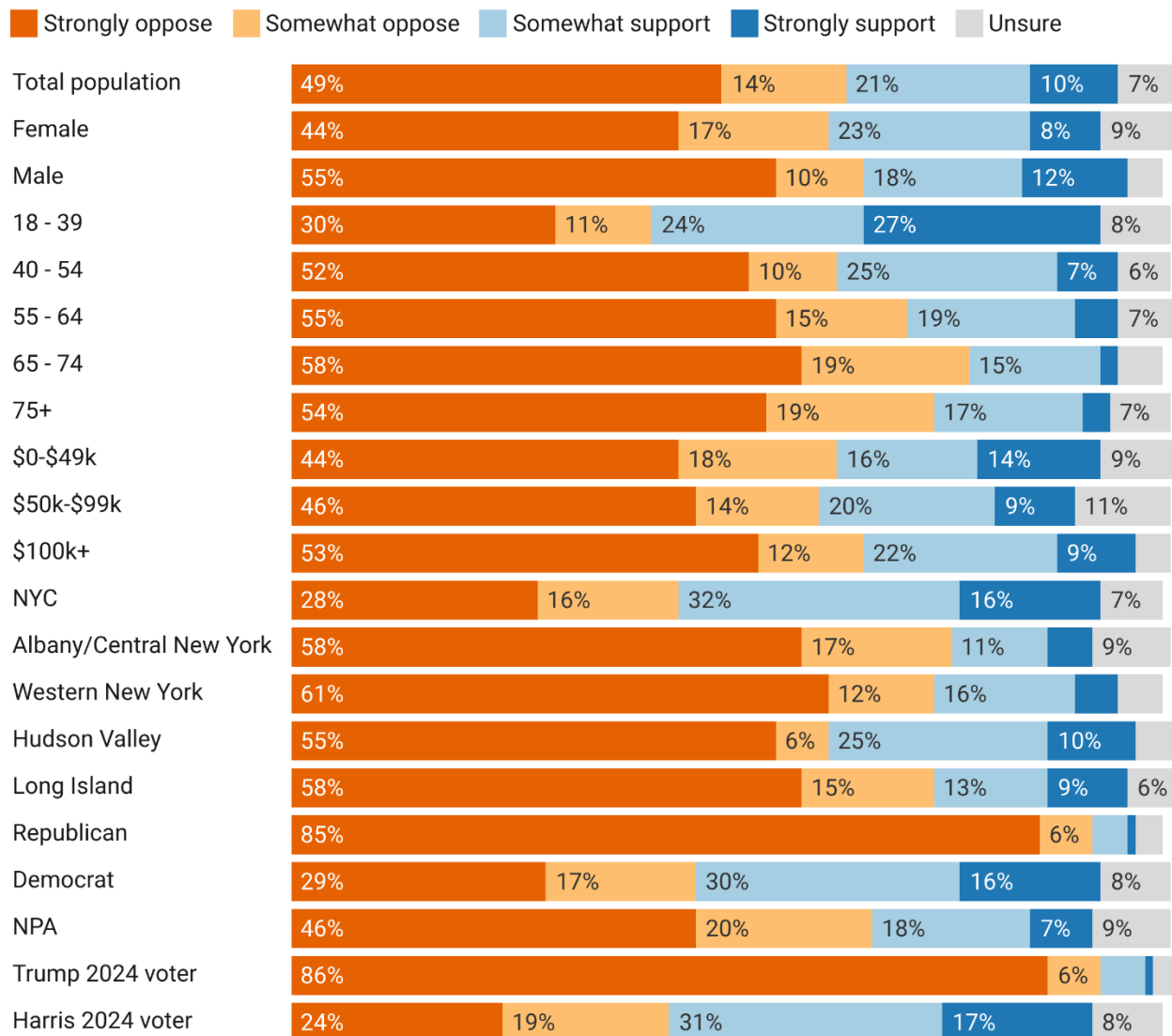
Opposition exceeds support by a substantial margin across most demographic groups. Republicans, upstate respondents, most income groups, and nearly all age groups oppose the idea. Voters with no party affiliation oppose home-heating electrification by 66 percent to 25 percent.

