



Challenges of Nations – Special Edition USA

WHAT MAJOR TASKS NEED TO BE SOLVED IN US
SOCIETY TODAY AND IN THE FUTURE. AN ANALYSIS IN
THE CONTEXT OF THE 2024 US PRESIDENTIAL
ELECTION.

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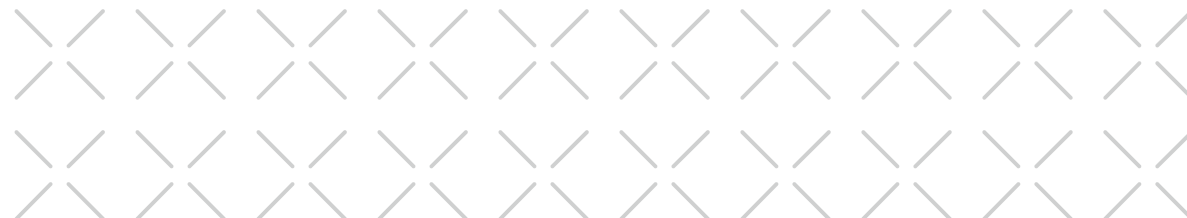
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2. The future challenges in the USA
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Key Insights



The most frequently mentioned problem that urgently needs to be solved in the USA **today** is the development around prices and purchasing power. This is followed by immigration and integration, crime and security, and the economy in general.



The topics of price and purchasing power development as well as immigration and integration have historically high levels of concern.



American society is divided when it comes to immigration and integration: While older people in particular see this as a problem, the corresponding proportion is lower among younger people.



The most frequently cited problem to be solved in the USA **in the future** is environmental and climate protection. This is followed by crime and security, the general economic situation, and the development around price and purchasing power.



Older people, city dwellers, and people with a high level of education are particularly concerned about the future of environmental and climate protection.

The study series



The "**Challenges of Nations**" is a series of studies that has been conducted by the Nuremberg Institute for Market Decisions (NIM) since 1985. In the survey, the respondents were not given any answers but were invited to answer openly and spontaneously about the most urgent tasks that currently need to be solved in their country of residence. They were also asked which urgent tasks they expect to demand attention in the near and medium term. The survey methodology was repeatedly adapted to current technical developments in the study series (e.g., online interviews since 2023), but the question itself remained constant. This has resulted in a representative time series that provides information about the changing awareness of the population.



This special edition of the "Challenges of Nations" study focuses on the United States of America. It includes responses from 1,877 people aged between 18 and 69. The survey was conducted by GfK between 07.23.2024 and 07.31.2024.

The background for this special edition is the presidential election in the USA on November 5, 2024. The results provide a reliable, data-based decision-making basis for business and politics. The study is available to download free of charge.





1

The current challenges in the USA

Current challenges: The development around price and purchasing power is the topic that currently concerns most Americans by far. This is followed by immigration and integration and crime and security.



The main concern in the USA is currently the **development around price and purchasing power**. This is mainly due to concerns about inflation and currency depreciation (32 percent) and complaints about the rising cost of living (6 percent). This category also includes calls for higher wages and a fairer distribution of income or higher taxes for high earners (6 percent).

Other frequently mentioned challenges

Immigration/ integration



36%

Immigration and integration is the second most frequently mentioned urgent issue. This includes, above all, the mentions of immigration and refugee policy (24 percent), illegal immigrants (4 percent), and border protection (9 percent).

Crime and security



35%

The topic of crime and security comes in third place. The most frequently mentioned specific issues were gun violence, including the demand for stricter gun laws (16 percent), crime in general and juvenile delinquency (15 percent), and strengthening the police, including the demand for stricter penalties (5 percent).

General economic situation



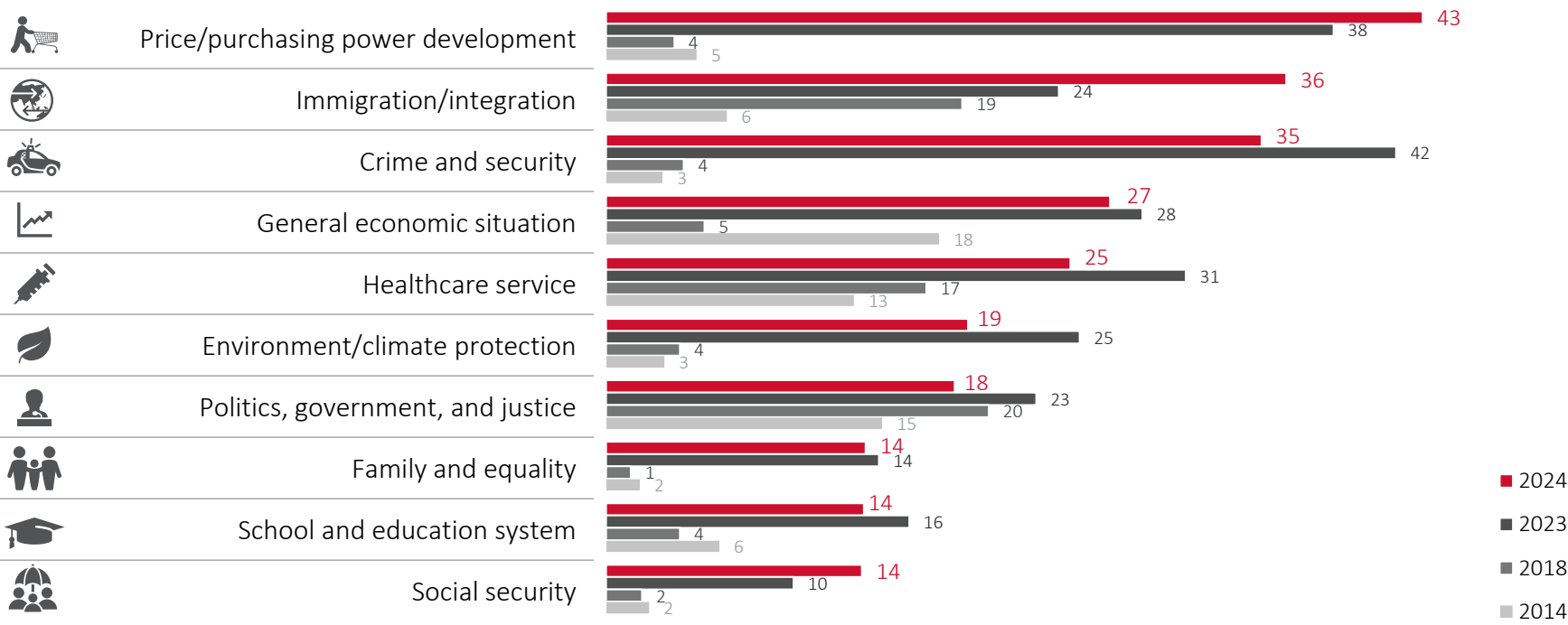
27%

The general economic situation ranks fourth in the list of urgent tasks that need to be solved in the view of Americans. In addition to a general mention of the economy (19 percent), this includes the description of the economy as a crisis (3 percent) and the call for demand stimulation (3 percent).

"In your opinion, what matters require to be resolved most urgently in the USA today?"
unaided responses (net sum per topic) | multiple responses possible | BASE: all respondents n = 1,877 | values in %

Current challenges: Compared to the 2023 survey, there are more mentions for the topics of price/purchasing power and immigration/integration. Environmental and climate protection, on the other hand, have become less relevant in terms of urgency.

