

INNOVATING INNOVATION

Rethinking the Purpose and Process of Change in Food

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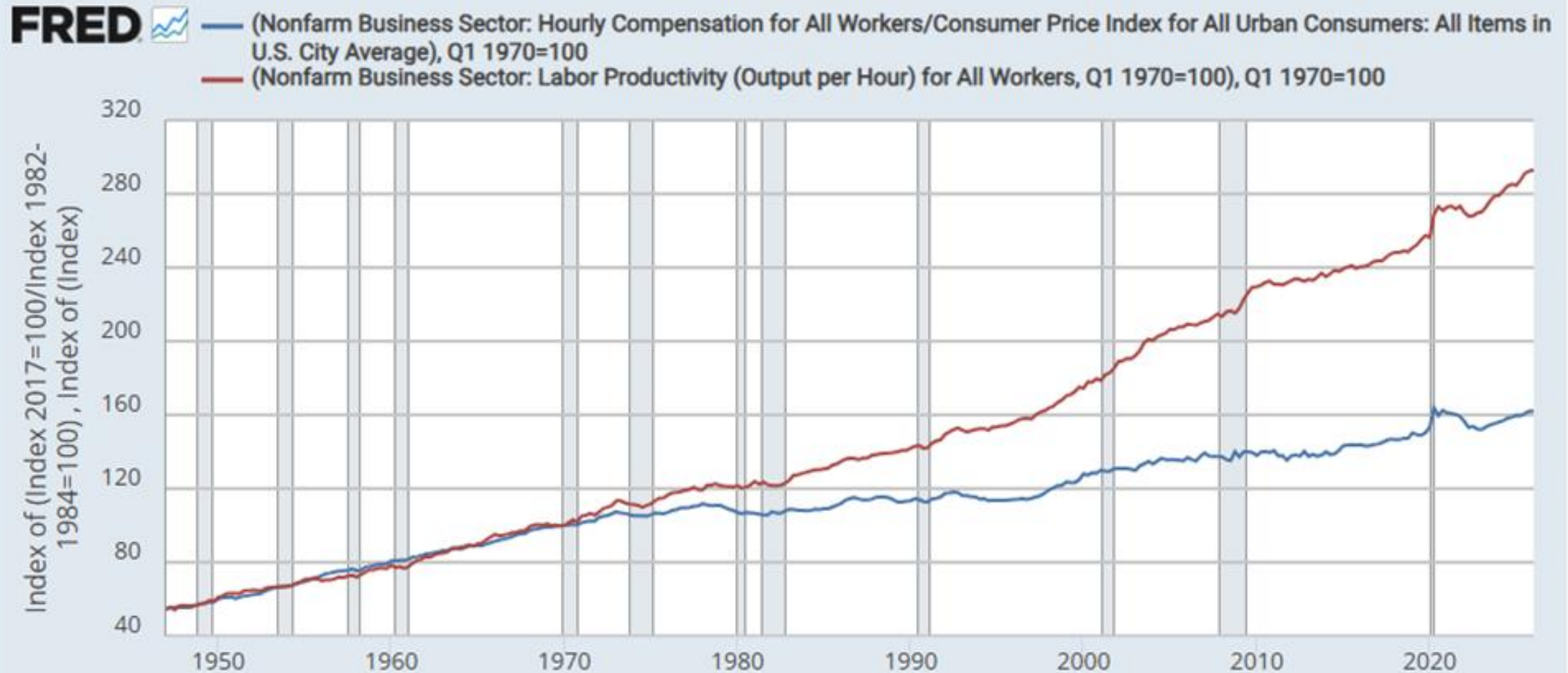


AKA

THE THREE THINGS I WORRY
ABOUT (*AS TOLD THROUGH
GRAPHS*)



#1: Living is incredibly expensive



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics via FRED®

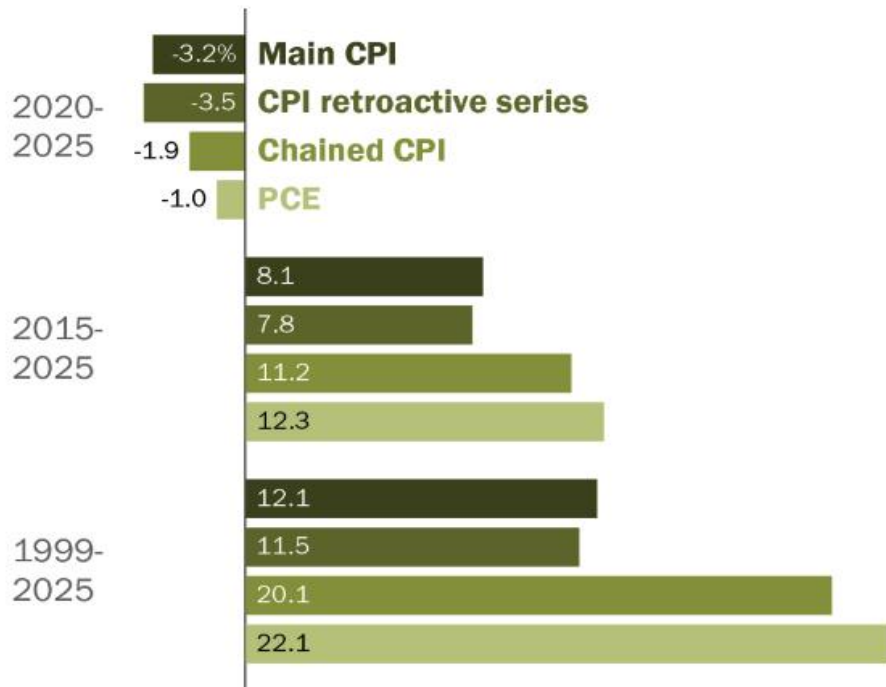
Shaded areas indicate U.S. recessions.