Even among Democrats, Harris voters, and New York City residents, support is matched by opposition. The only group with a sizable margin of support is adults ages 18 to 39, who support the measure 51 percent to 41 percent.

Notably, the share of respondents who strongly oppose the measure is larger than the share who somewhat oppose it. Among supporters of home-heating electrification, the reverse is generally true: somewhat supportive sentiment exceeds strong support in every group except adults ages 18 to 39.

Home Heating Electrification

Survey question: New York has a plan to phase out natural gas heating and require homes to be heated by electricity. Supporters say it will help fight climate change. But for some homeowners, this could require replacing their furnace or boiler, adding insulation, or making other upgrades. Do you support or oppose this plan?



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Chart: Empire Center, Cygnal • Created with Datawrapper

New Yorkers Are Split and Unsure on Cap-and-Invest

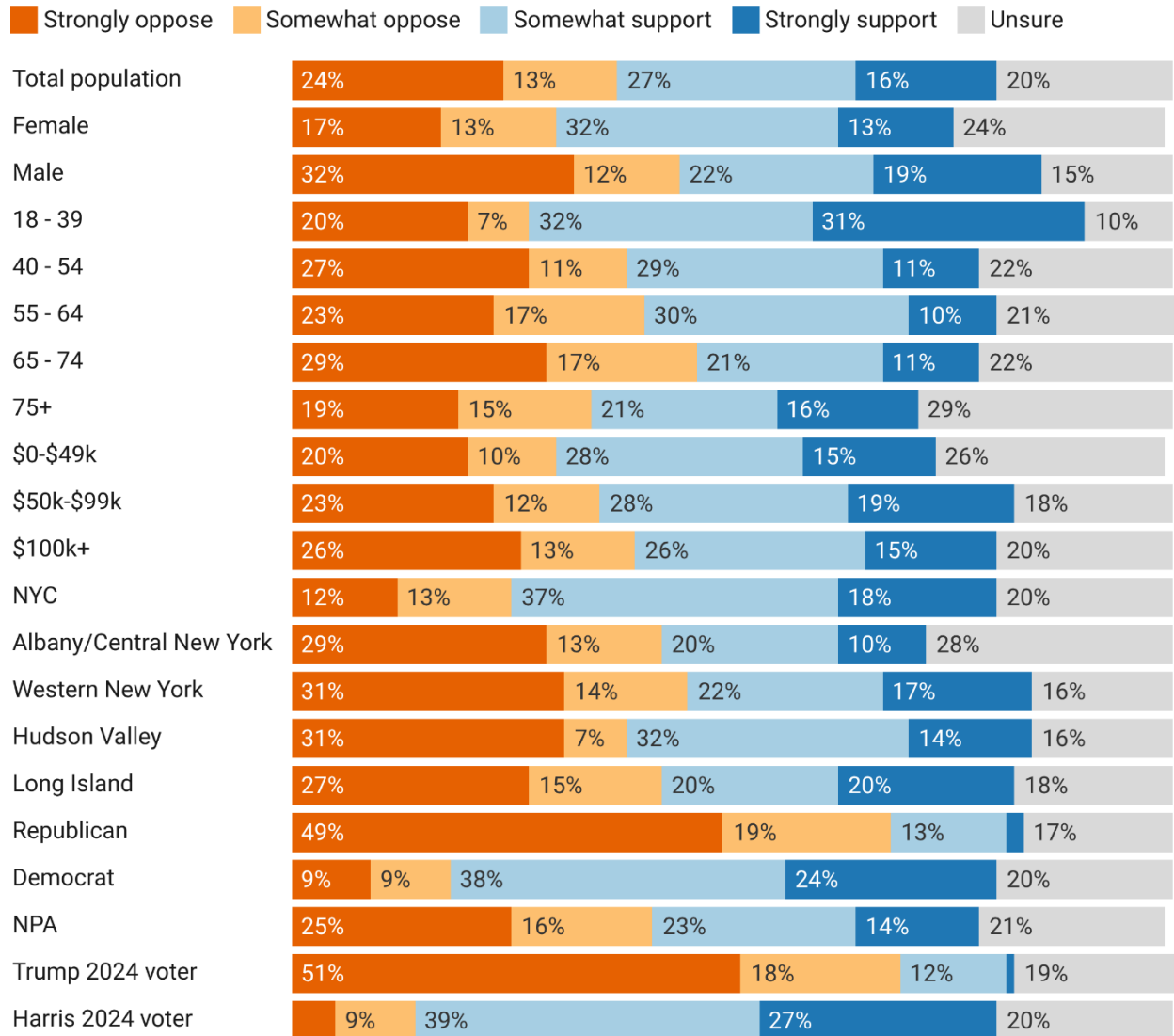
Opinion on New York’s proposed Cap-and-Invest program is closely divided, with a large share of respondents (20 percent) remaining unsure.

