



A New Way of Looking at Philadelphians

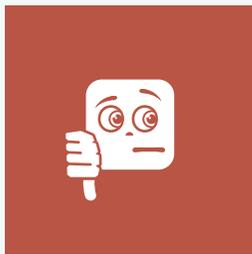
Beyond income, neighborhood, and race

Overview

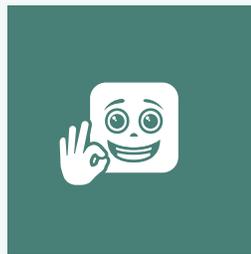
Since 2009, The Pew Charitable Trusts has produced detailed research about Philadelphia, analyzing the challenges the city has faced and documenting the ways the city has changed. As part of that research, Pew has commissioned public opinion polls on a regular basis, gauging residents' views on the quality of city services, the condition of neighborhoods, and the outlook for the future. A key element of these polls has been to see how opinions differ among groups defined by income, neighborhood, race, age, and levels of education.

Building on that research, Pew has created a new way of looking at Philadelphians, one rooted in how they think about the city rather than where they show up in demographic categories. The analysis, based on a telephone survey of 1,603 randomly chosen Philadelphians in early 2015, sorts adult city residents into four groups. We have labeled those groups Dissatisfied Citizens, Die-Hard Loyalists, Uncommitted Skeptics, and Enthusiastic Urbanists. Here is a brief description of each, ordered by size.

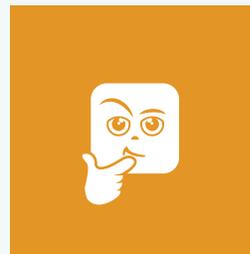
The four groups of Philadelphians



**Dissatisfied
Citizens**



**Die-Hard
Loyalists**



**Uncommitted
Skeptics**



**Enthusiastic
Urbanists**

- **Dissatisfied Citizens:** The largest of the four groups at 30 percent of the population, they are unhappy with their neighborhoods, disenchanted with city government, and not optimistic about Philadelphia's prospects. Many are economically disadvantaged. Most have lived in Philadelphia their entire lives but would move out if they could. In any number of ways, they feel stuck.
- **Die-Hard Loyalists:** These deeply committed individuals, 25 percent of all residents, see a bright future for Philadelphia and want to be part of it. They feel strong ties to their neighbors and think more should be done to preserve city neighborhoods and support longtime residents. They believe in hard work but want government to help people when necessary. Many are lifelong Philadelphians.

- **Uncommitted Skeptics:** These residents, who also represent 25 percent of the city, have little attachment to Philadelphia and, as a group, are ambivalent about the city’s direction. They have their doubts about the effectiveness and true goals of local institutions, including the business community, the police department, and local government generally. Many of them see their futures elsewhere.
- **Enthusiastic Urbanists:** The smallest group, 19 percent of the population, these Philadelphians are excited about the city and its future. Many are relative newcomers who view Center City as vital to the entire city’s well-being and think it is essential for Philadelphia to attract more residents. They have high regard for city government and want to see more economic development.

The groupings are the result of a process known as cluster analysis. In this case, 26 questions from the 2015 survey were used to create categories of Philadelphians intended to be both meaningful and informative.

For most of the 26 questions, respondents were given two statements related to a particular subject and were asked to select the one that more closely represented their view. The questions, specifically constructed for the purpose of this analysis, covered such topics as the city’s current direction, future, neighborhoods, police, and government.

This effort was modeled on work done nationally by our colleagues at the Pew Research Center in Washington. Through this type of polling and analysis, the center has sorted Americans into groupings based on values and attitudes, going beyond the simple labels of liberal and conservative.¹ For Philadelphia, we set out to do something similar—although not on the left-right spectrum—in hopes of increasing public understanding of the city and its residents.

For more detail on the methodology, see Page 9.

