



Advisor Sentiment Index: Advisor Market Optimism Slides Downward

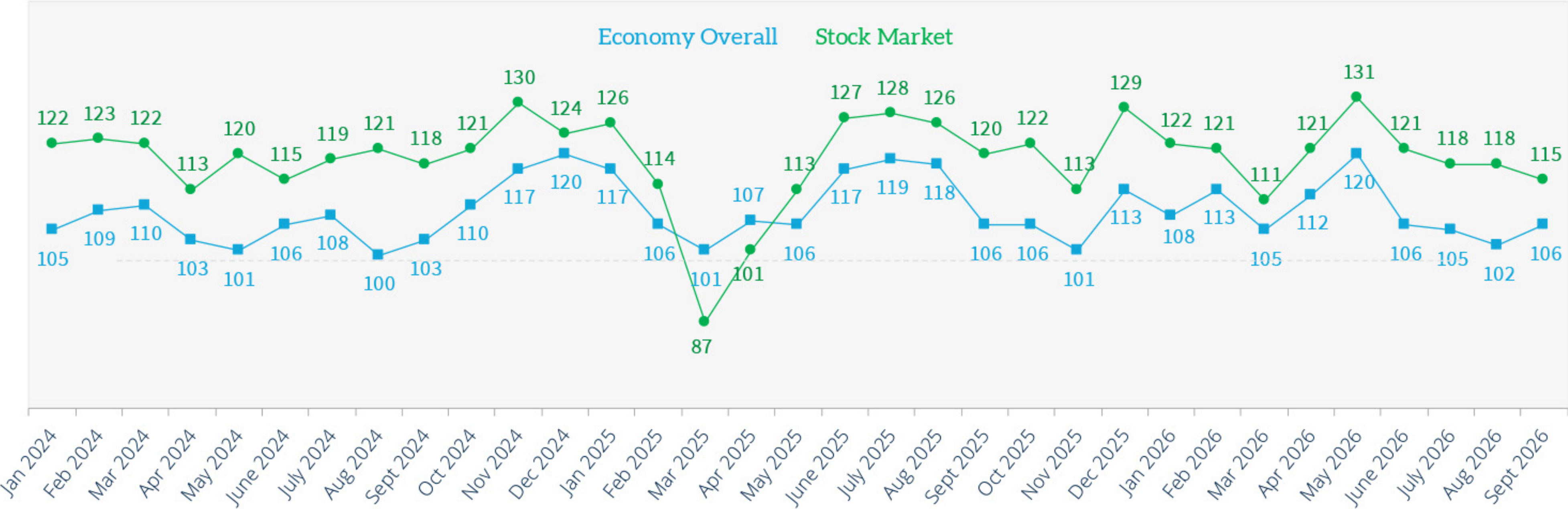
Section 1.

Advisor Sentiment Indices



Advisor Sentiment Indices

While confidence in the economy overall increased slightly in September 2026, while confidence in the stock market dropped slightly.



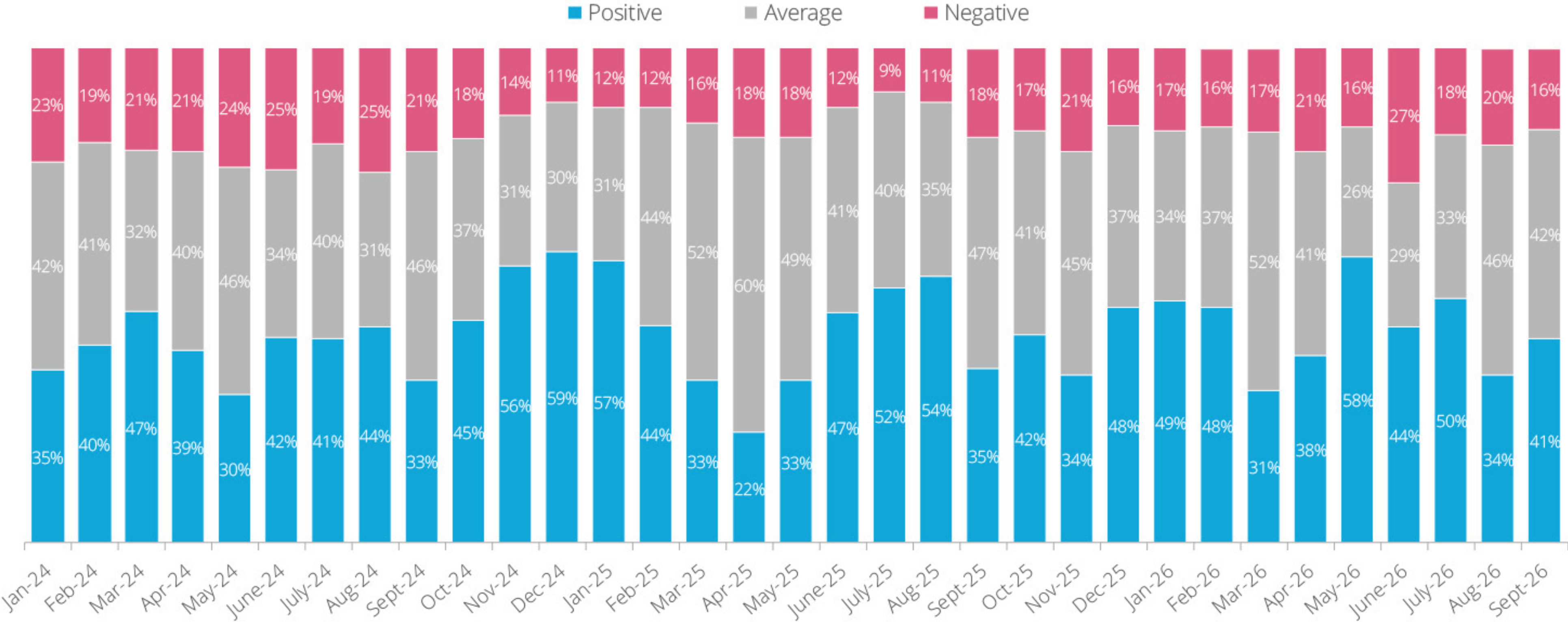
Analyst note: Indices can range from a low of 0 (extreme negative sentiment), to a high of 200 (extreme positive sentiment), with 100 as middle/neutral.

