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# 2023 Carnegie California Global Affairs Survey

Ian Klaus, Mark Baldassare, Marissa Jordan,  
and Hanan Coronado



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## Summary

The Carnegie California Global Affairs Survey offers a new, detailed, policy-relevant examination of how Californians think of the rapidly shifting global dynamics in the twenty-first century. To be sure, California's fate has long been linked to regional and global dynamics. California's rise in the twentieth century was inextricably intertwined with U.S. foreign policy and global affairs more generally. From the influx of domestic labor for shipbuilding and aviation during World War II to the impact that transnational research networks around physics and computing had on educational institutions and industry, the state has been shaped by the movement of people, goods, ideas, and capital within the United States and globally. Similarly, through culture, ideas, innovation, and industry, California did much to shape the twentieth century, especially after World War II. Scholars, policymakers, and community leaders alike have done much work to bring those connections into relief—indeed, a global California is not a new thing.

Californians understand the importance and value of these connections and the activities that inform them. They see value in diplomacy and international development, linking international affairs to well-being in the United States. **Nearly four in five Californians believe international engagement is important to American security and prosperity.**

But the contours of global affairs that are emerging more clearly in the twenty-first century are indeed different from those of the Cold War and the subsequent decades of American hegemony. In its most recent benchmark analytical assessment, *Global Trends*, the National Intelligence Council put it as such:

In the international system, no single [country] is likely to be positioned to dominate across all regions or domains, and a broader range of actors will compete to shape the international system and achieve narrower goals . . . Rival powers will jockey to shape global norms, rules, and institutions, while regional powers and nonstate actors may exert more influence and lead on issues left unattended by the major powers.<sup>1</sup>

To the degree that California and its economies and communities are shaped by developments in regional and global trade, health, security, technology, migration, and climate action, the state is operating—along with the rest of the United States—in a new era.

Looking at the intersection of global and local affairs broadly, **an overwhelming majority of Californians think that international affairs and domestic affairs are interconnected.** While supportive of international engagement overall, Californians, especially when compared with Americans more generally, are more likely to be westward-looking, **prioritizing Asia with regard to economic and security concerns.**

Californians view a number of global issues as potential threats, including climate change and misinformation, as well as (to a slightly lesser extent) cyber attacks, supply chain disruptions, infectious diseases, and artificial intelligence (AI). They believe their state has a role to play in addressing new and long-standing challenges, from climate change to AI, and must deliver for residents. **Nearly half of Californians believe state and local governments have a role to play outside of the federal government to protect the rights of undocumented immigrants.**

California has an integral role to play in this new era. It may be a subnational jurisdiction, but its economy is larger than that of all but four nation-states, and its population exceeds that of most United Nations member states. Its ecosystem of innovation has impacted the global economy, global affairs, behavior patterns, and governments for decades, a trend that looks likely to continue. Finally, while California has long been a global actor in its own right, the practices of subnational diplomacy have expanded in the past decade, giving state and local officials new avenues for advancing their priorities and influencing global policy.

**Half of Californians believe that state and local authorities should have an active role to play in addressing global challenges.** Most Californians believe the federal government should engage with states and cities in support of their international engagement, including through administrative support, policy briefings, and engagement in multilateral forums. Barely over one in ten Californians think the federal government should discourage such engagement.

It is a new era in global affairs, and it brings new opportunities and challenges, but California has new tools with which to face these challenges. This survey on how Californians think about U.S. foreign policy and California's role in a new era of diplomacy offers an unprecedented understanding of how Californians make sense of those opportunities and challenges.<sup>2</sup>



## Survey

This is the first year of the Carnegie California Global Affairs Survey. Findings in this paper are based on a survey of 1,500 adult California residents. The survey was conducted via YouGov between July 20 and August 15, 2023, in English and Spanish according to respondents' preferences. The questions in four topic areas were designed by the Carnegie California survey team. The Carnegie California survey team invited input, comments, and suggestions from policy experts and its own advisory group—including advisers from state and local government, California universities and think tanks, and civil society—during two workshops in early June 2023, but survey methods, questions, and content were solely determined by the Carnegie California survey team.

YouGov interviewed 1,542 adult California residents (eighteen and above), who were then matched down to a sample of 1,500 to produce the final dataset. The respondents were matched to a sampling frame on gender, age, race, and education. The sampling frame is a politically representative modeled frame of U.S. adults based on the American Community Survey public use microdata file, public voter file records, the 2020 Current Population Survey voting and registration supplements, the 2020 National Election Pool exit poll, and the Bureau of Labor Statistics' 2020 Current Employment Statistics surveys, including demographics and 2020 presidential vote. The matched cases were weighted to the sampling frame using propensity scores. The matched cases and the frame were combined, and a logistic regression was estimated for inclusion in the frame. The propensity score function included age, gender, race and ethnicity, years of education, region, home ownership, and presidential vote choice. The propensity scores were grouped into deciles of the estimated propensity score in the frame and post-stratified according to these deciles. The weights were then post-stratified on presidential vote and four ways on gender, age (four categories), race (four categories), and education (four categories) to produce the final weight.

The YouGov panel includes information about each respondent's demographic and political profile, used in this paper. We present results for four racial/ethnic groups: Asian Americans, Black Americans, Latinos, and White Americans. Residents of other racial and ethnic groups are included in the results reported for all adults, but sample sizes for these less populous groups are not large enough to report separately. We present results for five geographic regions, accounting for approximately 90 percent of the state population. "Central Valley" includes the counties Butte, Colusa, El Dorado, Fresno, Glenn, Kern, Kings, Madera, Merced, Placer, Sacramento, San Joaquin, Shasta, Stanislaus, Sutter, Tehama, Tulare, Yolo, and Yuba. "San Francisco Bay Area" includes Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Napa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Solano, and Sonoma counties. "Los Angeles" refers to Los Angeles County; "Inland Empire" refers to Riverside and San Bernardino counties; and "Orange/San Diego" refers to Orange and San Diego counties. Residents of other geographic areas are included in the results reported for all adults, but sample sizes for these less populous areas are not large enough to report separately.

The overall margin of error is +/- 3.4 percent. The margin of error is calculated at the 95 percent confidence interval. We compare current Carnegie California Global Affairs Survey results to a number of national and regional surveys. These include surveys from the Chicago Council on Global Affairs (2022),<sup>3</sup> Pew Research Center (2022),<sup>4</sup> the Public Policy Institute of California (2021),<sup>5</sup> the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace (2023),<sup>6</sup> and the Kaiser Family Foundation (2016).<sup>7</sup>

## Section 1. The Return of Geopolitics: U.S. Foreign Policy and the View From California

The 2022 U.S. National Security Strategy and its predecessor from 2017, though produced by a Democratic and Republican White House respectively, both described a more contentious, competitive world. Amid great power competition between the United States and China, the value and strength of alliances, international institutions, and even democracy are being tested and evaluated. The Russian invasion of Ukraine has called into question seemingly long-standing commitments to sovereignty, peace, and even international law, and the outbreak of a new Israel-Hamas conflict undermines ongoing diplomatic efforts and threatens regional conflict and a humanitarian crisis in the Middle East. Meanwhile, the impacts of climate change, including climate-forced migration, inequality, and even newly emergent technologies such as AI, are putting new strains upon communities while governments press to develop new policies and solutions.<sup>8</sup>

