

A person with blonde hair tied back, wearing a teal long-sleeved shirt, stands on a rugged, reddish-brown rocky cliff. They are looking out over a deep canyon where a river flows. The sky is filled with dramatic, dark clouds illuminated by the warm, orange and yellow light of a setting or rising sun. The overall mood is contemplative and scenic.

2026 Travel Plans

American Travel Sentiment Study

WAVE 111 : GAS PRICES AND PERCEPTIONS OF TRAVEL

September 24, 2026

Longwoods
INTERNATIONAL

miles
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American Travel Sentiment Wave 111 Highlights

Key Findings:

1. Impact of Gas Prices on Travel Plans Down Compared to April 2026

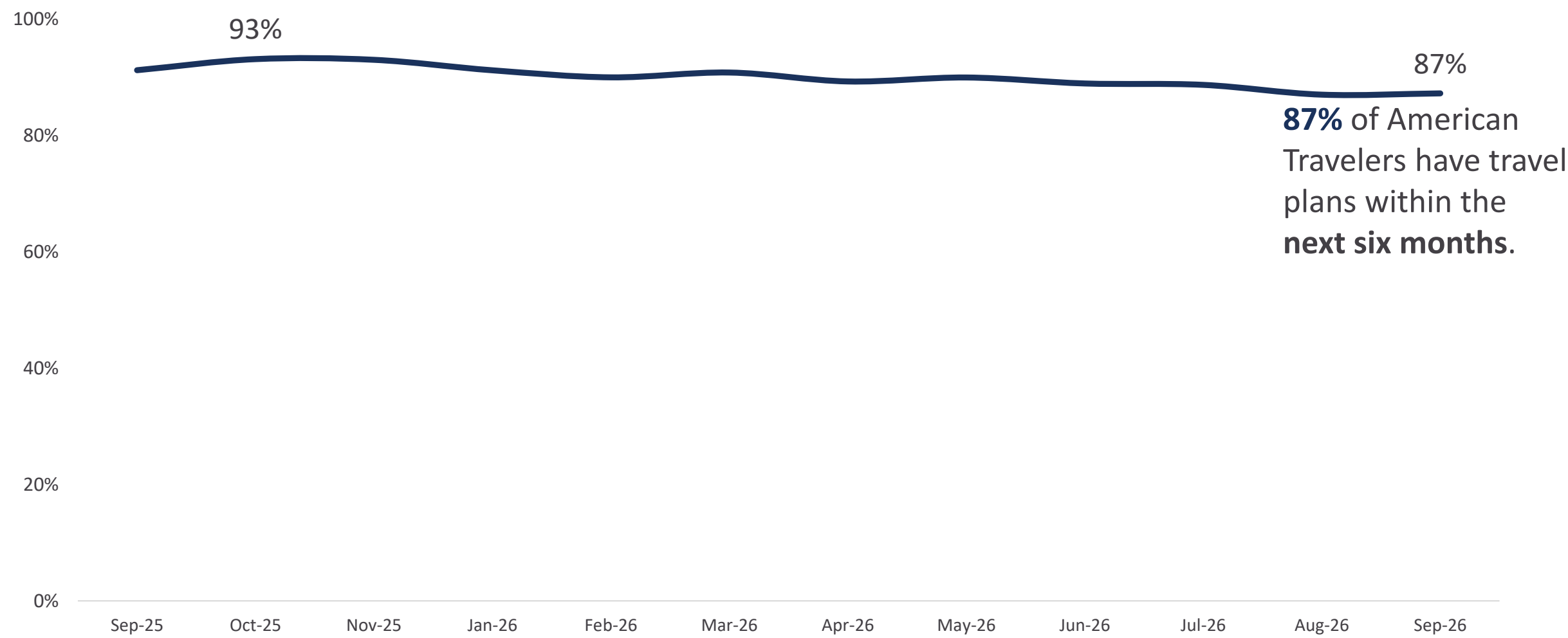
20% of travelers say that gas prices are not impacting their travel plans, up 3.1 points compared to April 2026. Fewer travelers are choosing destinations closer to home (37%, down 3.6 points) or reducing other travel spending. The largest decline in planned spending reductions is among those who say they would reduce the amount they spend on entertainment and recreation (26%, down 8.3 points).