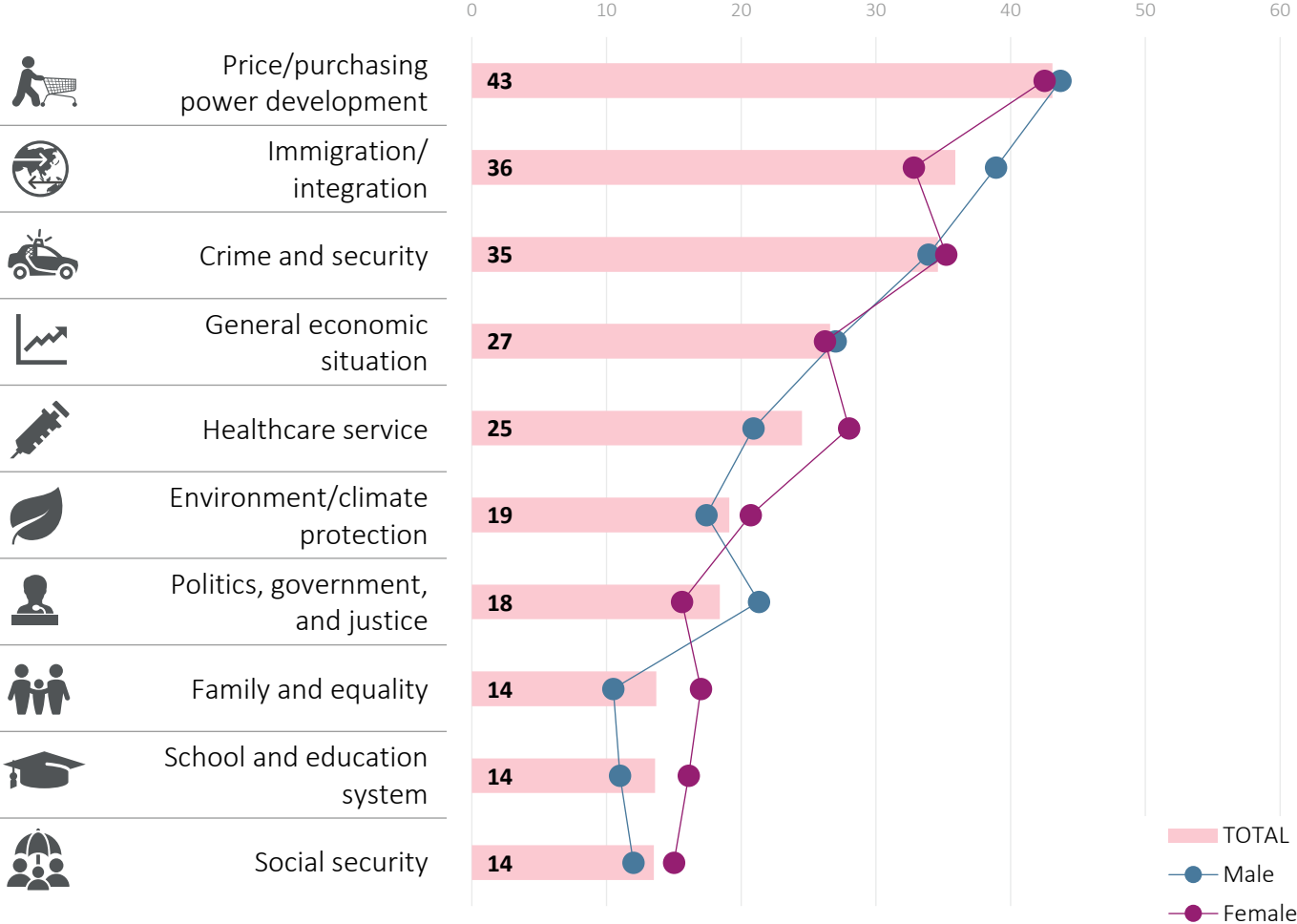
Ranking: Challenges of today and yesterday



"In your opinion, what matters require to be resolved most urgently in the USA today?"
unaided responses (net sum per topic) | multiple responses possible | BASE: all respondents n = 1,877 | values in %

Current challenges: Men worry more than average about immigration and integration, women about the healthcare service.

Top ten 2024 – by gender

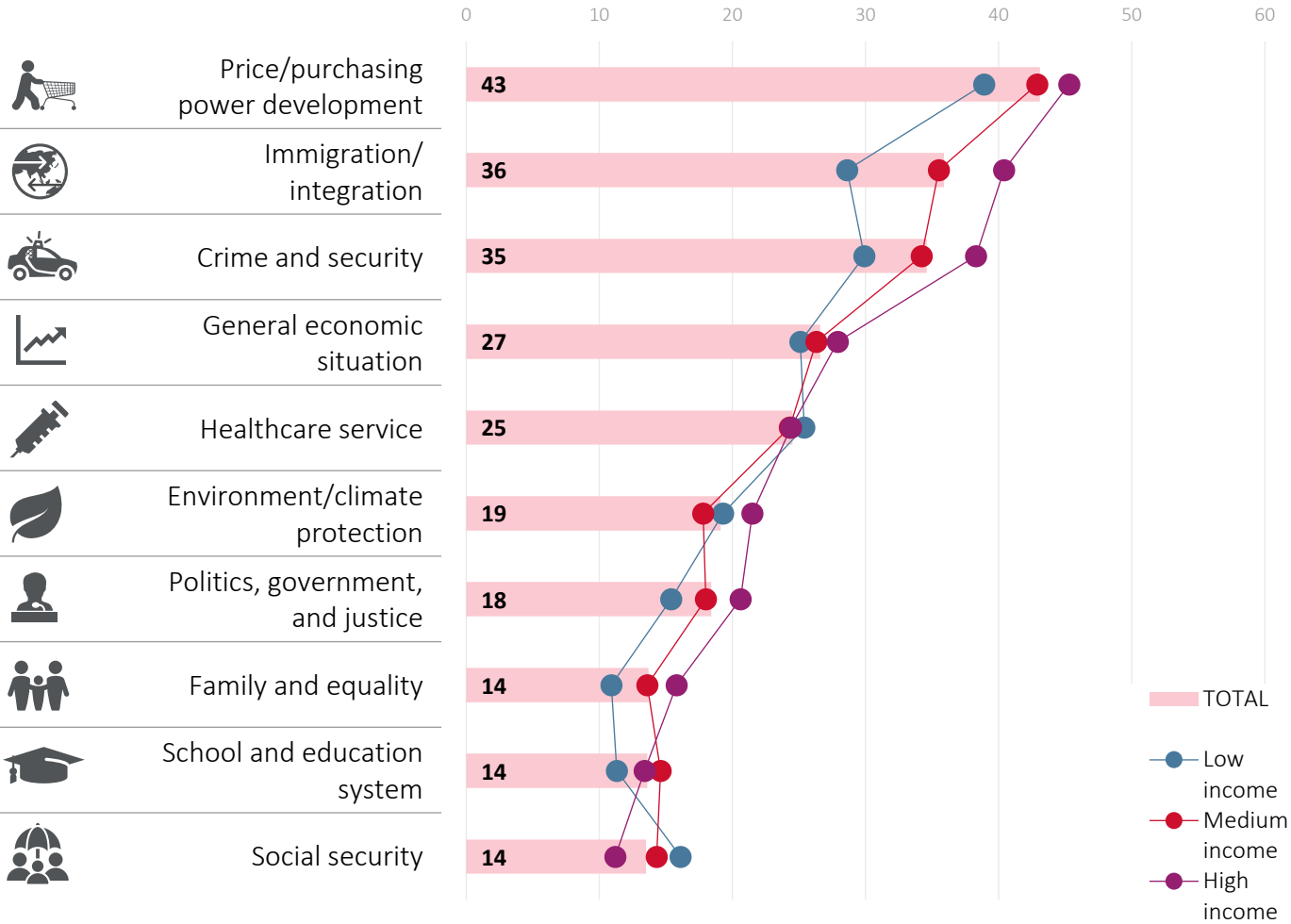


- > While 39 percent of the men surveyed identified issues relating to immigration and integration as an urgent task, the figure for women is 33 percent.
- > The opposite is true when it comes to healthcare service. Women (28 percent) cite this more often than men (21 percent) as an urgent task that needs to be solved.
- > The proportion of women is also higher for other social issues, such as family and equality (women: 17 percent, men: 11 percent), school and education system (women: 16 percent, men: 11 percent), and social security (women: 15 percent, men: 12 percent).

