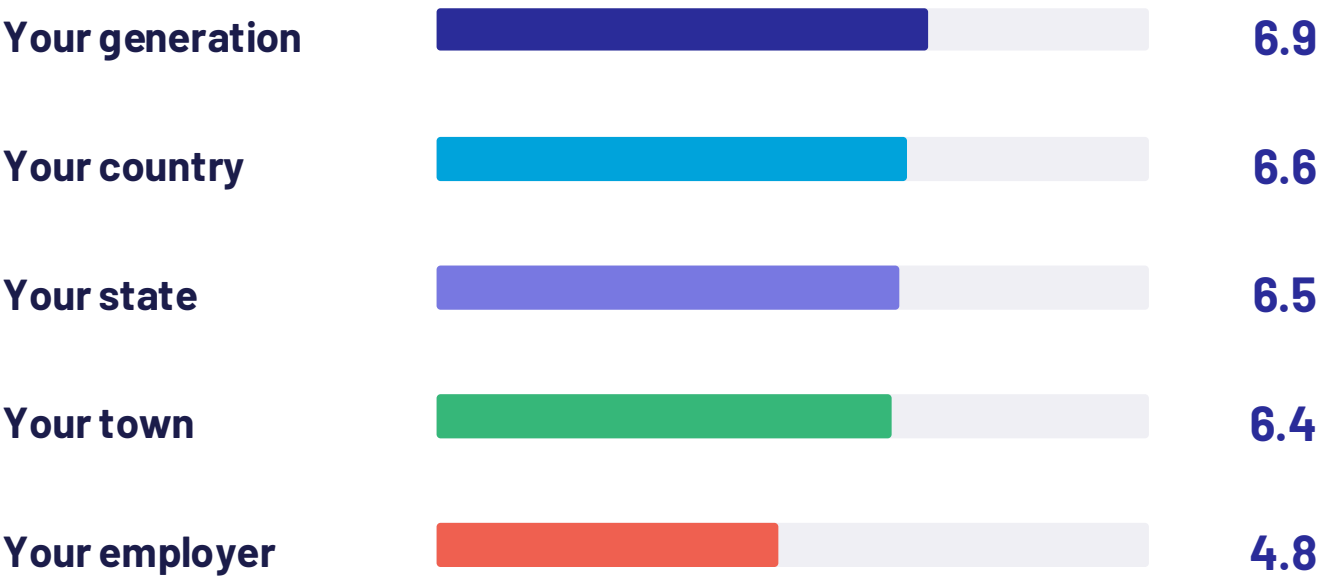


/ Connected Intelligence

One Nation, Different Stories

What Americans are proud of, what they say still holds the country together, and how brands should show up in the year after the 250th.

MEAN PRIDE, 0-10 SCALE



Americans are proudest of their generation and least proud of their employer. The country places third.

Three numbers that reframe **America after 250**

The 250th sat on top of a pride structure that is local, intense, and unevenly held. Here is what a brand should internalize before writing a line of flag copy.

27%

give the country a perfect 10, the highest score they could choose.

And 21% score it 0–3. National pride is two crowds, not one mood.

30%

answer "the people" when asked what holds the country together.

Institutions like the Constitution, courts, and government total under 7%.

21%

say nothing holds it together or cannot name a single thing.