Section 2.

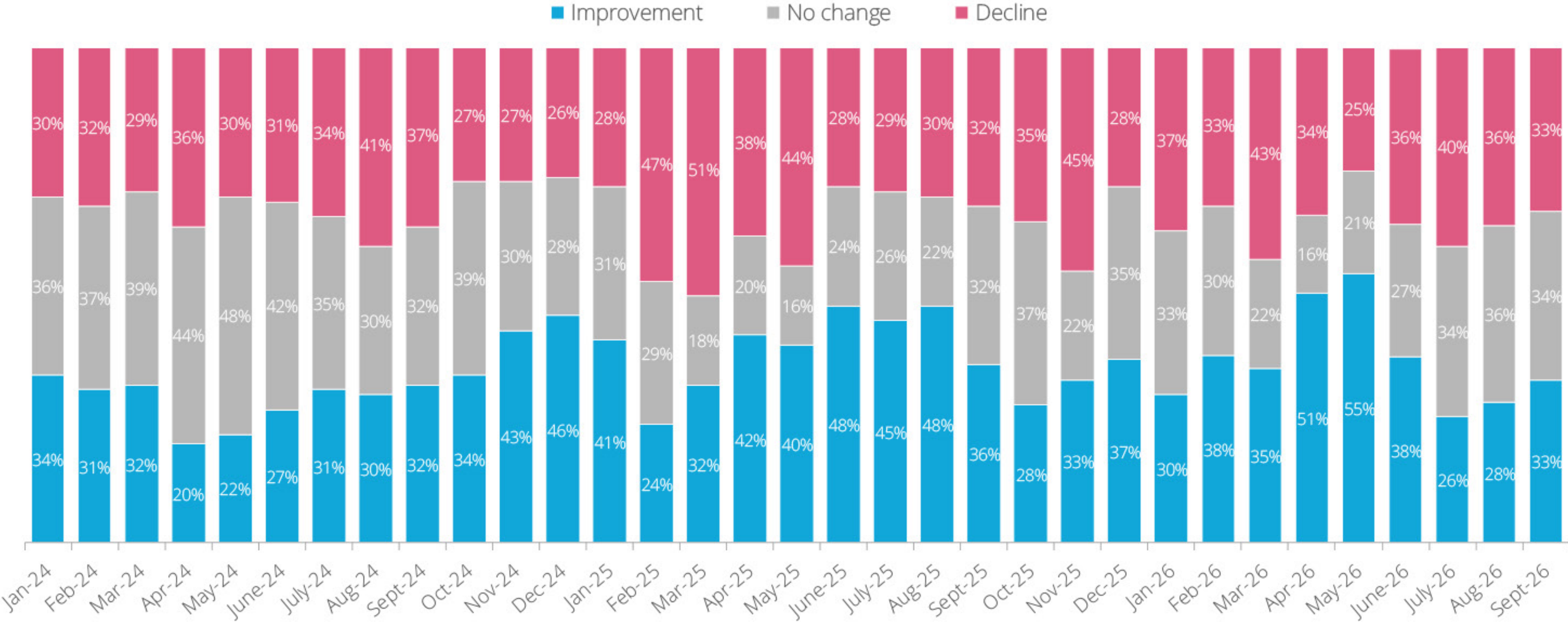
Trends: Health of the Economy



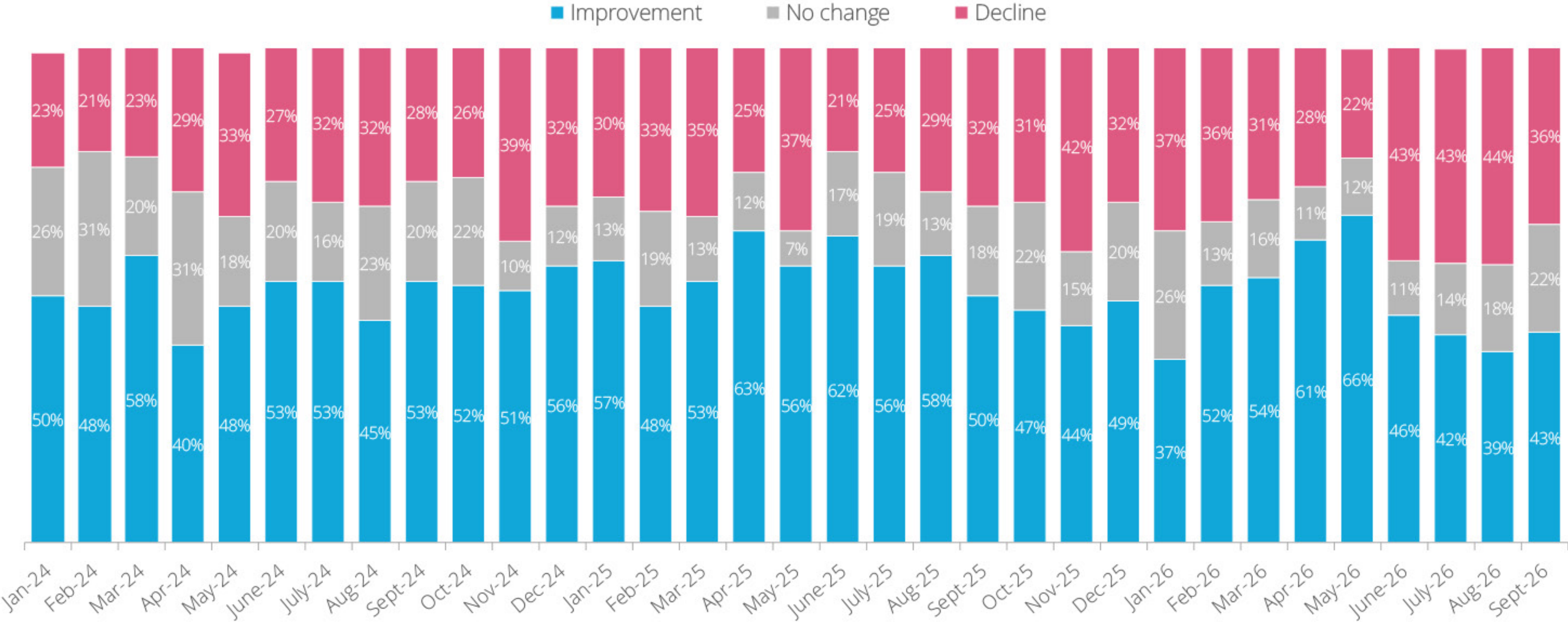
Current State of the Economy Overall Over Time