"In your opinion, what matters require to be resolved most urgently in the USA today?"
unaided responses (net sum per topic) | multiple responses possible | BASE: all respondents n = 1,877 | values in %

Current challenges: People with high incomes are more likely to cite problems with immigration and integration.

Top ten 2024 – by income

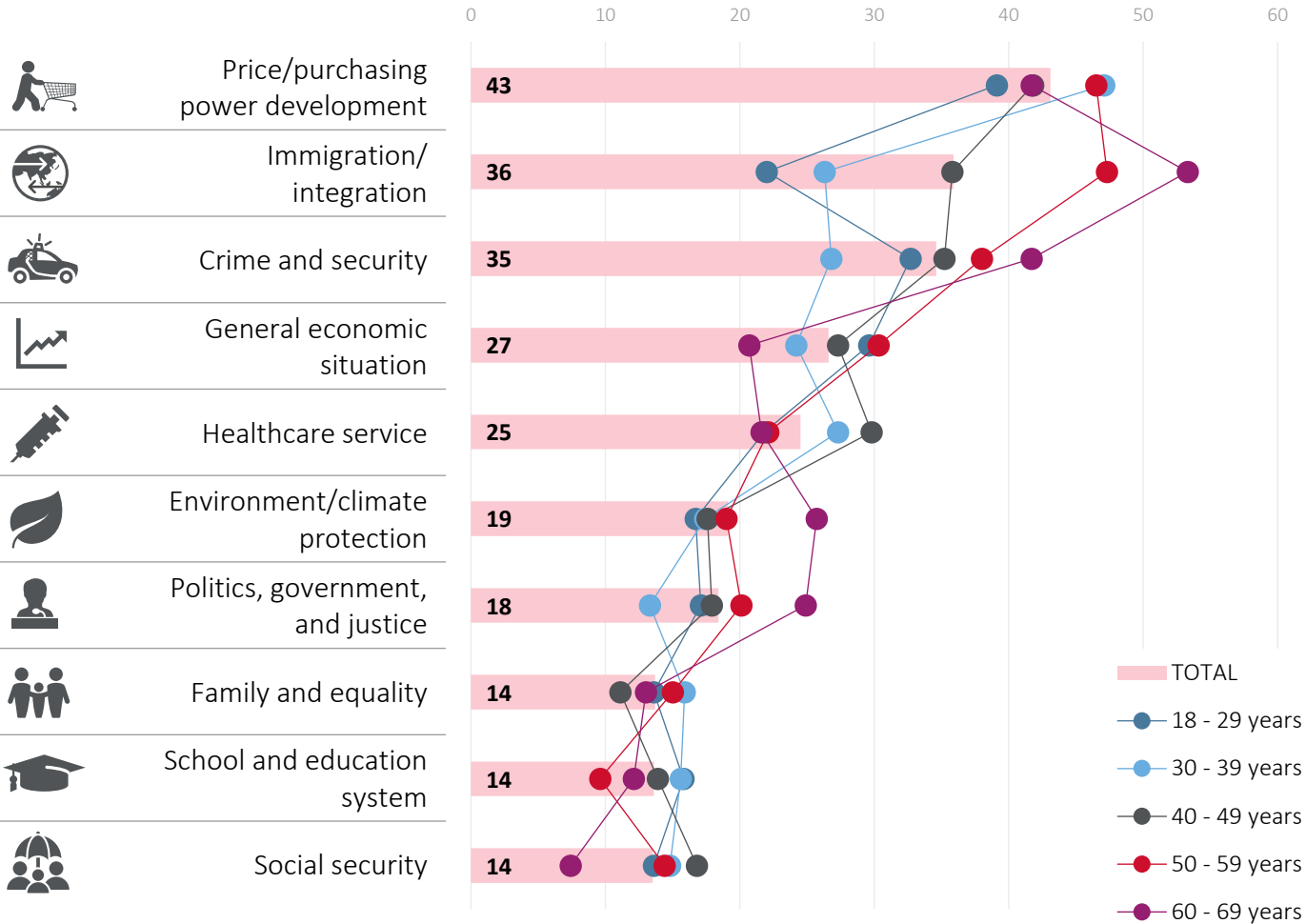


- > On average, people with a high income name more urgent tasks that need to be solved today.
- > Compared to those with lower incomes, they are more likely to believe that issues such as price/purchasing power, immigration and integration, or crime should be resolved urgently.
- > The biggest difference between people with high incomes and those with low incomes is in their assessment of the issue of immigration (high income: 40 percent, low income: 29 percent).

"In your opinion, what matters require to be resolved most urgently in the USA today?"
unaided responses (net sum per topic) | multiple responses possible | BASE: all respondents n = 1,877 | values in %

Current challenges: Immigration divides old and young.