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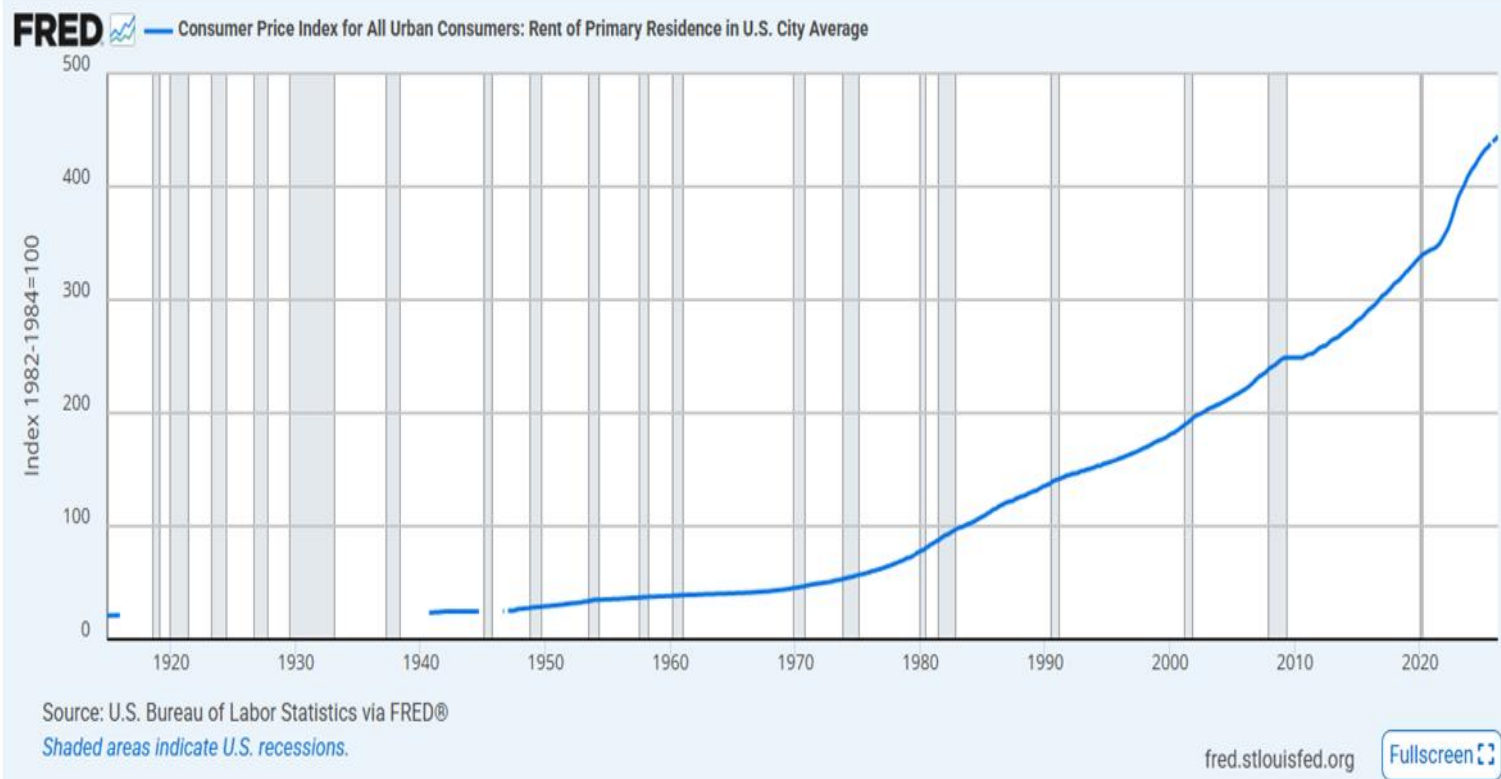
Whether wage growth beats inflation, and by how much, depends on when and how you look

Cumulative real wage growth, after adjusting for inflation using four measures



Note: Time periods shown start and end in December.
Source: Pew Research Center analysis of IPUMS CPS earnings data, Bureau of Labor Statistics' Consumer Price Index (CPI) variants and Bureau of Economic Analysis' Personal Consumption Expenditures (PCE) price index.

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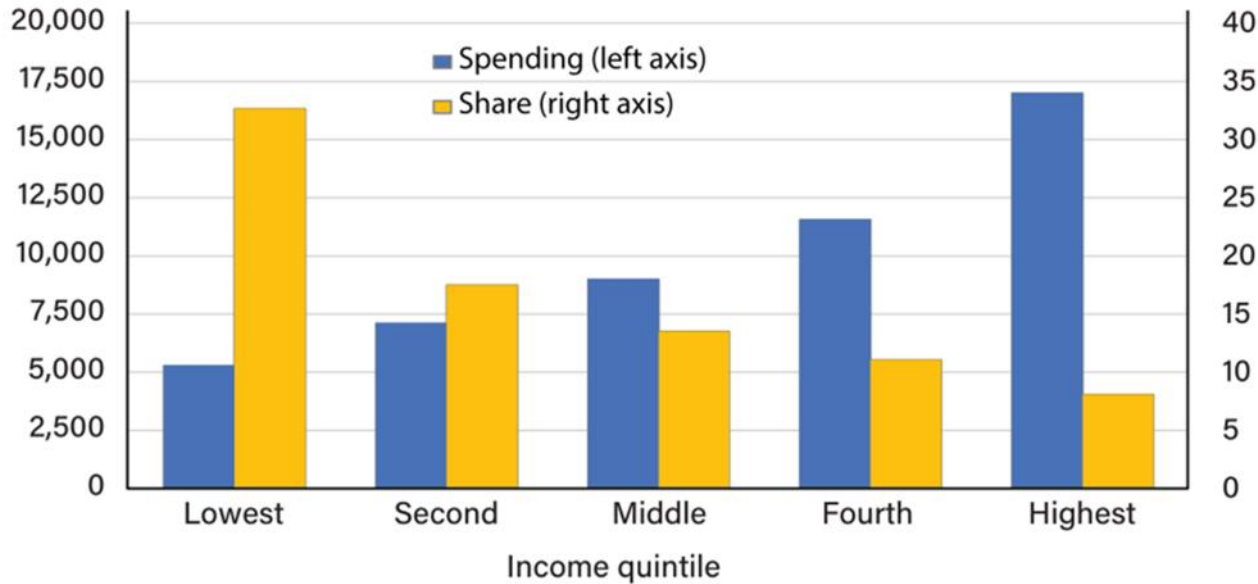


Food spending and share of after-tax income spent on food across U.S. households, 2023

USDA Economic Research Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Average annual food spending, U.S. dollars

Percent of income spent on food



Note: U.S. households are sorted from lowest to highest household income, then divided into 5 equal groups, or quintiles.

