

2026 Travel Plans

# American Travel Sentiment Study

WAVE 104 : SPORT & SPECIAL EVENT TRAVEL

FEBRUARY 26, 2026

 Longwoods  
INTERNATIONAL

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PARTNERSHIP

# American Travel Sentiment Wave 104 Highlights

## Key Findings:

### 1. Outlook for Sports Travel in 2026

About a third of travelers (34%) say they are likely to travel overnight within the next 12 months to attend special sporting events, such as professional or college sporting events. However, when asked specifically about likeliness to attend a World Cup match in the U.S., 7% of travelers say they are very likely to attend, with a majority (55%) saying it is very unlikely for them to attend a match.

### 2. Special Cultural or Entertainment Events Popular Among Travelers

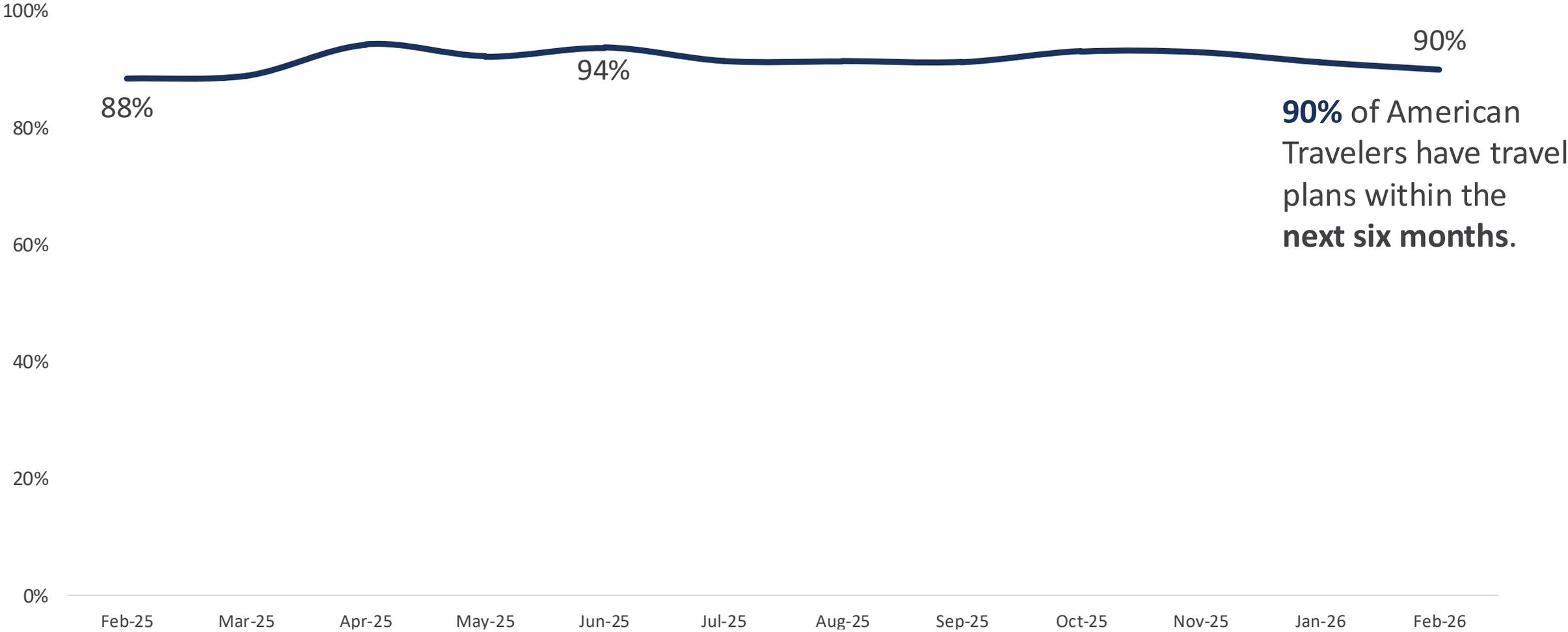
A majority of travelers (52%) say that they are likely to travel overnight within the next 12 months to attend special cultural or entertainment events, such as concerts/music festivals or local cultural festivals, with only 19% saying they are very unlikely to attend.