Top ten 2024 – by age

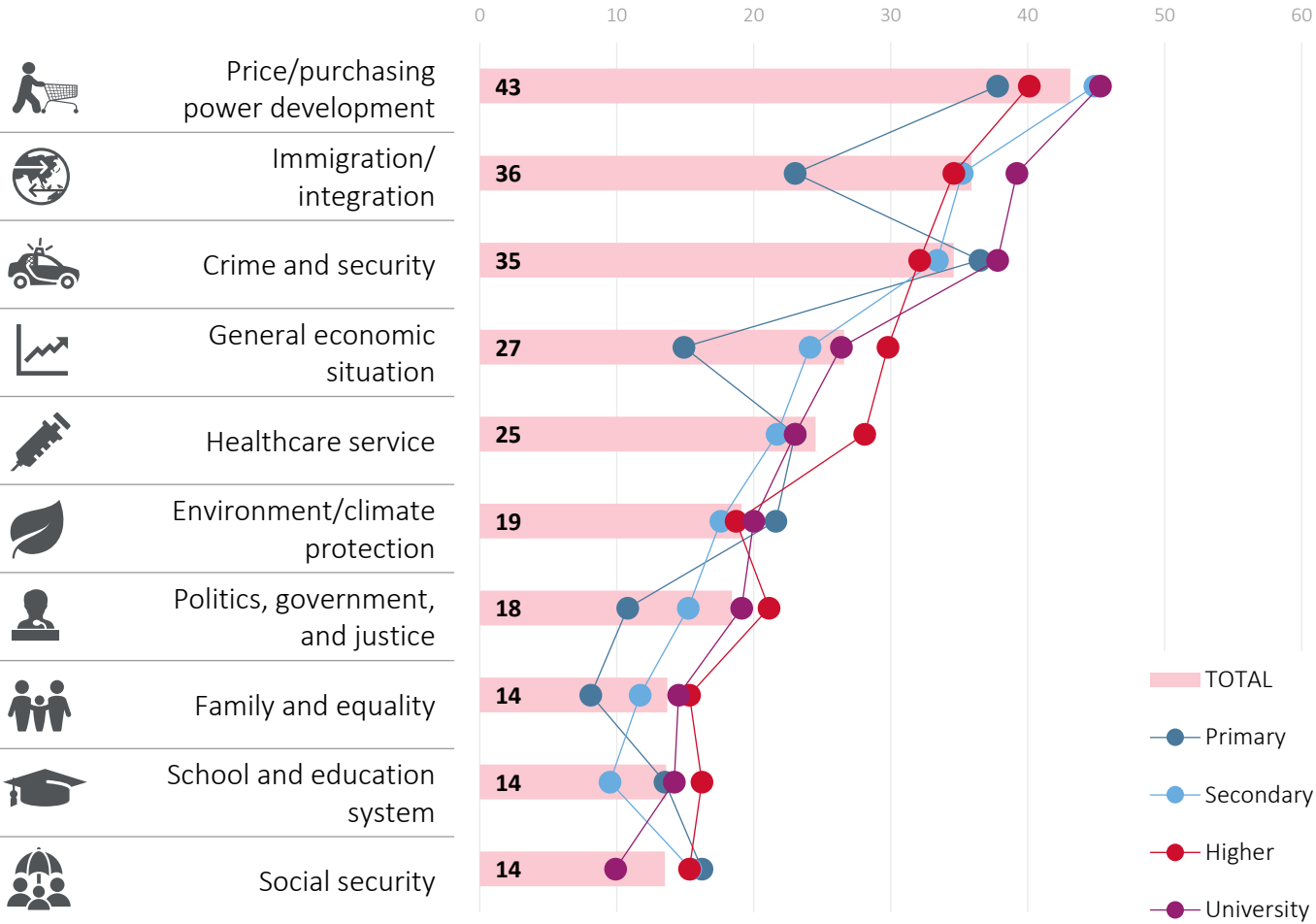


- > While 53 percent of the 60- to 69-year-olds see immigration and integration as an urgent task, the proportion of people aged between 18 and 29 who shared this view is only 22 percent.
- > There is also a division by age when it comes to crime and security, albeit not quite as extreme: 42 percent of the 60- to 69-year-olds see this as a problem that urgently needs to be solved, but only 27 percent of the 30- to 39-year-olds do.
- > The generations are relatively united in their assessment of the issue of environmental and climate protection. Somewhat surprisingly, it is mainly the 60- to 69-year-olds who see this as a task that urgently needs to be solved today.

"In your opinion, what matters require to be resolved most urgently in the USA today?"
unaided responses (net sum per topic) | multiple responses possible | BASE: all respondents n = 1,877 | values in %

Current challenges: Immigration divides people with different educational backgrounds.

Top ten 2024 – by educational qualification

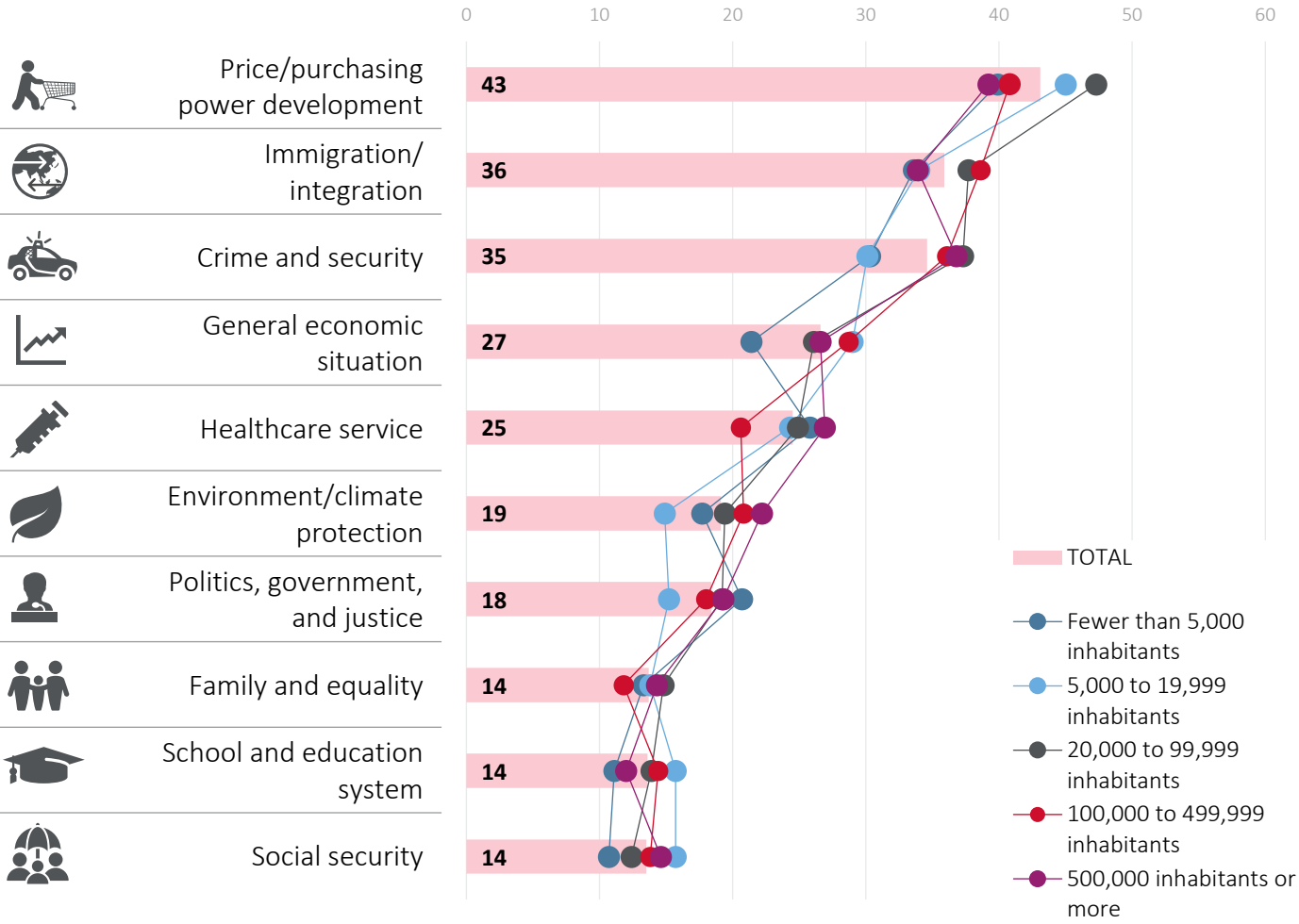


- > 39 percent of people with a university degree see immigration as a problem that urgently needs to be solved, but only 23 percent of people without a high school diploma believe this to be the case.
- > The difference is similarly large when it comes to the economic situation: Only 15 percent of people without a high school diploma describe this as a problem, but 30 percent of people with a higher school-leaving qualification do.
- > Overall, people with higher educational qualifications (higher and university) seem to perceive more problems; at least, these people name significantly more issues.