2. Travel Remains a Priority Despite Travel Costs

Although 75% of travelers agree that travel is becoming too expensive, the majority (55%) are willing to reduce spending in other areas of their life to prioritize travel. Eight in ten (81%) travelers agree that vacations are one of the things they most look forward to each year, up 5.8 points compared to September 2025. 74% of travelers agree that they value making experiences over acquiring more material belongings.



Travel Plans Within the Next 6 Months



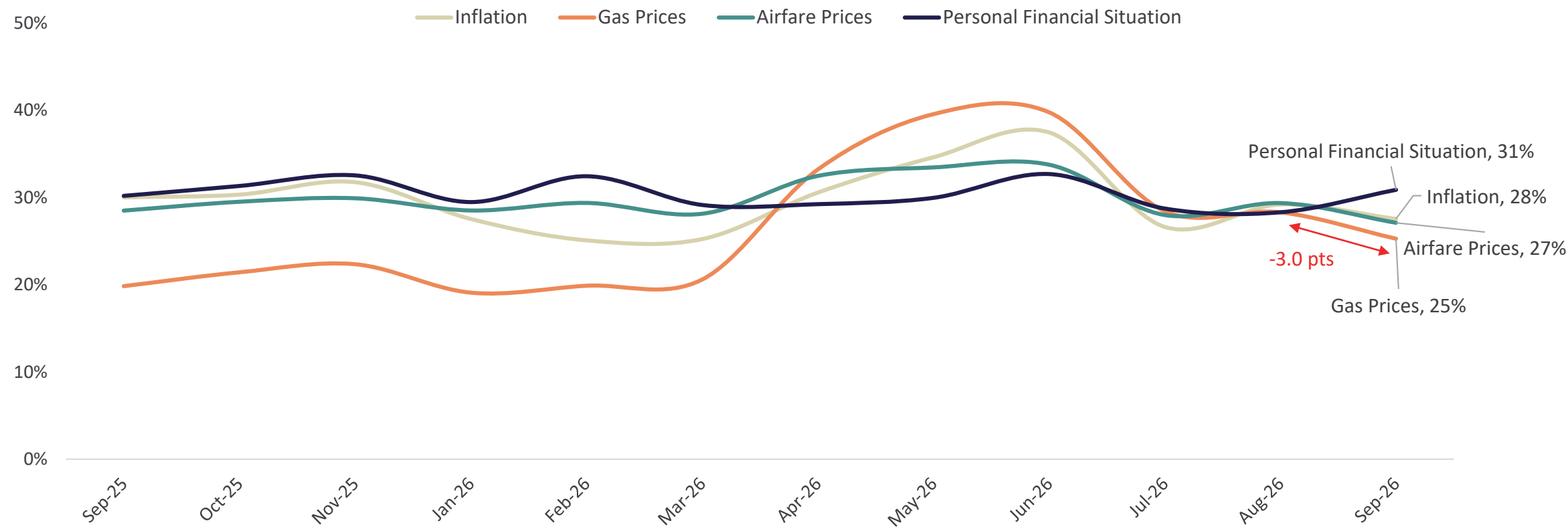
87% of American Travelers have travel plans within the next six months.