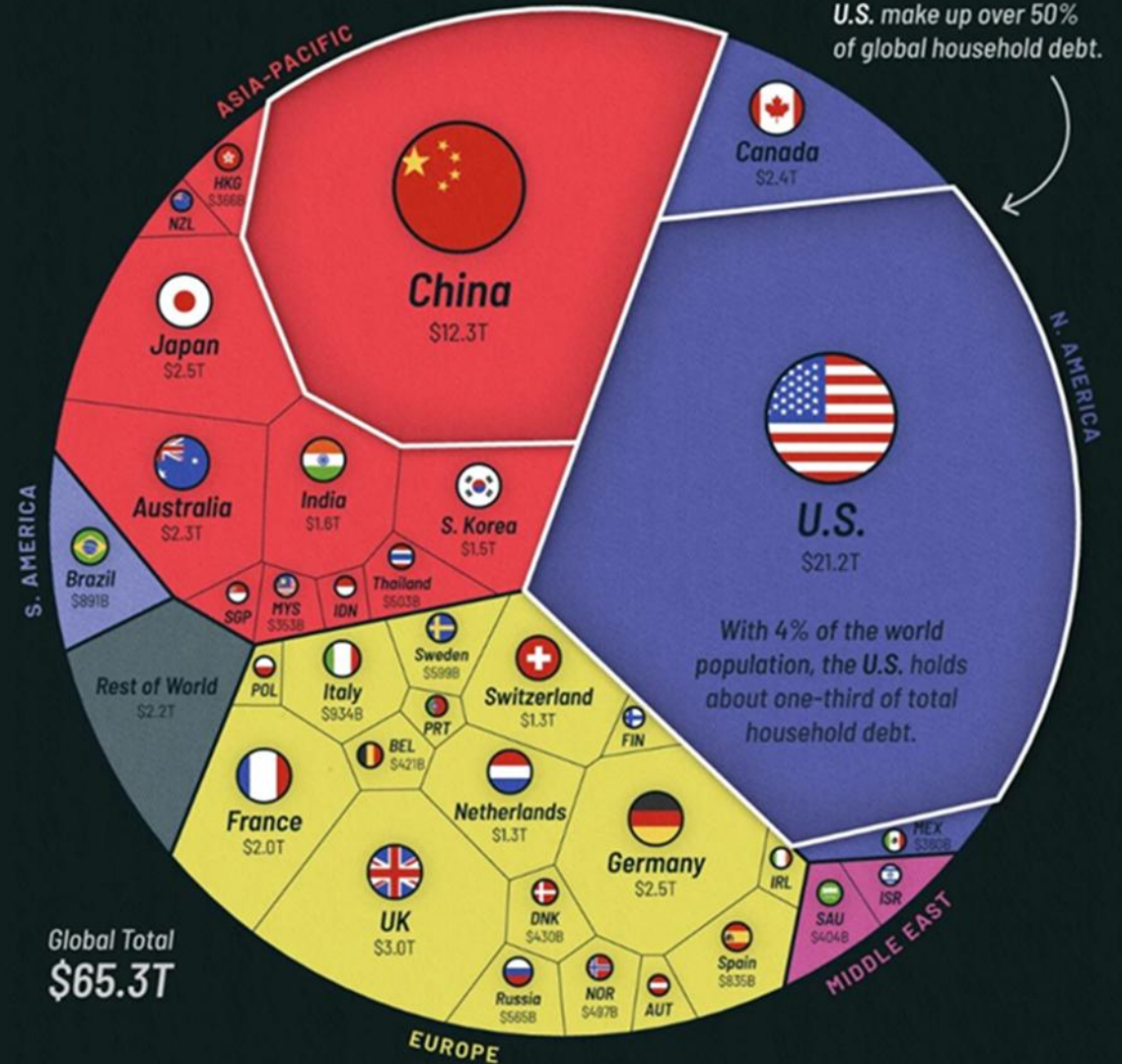
Source: USDA, Economic Research Service using data from the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Consumer Expenditure Survey, 2023.

CHARTS of NOTE

THE WORLD'S HOUSEHOLD DEBT

2026

Together, China and the U.S. make up over 50% of global household debt.