Anticipated Change in Overall Economy: 6-Month Window



Anticipated Change in Overall Economy: 12-Month Window

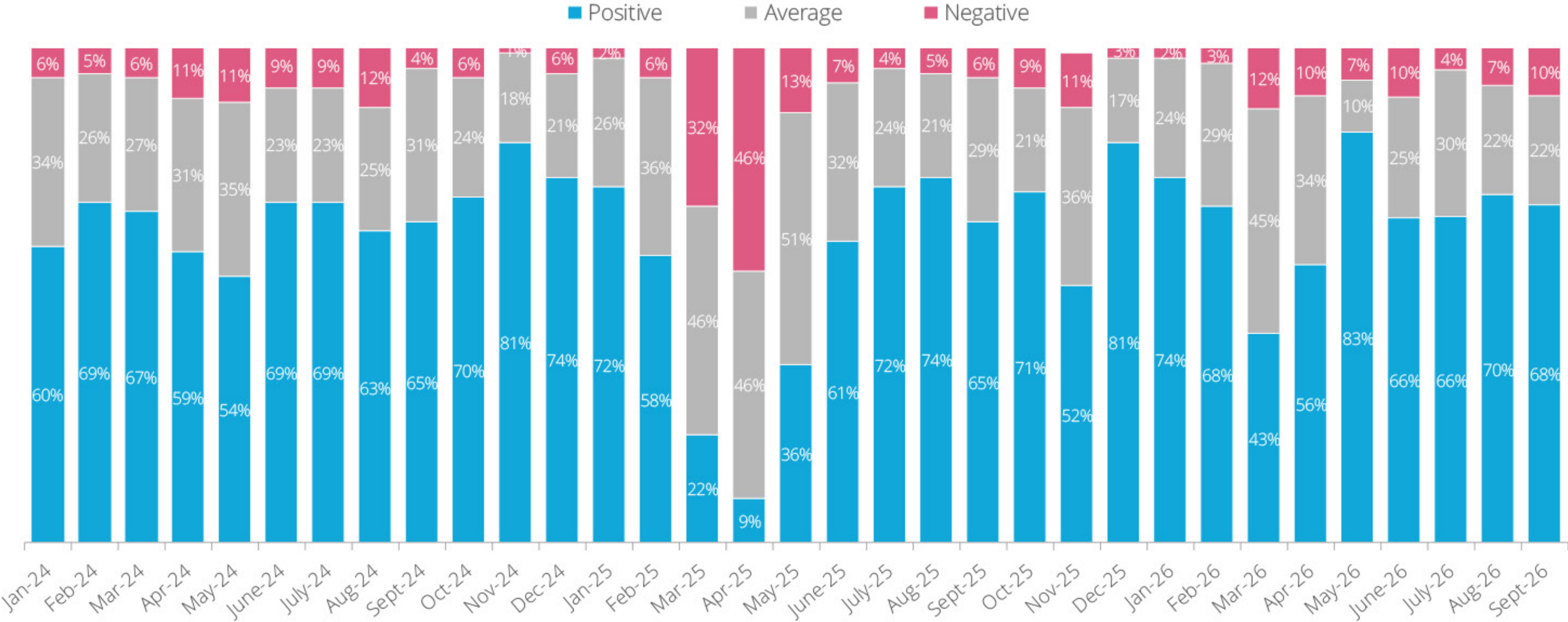


Section 3.