"In your opinion, what matters require to be resolved most urgently in the USA today?"
unaided responses (net sum per topic) | multiple responses possible | BASE: all respondents n = 1,877 | values in %

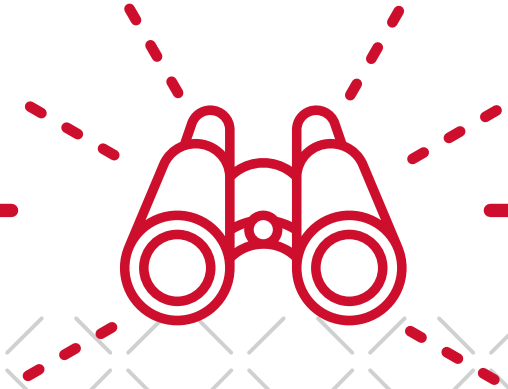
Current challenges: Hardly any differences emerged between urban and rural areas.

Top ten 2024 – by size of place of residence



- > The attitude toward immigration, which divides other groups, does not play a role when looking at urban vs. rural residents. The proportion of people in rural areas and those in large cities who describe this issue as a problem is roughly the same.
- > However, one topic where an urban-rural difference can certainly be observed is crime and security: While 37 percent of residents of large cities name this as an urgent problem, the corresponding figure for residents of rural areas is only 30 percent.

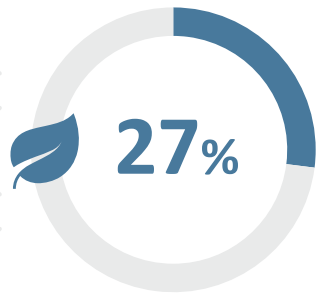
"In your opinion, what matters require to be resolved most urgently in the USA today?"
unaided responses (net sum per topic) | multiple responses possible | BASE: all respondents n = 1,877 | values in %



2

The future challenges in the USA

Future challenges: Environmental and climate protection demand most attention.



For the future, Americans expect the issue of **environmental and climate protection** in particular to be an urgent task. This primarily includes concerns about global warming and an increase in extreme weather events (20 percent). Issues such as animal welfare, food safety, and forest dieback are also included here (5 percent).

Other frequently mentioned challenges

Crime and security



22%

The topic of crime and security is the second most frequently mentioned urgent task for the future. With a share of 9 percent, the demand for stricter gun laws is the most commonly expressed need within this category.

General economic situation



21%

In third place is the topic of the economy in general. Many Americans, for example, expressed concern about the topic of digitalization and AI (4 percent). However, it is not always clear from the data whether respondents are afraid of missing out on digitalization or whether their fear is that AI will put jobs at risk.

Price/purchasing power development



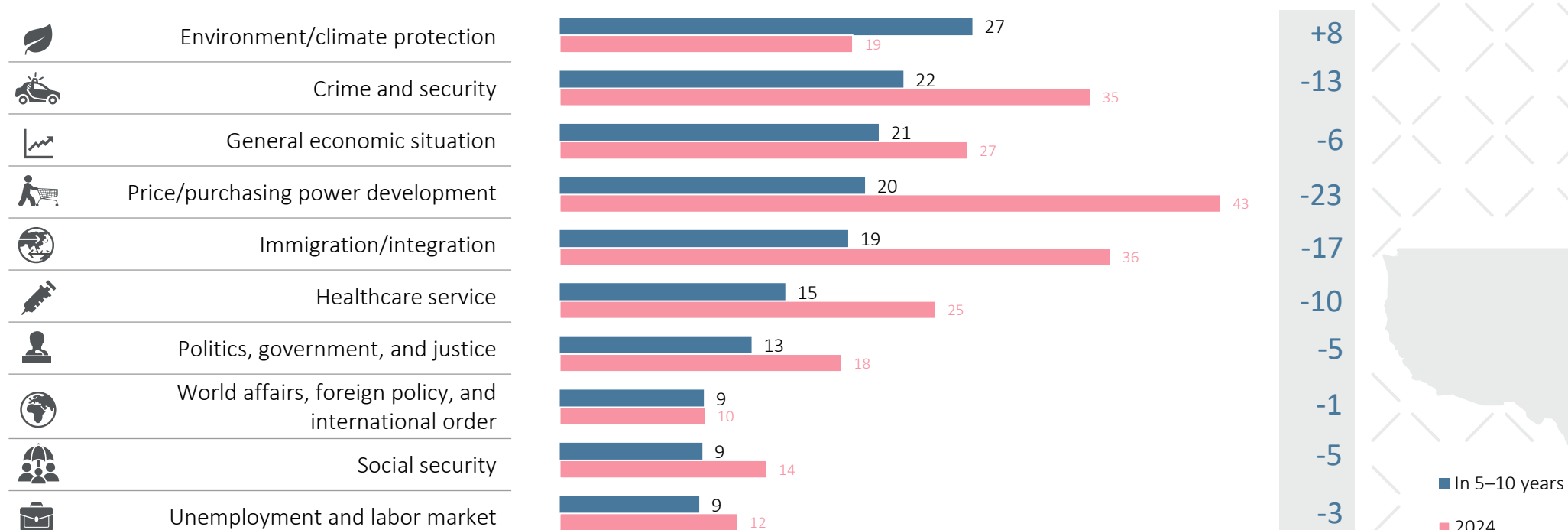
20%

The desire for a stable currency and to maintain the value of savings form the central basis of the topic of price/purchasing power, accounting for 13 percent of respondents. The fear of the cost of living continuing to rise (4 percent) is also frequently mentioned.

"And if you think 5–10 years into the future: What do you think, which urgent matters the USA will have to solve then?"
unaided responses (net sum per topic) | multiple responses possible | BASE: all respondents n = 1,877 | values in %

Future challenges: Environmental and climate protection is the only topic that receives more mentions in relation to the future than to the present.