Source: Longwoods International ATS Wave 111
Percentages are based only on respondents who are confirmed travelers (see definition in Methodology slide)

Decrease in Concerns About Gas Prices Impacting Travel Plans

Concerns Impacting Your Travel Decisions in the Next Six Months

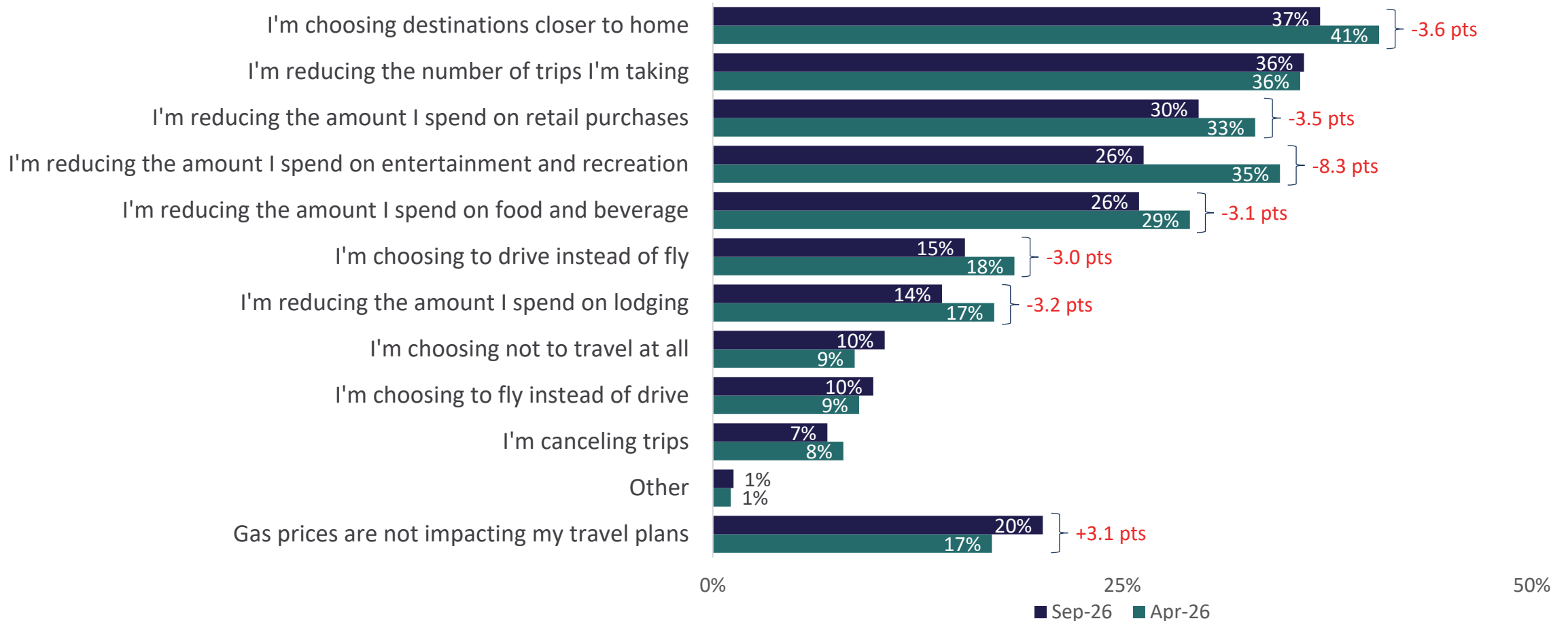
The chart shows the percentage of respondents who rated each factor as “Greatly impact” their travel plans (a 5 on a 1–5 scale) over the period from September 2025 to 2026.



