

Nebraska Annual Social Survey Snapshot:

How do Nebraskans rate the risks and benefits of AI?

About one-fifth of Nebraska adults view benefits of AI as very high or high, but three-quarters of Nebraska adults view the risks of AI as high or very high. Both benefits and risks of AI are rated higher among men, younger adults, and employed Nebraskans.

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A survey of 1750 Nebraskan adults conducted between February and May 2026 asked respondents “How would you rate the benefits of Artificial Intelligence (AI) for society as a whole?” For this report, “very high” and “high” benefits and “very low” and “low” benefits are combined. Nebraskans were also asked “How would you rate the risks of Artificial Intelligence (AI) for society as a whole?” For this report, “very high” and “high” risks are combined, and “medium,” “very low,” and “low” risks are combined.

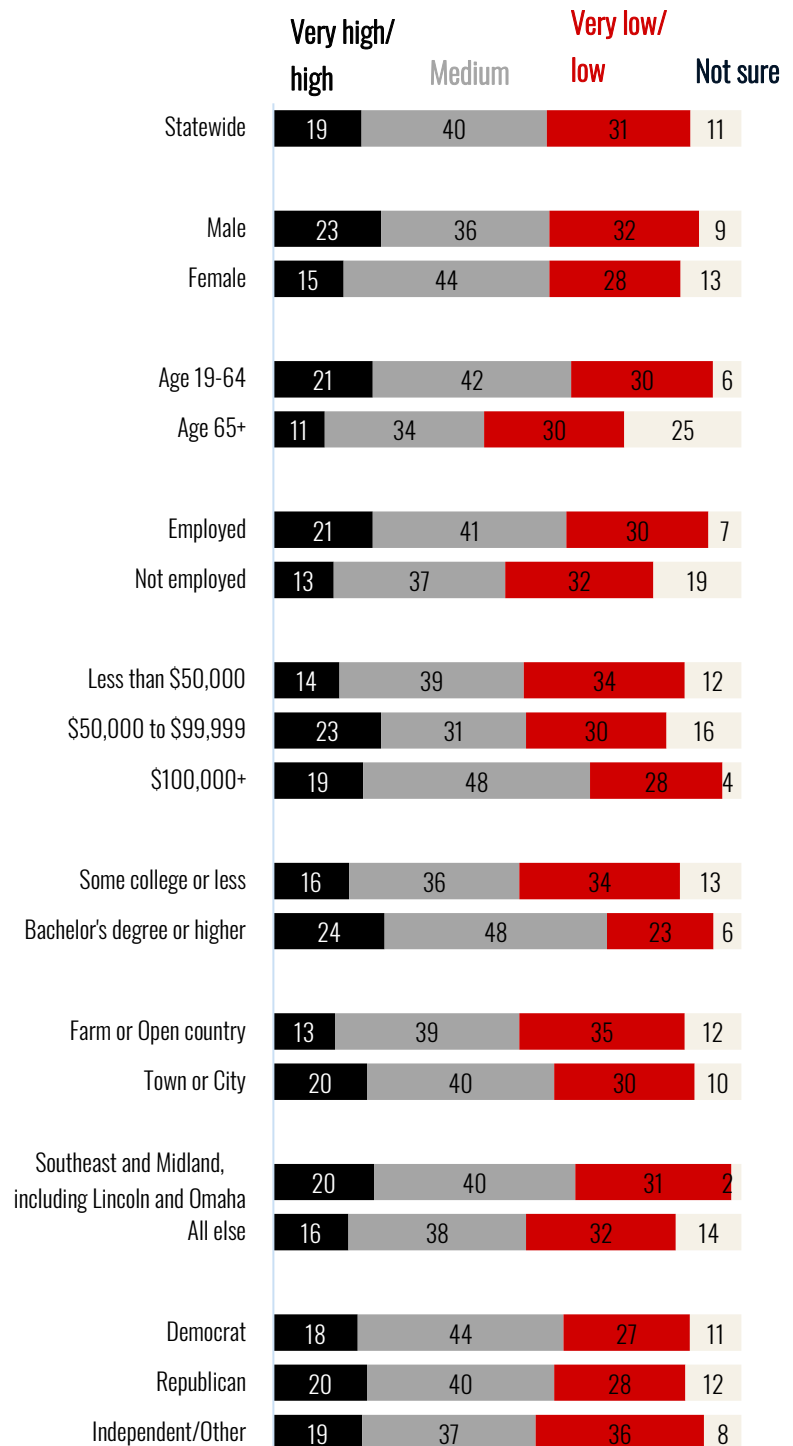
Overall, 19% of Nebraska adults think the benefits of AI for society are high or very high, with 40% reporting medium benefits. Nebraskans differ significantly from each other among gender, age, employment, income, and education. More men than women report very high or high benefits of AI for society (23% and 15% respectively).