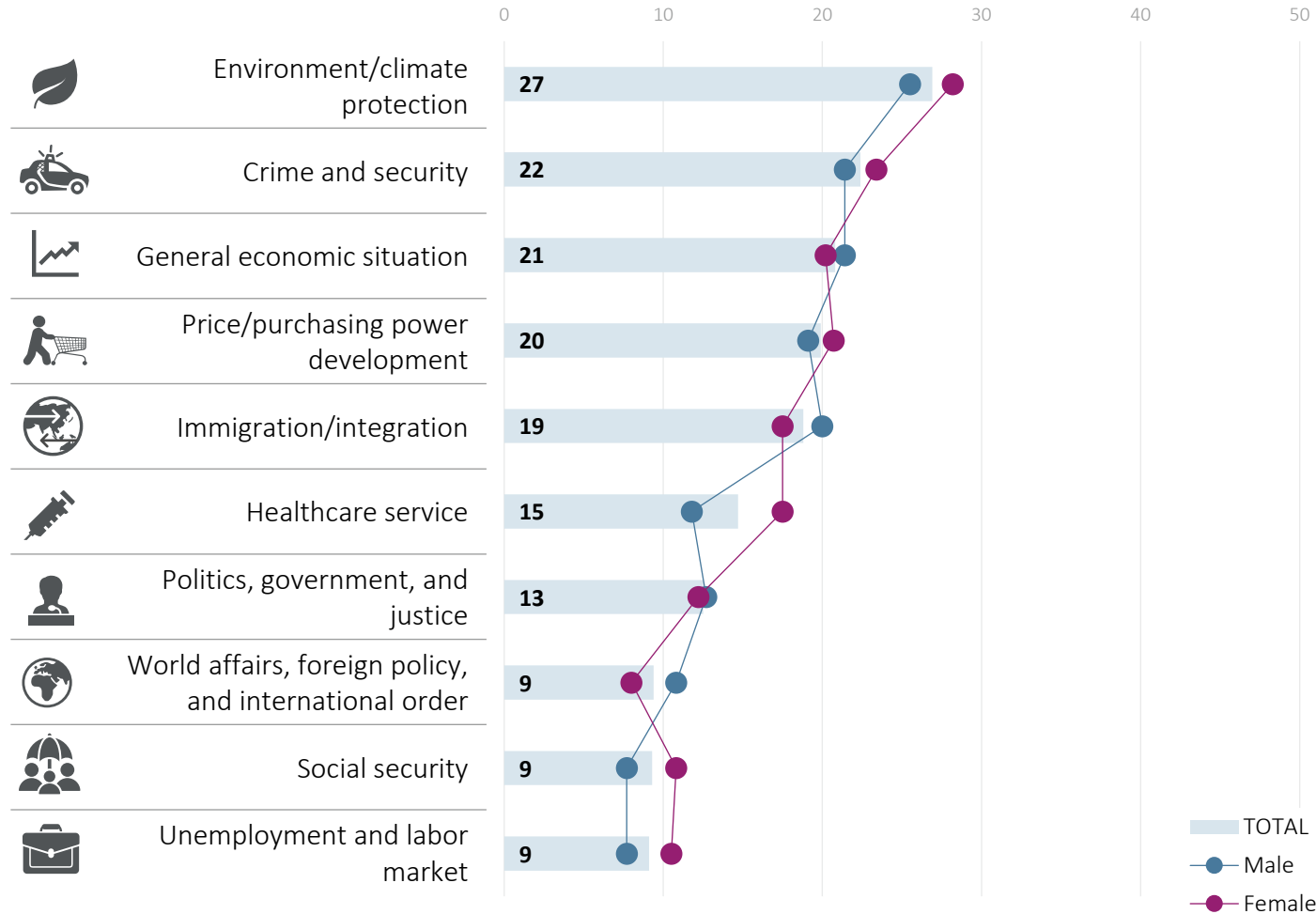
Ranking: Challenges of the future



"And if you think 5–10 years into the future: What do you think, which urgent matters the USA will have to solve then?"
 unaided responses (net sum per topic) | multiple responses possible | BASE: all respondents n = 1,877 | values in %

Future challenges: The genders display a high level of unity.

Top ten future – by gender

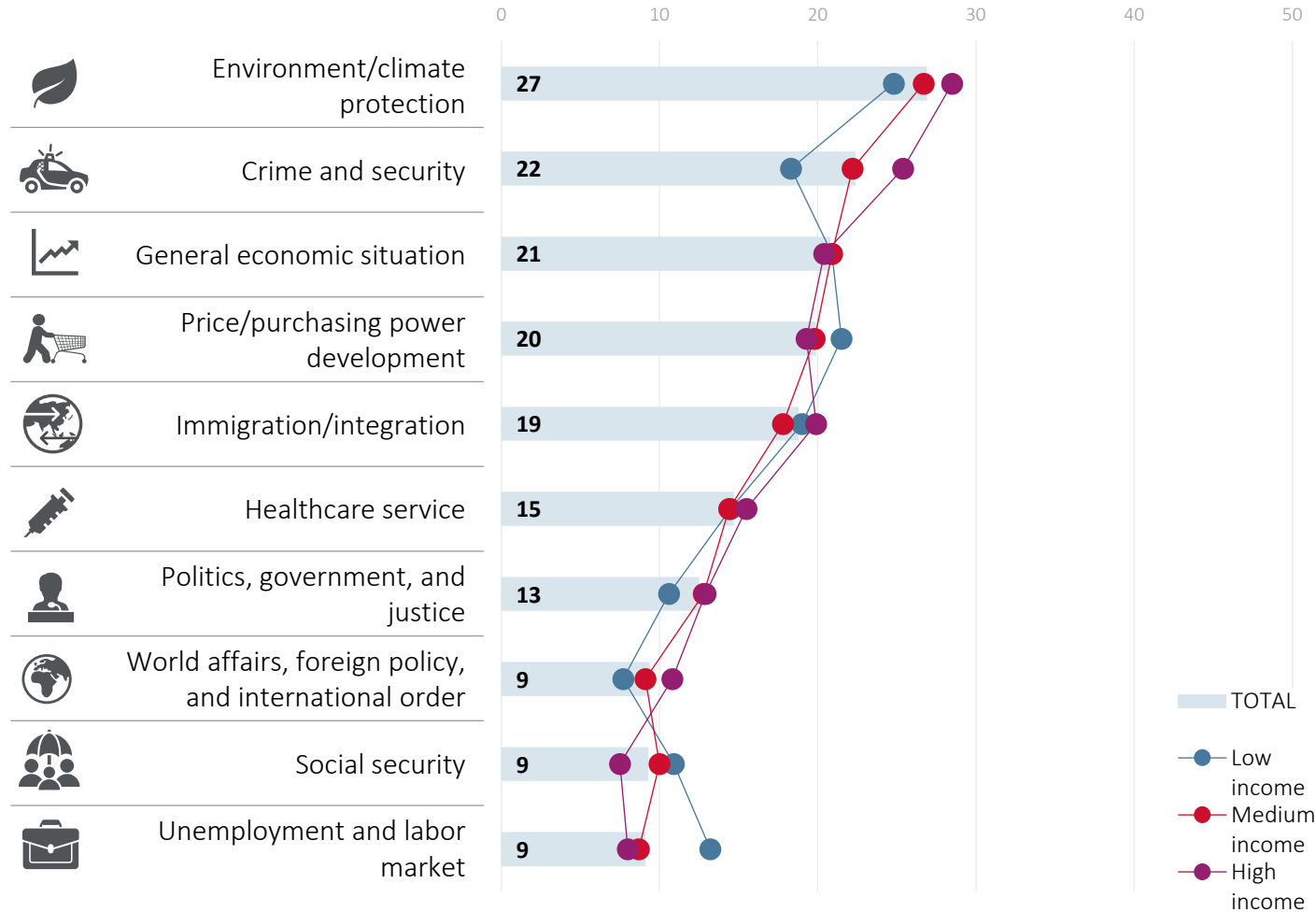


- > Women name slightly more tasks to be solved than men.
- > There is little change in the ranking when the genders are considered separately.
- > The biggest difference is when it comes to healthcare: While 18 percent of women see this as an urgent task to be solved in the future, only 12 percent of men do.

"And if you think 5–10 years into the future: What do you think, which urgent matters the USA will have to solve then?"
 unaided responses (net sum per topic) | multiple responses possible | BASE: all respondents n = 1,877 | values in %

Future challenges: People with higher incomes are more concerned about crime and security.