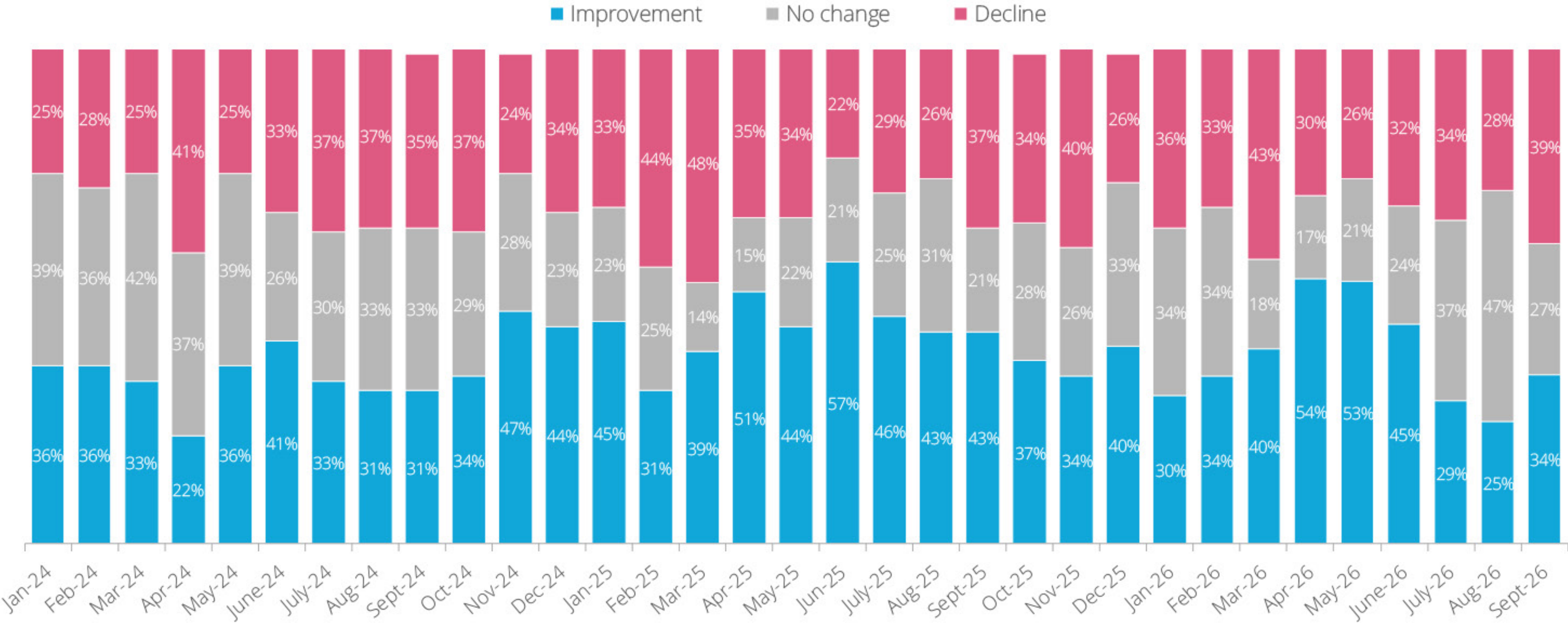
Trends: Health of the Stock Market



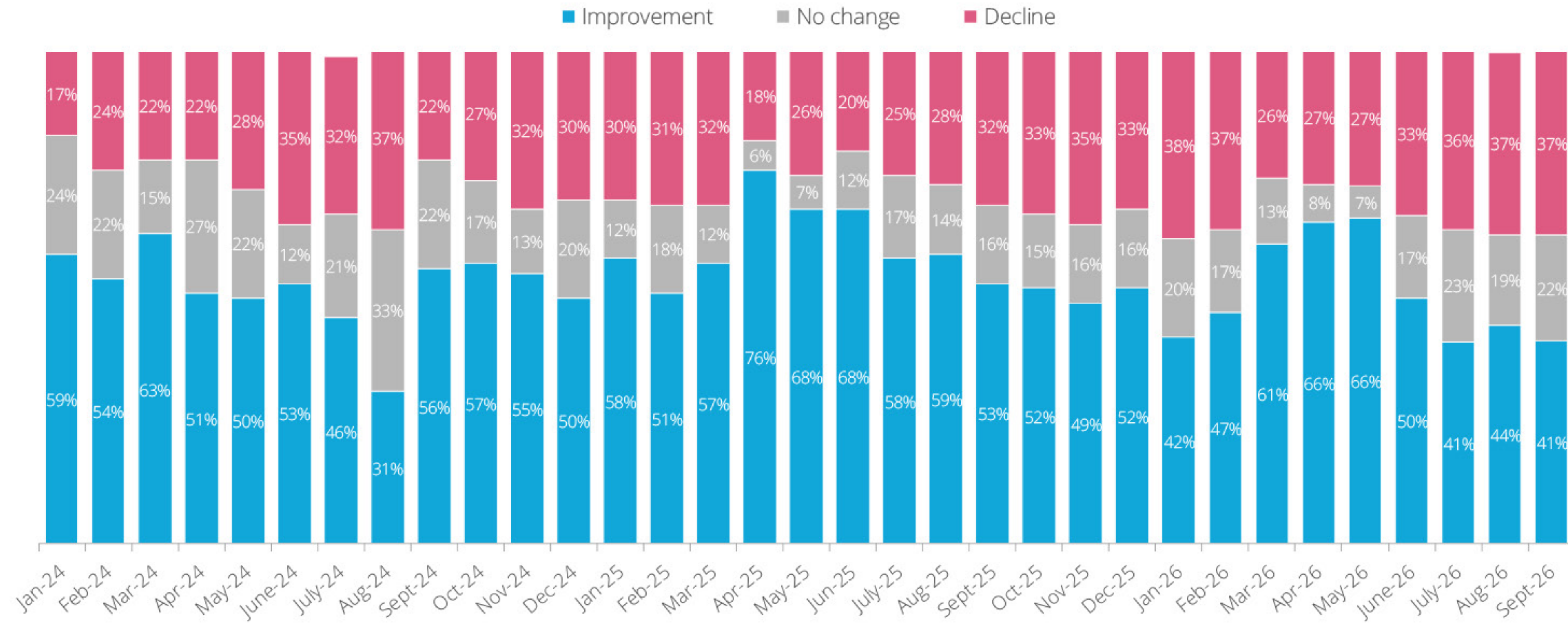
Current State of the Stock Market Over Time