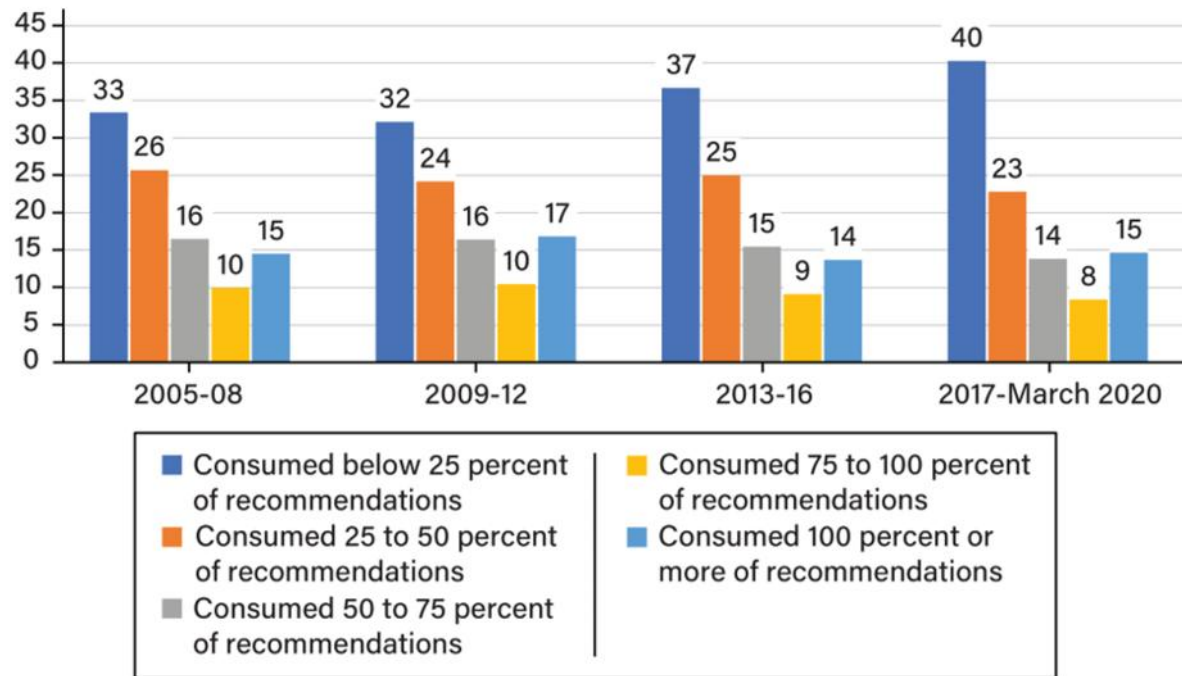


#2. We eat the wrong things

Adherence to U.S. fruit recommendations among adults, 2005–March 2020

USDA Economic Research Service
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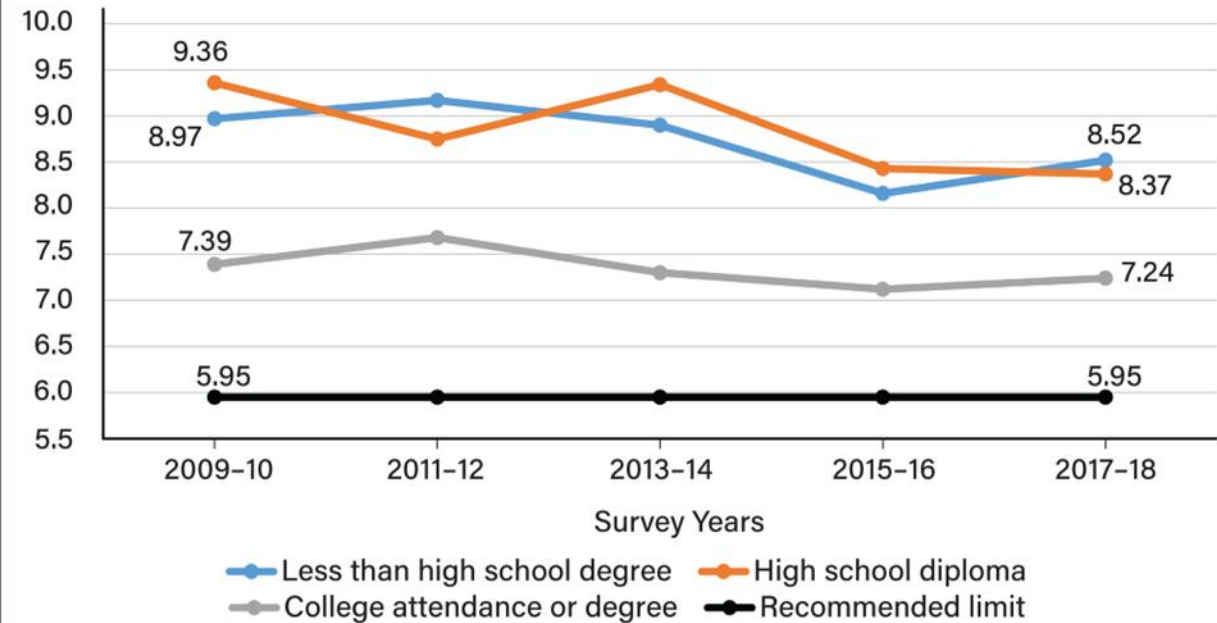
Percentage of all U.S. adults



Average added-sugar intake by education achievement of adults 20 and above, 2009–18

USDA Economic Research Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

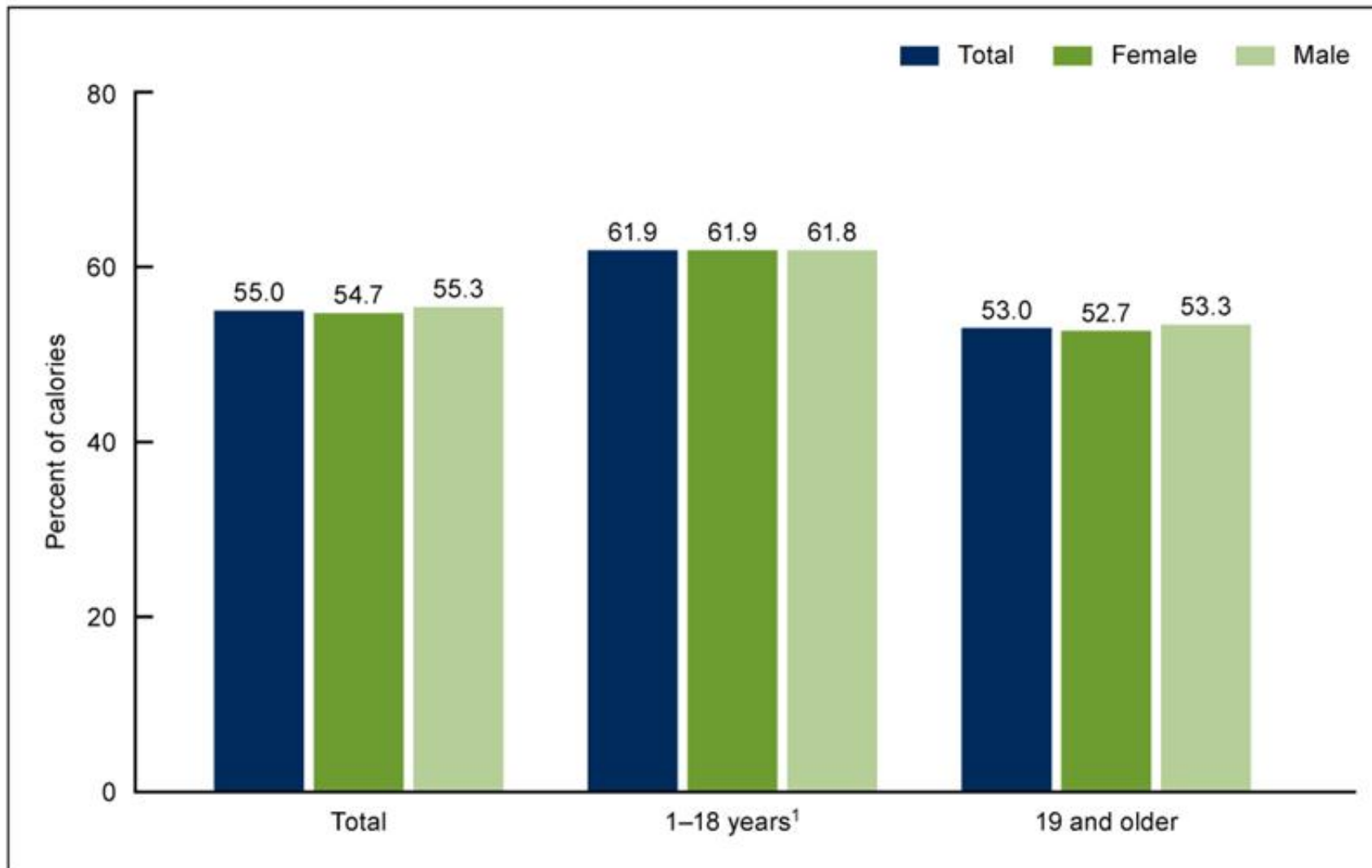
Teaspoons of added sugar per 1,000 calories



Source: USDA, Economic Research Service using data from USDA, Agricultural Research Service and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2017–18 What We Eat in America, National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey; USDA and HHS, Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2020–2025.