Top ten future – by income

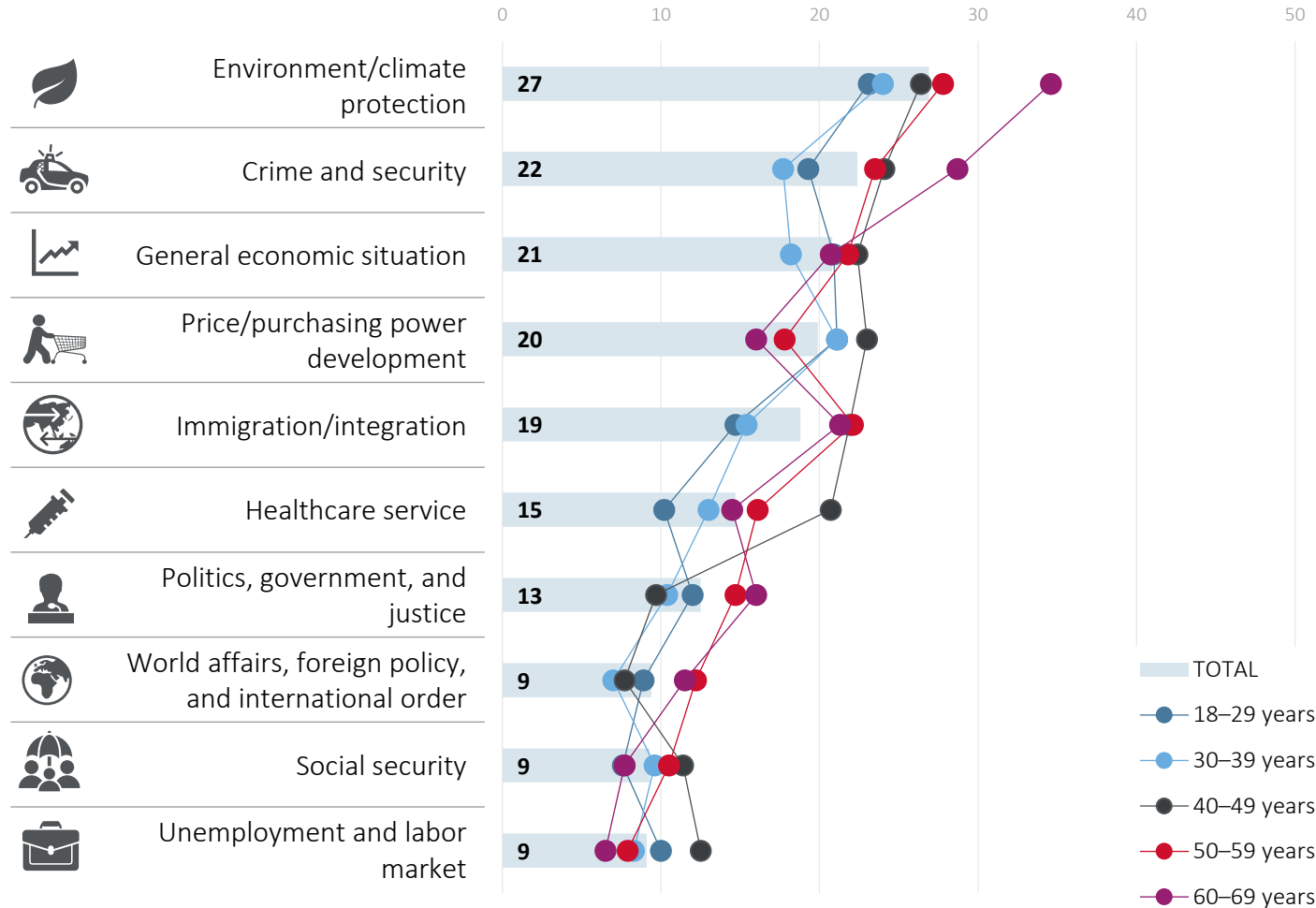


- > In the ranking, there is little change overall when looking at income groups separately. For people with low incomes, the topic of unemployment in particular would rise, while crime and security would fall.
- > These are also the two issues with the greatest differences according to income: While around 25 percent of people with a high income view crime and security as an urgent task to be solved in the future, this figure is only 18 percent for those with a low income.

"And if you think 5–10 years into the future: What do you think, which urgent matters the USA will have to solve then?"
unaided responses (net sum per topic) | multiple responses possible | BASE: all respondents n = 1,877 | values in %

Future challenges: Older people are more concerned about environmental and climate protection.

Top ten future – by age

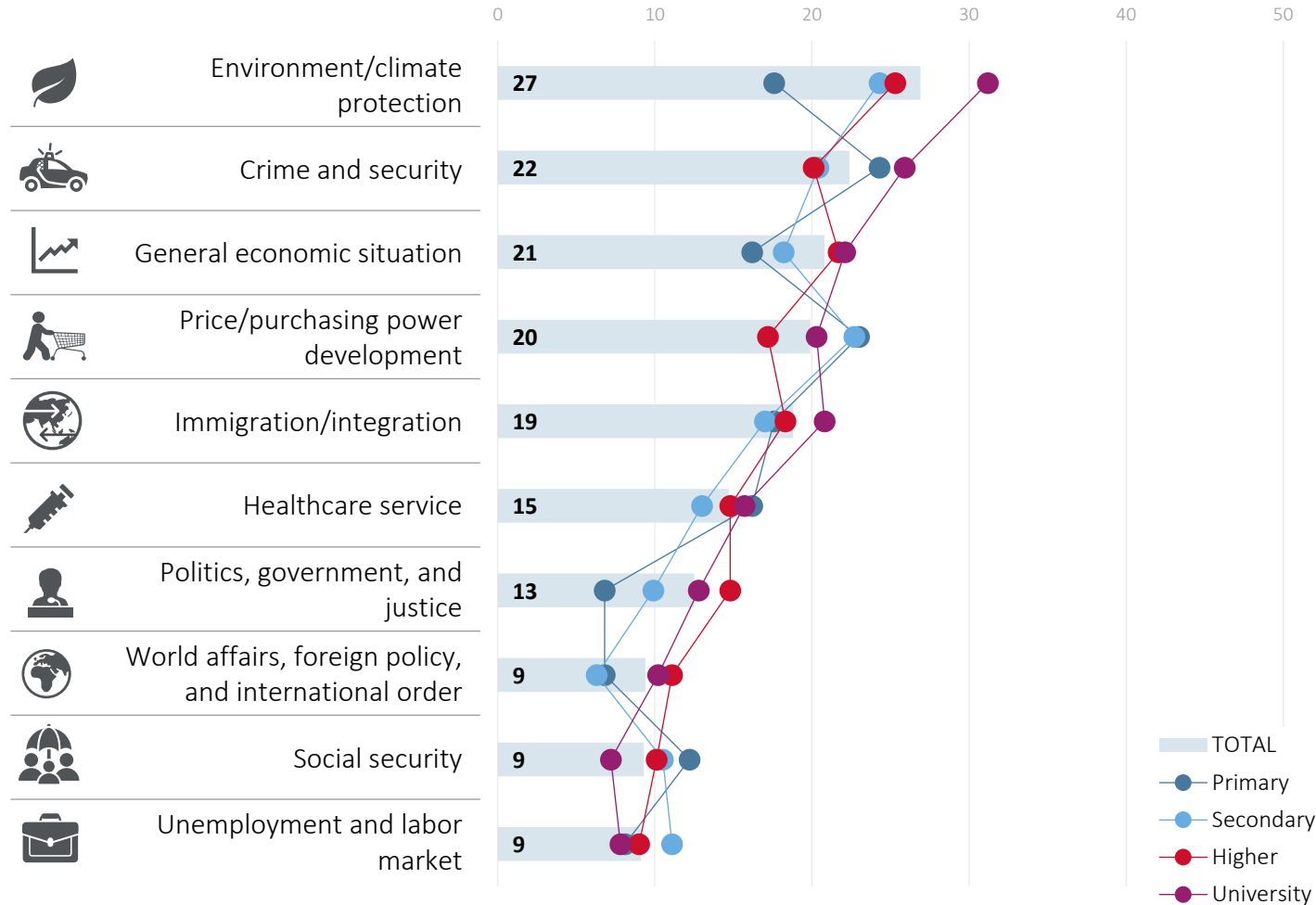


- > Greater generational differences can be seen in the areas of environmental and climate protection, crime and security, and immigration and integration.
- > Around 22 percent of people aged between 40 and 69 see immigration and integration as a problem for the future, but only around 15 percent of people under 40 share this view.
- > As far as environmental and climate protection is concerned, it is particularly people over 60 who see this as a problem for the future (35 percent). In contrast, the proportion of people under the age of 60 who see this as a problem for the future is only around 25 percent.