Anticipated Change in Stock Market: 6-Month Window



Anticipated Change in Stock Market: 12-Month Window



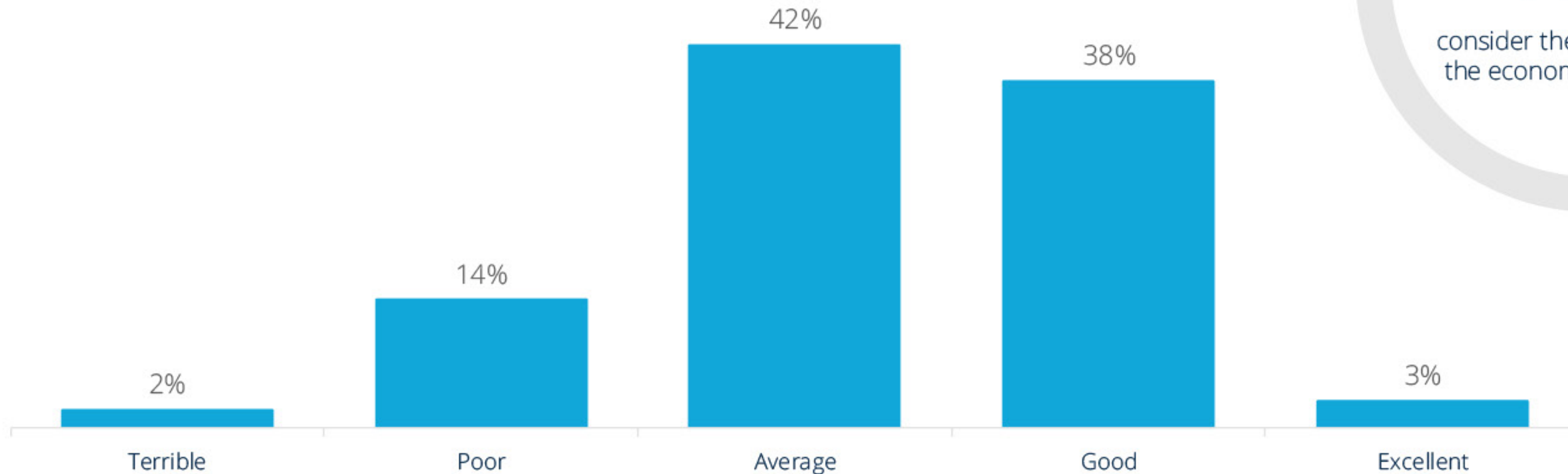
Section 4.

Detailed Findings



Current State of the Economy Overall

Four in ten respondents (41%) consider the current state of the economy to be positive. An additional 42% consider it average.



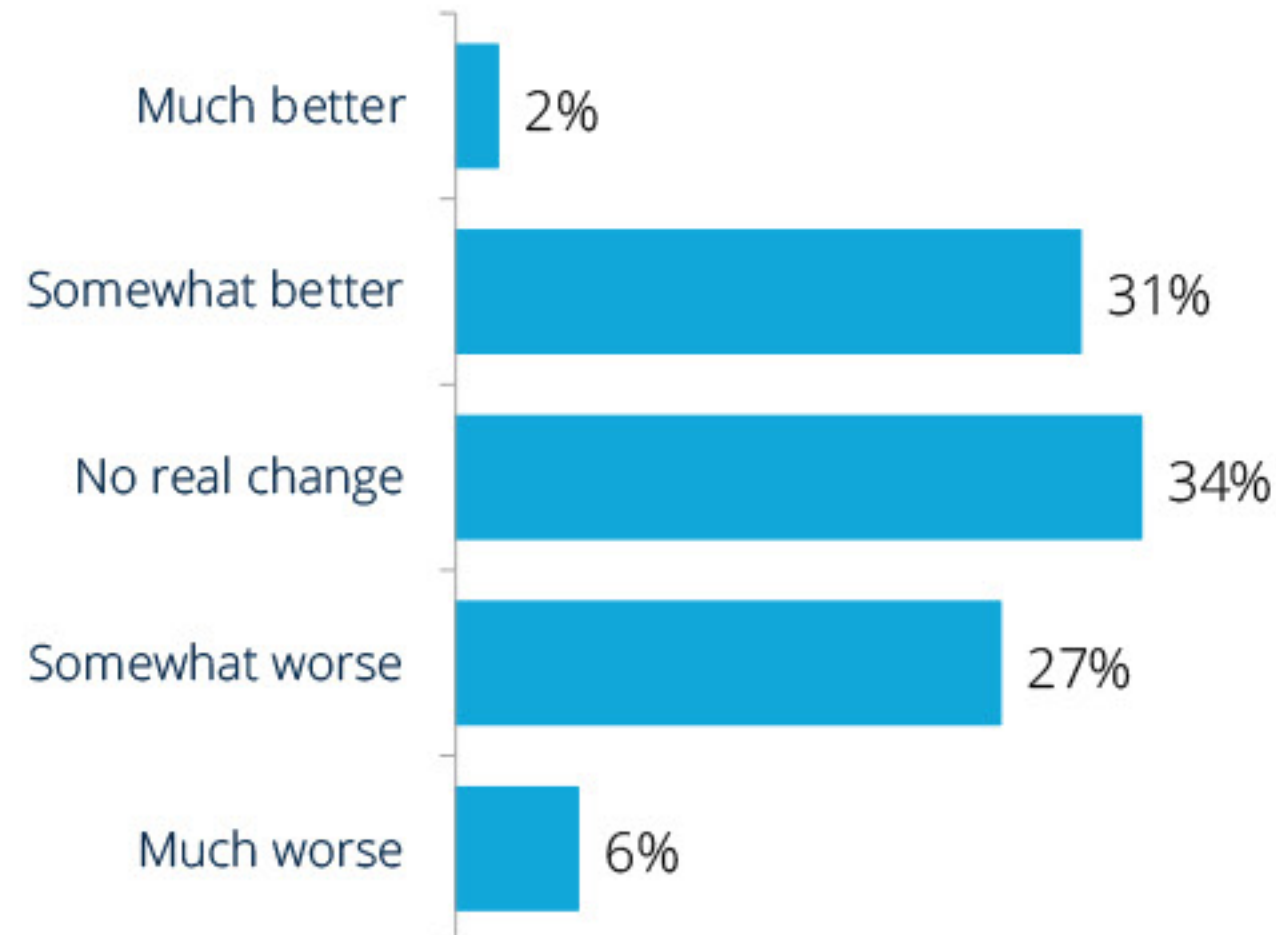
Question: How would you characterize the current state/health of the economy overall?
Base: All respondents (n=114).