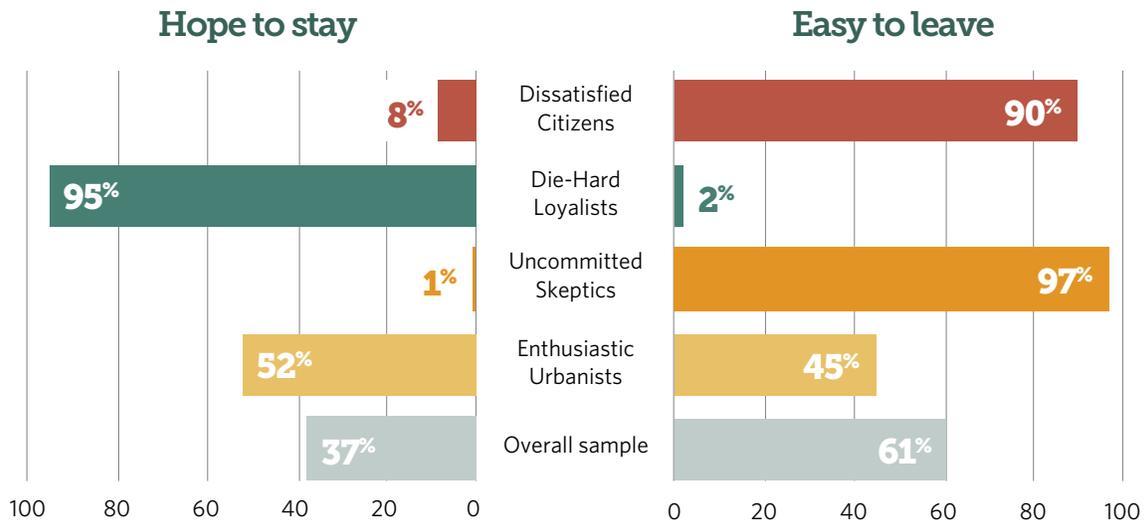
An online quiz, available at <http://www.pewtrusts.org/what-sort-of-philadelphian-are-you>, allows those who consider themselves Philadelphians to see in which category they belong.

Key questions and key differences

Answers to a few of the 26 questions turned out to be central to how the groups were statistically determined. In one question, which measured people’s attachment to the city, respondents were asked to choose between these two statements: “I hope to live the rest of my life in the city” and “It would be easy for me to leave the city if the right circumstances came along.” Uncommitted Skeptics and Dissatisfied Citizens said it would be easy to leave Philadelphia. The Enthusiastic Urbanists were split, and almost all of the Die-Hard Loyalists said they hoped to stay. (See Figure 1.)

Another question that helped define the groups focused on respondents’ broad sense of Philadelphia today—as either “an underappreciated city with a lot going for it” or “a city with more than its share of problems.” The Dissatisfied Citizens viewed the city as a place with more than its share of problems; the Uncommitted Skeptics were split almost down the middle; and the Enthusiastic Urbanists and Die-Hard Loyalists overwhelmingly described the city as underappreciated. (See Figure 2.)

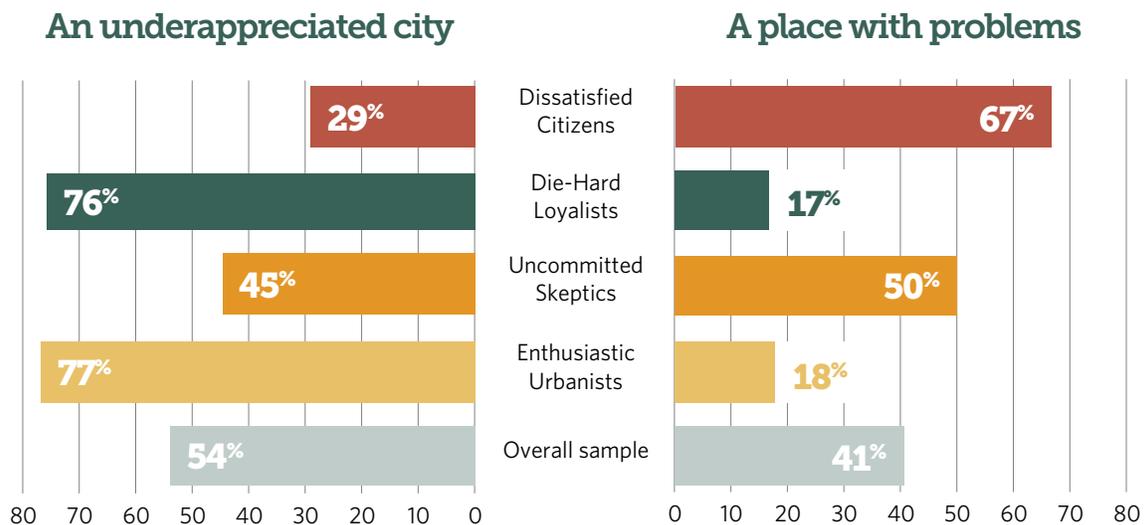
Figure 1
 Philadelphians' Attachment to the City



Note: Numbers for each group do not add up to 100% because some respondents declined to answer or said they did not know.