### Priorities, Institutions, Alliances, and Rivals

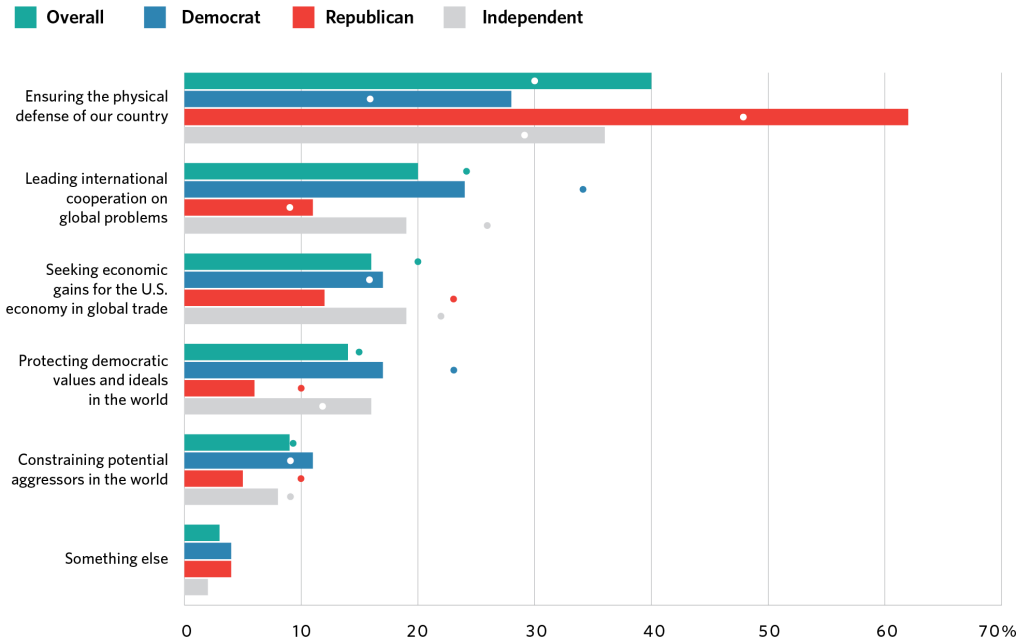
Californians see a very strong link between diplomatic and development efforts and well-being in the United States. When asked to what degree they consider diplomacy and international development essential to American security and prosperity, 79 percent of Californians answered either “a great deal” or “a fair amount.” Only 9 percent look askance at international engagement. While there is some partisan divide (with Democrats answering “a great deal” at 59 percent and Republicans at 45 percent), support for international engagement is broad across all regions within the state. In the Central Valley, 82 percent of Californians answered either “a great deal” or “a fair amount,” as did 81 percent of respondents in the San Francisco Bay Area, 78 percent in Los Angeles, 74 percent in the Inland Empire, and 79 percent in San Diego/Orange County. When compared with respondents in national surveys, Californians appear to look more favorably on global engagement. For example, according to the 2022 Chicago Council Survey of American Public Opinion on U.S. Foreign Policy, 60 percent of Americans think it best for the country if the United States takes an active role in world affairs.<sup>9</sup>

In addition to linking global engagement and domestic well-being, Californians believe the United States should be playing a leading role internationally on a number of policy issues. A majority of Californians say that the United States should play a leading role in preventing the spread of nuclear weapons (58 percent) and addressing global climate change (52 percent), and a significant number support the country taking a leadership role in promoting human rights and democracy around the world (47 percent). Given their support for U.S. leadership on democracy abroad, it is worth noting that many Californians maintain a predominantly positive view of U.S. democracy. According to a recent survey conducted by the Public Policy Institute of California, 40 percent of voters in California express satisfaction with the way democracy is functioning in the United States. Notably, and in the context of the ongoing leadership role President Joe Biden's administration has established for the United States, only 29 percent of Californians believe that the United States should play a leading role in coordinating the international response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine, with 40 percent favoring a "supporting role." There is a stark partisan divide around this question, with 44 percent of Democrats favoring leadership in comparison with 24 percent of Republicans.

On foreign policy priorities, Californians track very closely with Americans more broadly.<sup>10</sup> When they were asked which priority should be most important in U.S. foreign policy, ensuring the physical defense of the country topped the list (38 percent), followed by leading international cooperation on global problems (20 percent), seeking economic gains in global trade (16 percent), and protecting democratic values and ideals in the world (14 percent). Tracking national figures, there is a stark partisan divide among Californians on priorities. For example, according to the 2022 Chicago Council Survey, 30 percent of Americans prioritize ensuring the physical defense of the country in foreign policy; that number rises to 48 percent for Republicans but falls to 29 percent for independents and 16 percent for Democrats. In California, the partisan breakdown is similarly skewed, though the numbers are higher across the board, at 62 percent for Republicans, 36 percent for independents, and 28 percent for Democrats. Notably, the partisan divide in California around global leadership and protecting democratic values is significantly less stark than that in the United States more generally.

**Figure 1. U.S. Foreign Policy Priorities**

Q: Which of the following priorities do you think should be the most important in the making of U.S. foreign policy today?



Source: 2023 Carnegie California Global Affairs Survey  
 Note: circles (●●●) represent results from the 2022 Chicago Council Survey of American Public Opinion on U.S. Foreign Policy N=1,234

Within the United States, California has a unique set of relationships with Asia—economically, culturally, and through subnational engagement. These relationships are explored in more detail in the following section, but it is worth considering them here in the context of geopolitics. When asked which region was most important to U.S. security, the highest proportion of Californians named Asia (31 percent), followed by Europe (28 percent) and the Middle East (19 percent). Californians’ westward focus in terms of security stands in contrast to national responses, which prioritized Europe, Asia, and then the Middle East.<sup>11</sup> Californians are also looking west when it comes to U.S. economic prosperity, with 35 percent of Californians identifying Asia as the most important region, followed by Europe (30 percent), Latin America (13 percent), the Middle East (12 percent), and Africa (9 percent).

# Section 2. Global Challenges and Local Impact: The View From California

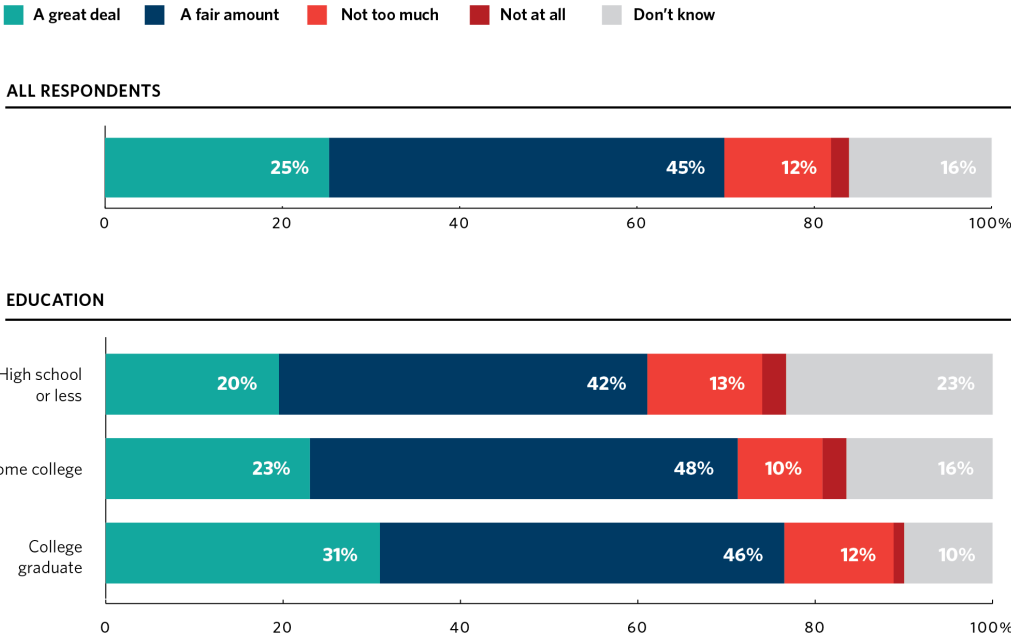
Despite its scale and influence, California is shaped by an array of trends and developments outside the state—and outside the United States for that matter. Competition in trade and infrastructure development, climate change, transnational migration, and the impacts of emerging technologies all influence the population, economy, and environment of California. How do Californians perceive and experience global and regional trends and view their consequences for different age groups and future generations?