Expected Change in the State of the Economy

Respondents are evenly divided on the state of the economy looking forward six months from: 33% expect an improvement; 34% expect no change; and 33% expect a decline. They remain divided, albeit slightly more optimistic, looking forward twelve months, with 43% expecting an improvement and 36% expecting a decline.

Six Months from Now

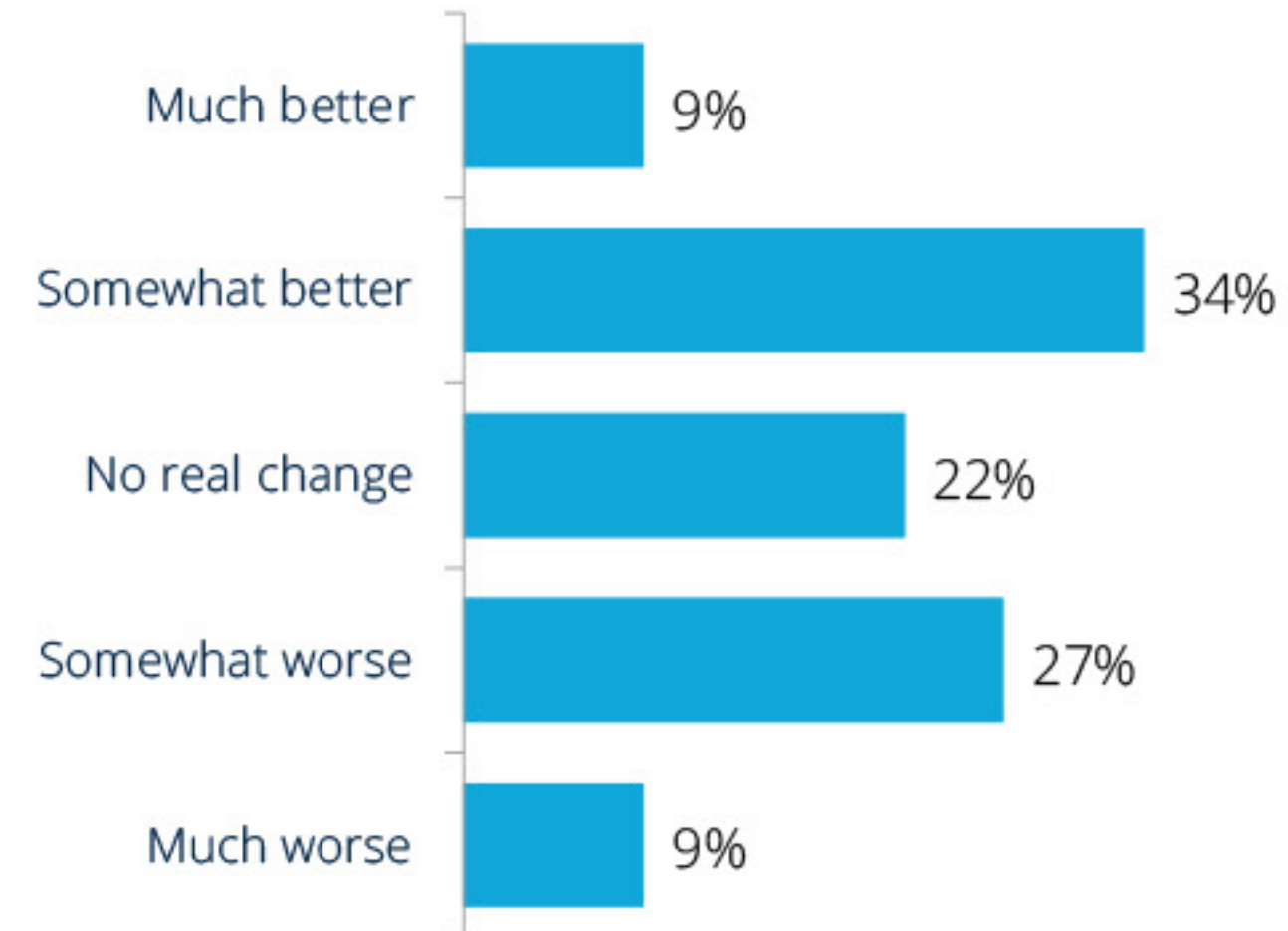
Net Improvement: 33%
Net Decline: 33%



Question: Relative to today, how do you expect the state/health of the economy to change 6 months from now?
Base: All respondents (n=114).