CHARTS of NOTE

Figure 1. Mean percentage of total calories from ultra-processed foods consumed by youth and adults, by sex: United States, August 2021–August 2023



¹Significantly different from adults.

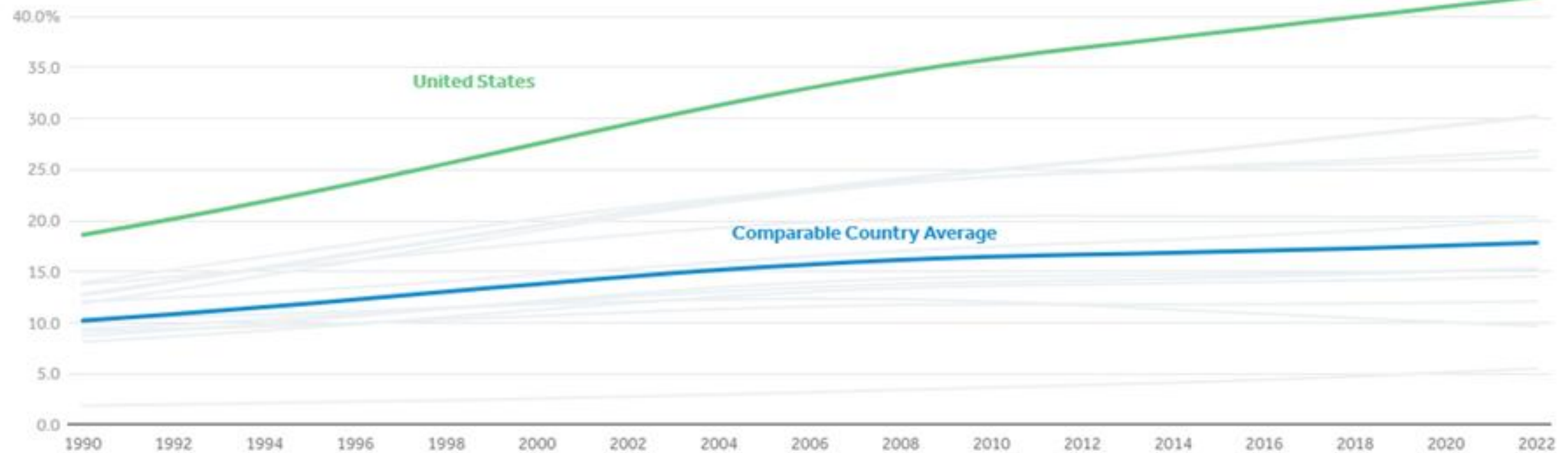
NOTE: Ultra-processed food is based on the Nova classification.

SOURCE: National Center for Health Statistics, National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey, August 2021–August 2023.

[View Larger](#)

The U.S. obesity rate is twice that of peer nations

Age-standardized percent of adults with obesity, 18 and older, 1990-2022



Note: Obesity is defined as an adult with a BMI over 30.

Source [KFF analysis of World Health Organization data \(WHO\)](#) • [Get the data](#) • [PNG](#)