## Connection of Global and Local

Looking at the intersection of global and local affairs broadly, an overwhelming majority of Californians think that international affairs and domestic affairs are interconnected (25 percent say “a great deal” and 45 percent “a fair amount”). Just 14 percent say they are not interconnected, while 16 percent are unsure. The belief that international affairs and domestic affairs are interconnected is more prevalent among older, affluent, and college-educated residents.

**Figure 2. Connection of Domestic and International Affairs**

Q: To what degree do you think international affairs and domestic affairs are interconnected?



Source: 2023 Carnegie California Global Affairs Survey  
N=1,500

We asked respondents whether several international issues were major, minor, or no threat to California. Majorities of Californians say that climate change (56 percent) and misinformation (54 percent) are major threats, while more than four in ten believe the same of cyber attacks (49 percent), supply chain disruptions (47 percent), and infectious diseases (45 percent). Some also rate artificial intelligence (39 percent) as a major threat (30 percent say it is a minor threat, 13 percent say it is no threat, and 18 percent do not know). Large majorities view each of these issues as at least a minor threat.

## **Climate Change**

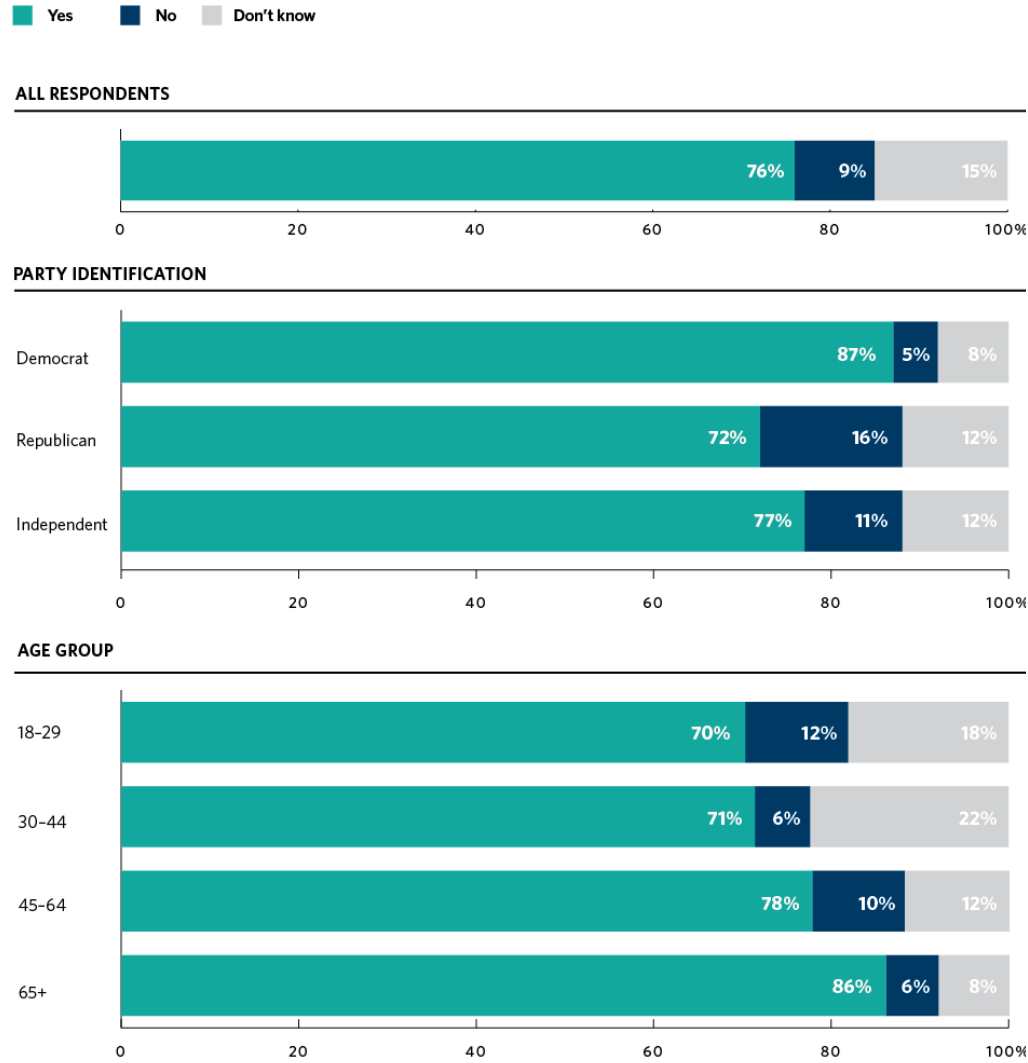
Californians are more likely to say that the state government (31 percent), rather than the federal government (22 percent) or local government (9 percent), is doing the most to respond to climate change. About one in three are not sure which level of government is doing the most to respond to climate change. The share that says that the state government is doing the most to respond to climate change rises with income and education and varies across political parties (45 percent Democrats, 21 percent Republicans, 30 percent independents).

About four in ten believe that U.S. climate leadership is economically beneficial to California (42 percent yes, 25 percent no) and that the current policies around emissions reduction and adaptation allow California to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (39 percent yes, 27 percent no). About one in three are not sure about these two potential impacts of climate policies. Democrats have more positive views than Republicans regarding these two potential impacts of climate policies.

Solid majorities of Californians believe that considerations around emissions reductions and adaptation should include the needs and interests of different generations, including the youth and elderly (64 percent) and also the needs and interests of generations yet to come (66 percent). Moreover, solid majorities say that infrastructure and housing plans should take into account the needs and interests of different generations, including the youth and elderly (76 percent) and generations yet to come (66 percent). As illustrated in figure 3, majorities across demographic groups, regions of the state, and partisan groups hold these four beliefs.

### Figure 3. Infrastructure Across Future Generations

Q: Do you believe that infrastructure and housing plans should take into account the needs and interests of different generations, to include the youth and elderly?



Source: 2023 Carnegie California Global Affairs Survey  
N=1,500

### Misinformation and Disinformation

Social media platforms and new technologies have democratized information flows while also enabling new tactics around misinformation and disinformation, deployed with frequency by authoritarian and repressive regimes.<sup>12</sup> Strong majorities of Californians think that social media is effective at raising awareness of political issues: 27 percent say it is very effective, and 41 percent say somewhat effective. Majorities also view social media as effective in getting elected officials to pay attention to issues (19 percent say it is very effective, and 39 percent say somewhat effective) and influencing policy decisions in California (17 percent say it is very effective, and 36 percent say somewhat effective).