Source: The Pew Philadelphia Poll, 2015
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Figure 2
 Residents' Views on Philadelphia Today



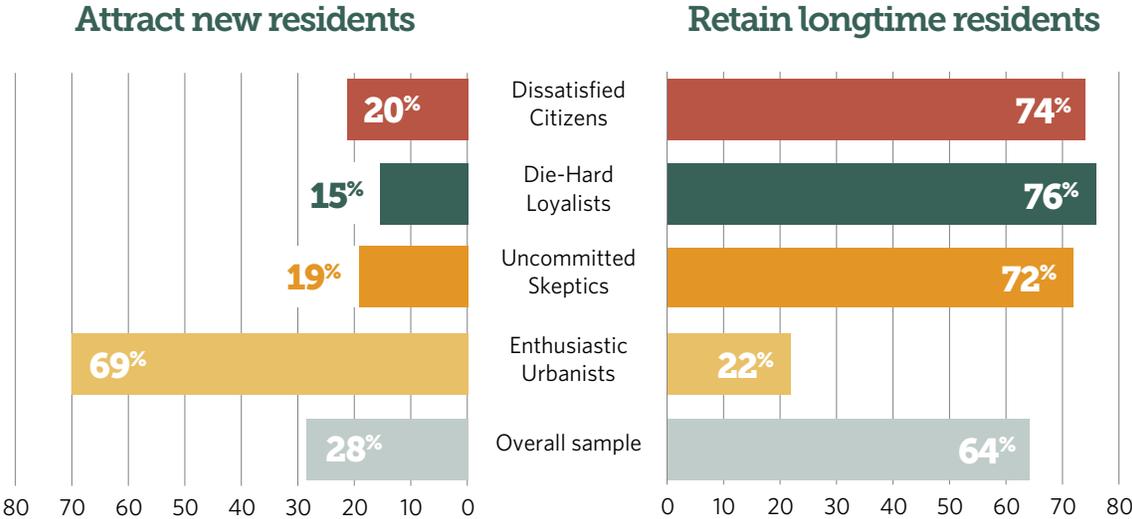
Note: Numbers for each group do not add up to 100% because some respondents declined to answer or said they did not know.

Source: The Pew Philadelphia Poll, 2015
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Whether the city should “do more to attract and retain new residents” or “do more for longtime residents” was a third item that divided the groups. The Uncommitted Skeptics, Dissatisfied Citizens, and Die-Hard Loyalists all expressed a strong preference for doing more for longtime Philadelphians; the Enthusiastic Urbanists said the emphasis should be on attracting new residents. (See Figure 3.)

Figure 3
Which is More Important for Philadelphia?



Note: Numbers for each group do not add up to 100% because some respondents declined to answer or said they did not know.

Source: The Pew Philadelphia Poll, 2015
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The groups in detail



Dissatisfied Citizens

Deeply unhappy and financially challenged
30% of Philadelphians

Defining attitudes: More than half of Dissatisfied Citizens, 53 percent, believe that Philadelphia is on the wrong track, the highest percentage of the four groups. In addition, they are most likely to believe that the city's best days are behind it and that the city is not worth recommending to a friend as a place to live. Only 8 percent hope to spend the rest of their lives in Philadelphia. They have the lowest regard for the city police force—only 42 percent have confidence in the police to treat blacks and whites equally—and 65 percent find city government to be wasteful and inefficient.² Sixty-one percent described their neighborhoods as only fair or poor. Sixty percent do not feel safe when they are outside at night, compared with 38 percent for all Philadelphians. And 61 percent of them, the highest figure for the four groups, responded affirmatively when asked in the poll whether they think that “race is often a major factor in the policies and decisions of city government.”

Who they are: Dissatisfied Citizens include large percentages of low-income Philadelphians and people of color. Sixty-two percent of this group had household incomes under \$30,000 in 2014, and the same percentage reported having no more than a high school education. Nearly all of them, 97 percent, said they have trouble paying their bills, and 88 percent rated their personal financial situations as poor or only fair. Forty percent receive general assistance or Temporary Assistance for Needy Families; live in public housing; and/or participate in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. Twenty-seven percent live in North Philadelphia. Slightly more than half, 51 percent, are African-American; 30 percent are white; and 14 percent are Hispanic. They tend to be relatively young—68 percent are under age 50—and 61 percent are women. Sixty-five percent have spent their entire lives in Philadelphia; another 12 percent have been in the city for more than 30 years.