Support for cap-and-invest is strongest among younger adults, Democrats, and New York City residents. Republicans, older voters, and respondents outside New York City are more likely to oppose the proposal.

The relatively large share of unsure respondents suggests that many voters have not reached a firm conclusion. Compared with issues such as home-heating electrification, public opinion on Cap-and-Invest appears less settled, leaving room for opinion shifts as details emerge on whether, and by how much, it would increase energy prices and what energy sources and fuels the program would apply to. In some demographic groups, the unsure share approaches 30 percent.

Cap and Invest

Survey question: New York is considering a "cap-and-invest" program that would require energy companies to purchase permits for their greenhouse gas emissions. Supporters say it will reduce pollution and fund clean energy programs; opponents say it will raise costs for electricity, gasoline, and home heating. Do you support or oppose New York adopting this program?



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Most New Yorkers Oppose Lawsuits Against Oil Companies for Climate-Related Damages

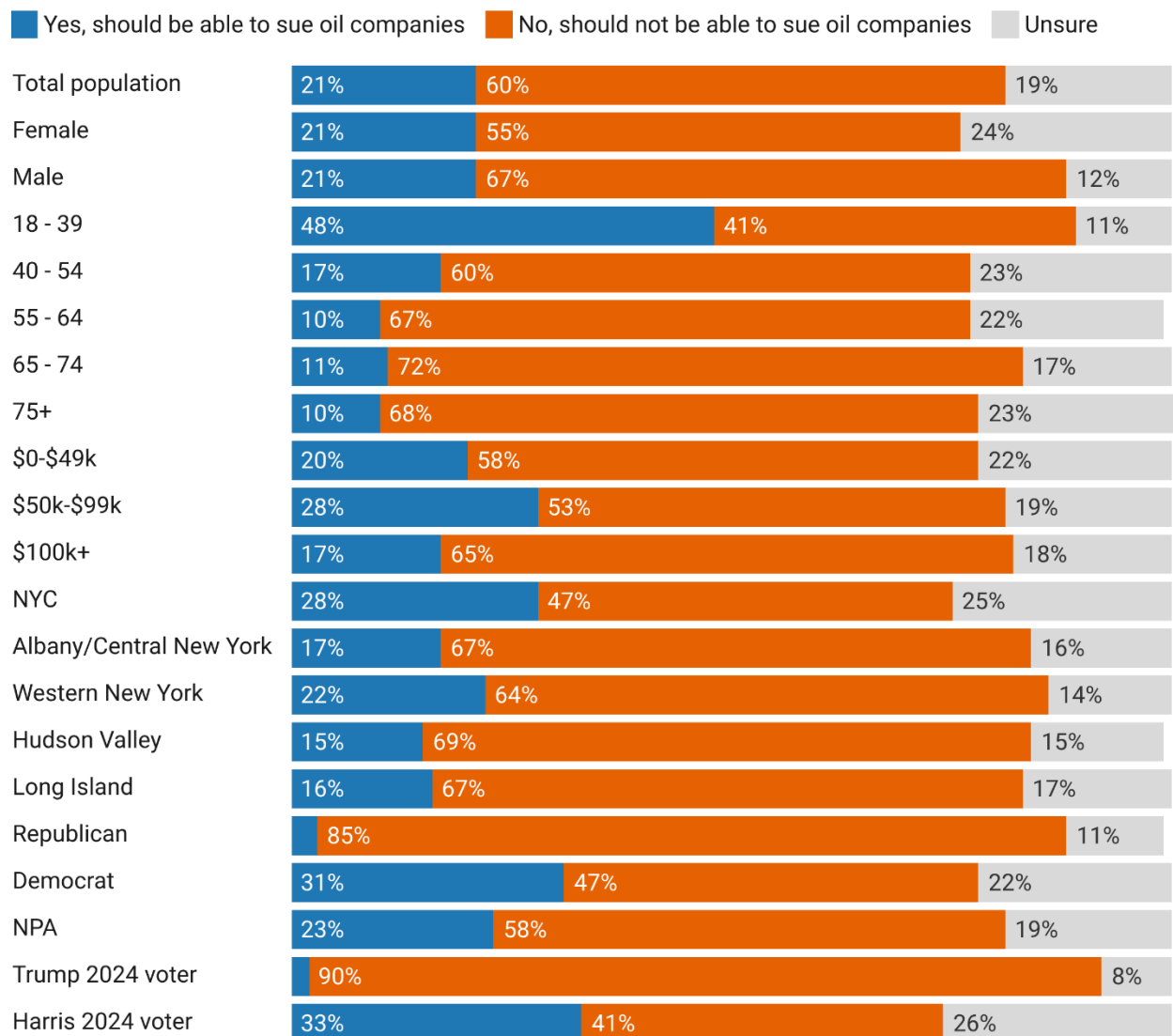
Most New Yorkers oppose allowing individuals to sue oil companies over their contribution to climate change. Statewide, 60 percent of respondents oppose such lawsuits, compared with 21 percent who support them. Opposition is the dominant view across nearly every demographic group, including New York City residents and Democrats.

The only notable exception is adults ages 18 to 39, where 48 percent support it and 41 percent oppose it.

Opposition is strongest among Republicans, older adults, and upstate respondents, and even among New York City residents, support is only 28 percent.

Suing Energy Companies for Climate Change

Survey question: If a storm damaged your home, should you be able to sue oil companies for their contribution to climate change?



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Chart: Empire Center, Cygnal • Created with Datawrapper

New Yorkers Prefer Data Centers Build Power Plants or Upgrade the Grid

Most respondents (59 percent) would require data centers to take steps to ensure energy prices do not rise. The most common response, at 43 percent, is to require data centers to build their own power sources rather than draw electricity from the grid. Allowing partial grid access while investing in local grid upgrades is the preferred option for 16 percent of respondents.