## Figure 4. Social Media Impacts on Civil Society

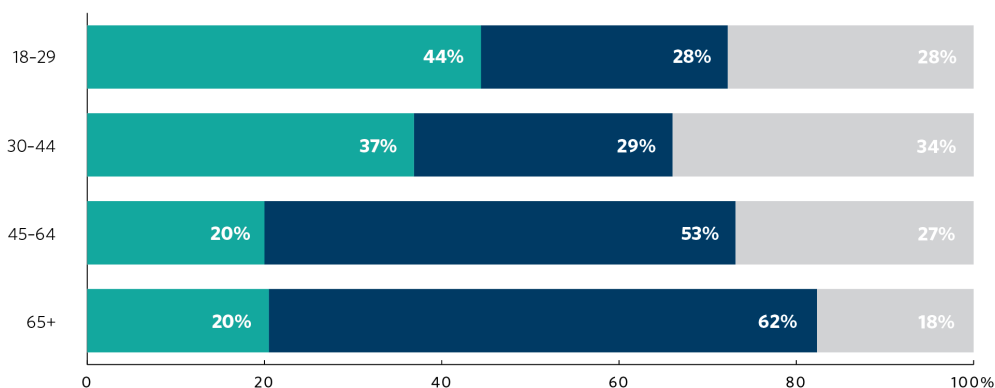
Q: Do you think social media has empowered or weakened civil society in California?

Empowered Weakened Don't know

### ALL RESPONDENTS



### AGE GROUP



Source: 2023 Carnegie California Global Affairs Survey  
N= 1,500

Forty-three percent believe that social media has weakened civil society in California (30 percent say that it has strengthened civil society and 27 percent are unsure). Central Valley, Inland Empire, Los Angeles, Orange/San Diego, and San Francisco Bay Area residents are more likely to say that social media has weakened rather than strengthened civil society. As captured in figure 4, older adults and White respondents are most likely to say it has weakened civil society, Californians are more divided about social media's impact on democracy globally (26 percent say social media is overall a good thing, 28 percent say it is a bad thing, and 34 percent are neutral) and in the United States (26 percent say social media is a good thing, 32 percent say it is bad, and 31 percent are neutral).

## Infectious Diseases

Three in four Californians are concerned about being affected by another global pandemic (34 percent very concerned, 43 percent somewhat). Fewer than one in four (23 percent) say they are not concerned about this possibility. The share who are very concerned about being affected by another global pandemic is similar among men and women and among immigrants and U.S.-born residents. Lower-income residents are more likely than



higher-income residents to say that they are very concerned, and there is a partisan divide: 42 percent of Democrats, 25 percent of Republicans, and 24 percent of independents say they are very concerned. White Americans (at 27 percent) are less likely than Black Americans (37 percent), Asian Americans (38 percent), and Latinos (42 percent) to say they are very concerned. Central Valley residents (41 percent) are more likely than those living in other regions to say they are very concerned about another global pandemic.

When asked to choose the primary reason the United States should invest in global health, most said because it is the right thing to do (41 percent) or because it will help ensure national security and domestic well-being (30 percent). Fewer said the primary reason is to help the U.S. economy (14 percent), improve diplomatic relationships (8 percent), or improve the United States' relationships and image around the world (7 percent). The reason given most often is "because it is the right thing to do," across age, gender, education, racial/ethnic groups, and state regions, as well as among Democrats (52 percent) and U.S.-born residents (43 percent).

## Artificial Intelligence

Machine learning and big data approaches are not necessarily new, but the quickening pace of development of generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) and large language models has heightened the hopes and fears, and the associated commercial and policy activity, around the emergent technology. Much of the technological development around GenAI is being led by California-based firms, and in September 2023, California Governor Gavin Newsom signed Executive Order N-12-23, which offers guidelines for GenAI procurement and use by government officials as well as a vision for its economic impact across the state.<sup>13</sup>

More Californians say that they are "worried" (31 percent) or "pessimistic" (17 percent) than report that they are "optimistic" (27 percent) or "excited" (11 percent) about GenAI. The issues they are most worried or pessimistic about are jobs and the economy (28 percent), national security (27 percent), and social stability and community (23 percent). The issues they are most excited or optimistic about are science (30 percent) and healthcare (27 percent). A greater share of younger adults than older adults are excited or optimistic about AI.

Forty-seven percent of Californians support an international agreement on AI standard setting; 20 percent oppose it, and 34 percent do not know (see figure 5). Public support for an international agreement on AI increases with age and income. It also varies across parties (with 63 percent support among Democrats, 37 percent among Republicans, and 46 percent among independents) and increases with higher education.

## Figure 5. International Agreements on AI Standards

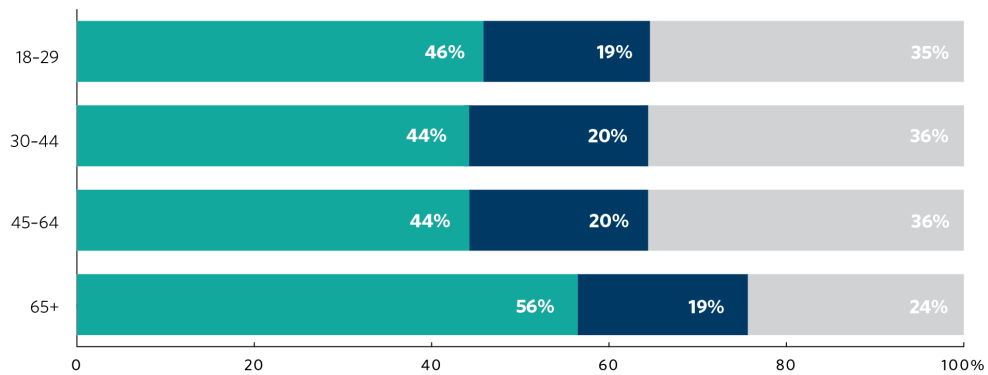
Q: Would you support or oppose an international agreement on generative artificial intelligence standard-setting?

Support Oppose Don't know

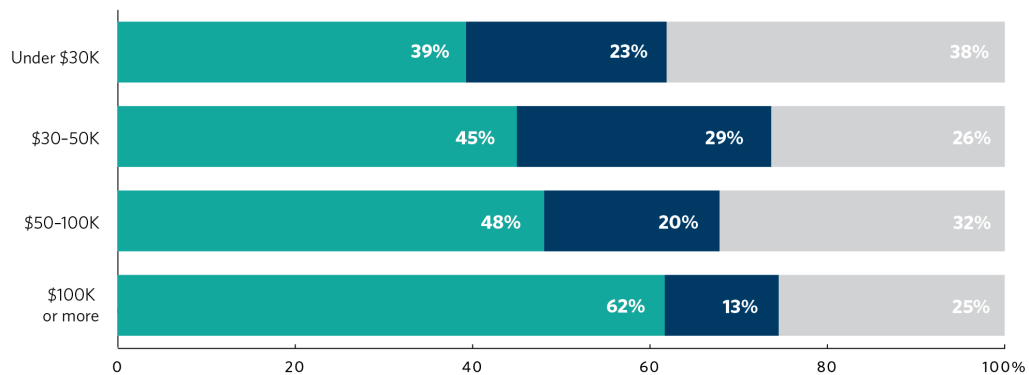
### ALL RESPONDENTS



### AGE GROUP



### HOUSEHOLD INCOME



Source: 2023 Carnegie California Global Affairs Survey  
N= 1,500

About four in ten Californians say that local, state, and federal governments are “not doing enough” to respond to the potential benefits and risks of AI. Fewer than one in ten say that the federal, state, and local governments are doing “too much,” and about one in five say that governments at each of these three levels are doing the “right amount.” Residents across regions of the state, partisan groups, and demographic groups are more likely to say that local, state, and federal governments are “not doing enough” than “too much” or the “right amount.” Californians believe that the federal government (61 percent) rather than the state

government (27 percent) or local government (11 percent) is doing the most to respond to the challenges associated with AI. Majorities across all demographic groups, regions of the state, and partisan groups share this view.