### 3. Interest and Intent to Tour Route 66 High for its 100<sup>th</sup> Year Anniversary

Nearly half of travelers (47%) are interested in touring part or all of Route 66, with 15% extremely interested and the other 32% somewhat interested. While 47% say they are interested in touring Route 66, 41% say they are planning to travel along Route 66 within the next 12 months, with 7% already having booked their travel. Among the 41% who are planning to travel along Route 66, the top two reasons are touring through naturally beautiful/historically significant parts of the U.S. (34%) and taking road trips with friends and/or family (32%).



# Travel Plans Within the Next 6 Months



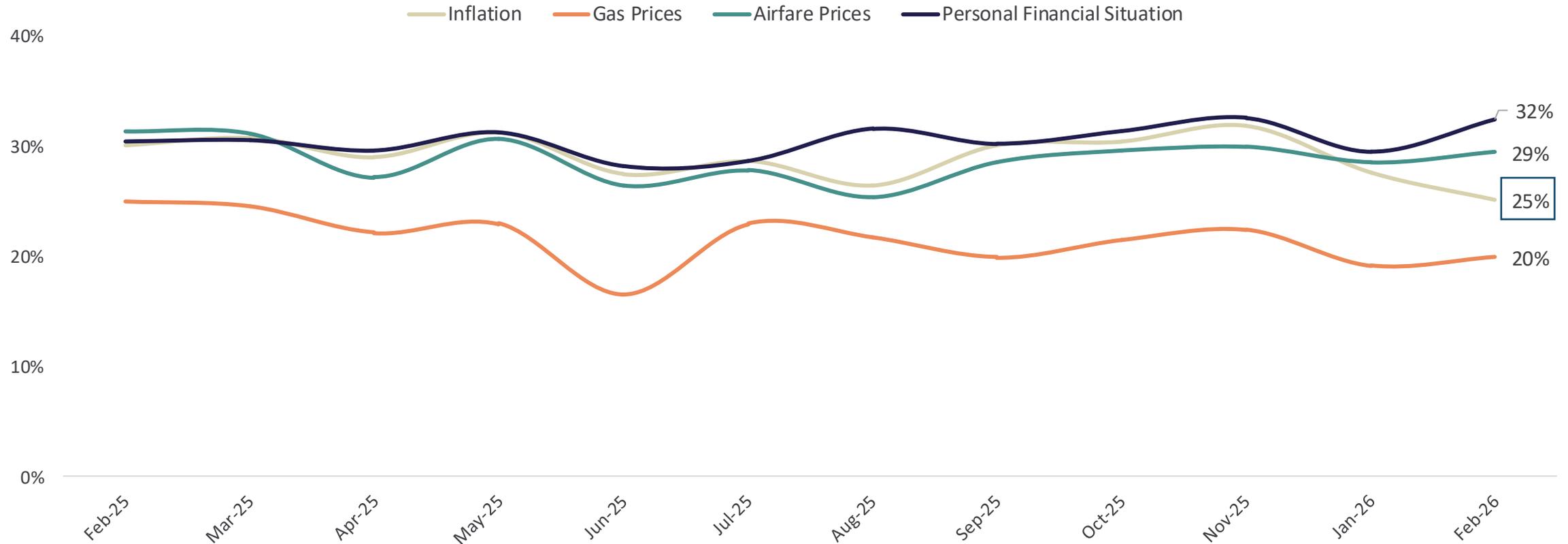
**90%** of American Travelers have travel plans within the next six months.

Source: Longwoods International ATS Wave 104  
Percentages are based only on respondents who are confirmed travelers (see definition in Methodology slide)