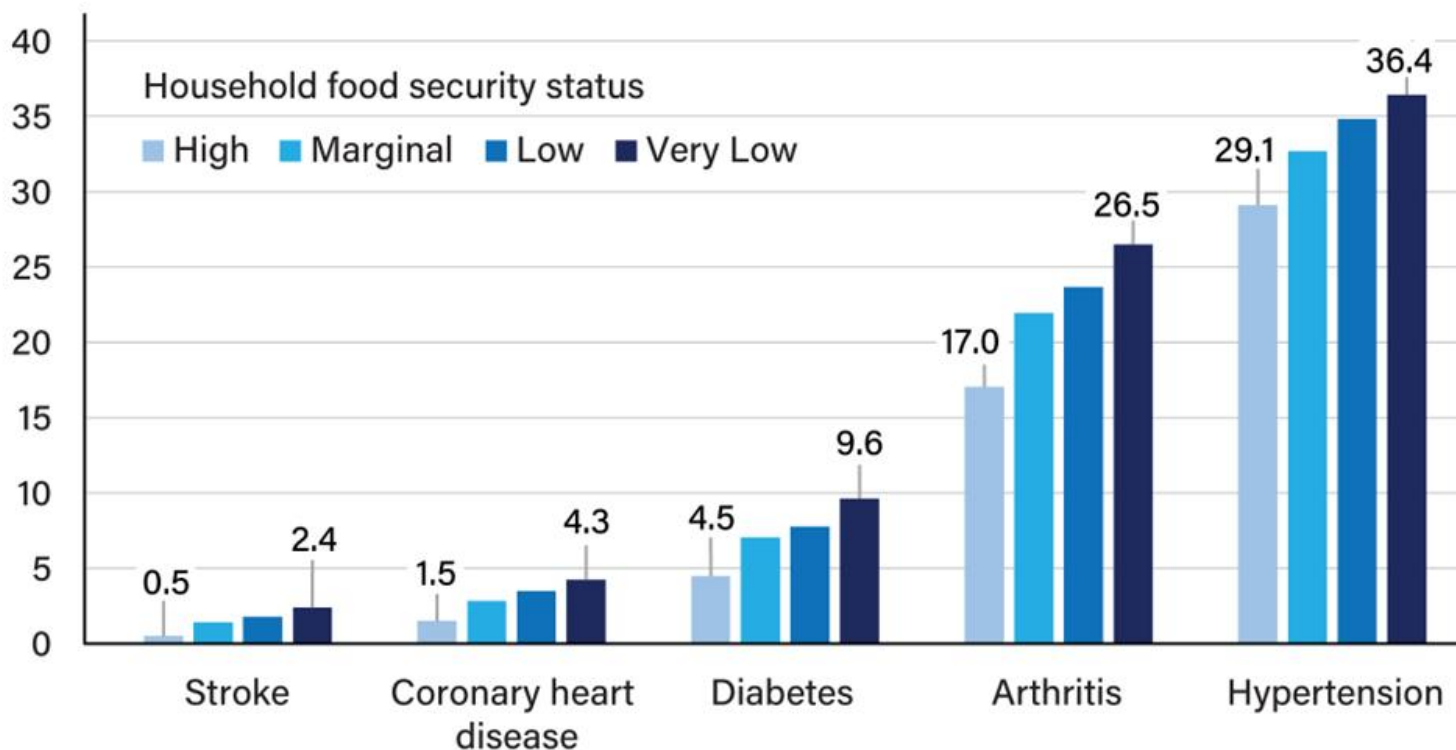
Peterson-KFF
Health System Tracker

Predicted disease prevalences for adults in low-income households, 2019-22



Economic Research Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

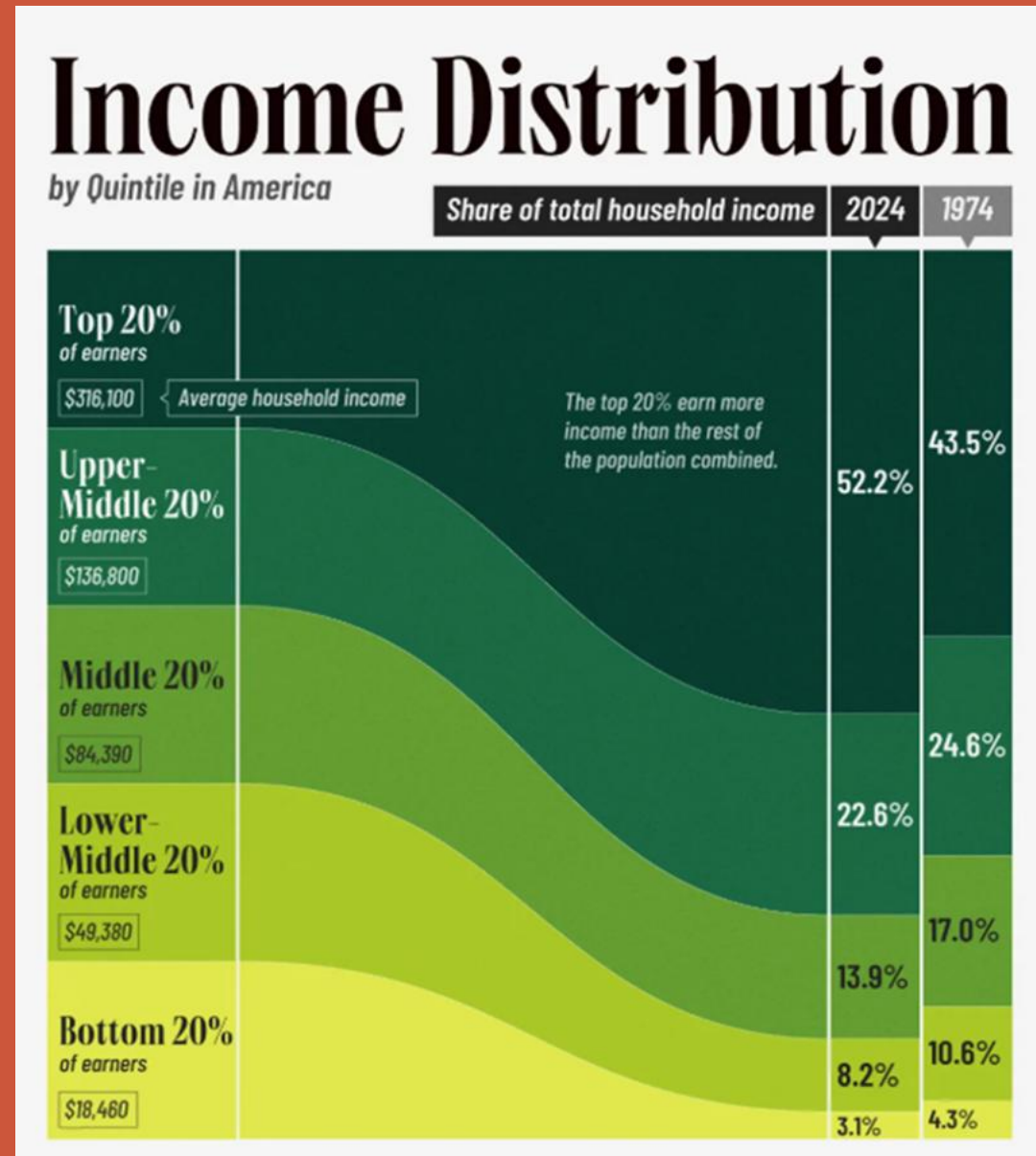
Predicted prevalence (percent)