## Section 3. California Connections: Asia and Latin America Deep Dives

Biden began his term in 2021 by designating the United States’ relationship with China going forward as one of deep strategic and systemic competition. In doing so, he was the third successive U.S. president to try to refocus U.S. grand strategy on China’s ascent, following former president Barack Obama’s “pivot to Asia” and his successor’s hardline approach to the Chinese Communist Party, including an escalation in tariffs. California is deeply connected to Asia via trade, academic and cultural exchange, and diaspora communities. In the past five years, major powers in the region—including India and China—have seen major changes in their domestic politics. These changes are both strengthening and straining partnerships that have been core features of U.S. foreign policy in Asia. Meanwhile, flexible and at times ad hoc responses to crises have become more common in the Pacific and Indian Ocean regions. The regional politics of the so-called Asian Century are dynamic.

California is also deeply, and uniquely, connected with Latin America. Mexico is now the United States’ biggest trading partner, surpassing China. Strained diplomatic relations with China and increased manufacturing in Mexico, particularly in the auto industry, have pushed the United States to further strengthen trading relations with its “nearshore” partners.<sup>14</sup> In addition to these growing economic ties, a plurality of Californians identify as Latino.<sup>15</sup> While immigration from the region continues, there is also a firmly rooted Latin American immigrant population, with many having immigrated to California more than thirty years ago.<sup>16</sup>

### Asia

A vast majority of Californians recognize relations with China as important to the United States: 43 percent say very important, and 38 percent say somewhat important. But, as figure 6 shows, many people—from all regions of California, but especially the Inland Empire—believe that the relationship between the two countries is in poor standing. Forty-five percent of respondents consider the current state of the relationship to be poor, whereas only 4 percent say it is excellent, 9 percent good, and 32 percent fair. Democrats are most likely to say the relationship is fair (at 41 percent), while majorities of Republicans (61 percent) and independents (59 percent) say it is poor.

## Figure 6. U.S.-China Relations

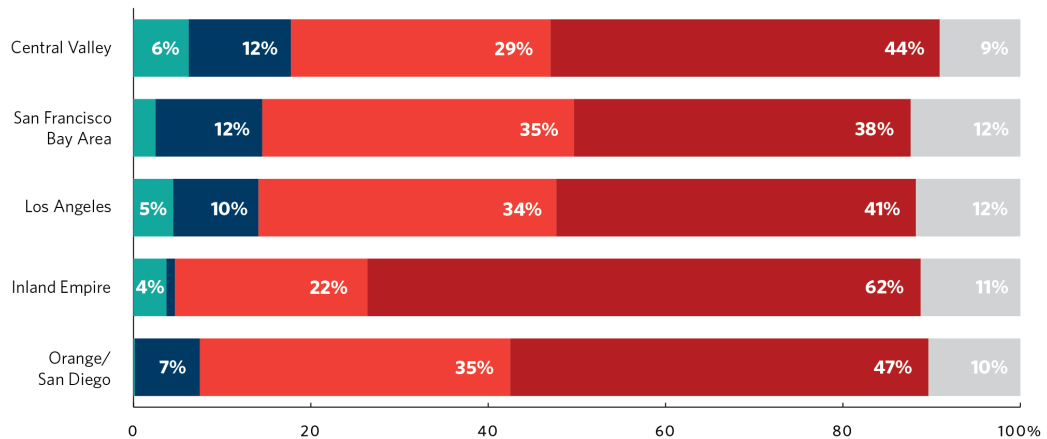
Q: How would you rate the current state of relations between the United States and China?

Excellent Good Fair Poor Don't know

### ALL RESPONDENTS



### REGION



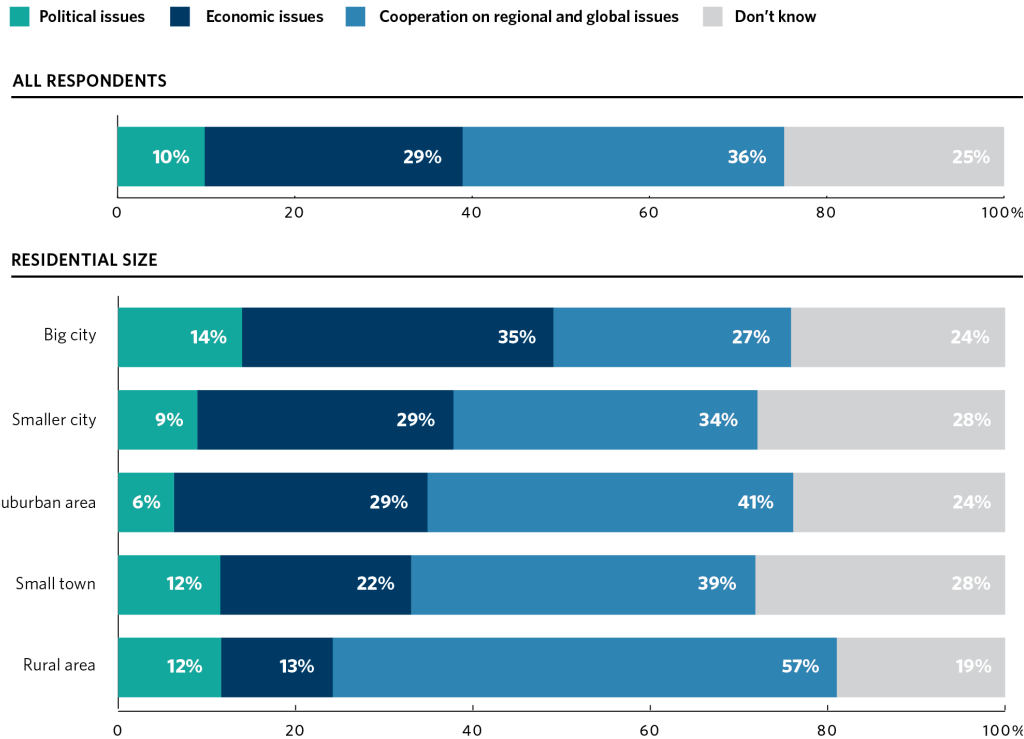
Source: 2023 Carnegie California Global Affairs Survey  
N=1,500

In recent years, the United States has formulated an Indo-Pacific strategy to counter China's influence. When Californians were asked about this strategy, a plurality (43 percent) said the United States should help strengthen regional militaries within the Indo-Pacific as a check against China, while 18 percent disagreed with strengthening the regional militaries and 26 percent were unsure of what the United States should do. Respondents who are older, male, or registered to vote are more in favor of strengthening regional militaries, while younger or female respondents are more unsure. In this same vein, the primary concern among Californians when it comes to the U.S.-China relationship is security (34 percent), with economic concerns also at the forefront of respondents' minds (27 percent).