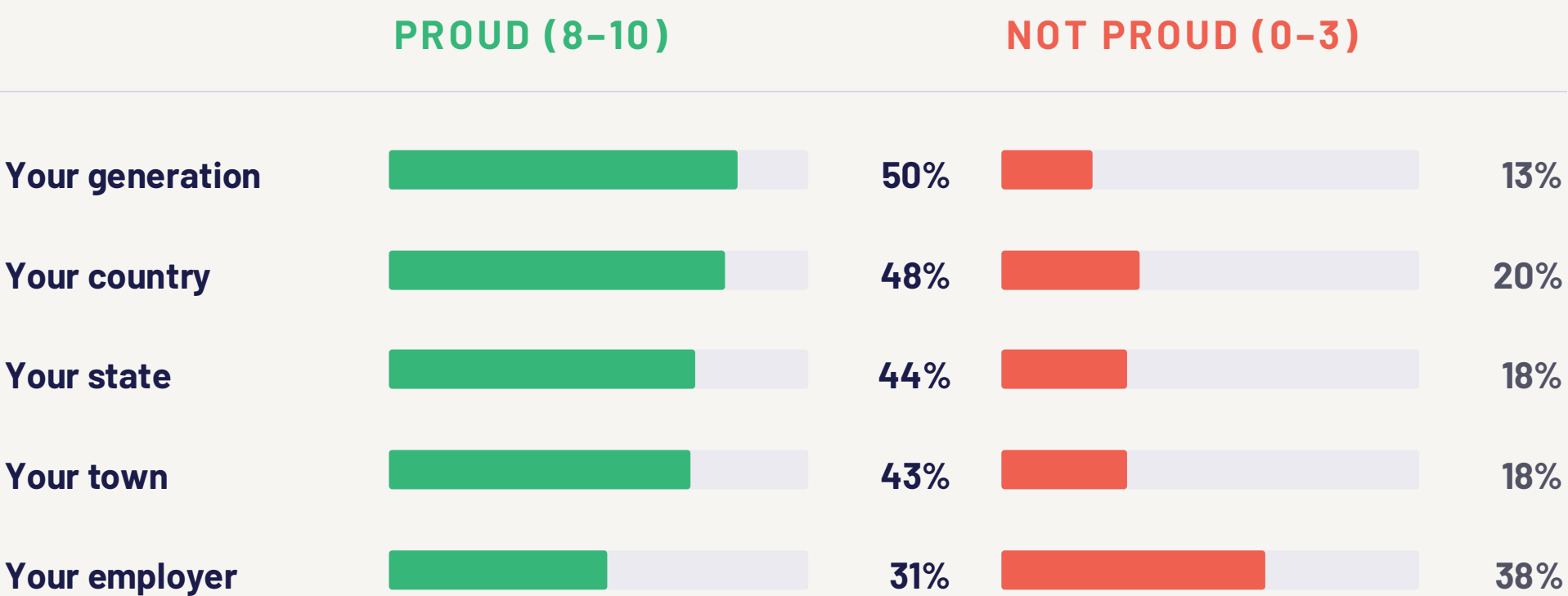
Any campaign premised on common ground speaks past a fifth of the country.

Why it matters: the celebration is over and the shared script went with it. Pride still exists in volume but it no longer points at one thing.

THE BOTTOM LINE **Specific beats patriotic. Every finding in this guide points the same direction.**

The country is not the top of the pride stack

Five identities, each rated 0–10. Americans are proudest of their generation; state and town sit just below the country; employer is in a different league.



THE ASYMMETRY

Town and state pride are nearly as broad as national pride — **43–44% proud vs 48%** — but carry less downside: **18% not-proud vs the country's 21%**. Almost the same warmth, lower risk premium.

THE BOTTOM LINE Generation is the strongest identity in the study: GenX and Boomers are carrying the weight on this one with higher numbers.

National pride is the hottest **and the most fractured**

The country wins on intensity and loses on consensus. More Americans give it a perfect 10 than any other identity — and more give it a zero.

THE INTENSITY INDEX

65%

is everyone expressing any pride in the country (a 6 or above) with high concentration at the top. Nothing else concentrates like this.

32%

sit at one of the two extremes

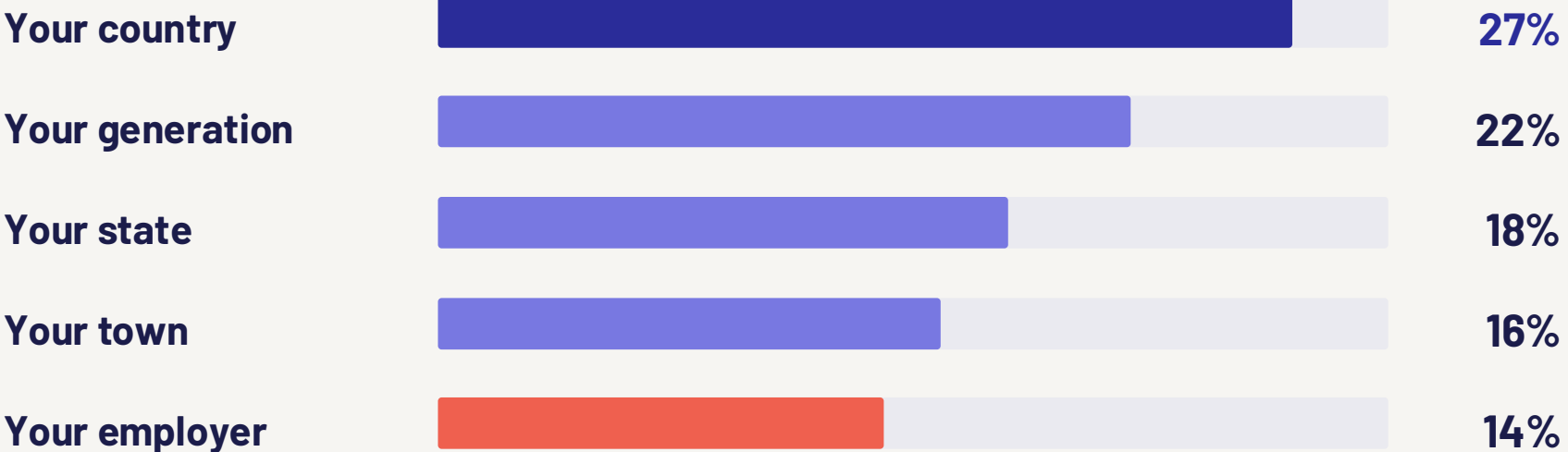
a perfect 10 or a flat 0 on the country

61%

is the high-mark for national pride

this is held by Republicans

SHARE GIVING A PERFECT 10



THE BOTTOM LINE High-intensity patriotism is a segment strategy. Priced and targeted as one, it works. Broadcast, it divides.