Source: Longwoods International ATS Wave 111
Percentages are based only on respondents who are confirmed travelers and intend on traveling in the next six months

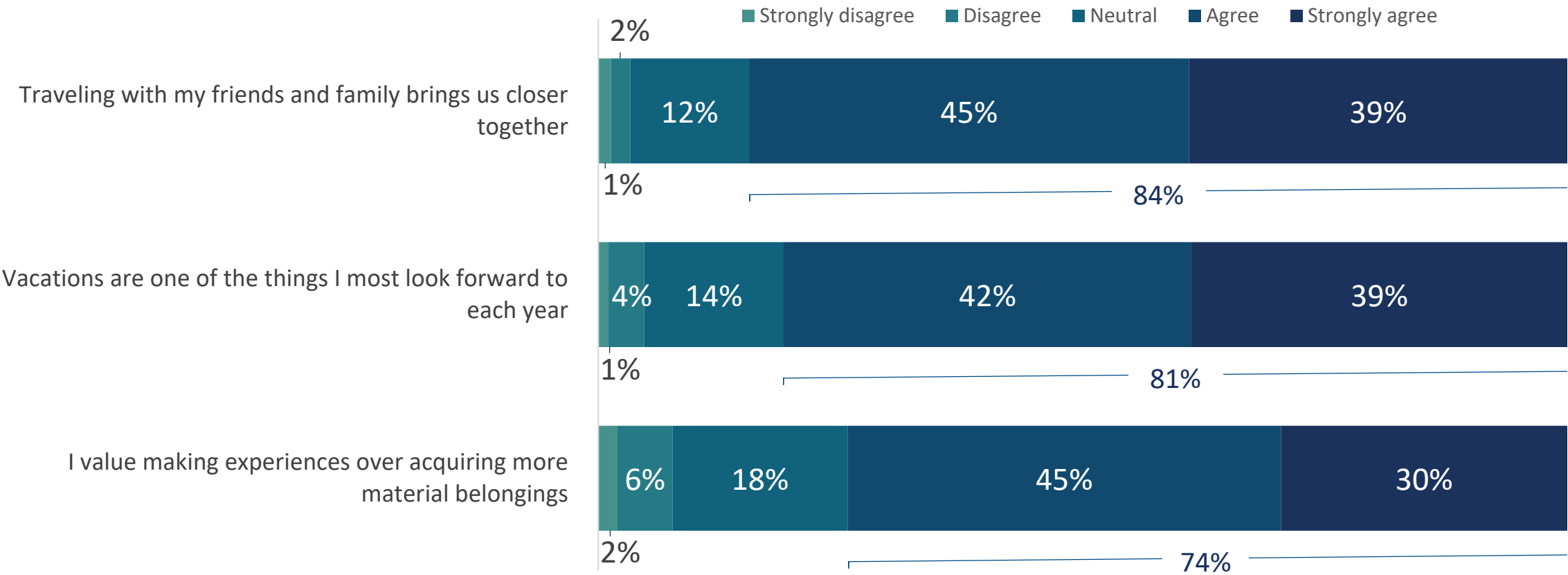
Impact of Gas Prices on Travel Plans

During the next six months, how are gas prices impacting your travel?