# Inflation Concerns Impacting Travel Plans Drop to Lowest Level within Past 12 Months

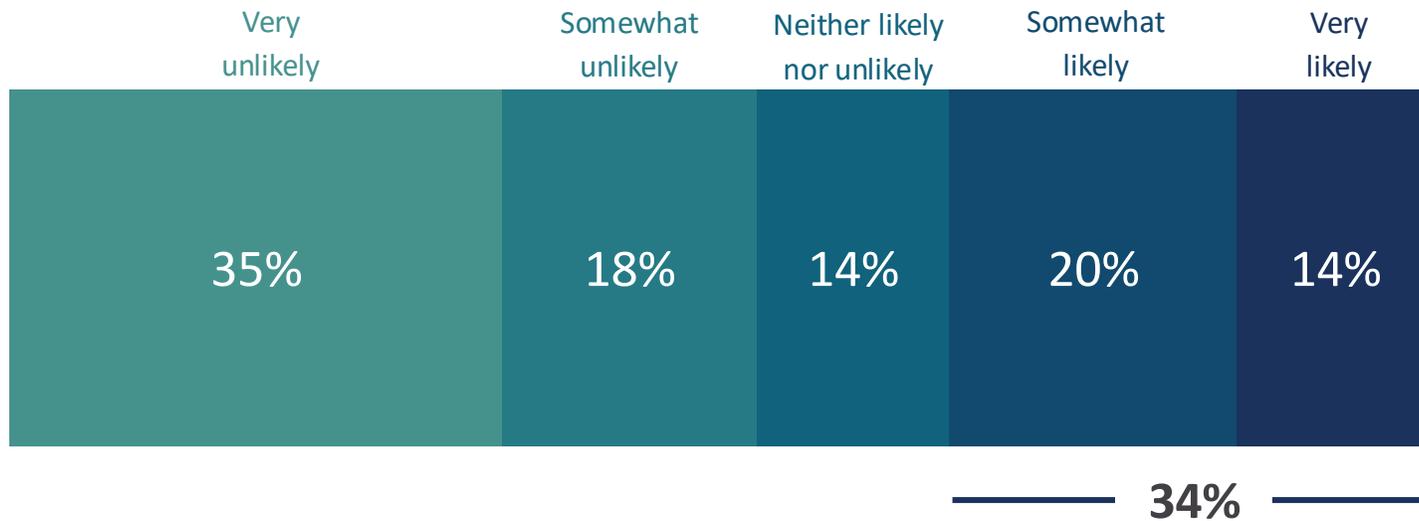
## Concerns Impacting Your Travel Decisions in the Next Six Months

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 February 2025 to 2026.



# A Third of Travelers Likely to Attend Special Sporting Events

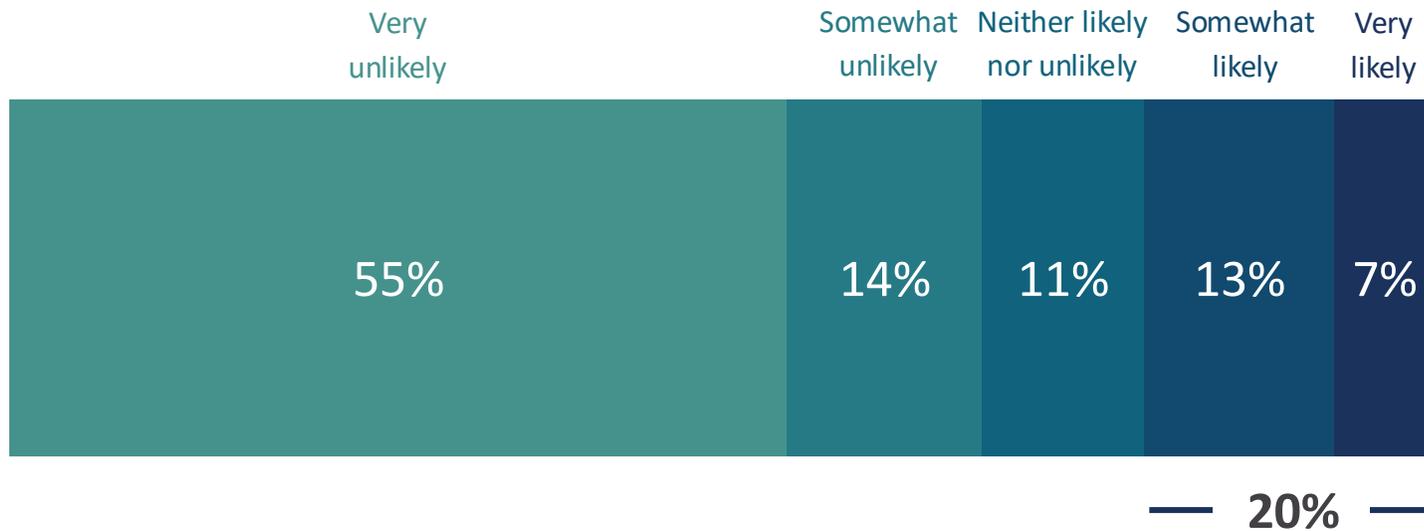
Within the next 12 months, how likely are you to travel overnight to attend special sporting events, such as professional or college sporting events or international competitions taking place in the U.S.?