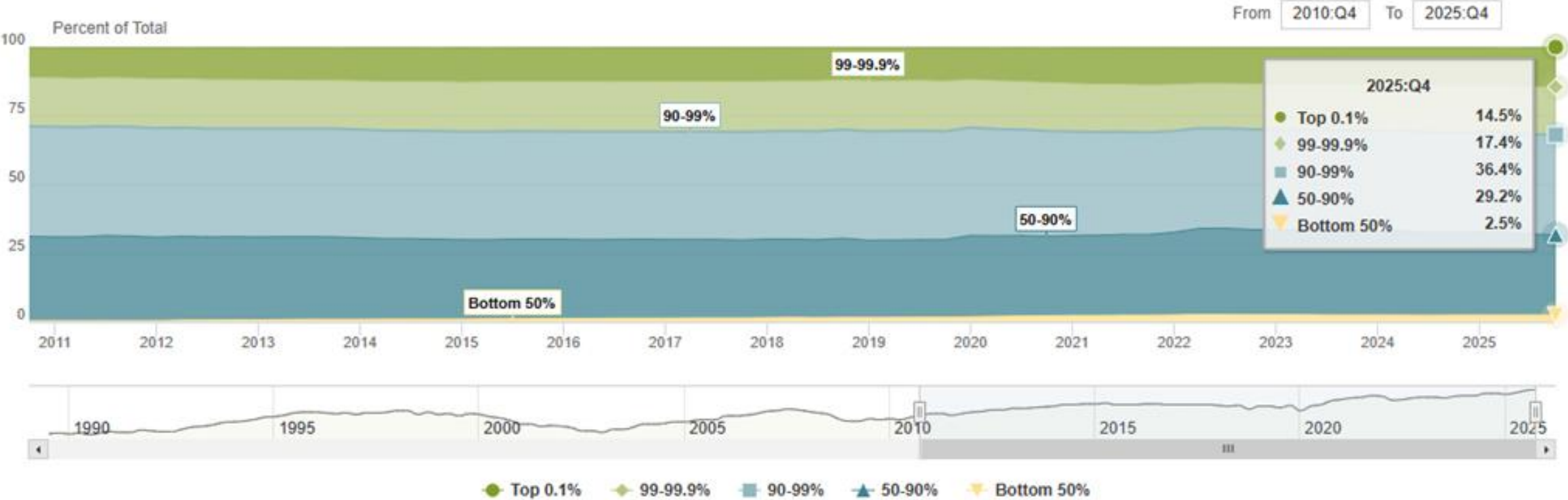
Note: **Predicted prevalence** estimates are adjusted for survey year indicators, age, gender, employment, marital status, race/ethnicity, insurance status, education, family size, and household income-to-poverty ratio. Sample includes working-age adults (19-64) in households with incomes at or below 200 percent of the Federal poverty line.

Source: USDA, Economic Research Service calculations using data from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's National Health Interview Survey, 2019-22.