Travelers Value Vacations and Making Experiences

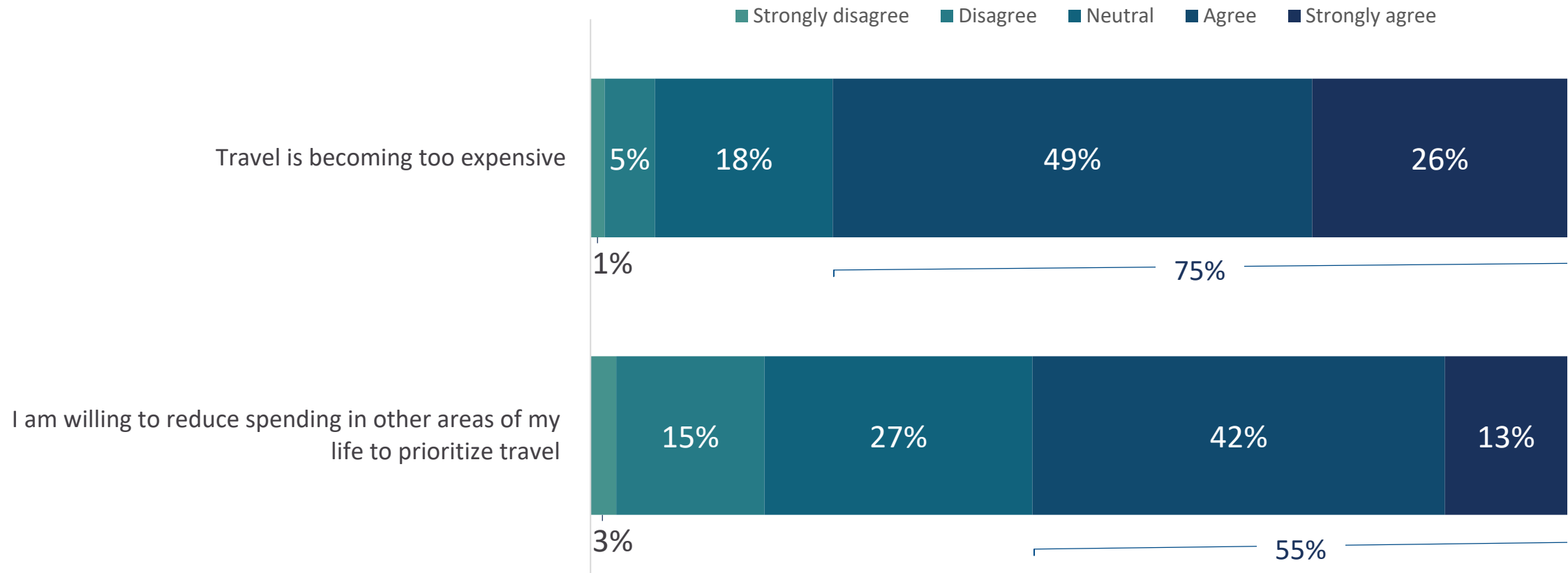
Using the scale below, please indicate your level of agreement with the following statement:



Source: Longwoods International ATS Wave 111
Percentages are based only on respondents who are confirmed travelers