**A third (34%)** of travelers say they are likely to travel overnight to attend special sporting events, however a **third (35%)** say it is **very unlikely** they will attend a special sporting events.

# Majority of Travelers Very Unlikely to Attend a World Cup Match

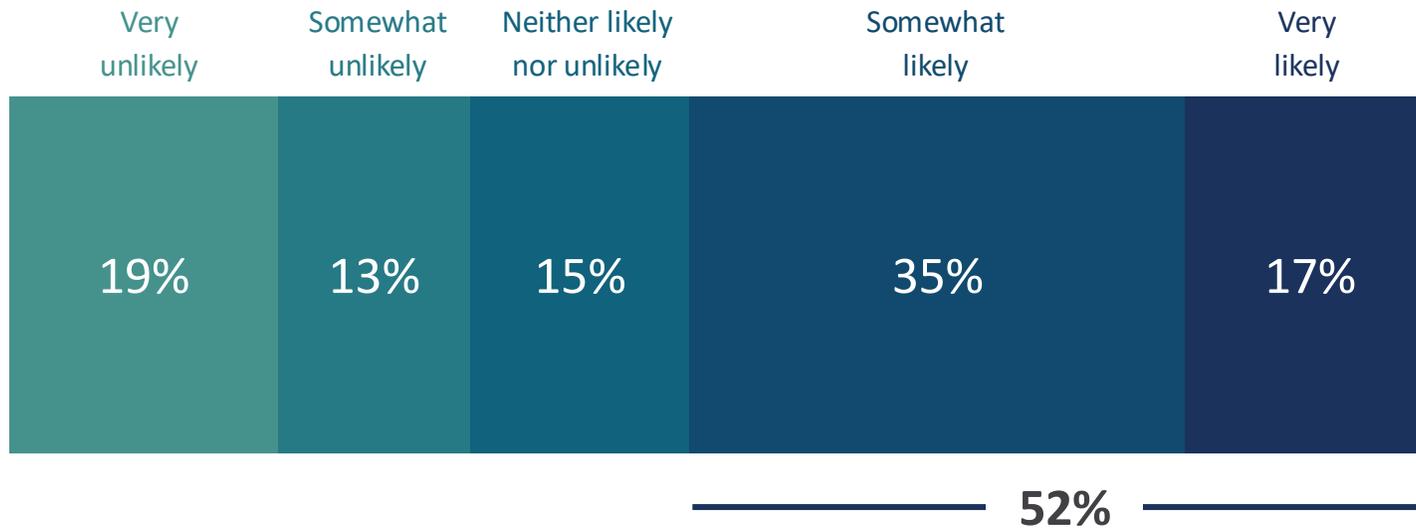
How likely are you to attend a FIFA World Cup match in the United States this summer?



**55%** of travelers say it is **very unlikely** that they will attend a **World Cup match** this summer, while just **20%** say they are **very or somewhat likely** to attend a **World Cup match** this summer.