/ Finding 03 • The employer gap

The one identity Americans **will not defend**

Employer pride is the only dimension in the study with a negative net score. It is also the one a brand controls outright.

38%

score their employer 0–3

vs 21% for the country

22%

give their employer a flat 0

highest zero in the study

–8

net pride score

every other identity is +25 or better

4.8

mean out of 10

the next lowest is 6.4

READ IT CAREFULLY

The 22% at zero almost certainly blends genuine disaffection with respondents who have no employer to rate. Groups that could be considered major promoters are entirely income driven, taking home over six figures in pay.

Treat 4.8 as a floor, not a verdict. But even discounting every zero, employer pride trails every civic identity here.

THE OPENING

Employer is the one pride score a brand can move alone and all without permission, political risk, or waiting.

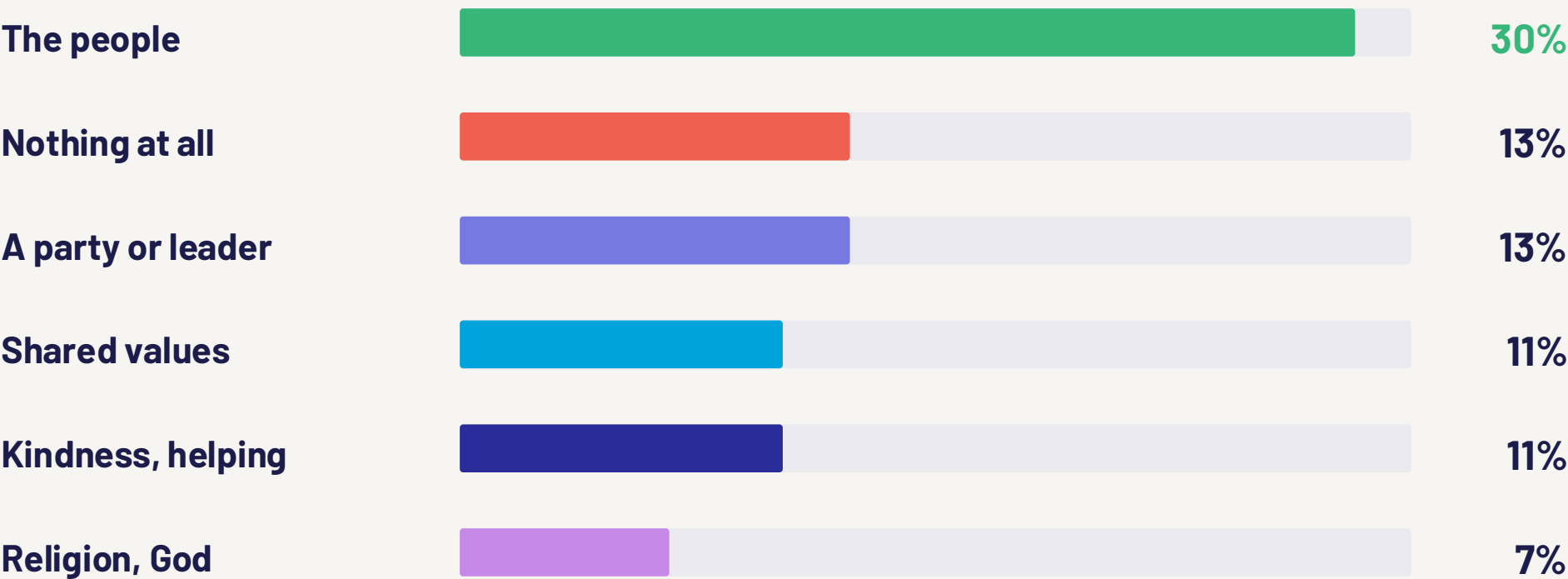
THE BOTTOM LINE

Fix the pride number you own before you borrow the one you don't.

Unprompted, America says "the people"

One open-ended question, no options offered: "What holds the country together right now, if anything?"

TOP THEMES



WHY IT MATTERS

The country credits we the people, its **neighbors** , and not its institutions.

IN THEIR OWN WORDS

"The people of the United States."

"Everyday people."