U.S. bilateral diplomatic relationships, while different in each discrete case, are at the moment notably strong with India, Japan, and South Korea. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's June state visit to the United States, as well as the Trilateral Leaders' Summit at Camp David in August between Japan, South Korea, and the United States, demonstrate the importance of Indo-Pacific and East Asian diplomacy to the United States. For Californians watching the region and trans-Pacific diplomacy, cooperation on regional and global issues is the most important issue in relations between the United States and India (33 percent), Japan (36 percent), and South Korea (33 percent). Respondents also

## Figure 7. U.S.-Japan Relations

Q: Which of the following do you think is the most important issue in relations between the United States and Japan?



Source: 2023 Carnegie California Global Affairs Survey  
N=1,500

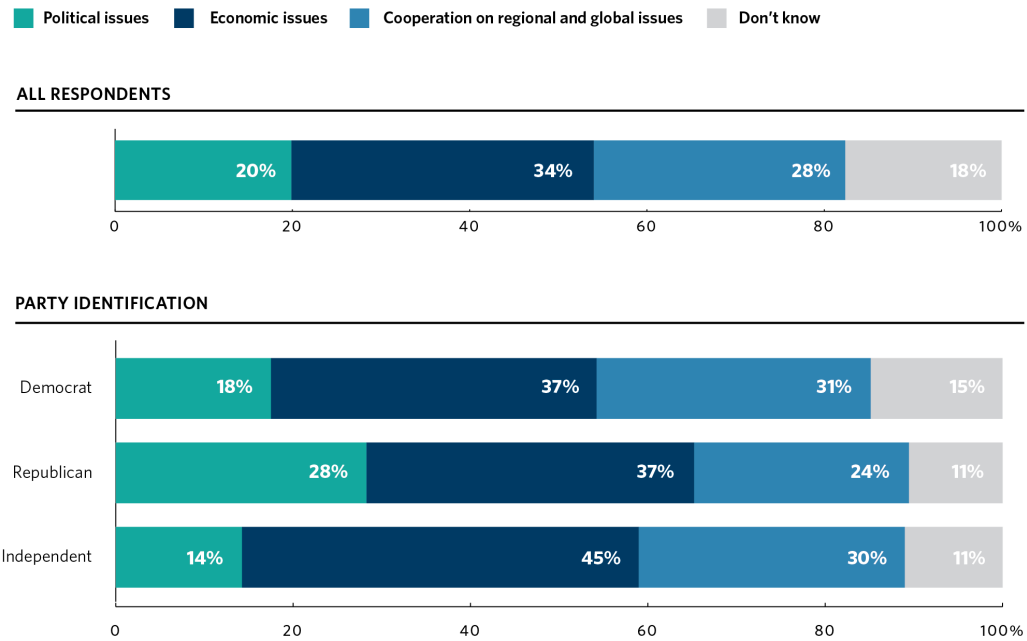
highlight economic issues, particularly when it comes to relations with India (29 percent) and Japan (29 percent). Republicans and those from Los Angeles are more concerned with economic issues regarding the relationship with Japan. Respondents above the age of sixty-five years and those living in small cities or towns, suburbia, or rural areas are more concerned with regional cooperation with Japan (see figure 7).

## Latin America

In contrast to their opinions on India, Japan, and South Korea, Californians are more likely to be concerned about economic issues when it comes to U.S. relations with Latin American countries (35 percent) and Mexico (34 percent) than cooperation on regional and global issues (28 percent for Mexico and 27 percent for Latin America). For relations with Latin America, Asian Americans, Bay Area residents, and liberals are more concerned with cooperation on regional and global issues. Hispanic respondents in particular are closely aligned with California-wide results, identifying economic issues (36 percent) as the most important priority for U.S. relations with Latin America. Republican respondents (42 percent), San Diego/Orange County residents (41 percent), and registered voters (36 percent) are also much more likely to be concerned with economic relations with Latin American countries than cooperation.

## Figure 8. U.S.–Mexico Relations

Q: Which of the following do you think is the most important issue in relations between the United States and Mexico?



Source: 2023 Carnegie California Global Affairs Survey  
N=1,500

For relations with Mexico, high-earning respondents are significantly more concerned with economic relations (43 percent) than cooperation on regional and global issues (30 percent). There was also a notable split between registered voters, 38 percent of whom believe economic relations to be more important than regional cooperation (considered more important by 28 percent), and nonvoters, 30 percent of whom believe regional cooperation to be more important than economic relations (considered more important by 23 percent). In contrast to their views on U.S. relationships in Latin America generally, when it comes to Mexico, figure 8 shows that independents are more concerned with economic relations (45 percent) than with cooperation on regional and global issues (30 percent).

## Migration

A 2023 Gallup poll found that Americans in general are split on whether immigrants make the U.S. economy better or worse, with 39 percent saying better and 38 percent saying worse.<sup>17</sup> Meanwhile, the Carnegie California Global Affairs Survey found that the majority of Californians—61 percent—believe immigrants contribute to the state and national economy, though 26 percent of respondents say immigrants take opportunities away from workers already in the United States. Respondents earning \$100,000 or more per year and Democrats overwhelmingly believe immigrants contribute, at 72 percent and 79 percent respectively. In a notable divide, 57 percent of Republicans and 53 percent of conservative

respondents believe immigrants do not contribute. When asked whether they believe their local, state, and federal governments are doing enough to respond to the immigration challenge, respondents were more likely to respond that these governments are “not doing enough” rather than doing “too much” or the “right amount.” Black respondents (at 34 percent) are more likely than others to believe that the federal government is doing the “right amount” to respond to the challenges of immigration. Out of all respondents, only 9 percent say that they send remittances to family outside of the United States. Those who are most likely to send remittances abroad are Hispanic people, immigrants, people between thirty and forty-four years old, and those with children.

About half of Californians agree (20 percent very much so, 28 percent somewhat) that their state government should make its own policies, separate from the federal government, to protect the legal rights of undocumented immigrants in California (while 11 percent somewhat disagree and 24 percent strongly disagree). There were many opposing opinions on this question between groups of Californians. Respondents who are aged forty-four and under, high-earning, female, white, Asian American, more educated, Democrats, or located in Los Angeles or Orange County, or who have children, are more likely to “somewhat agree” that the state government should make policies separately from the federal. Respondents who are older, male, Black, less educated, less affluent, Republican, independent, rurally located, or childless are more likely to “strongly disagree” with the statement.

In terms of local governments pursuing separate policies from the federal government, views are more mixed, with 43 percent agreeing that their local government should make its own policies, separate from the federal government, to protect the legal rights of undocumented immigrants in California (17 percent strongly, 26 percent somewhat) and 39 percent disagreeing (13 percent strongly, 26 percent somewhat). There is significant diversity among the respondents who are more likely to “strongly disagree”; they include respondents who are older; male; Black; Republican; independent; located in the Central Valley, the Bay Area, or the Inland Empire; rural or suburban; registered to vote; or childless, as well as those born in the United States and those who earn \$30,000–\$100,000 per year. Meanwhile, those who are aged forty-four or younger, female, white, wealthier, Democrat, city-located, nonvoting, and immigrant respondents are more likely to “somewhat agree.”