# Half of Travelers Likely to Attend Special Cultural or Entertainment Events

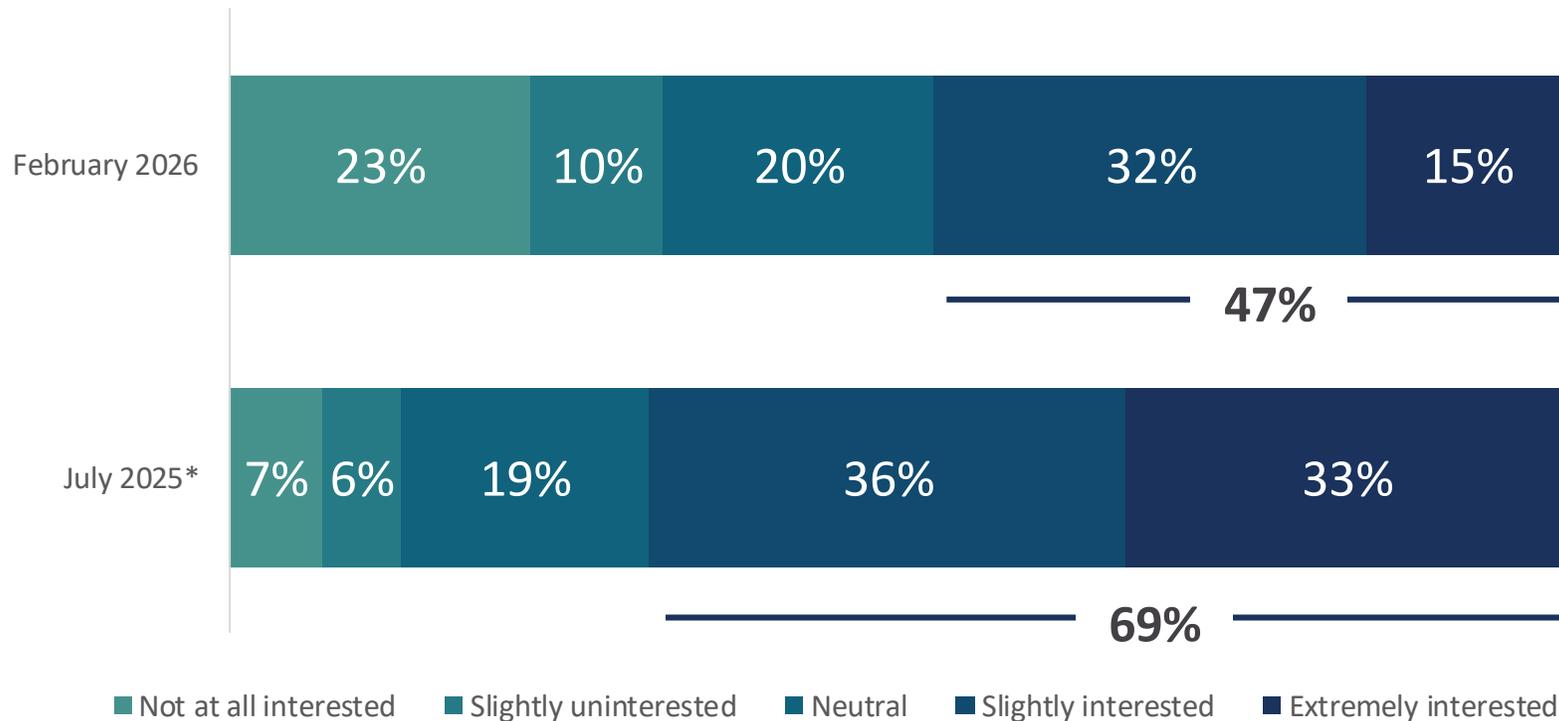
Within the next 12 months, how likely are you to travel overnight to attend special cultural or entertainment events, such as concerts/music festivals or local cultural festivals?



**Half of travelers (52%)** say they are likely to travel overnight to attend special cultural or entertainment events in the next 12 months, with only **19%** saying it is **very unlikely** that they will travel overnight to attend such events.

# Nearly Half of Travelers are Interested in Touring Route 66

Route 66 is celebrating its 100<sup>th</sup> year anniversary in 2026. How interested are you in touring part or all of Route 66 within the next 12 months?