"And if you think 5–10 years into the future: What do you think, which urgent matters the USA will have to solve then?"
 unaided responses (net sum per topic) | multiple responses possible | BASE: all respondents n = 1,877 | values in %

Future challenges: People with a higher level of education are more likely to be concerned about environmental and climate protection.

Top ten future – by educational qualification

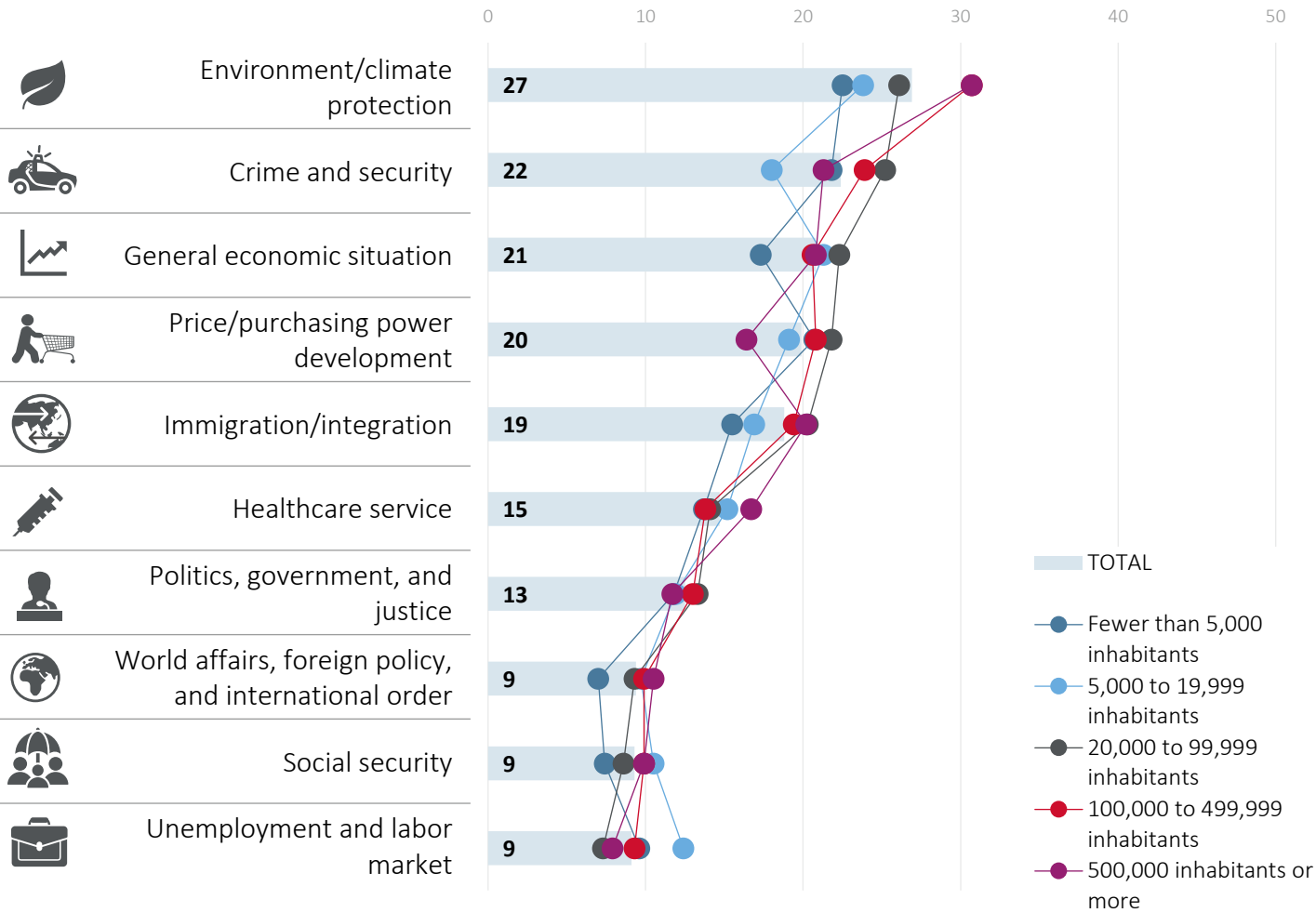


- > The ranking by educational background differs in some respects from the overall ranking. For people with a low level of education, for example, crime and security and price and purchasing power are ranked higher than environmental and climate protection. In this group, the desire for better social security is also more pronounced than concerns about politics and world affairs.
- > People with a university degree see environmental and climate protection (31 percent vs. 27 percent on average) and crime (26 percent vs. 22 percent on average) as future problems more frequently than the other respondents.

"And if you think 5–10 years into the future: What do you think, which urgent matters the USA will have to solve then?"
unaided responses (net sum per topic) | multiple responses possible | BASE: all respondents n = 1,877 | values in %

Future challenges: The differences between urban and rural areas are relatively small.

Top ten future – by size of place of residence

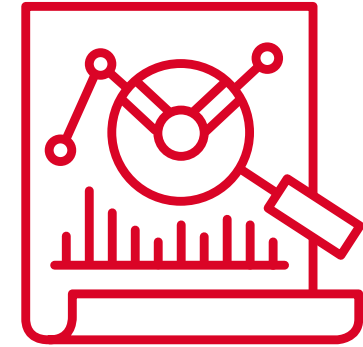


- > The rankings experience little change when viewed through the lens of place of residence.
- > People in large cities see an above-average need for action on environmental and climate protection (31 percent vs. 27 percent on average).
- > Differences can also be observed when it comes to immigration and integration. While around 20 percent of city dwellers see a need for action in this area in the future, only around 16 percent of people in towns with fewer than 20,000 inhabitants express this view.

"And if you think 5–10 years into the future: What do you think, which urgent matters the USA will have to solve then?"
unaided responses (net sum per topic) | multiple responses possible | BASE: all respondents n = 1,877 | values in %

3

Appendix and method



3 Sample of the survey

Concept and questionnaire

Nuremberg Institute for
Market Decisions

Sample

1,877 Men and women between the ages of 18 and 69, representative
for the (online) population.

Survey

GfK eBUS® International

Scope

2 open questions,
with the answers coded using
an existing code plan and
supplemented by current
topics.

Period of the survey

July 23, 2024, until
July 31, 2024

Number of demographic characteristics

10

Information on the study and the report

Question

- > These open questions without any answer specifications were asked, with multiple responses possible:
- > "In your opinion, what matters require to be resolved most urgently in the respective country today?"
- > "And if you think 5–10 years into the future: What do you think, which urgent matters the respective country will have to solve then?"

Coverage

- > 2024: USA

Charts

- > The values used in the data charts are rounded figures.
- > The value "-" means that the challenge was not mentioned at all.

Methodological changes

- > From 2018 to 2023: Method change to the previous waves from offline (except USA), GfK GLOBO BUS® to online in Access Panels
CAWI:
 - > USA, age 18+ years
- > From 2023 to 2024: change of panel to GfK eBUS®