More younger adults rate the benefits of AI for society as very high or high than older adults (23% and 15% respectively). A quarter of older adults (25%) are not sure about the benefits of AI for society, while only 6% of younger adults are not sure. This pattern is repeated when looking at employment and education. One-fifth (21%) of those who are employed and 11% of those who are not employed rate the benefits of AI for society as very high or high. Almost one-fifth of those who are not employed are not sure about the benefits, compared to only 7% of those who are employed. More people with a bachelor’s degree or higher rate the benefits of AI for society as very high or high than those with some college or less (24% and 16% respectively), while 13% of those with some college or less are not sure about the benefits, compared to only 6% of those with a bachelor’s degree or higher.

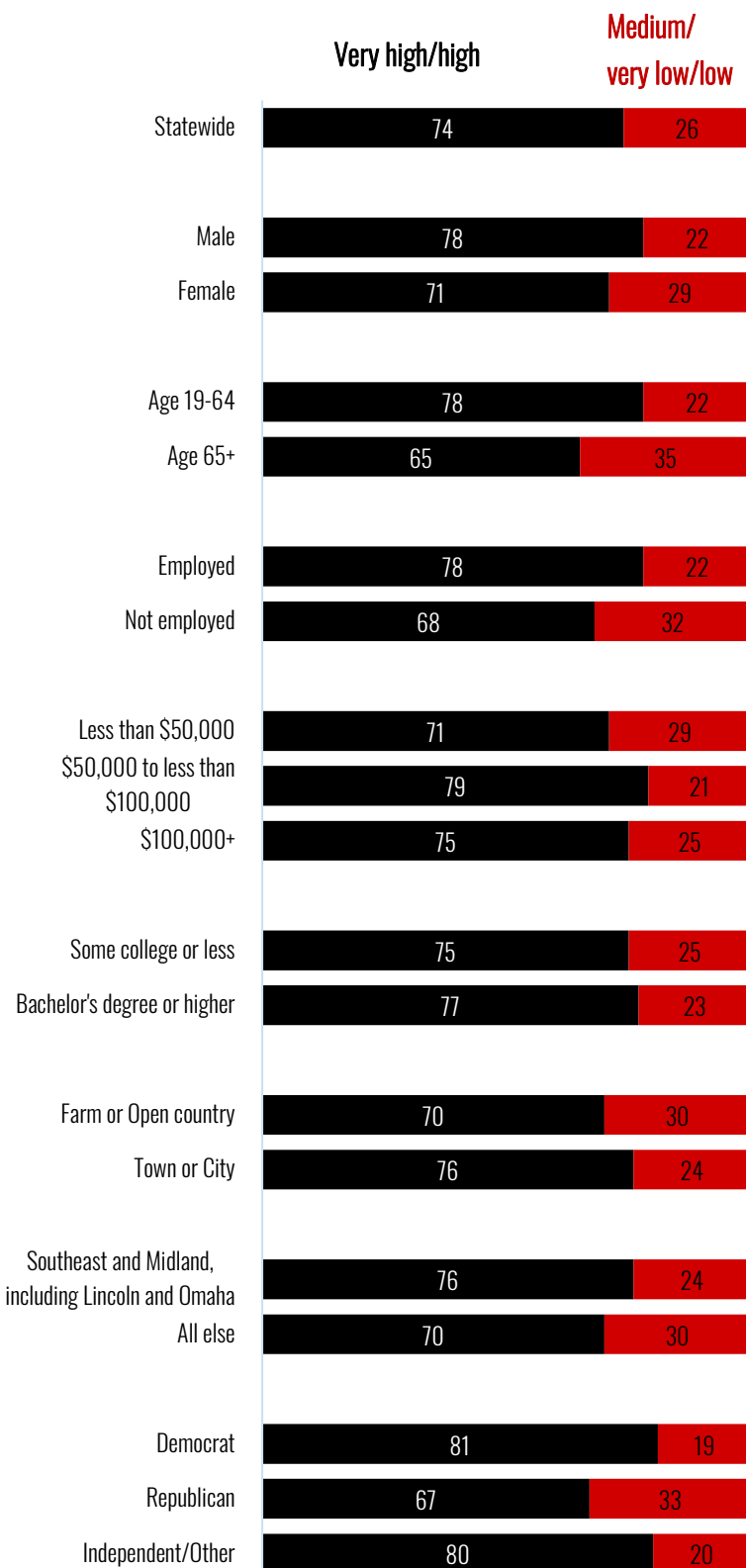
Those who earn \$50,000-\$99,999 were most likely to rate the benefits of AI for society as very high or high (23%), compared to 14% of those earning less than \$50,000 and 19% of those earning \$100,000 or more. Surprisingly, this middle-income group was also most likely to report they were not sure (16%) about the benefits of AI for society, compared to 12% of those earning less than \$50,000 and 4% of those earning \$100,000 or more.