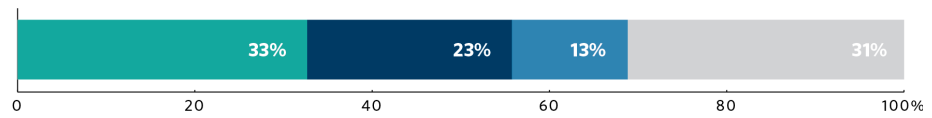
Thirty-three percent of respondents believe that U.S. immigration policy should focus most of its attention on alleviating the root causes of migration overseas. As captured in figure 9, however, the route forward on immigration policy is by no means clear to many. A similar 31 percent of respondents believed none of the following options are most important for U.S. immigration policy: alleviating root causes, facilitating service delivery and integration of migrants upon arrival, or increasing the capacity of immigration courts. Future surveys will explore this question in more depth. Respondents who are above age thirty, male, Asian American, college-educated, from the lowest-earning and highest-earning income brackets, city-located, or nonvoters believe alleviating root causes to be the most important for U.S. immigration policy, while all other demographics believe that none of the options provided is the most pressing need for U.S. immigration policy.

## Figure 9. U.S. Migration Policy: Approaches

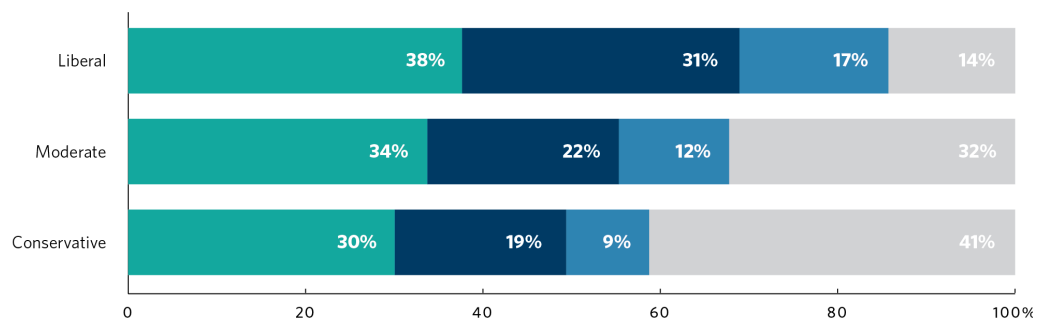
Q: What do you think is most important for U.S. migration policies to focus on?

- Alleviating root causes of migration overseas
- Facilitating service delivery and integration of migrants upon arrival
- Increasing the capacity of immigration courts
- None of the above

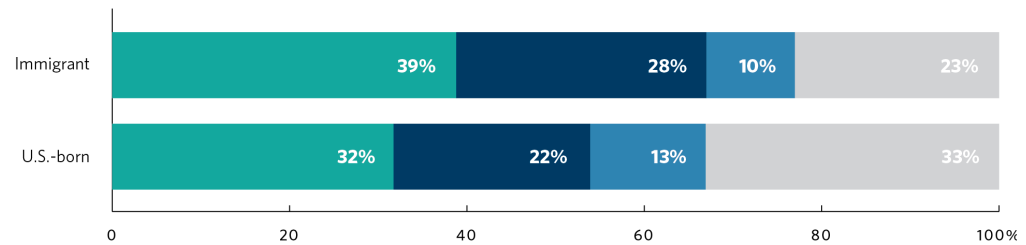
### ALL RESPONDENTS



### POLITICAL IDEOLOGY



### IMMIGRANT STATUS



Source: 2023 Carnegie California Global Affairs Survey  
N=1,500



## Section 4. California Connections: Subnational Diplomacy

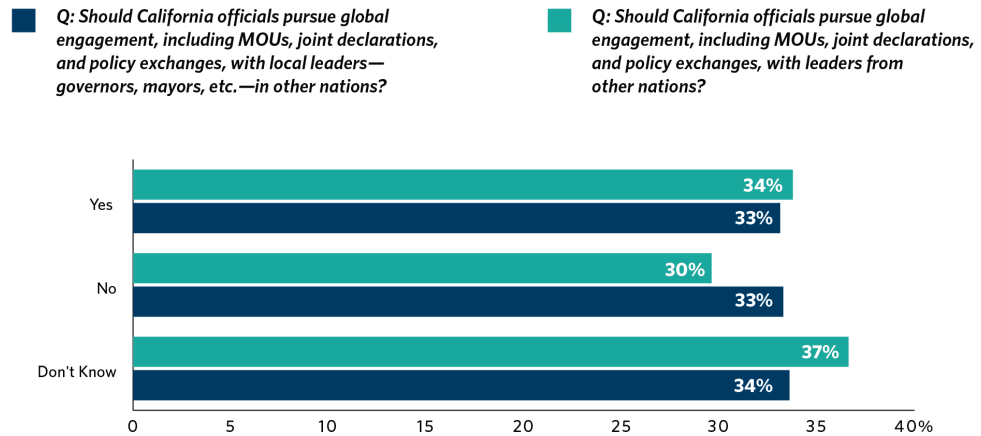
The last decade has seen a dramatic increase in diplomatic engagement by subnational officials, including those from cities and states. While city and subnational diplomacy is by no means new—shown by the ongoing sister-city relationships of the Cold War—the practices have been refined. Most importantly, the bilateral approach to relationships and knowledge exchange has been replaced by one rooted in networks. Today there are somewhere between 250 and 300 organized associations of cities globally, nearly half of which operate transnationally. Most of these networks serve one, if not both, of the twin goals of city diplomacy: to improve cities locally while influencing the global agenda.

The state of California and its cities and communities have a long history of diplomatic engagement with the wider world. For example, the state’s memorandum of understanding (MOU) on joint climate action and low carbon development with China’s National Development and Reform Commission, signed in 2013, preceded the breakthrough bilateral agreement on climate between the United States and China in 2015.<sup>18</sup> More recently, and tracking closely to diplomatic advances between the United States and Australia, California signed a 2023 MOU with Australia to forge a new climate partnership centered around climate change, critical minerals, and clean energy.<sup>19</sup> Californian cities and metropolitan areas have long been, and remain, in the lead on such efforts. The Port of Los Angeles has entered into agreements with Shanghai, Tokyo, Singapore, and a number of other Asian port cities to jointly develop green shipping corridors. This section explores how Californians feel about their state and local leaders engaging in transnational diplomatic efforts and the issues around which they think such engagement is worthwhile.

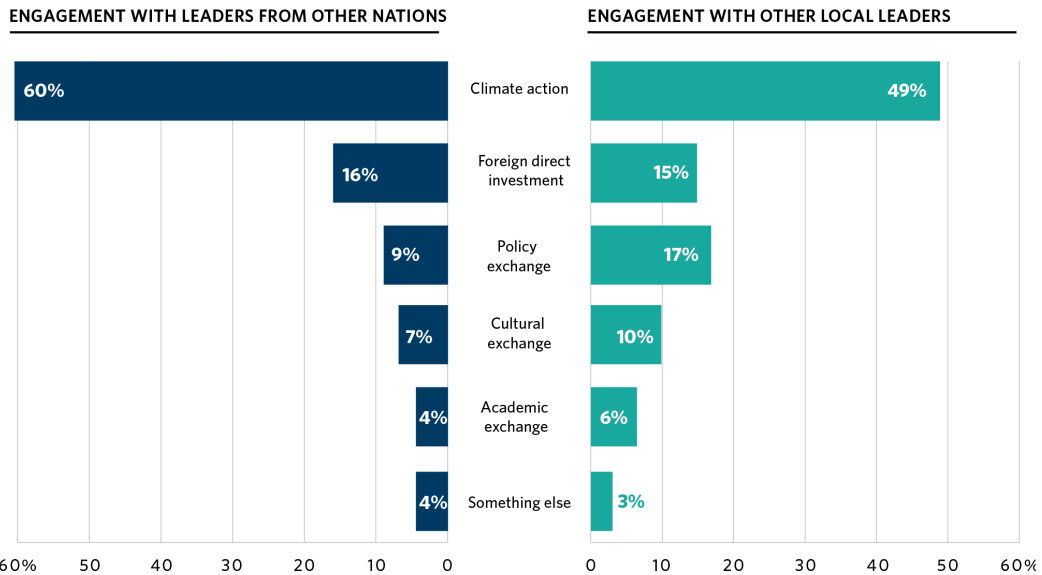
### Subnational Diplomacy and Policy Influence