Dissatisfied Citizens' Answers to Key Questions

	Dissatisfied Citizens	Overall sample
Don't have enough money to make ends meet	97%	43%
Hope to live the rest of my life in the city	8%	37%
Philadelphia is a city with more than its share of problems	67%	41%
Philadelphia is seriously off on the wrong track	53%	33%
Most people who want to get ahead can make it if they work hard	54%	70%
Too much attention has been paid to Center City and not enough to the city's neighborhoods	82%	66%
Philadelphia's best days are ahead of it	49%	65%
Almost all police are trustworthy and do their jobs properly	18%	33%

Source: The Pew Philadelphia Poll, 2015
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Die-Hard Loyalists

Longtime Philadelphians and proud of it

25% of Philadelphians

Defining attitudes: The Die-Hard Loyalists like almost everything about Philadelphia. Nearly all of them, 95 percent, hope to stay in the city for their whole lives, and 93 percent said they would definitely or probably remain in the city over the next five to 10 years. Those who would recommend Philadelphia to a friend as a place to live also clocked in at 93 percent. Sixty-six percent said the city is headed in the right direction, compared with only 17 percent who said it’s on the wrong track. This group also expressed a strong preference for urban living in general (66 percent). Of the four groups, the Die-Hard Loyalists were most inclined, at 66 percent, to say that the government does not go far enough to help poor people. They also expressed the strongest support for labor unions, with 64 percent saying that unions help Philadelphians get the wages and benefits they need. By a 5-1 ratio, they would like to see the city work to retain longtime residents rather than attract new ones.

Who they are: As a group, the Die-Hard Loyalists are older than the city population as a whole; half of them are 50 and older, and only 23 percent are younger than 35. Thirty-seven percent are retired. They are racially and ethnically diverse—42 percent white, 41 percent black, and 13 percent Hispanic. They mostly identify as middle class, 47 percent, or lower middle class, 29 percent. Of those who reported household income for 2014, 78 percent said it was less than \$50,000. Fifty-eight percent have a high school education or less. Most have long tenures in the city: 79 percent have been in Philadelphia for more than 30 years or for their whole lives. Seventy-seven percent said that religion is important to them, the highest percentage of the four groups.

Die-Hard Loyalists’ Answers to Key Questions

	Die-Hard Loyalists	Overall sample
Hope to live the rest of my life in the city	95%	37%
Likely to be living in Philadelphia in 5-10 years	93%	67%
Philadelphia is an excellent or good place to live	86%	64%
Philadelphia is headed in the right direction	66%	48%
Philadelphia’s best days are ahead of it	81%	65%
Poor people have hard lives because government benefits don’t go far enough	66%	56%
City should do more to help longtime residents stay in their neighborhoods	78%	67%
Rate neighborhood excellent or good	70%	61%

Source: The Pew Philadelphia Poll, 2015
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Uncommitted Skeptics

Not sold and ready to leave

25% of Philadelphians

Defining attitudes: Of the four groups, Uncommitted Skeptics feel the least connected to Philadelphia. Nearly all of them, 97 percent, said they would depart if the right circumstances came along; only 54 percent expect to be living in Philadelphia five to 10 years from now; and 61 percent would prefer to live in a suburban or rural area. While 58 percent of them rated the city as an excellent or good place to live, a relatively high share, 41 percent, said it is on the wrong track—far higher than for the Enthusiastic Urbanists or Die-Hard Loyalists but lower than for the Dissatisfied Citizens. Sixty-three percent said that they think city officials are interested in helping friends and associates, as opposed to all constituents. Only 23 percent said that almost all police do their jobs properly. Seventy-seven percent believe too much attention has been paid to Center City while a relatively small 19 percent think the city should do more to attract and retain new residents.

Who they are: Uncommitted Skeptics are the youngest of the four groups; 44 percent of them are ages 18 to 34. Their racial and ethnic mix is similar to that of the city as a whole: 43 percent are black, 39 percent white, and 10 percent Hispanic. Twenty-four percent of Uncommitted Skeptics reported household incomes between \$50,000 and \$100,000—the largest percentage of the four groups in that range—and 93 percent of them said they generally pay their bills without a problem. Sixty-two percent have completed at least some college work, although only 28 percent have bachelor’s degrees; many are still in college. Thirty-five percent of Uncommitted Skeptics live in Northeast Philadelphia.