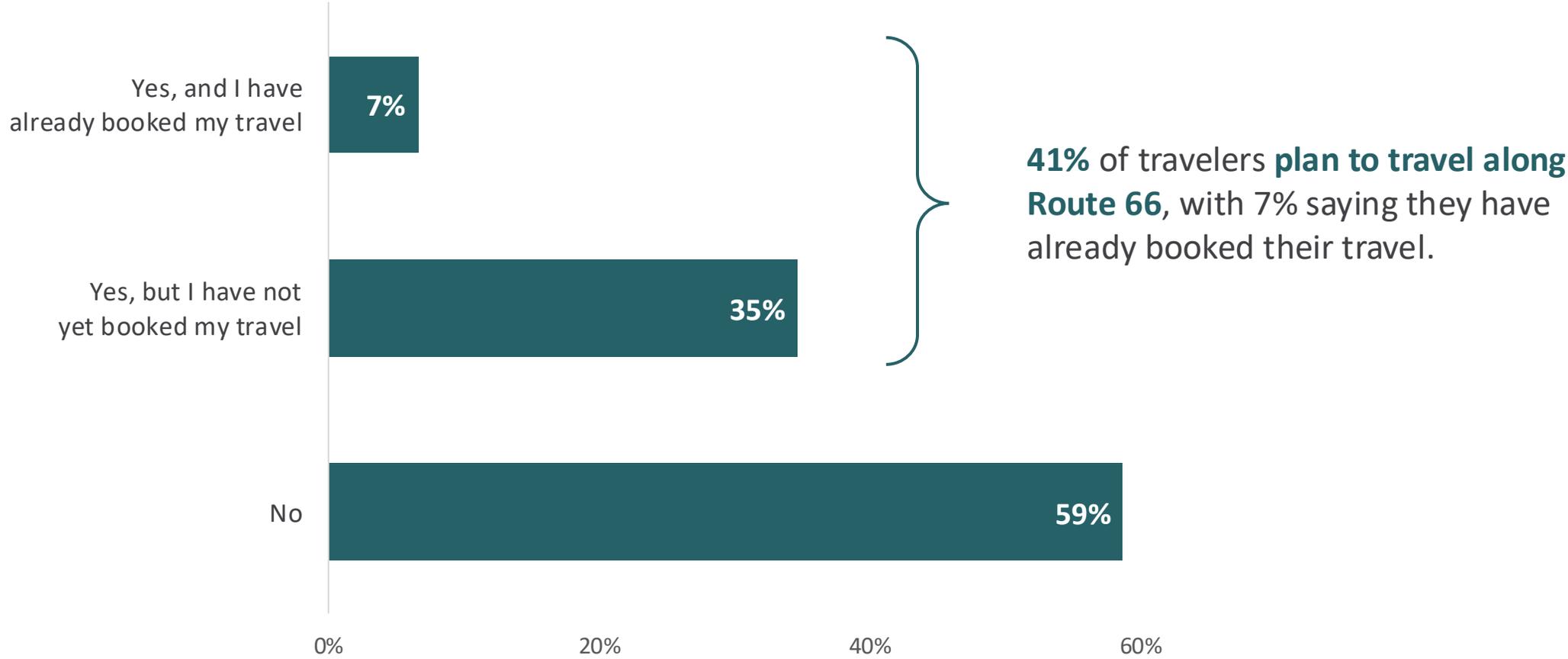


**47% of travelers are either extremely or slightly interested** in touring part or all of Route 66 in the next 12 months.

While interest remains high, it is **down 21.2 points vs July 2025**, in which travelers were asked about their interest in touring Route 66 within the next 2 years. This drop can mainly be attributed to a decrease in those **extremely interested**, which is down 18.0 points vs July 2025.