#3. We don't know or trust each other



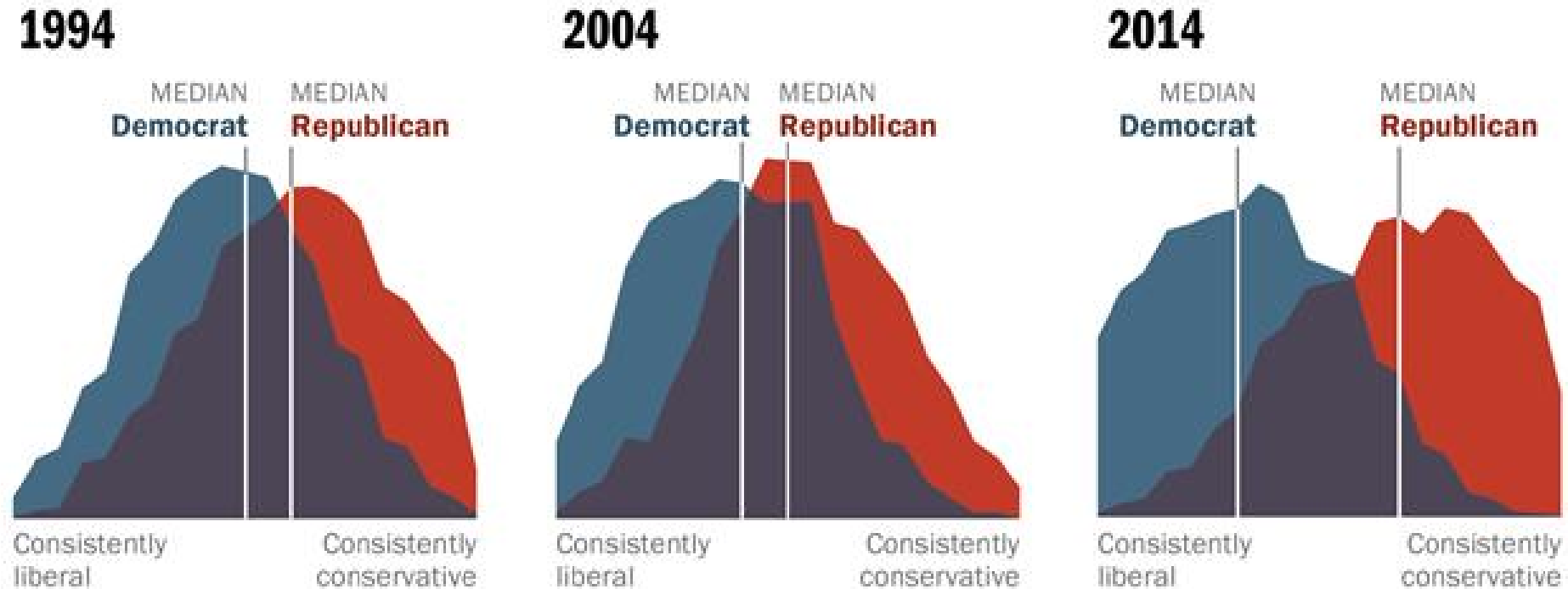
Wealth by wealth percentile group



Source: Survey of Consumer Finances and Financial Accounts of the United States

Democrats and Republicans More Ideologically Divided than in the Past

Distribution of Democrats and Republicans on a 10-item scale of political values



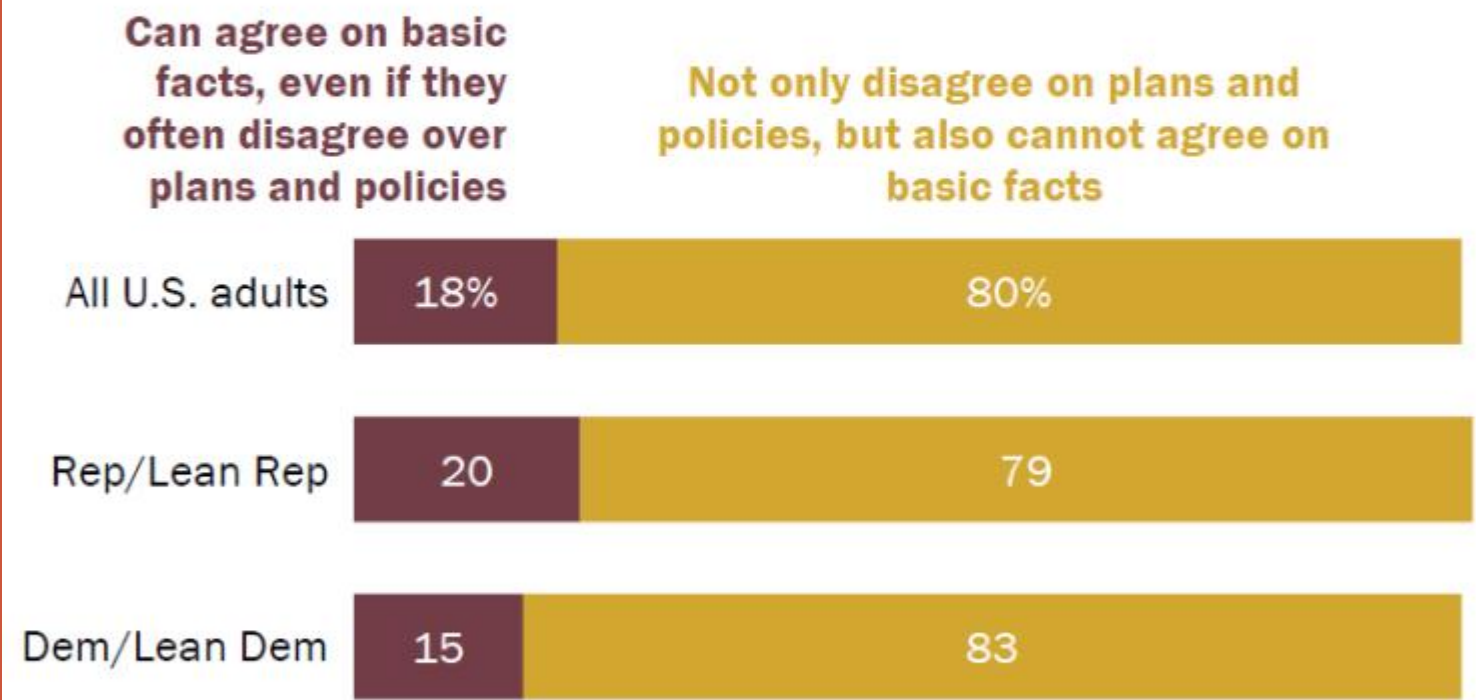
Source: 2014 Political Polarization in the American Public

Notes: Ideological consistency based on a scale of 10 political values questions (see Appendix A). The blue area in this chart represents the ideological distribution of Democrats; the red area of Republicans. The overlap of these two distributions is shaded purple. Republicans include Republican-leaning independents; Democrats include Democratic-leaning independents (see Appendix B).

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Majorities in both parties say Republican and Democratic voters cannot agree on basic facts

% who say when it comes to important issues facing the country, Republican and Democratic voters ...

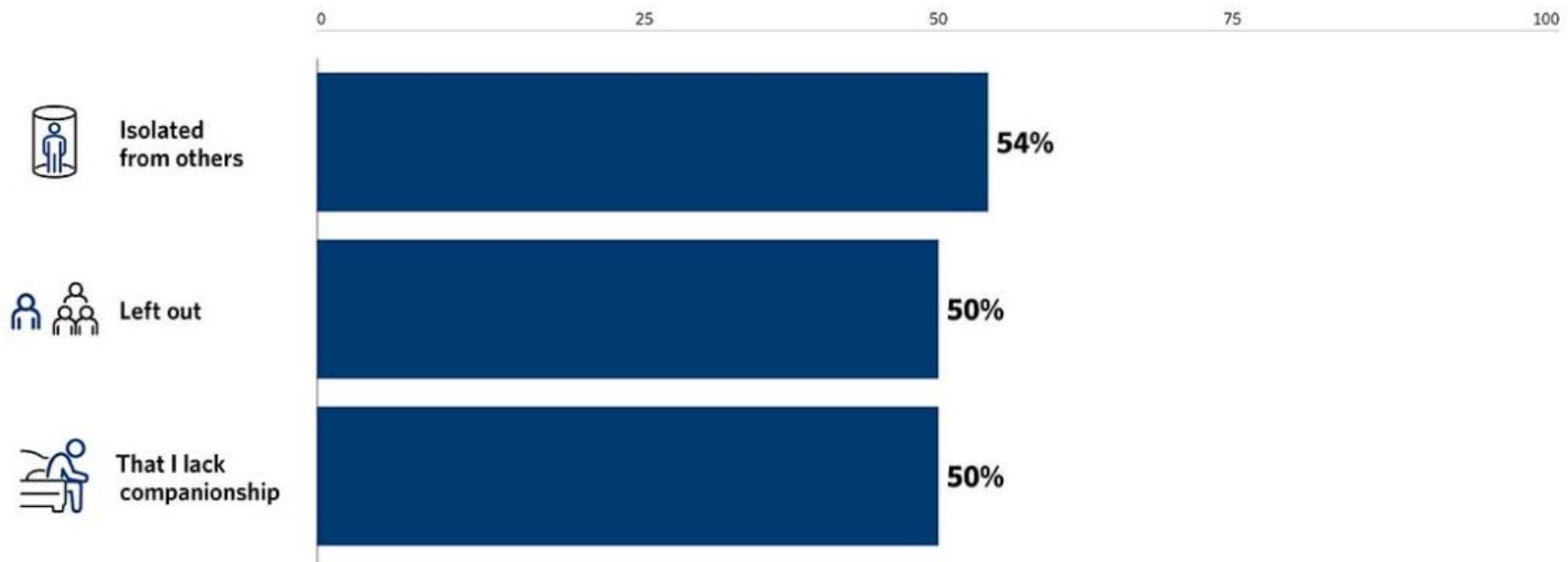


Note: Respondents who did not answer are not shown.
Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted March 10-16, 2025.

Infographic: Signs of loneliness

Half or more of U.S. adults report signs of loneliness

% WHO SAY THEY HAVE FELT THE FOLLOWING OFTEN OR SOME OF THE TIME



STRESS IN AMERICA™ 2025

© 2025 American Psychological Association

Details of infographic from APA's 2025 Stress in America survey

The common solution?

FOOD!

The single most consistent predictor of disease risk

An indispensable expenditure

Direct impact on mental and emotional health

The center of every human gathering

Our window to unfamiliar cultures and traditions

For food professionals...

- Keep doing what you're doing. **Top trends** = Cost reduction, clean label, ingredient reduction, health & wellness
- **Tactically**, this means flexible core ingredients, waste utilization, portion consistency and higher nutrition/lower calorie staples
- **Borrowing from other cultures** means affordable whole foods, exciting flavors and opportunities for education

For educators and institutions...

- Food and nutrition as the **vehicle for core learning outcomes** in K-12 and beyond
- **Storytelling** through food...from the CEO to the freshmen
- **Every meal is a teachable moment**