Half of Californians believe local jurisdictions, including cities and states, should have an active role in addressing global challenges: 50 percent say yes, 25 percent say no, and 25 percent do not know. Democrats are far more likely (64 percent) to support such efforts than are Republicans (35 percent), as are big-city residents (59 percent) as opposed to residents of smaller cities (43 percent) or suburbs (45 percent). This confirms thinking within city halls, if not state capitals. The 2022 city survey conducted by the Melbourne Center for Cities and the Chicago Council on Global Affairs found that 70 percent of the fifty-nine cities surveyed expressed confidence in their ability to address global challenges.<sup>20</sup> Two-thirds of that survey’s respondents from city halls believed that their citizens understood the importance of international engagement for city governments. Figure 10 shows whether Californians believe their local leaders should participate in global engagement and on which issues they prefer that engagement to occur.

**Figure 10. Global Engagement of Local Leaders**



**Q: Around which issue would you most like this engagement to occur:**



Source: 2023 Carnegie California Global Affairs Survey  
N=1,500

The picture in California is complex, however. Californians draw a sharp distinction between state and local jurisdictions addressing global challenges and state and local leaders engaging in the international affairs of the United States. They are divided on whether state officials should have a role in the international affairs of the United States (38 percent say yes, 33 percent say no, and 29 percent do not know). Residents of Los Angeles, the San Francisco Bay Area, and the Central Valley are far more likely to respond in the affirmative (39 percent, 46 percent, and 41 percent, respectively) than are residents of the Inland Empire

(23 percent). Residents of big cities are similarly more inclined to say yes than those located in small cities, towns, or rural areas.

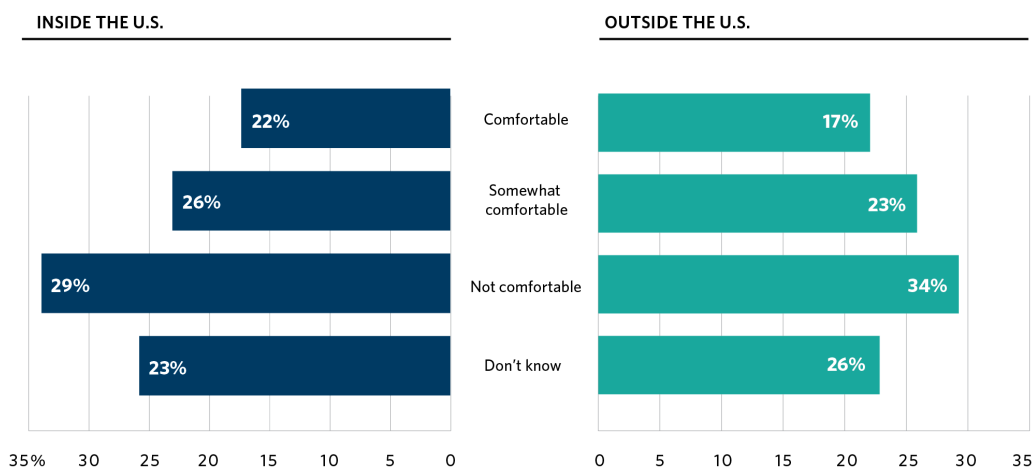
Despite support for local engagement on pressing global issues, Californians are even less likely to support a role for local and city officials in the international affairs of the United States (26 percent say yes, 46 percent say no, and 29 percent do not know) than for state officials. Similar views were held across race and education levels. Big-city residents were more likely to respond yes (35 percent) than residents of other areas, but “no” responses still made up a plurality (39 percent) in said cities. Californians believe in U.S. climate leadership; they also believe, even above the federal level, in state climate leadership; and yet many do not fully grasp how climate diplomacy contributes to the first two efforts.

Historically, California policy innovation and implementation has influenced, whether directly or through market mechanisms, other jurisdictions within the United States. This phenomenon, known as the “California Effect,” has had bearing on everything from car emission standards to pork and poultry farming practices. Forty-eight percent of Californians are comfortable or somewhat comfortable with California-based legislation or regulation influencing norms and practices in other jurisdictions in the United States (see figure 11). More than 70 percent of surveyed Democrats are comfortable or somewhat comfortable with extrajurisdictional influence, while 57 percent of surveyed Republicans were not comfortable with such influence.

**Figure 11. California's Policy Influence**

*Q: How comfortable are you with California-based legislation or regulation influencing norms and practices in other jurisdictions—cities, states, etc.—in the United States?*

*Q: How comfortable are you with California-based legislation or regulation influencing norms and practices in jurisdictions, such as states, countries, and provinces, outside the United States?*



Source: 2023 Carnegie California Global Affairs Survey  
N=1,500

Increasingly, policy development, and particularly regulation, has influence on jurisdictions across national borders. This is particularly true when the regulatory jurisdiction—like, for example, the European Union—is large, has regulatory capacity, and targets inelastic markets or sectors.<sup>21</sup> Californians are somewhat less comfortable with transnational influence, with only 40 percent of those surveyed being comfortable or somewhat comfortable with California-based legislation or regulation influencing norms and practices in jurisdictions, such as states, countries, and provinces, outside the United States. In addition to the partisan divide, there is a notable urban-rural divide around such influence, with more than one in two big-city residents expressing some comfort, while 54 percent of rural residents are not comfortable.

As the influence of subnational actors has grown, national governments—including in Brazil, China, France, Germany, and the United States—have increased their attention on the ongoing economic, policy, and diplomatic engagement by city networks and some states. For example, in the United States, the State Department has created new offices focused on subnational diplomacy, and in Germany, the government has begun to pay increased attention to the ability of cities to advance climate action. Where and how national governments engage subnational actors has remained a subject of ongoing debate with bureaucratic, budgetary, and ultimately policy implications.

Of the fifty-nine cities studied in the 2022 Melbourne Center for Cities and Chicago Council on Global Affairs surveys, more than half noted engagement with their national government regarding international activities, with nearly 60 percent reporting being contacted by their national government at least once every three months.<sup>22</sup> Notably, over 70 percent of the cities surveyed described this national-local engagement as ad hoc, with only 19 percent of cities having regularly scheduled meetings with national counterparts. When asked how U.S. foreign policy officials should engage with the international efforts of local officials in California, only 11 percent of respondents thought the federal government should discourage such engagement, with over 20 percent identifying both policy briefings and administration support as useful engagement.

Westward-looking, often aligned with their fellow Americans, and confident in U.S. global engagement, Californians would prefer that the role of their state and local leaders on the world stage be decided close to home.

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