Twelve Months from Now

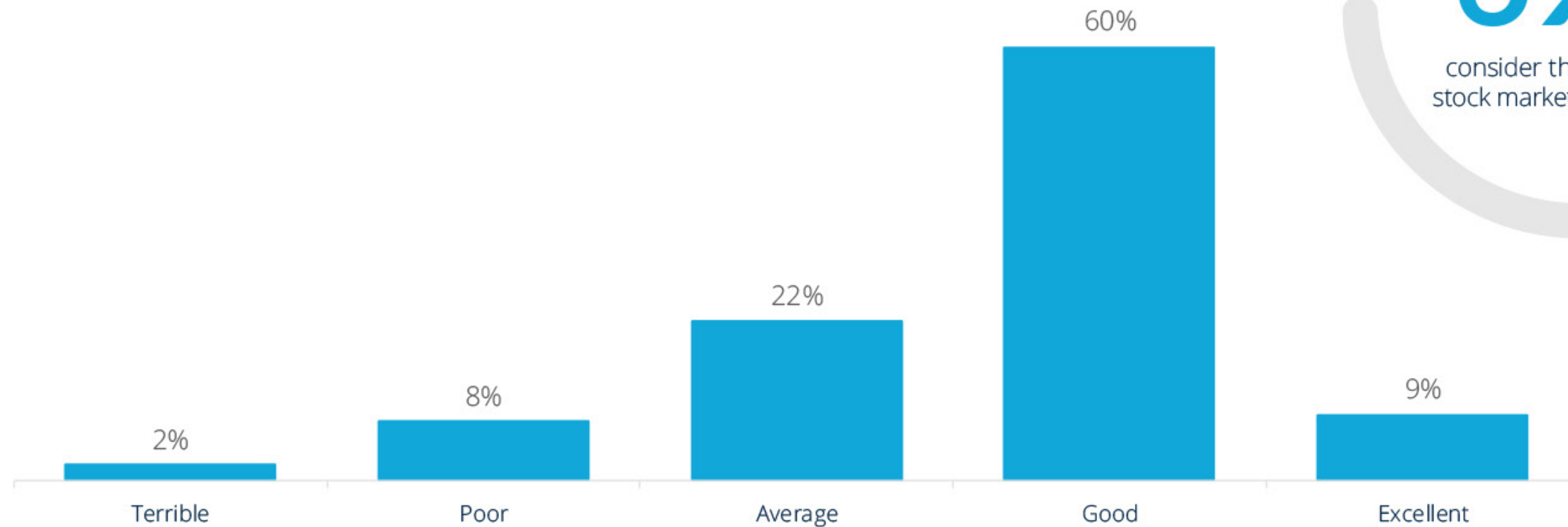
Net Improvement: 43%
Net Decline: 36%



Question: Relative to today, how do you expect the state/health of the economy to change 12 months from now?
Base: All respondents (n=114).

Current State of the Stock Market

A decisive majority of respondents (69%) consider the current state of the stock market to be positive, with just 10% expressing a negative view.



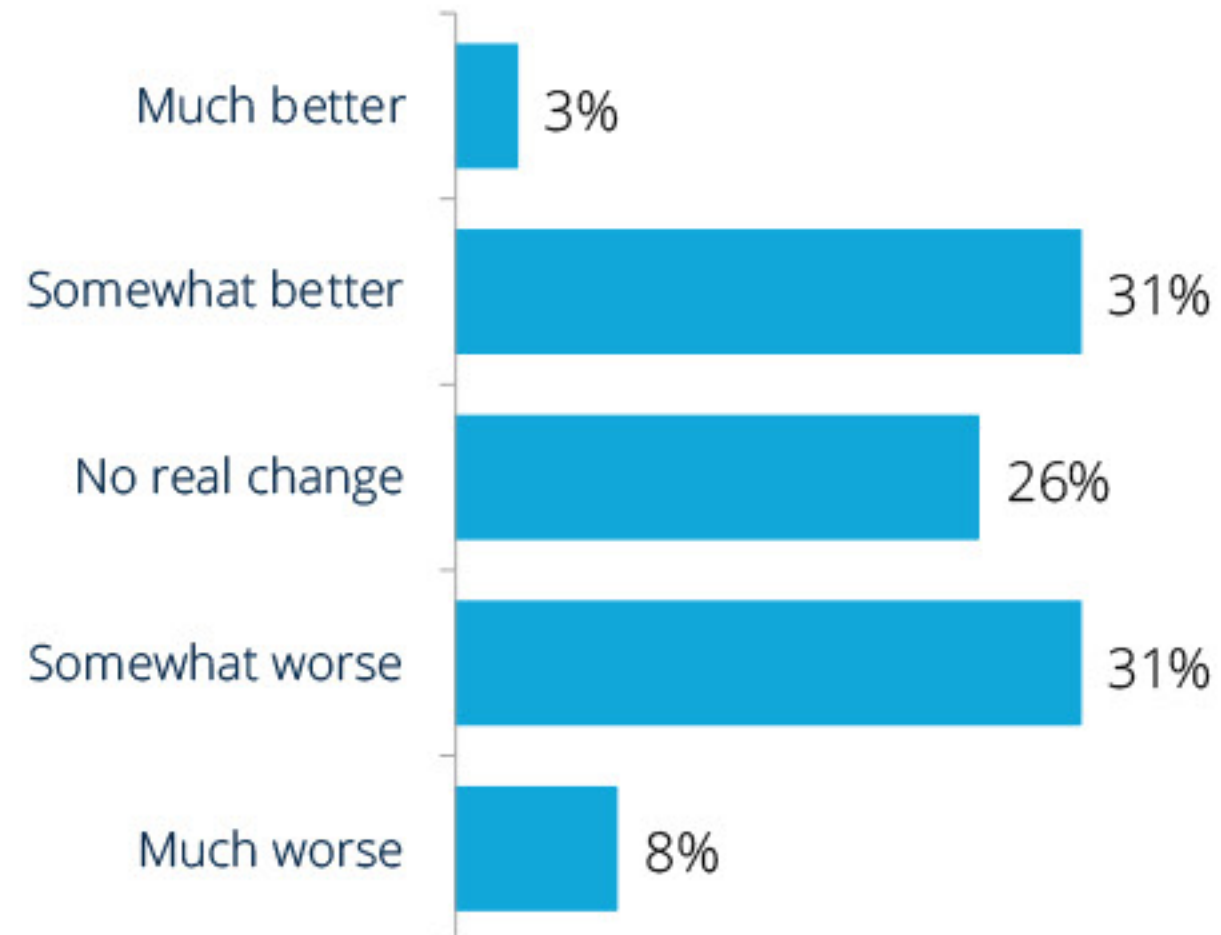
Question: How would you characterize the current state/health of the stock market?
Base: All respondents (n=114).

Expected Change in the State of the Stock Market

As with the overall economy, respondents are divided on the state of the stock market six months from now: 34% expect an improvement; 26% expect stability; and 39% expect a decline. This pattern largely holds looking forward 12 months, with 41% expecting an improvement, and 37% expecting a decline.