THE BOTTOM LINE

Lead with people. Skip the eagle, the monument, and the founding-document voiceover.

/ Finding 05 • The void

One in five cannot name **anything at all**

Two adjacent groups: those who say nothing holds the country together (13%), and those who simply cannot answer (8%). Together, the second-largest bloc in the data.

21%

of Americans name nothing at all when asked what holds the country together.

WHAT THIS BREAKS

Any line that asserts unity as a fact. To this group it reads as inaccurate.

IN THEIR OWN WORDS

"The fact that most of us can't afford to leave."

"Duct tape."

"Nothing, we are not united."

"Nothing. I've never seen a less together country in my life."

THE BOTTOM LINE **Aspire to connection. Never assert it as already achieved.**

/ Finding 06 · Oppositional glue

For 4 in 10, the glue is **who they are against**

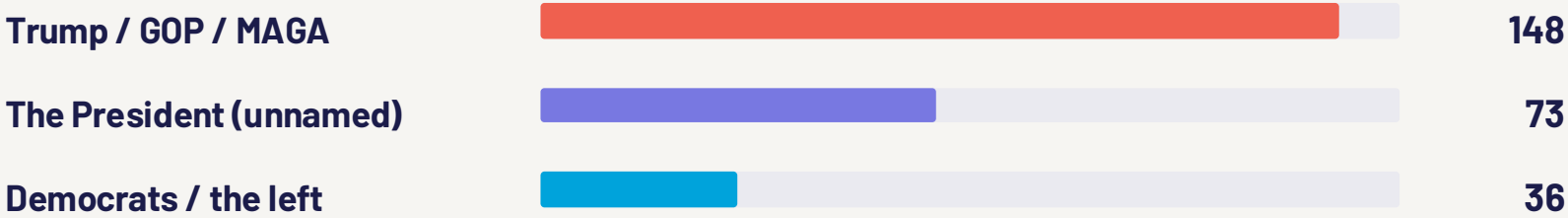
Of the 257 verbatims naming a party or leader, most do not name them as what holds the country together. They name opposition to them.

THE OPPOSITION SHARE

40% of political answers frame unity as shared opposition rather than shared support.



VERBATIMS NAMING A PARTY OR LEADER



WHAT IT SOUNDS LIKE

"We the people – certainly isn't the people running it."

"Hopefully a mutual hate of Donald Trump."

"The republicans, because democrats hurt our country."

THE BOTTOM LINE A shared enemy is not a shared value. Campaigns of any kind that borrow oppositional energy inherit its shelf life.

Five rules for a country that seems to **agree on very little**

Brands, advocacy groups, and agencies alike can take from these insights into their next campaign.

01

Go local before you go national.

Town and state pride are nearly as broad as national pride with less downside. A hometown story earns the same warmth at lower risk.

02

Lead with people, not symbols.

"The people" is the #1 unprompted answer holding us together at 30%. Institutions total under 7%. Cast ordinary Americans doing ordinary things.

03

Never claim unity as a fact. Really.

A fifth of the country says nothing holds it together. Offer connection; do not assert it. Assertion reads as inaccuracy.

04

Treat flag-waving as targeting, not tone.

27% give the country a perfect 10; 21% score it 0–3; 32% sit at either extreme. Intense patriotism is a segment, not broadcast message.

05

Fix your own pride score first.

Employer pride is the only negative net in the study — the cheapest civic equity a brand can buy, and the only one it controls.

THE BOTTOM LINE The through-line: be specific, be about people, and be true before you are patriotic.

Everything about **this survey**

Conducted using Tunnl's national omnibus survey which runs multiple times each month. Interested in adding a question? Email hello@tunnldata.com.

THE PRIDE RATINGS

n = 3,066 adults surveyed nationally. Five dimensions — country, state, town, employer, generation — each rated 0–10. Reported here as mean, proud (8–10), not proud (0–3), top box (10) and an intensity index: the share of everyone expressing any pride (6–10) who chooses a full 10.

A NOTE ON EMPLOYER PRIDE

The 22% who rate their employer a flat 0 include respondents with no employer to rate, so read 4.8 as a floor. The relative ranking (employer last by a wide margin) holds under any reasonable adjustment.

THE OPEN-ENDED

"What holds the country together right now, if anything?" — unprompted free text, coded into 22 themes. Answers can carry more than one theme, so percentages sum above 100%. Political mentions were also coded for direction: whether the named party or leader is the glue, or whether opposition to them is.

TIMING

This survey was conducted about a month after the Fourth of July. It fielded July 31–August 4, 2026.

Pride is specific. **So is the work.**

Tunnl builds addressable audiences founded in research among real individuals that let you say something true to the right people, and skip the ones who were never going to believe it.

[START A CONVERSATION](#)