# 41% of Travelers Plan to Travel Along Route 66

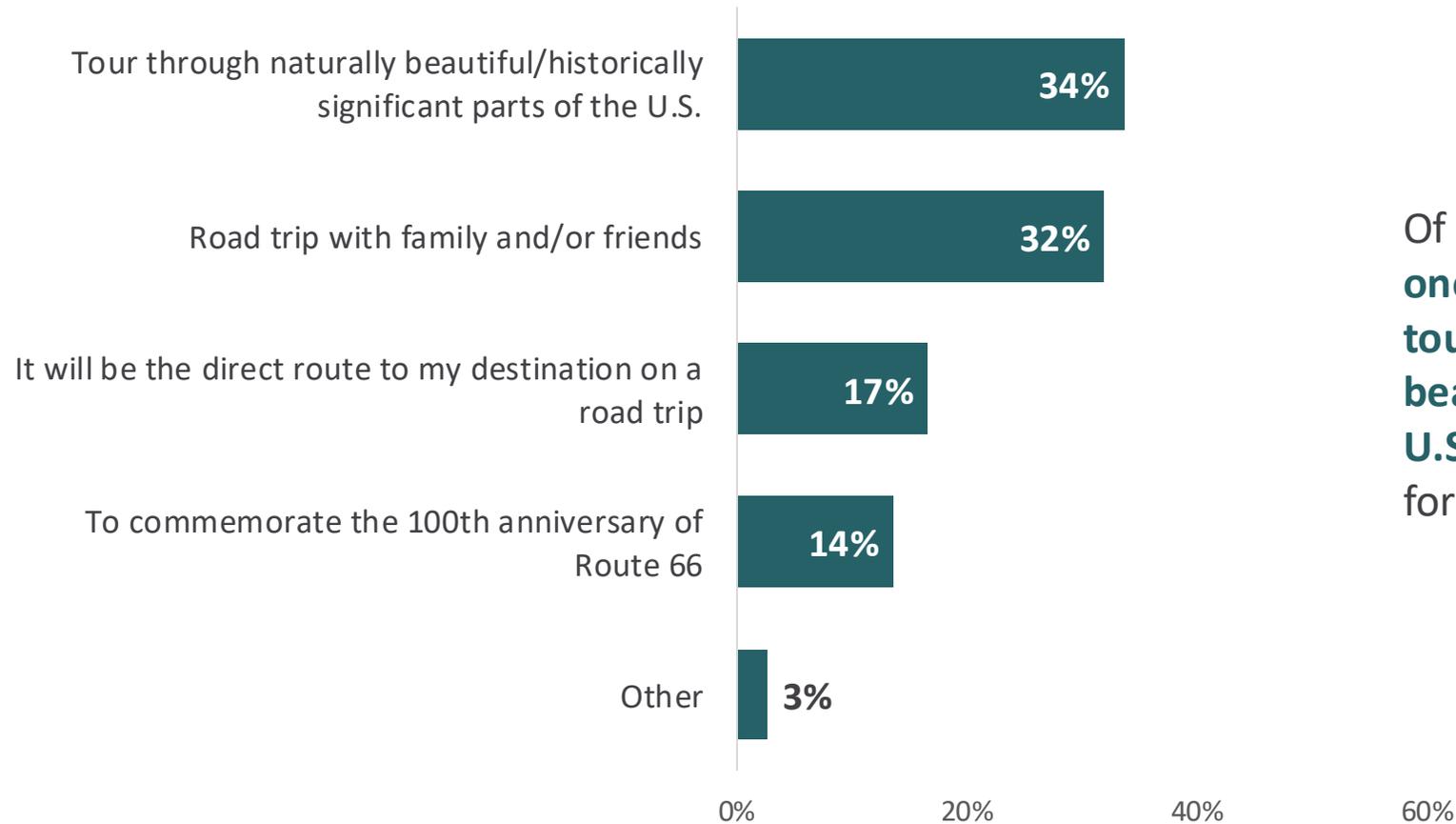
Within the next 12 months, do you plan to travel along Route 66?



Source: Longwoods International ATS Wave 104  
Percentages are based only on respondents who are confirmed travelers

# Touring and Road Trips are Top Reasons for Traveling Along Route 66

What is the primary reason for your intended travel along Route 66?



Of those who plan to travel along Route 66, **one third (34%)** say their primary reason is **touring through naturally beautiful/historically significant parts of the U.S.** Another **third (32%)** said they are traveling for a **road trip with their family and/or friends.**

# 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: February 3 - 5, 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 features the word "Longwoods" in a blue, sans-serif font. The letter "o" is replaced by a stylized globe icon. Below "Longwoods" is the word "INTERNATIONAL" 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](http://www.MilesPartnership.com/How-We-Think)

A person with long blonde hair tied back, wearing a teal long-sleeved shirt, stands on a rocky ledge overlooking a deep canyon. The canyon walls are dark brown and layered, with a vibrant turquoise river winding through the bottom. The scene is captured from a high angle, looking down at the person and across the canyon.

**Thank You!**

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