Six Months from Now

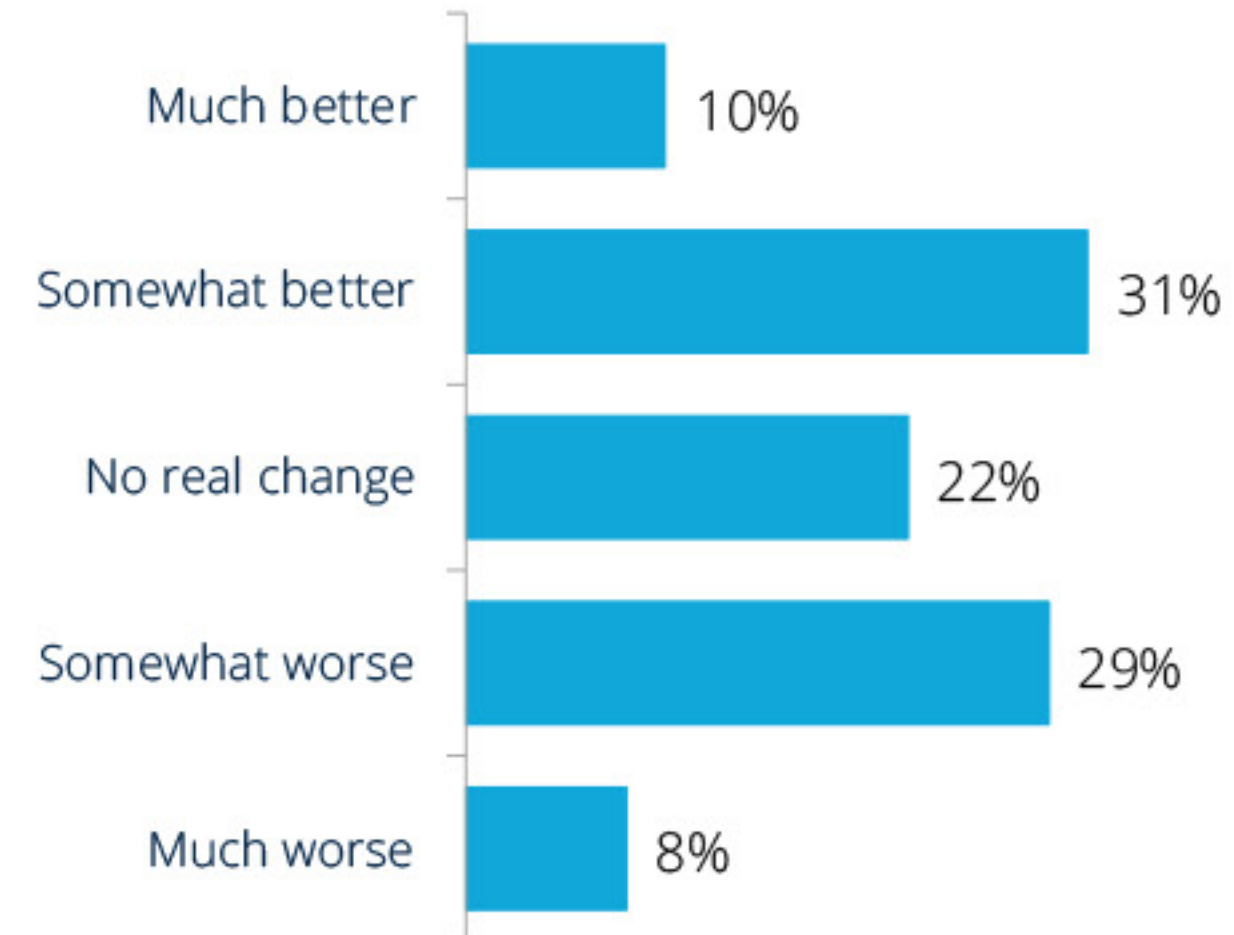
Net Improvement: 34%
Net Decline: 39%



Question: Relative to today, how do you expect the state/health of the stock market to change 6 months from now?
Base: All respondents (n=114).

Twelve Months from Now

Net Improvement: 41%
Net Decline: 37%



Question: Relative to today, how do you expect the state/health of the stock market to change 12 months from now?
Base: All respondents (n=114).

Section 5. Respondent Commentary



Commentary on State of the Economy & Stock Market

Overall, respondent comments on the state of the economy and stock market are cautious rather than broadly bearish. There is recognition that the economy and markets have remained stronger than sentiment might suggest, but advisors see inflation, elevated valuations, AI concentration, political/fiscal uncertainty and geopolitical risk as significant vulnerabilities.

- 1. Inflation, Interest Rates and Cost-of-Living Pressures Remain Key Concerns:** Inflation remains one of the most frequently cited economic concerns, with advisors pointing to persistently high prices, elevated interest rates, gas prices and broader cost-of-living pressures. Several also connect inflation to government spending, tariffs and fiscal policy, suggesting that these pressures could eventually weigh on both consumers and markets.
- 2. Markets Appear Resilient, but Valuations Raise Concerns:** Some advisors view the economy and stock market as fundamentally healthy, citing strong market data, corporate profitability and continued price gains. At the same time, several believe equities are overvalued or trading at historically high multiples, leaving the market particularly vulnerable to disappointing economic news or earnings results.
- 3. AI Is Driving Growth and Creating Concentration Risk:** AI investment and technology leadership are viewed as important drivers of current economic and market strength, with several advisors specifically crediting the AI buildout for supporting growth. However, respondents also question whether current AI spending is sustainable and express concern about market concentration, lofty expectations and the potential impact of AI on employment.
- 4. Political and Fiscal Uncertainty Is Shaping the Outlook:** A substantial share of comments tie the economic and market outlook to elections, congressional control, federal policy, government spending and national debt. While respondents differ sharply in their political perspectives, the broader theme is that uncertainty surrounding government policy and fiscal direction is influencing confidence in the future trajectory of the economy and markets.
- 5. Geopolitical Risk Adds to an Already Uncertain Environment:** Wars and broader geopolitical instability are another recurring source of concern, with advisors citing their potential effects on inflation, energy prices, economic growth and market performance. Several expect conditions to improve as geopolitical tensions ease, but the combination of war, macroeconomic uncertainty and other external risks contributes to a generally cautious outlook.