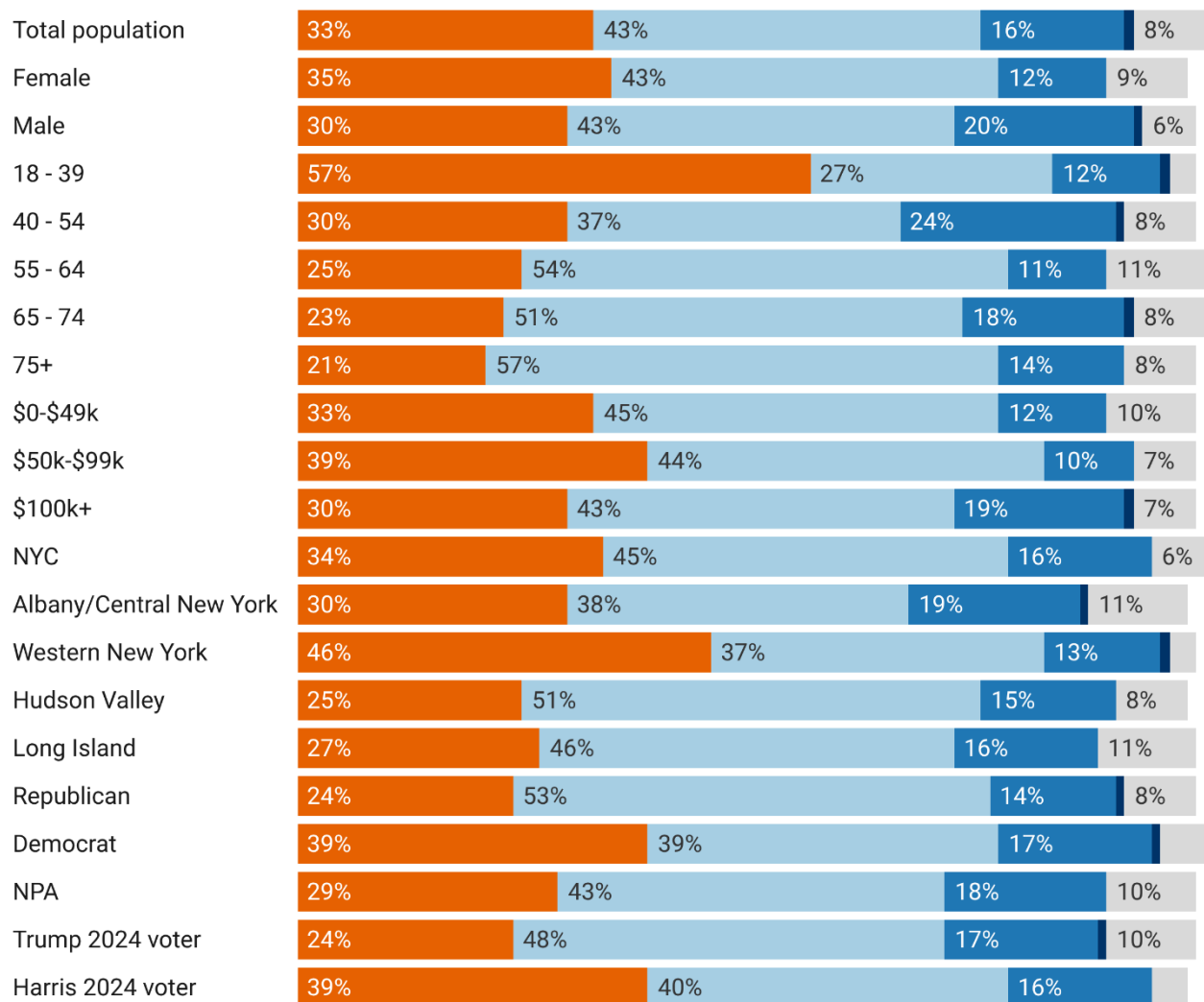
One-third of respondents would not allow data centers in New York under any circumstances. This position is most common among adults ages 18 to 39, where 57 percent favor an outright prohibition.

Compared with other survey questions, views on data centers vary the least across demographic groups, suggesting that concerns about energy prices and potential solutions are broadly shared among New Yorkers.

Data Centers in New York

Survey question: New York is considering permitting large data centers to support artificial intelligence technology. Supporters say data centers are critical infrastructure for AI, one of the largest drivers of economic growth in the coming decades; opponents say each facility can consume as much electricity as a small city, straining the grid and raising energy costs for consumers. Which approach should New York take?

- Do not permit new data centers in New York under any circumstances
- Require data centers to build their own power sources so that they do not draw from the public grid
- Allow data centers to have partial access to the public grid only if the company invests in local grid upgrades
- Allow data centers to connect to the existing power grid even if it increases electricity prices
- Unsure



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Zilvinas Silenas
Empire Center for Public Policy
518.434.3100
press@empirecenter.org