Majority of Travelers Prioritize Travel Despite Cost

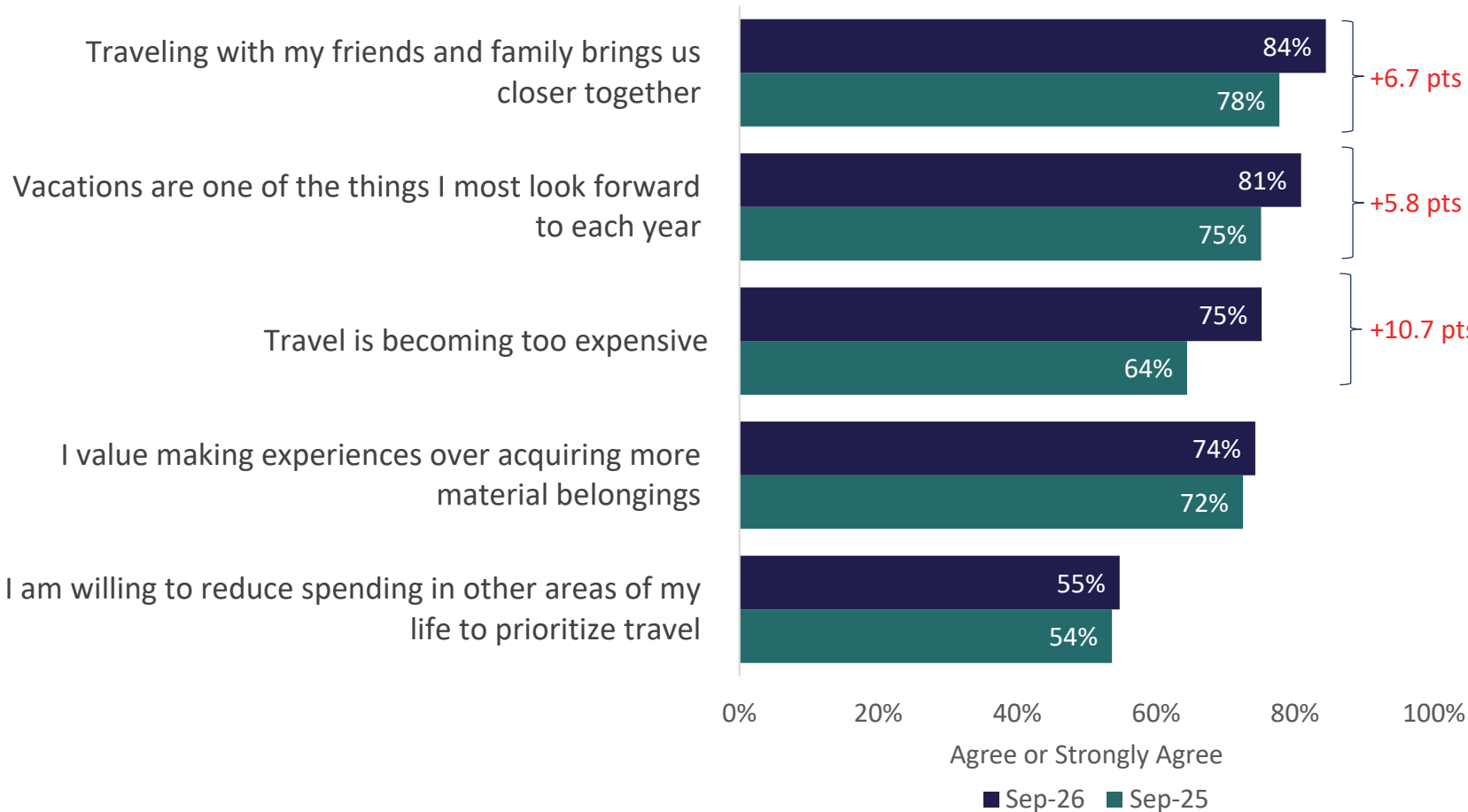
Using the scale below, please indicate your level of agreement with the following statement:



Source: Longwoods International ATS Wave 111
Percentages are based only on respondents who are confirmed travelers

Travel's Emotional Value Grows Despite Rising Cost Concerns

Using the scale below, please indicate your level of agreement with the following statement:



Over 80% of travelers agree that vacations are one of the things they most look forward to each year, up 5.8 points since September 2025.

75% of travelers feel that travel is becoming too expensive (up 10.7 points), but most travelers are willing to reduce other spending to prioritize travel (55%).

American Travel Sentiment Methodology

The American National Travel Sentiment Study is the most comprehensive and longest-running survey of its kind, offering valuable insights into the factors influencing American travel behaviors.

Key Details:

- Survey Date: September 1 – 4, 2026
- Sample Size: 1,000 U.S. adults (18+)
- Margin of Error: $\pm 3\%$
- Representative of U.S. population demographics (age, gender, region)

Travelers are only respondents that have taken a trip in the last 3 years and intend to take a trip in the next 2 years.

Conducted with support from Miles Partnership, this study remains a vital tool for understanding the dynamic landscape of American travel.





WHO WE ARE

Established in 1978 as a
market research
consultancy

Headquartered in
Columbus, OH and
Toronto, ON

Focused in
tourism since
1985

Working with over
175 Destinations
and Brands

The logo for Longwoods International. The word 'Longwoods' is in a large, blue, sans-serif font. The letter 'o' is replaced by a blue globe icon with a green leaf-like shape above it. Below 'Longwoods', the word 'INTERNATIONAL' is written in a smaller, green, all-caps, sans-serif font.



Additional Resources

Longwoods International Research

<https://longwoods-intl.com/category/american-travel-sentiment/>

Miles Partnership Research and Insights

www.MilesPartnership.com/How-We-Think



Thank You!

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