There were not regional differences or differences across party ID in perceptions of benefits.

How would you rate the benefits of AI for society as a whole?



How would you rate the risks of AI for society as a whole?



We also asked respondents how they would rate the risks of AI for society as a whole. Only 6% of respondents indicated they were not sure about the risk of AI for society as a whole. Due to this small number, we are unable to report subgroup breakouts for this response option. Overall, almost three-fourths (74%) of Nebraska adults think there is a very high/high risk of AI for society as a whole.

As with the benefits of AI to society, Nebraskans differ significantly from each other among gender, age, and employment on the risks of AI. More men than women (78% and 71% respectively), more younger adults than older adults (78% and 65% respectively), and more employed than unemployed adults (78% and 68% respectively) rate the risks of AI for society as very high or high.

Unlike perceptions of benefits, we see differences in perceptions of risk related to AI by political party. More Democrats (81%) and Independents/Other party (80%) rate the risks of AI to society as very high or high, compared to 67% of Republicans.

Data Source and Methodology The Nebraska Annual Social Indicators Survey (NASIS) is an annual statewide concurrent mail and web survey conducted by BOSR with multiple clients. NASIS uses an address-based sample of adults aged 19 and older (Nebraska's age of majority) and asks adults with the next birthday to participate in the survey. The 2026 NASIS consisted of a 12-page paper questionnaire that was administered by mail with an option to complete by web to a sample of 8,000 Nebraska households. Data were collected from February to May 2026 with an AAPOR Response Rate 2 of 22.1% (n=1,750). Overall estimates have a margin of error of $\pm 4\%$. Significantly separate groups are reported from statistical tests with $p < .05$. The full methodology report can be found at <https://bosr.unl.edu/nasis>

WHO ARE WE? BOSR has been conducting survey research and providing research assistance to University of Nebraska–Lincoln faculty, departments, administrative units, students, and various government agencies and non-profit organizations since 1964. Operating as a 'one-stop research shop,' BOSR develops and manages mail, web, telephone, in-person, and mixed-mode surveys with academic rigor.