Uncommitted Skeptics’ Answers to Key Questions

	Uncommitted Skeptics	Overall sample
Paying the bills is generally not a problem	93%	53%
Easy for me to leave if the right circumstances came along	97%	61%
Probably/definitely will not be living in Philadelphia in the next five to 10 years	43%	30%
Too much attention has been paid to Center City and not enough to the city’s neighborhoods	77%	66%
Reducing the city business taxes will only help businesses to make more profit	43%	33%
Philadelphia is a city with more than its share of problems	50%	41%
City should do more to attract and retain new residents	19%	28%
Not all police are trustworthy and do their jobs properly	73%	62%

Source: The Pew Philadelphia Poll, 2015
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Enthusiastic Urbanists

Well-educated and open to change

19% of Philadelphians

Defining attitudes: Sixty-eight percent of the Enthusiastic Urbanists think Philadelphia is headed in the right direction; 75 percent believe its best days are ahead of it; and 85 percent consider it to be a good or excellent place to live—all of which are well above the citywide figures. Even so, a relatively modest 52 percent said they hope to spend the rest of their lives in the city, and 45 percent said they would find it easy to leave. Among the four groups, this one is the most likely, at 74 percent, to believe that a thriving Center City is the key to Philadelphia’s economic well-being. And 70 percent believe that lower business taxes would help the city attract jobs. In addition, unlike the other groups, the Enthusiastic Urbanists overwhelmingly said that it is more important for the city to work to attract new residents (69 percent) than to retain existing residents (22 percent). Fifty-seven percent of them said that city government does a better job than people give it credit for, and 85 percent have a great deal or a good amount of respect for city police. While all of the groups have negative views of Philadelphia’s public schools, the Urbanists are least negative; 28 percent judged the schools to be good or excellent. Eighty percent feel safe outside at night in their neighborhoods.

Who they are: Enthusiastic Urbanists are the wealthiest of the four groups: 22 percent have household incomes over \$100,000 a year, compared with 9 percent for the sample as a whole. On the other hand, 32 percent reported household incomes under \$30,000. Three-quarters consider themselves middle class, upper middle class, or upper class, and 17 percent live in Center City, by far the highest percentage of the four groups. They are the best-educated group, with 39 percent having earned bachelor’s degrees or higher, and include the highest share of new arrivals, with 22 percent having lived in the city for 10 years or less. They are also the least diverse of the four groups in terms of race and ethnicity. Fifty-nine percent are white, 25 percent black, and 8 percent Hispanic. And 59 percent are male.

Enthusiastic Urbanists’ Answers to Key Questions

	Enthusiastic Urbanists	Overall sample
A thriving Center City is the key to Philadelphia’s economic well-being	74%	28%
City should do more to attract and retain new residents	69%	28%
City should do more to attract middle- and upper-income people to struggling neighborhoods	59%	26%
Almost all police are trustworthy and do their jobs properly	59%	33%
Philadelphia is an underappreciated city with a lot going for it	77%	54%
Philadelphia is headed in the right direction	68%	48%
Reducing business taxes will help create jobs	70%	57%
Feel safe outside in neighborhood at night	80%	60%

Source: The Pew Philadelphia Poll, 2015
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Common ground

The groups, for all of their differences, agree on quite a bit.

All four believe—and by substantial margins—that immigrants “bring new people and vitality to Philadelphia’s neighborhoods” rather than “create or add to the problems in city neighborhoods.” They also have a favorable view of labor unions, agreeing with the statement that strong unions “help Philadelphians get the wages and benefits they need” rather than serve as “obstacles to economic growth and progress.”

In addition, there is a broad consensus that K-12 education, jobs, and public safety are the three biggest issues facing the city. And all are split almost evenly on whether they would prefer to pay higher taxes and receive more services from local government or pay lower taxes and receive fewer services.³

Methodology

The assignment of individual Philadelphians to the four groups, as well as the determination of the defining characteristics of the groups, is based on responses of a random sample of residents to 26 survey questions about their attitudes regarding the city. Most of those questions were asked in what is known as a “balanced alternative” format, in which respondents are asked to choose which of two statements more closely reflects their own views.

The groups were created using cluster analysis, which was performed by Douglas Steinley, professor of psychological sciences at the University of Missouri and an expert in the field. Cluster analysis is a statistical procedure that uses respondents’ scores on all 26 items to sort them into relatively homogeneous groups.

The results depend largely on the content of the questions used to create the typology—there were more than 26 questions in the poll—and the number of groups to be created. Each cluster model was run several thousand times to identify the solution that produced groups that were both homogeneous internally and different from one another. The final model selected to produce the typology discussed in this brief was judged to be the strongest from a statistical point of view and most relevant from a substantive one.

All of the responses used to develop the typology were collected in a public opinion poll conducted for Pew by telephone from Jan. 28 to Feb. 19, 2015, of a citywide random sample of 1,603 city residents 18 and older. Interviews were conducted with 640 landline users and 963 cellphone users to reach a broad representative sample.

The final sample was weighted to reflect the demographic breakdown of the city. The margin of error for the entire sample is approximately plus or minus 2.5 percentage points. The margin of error is higher for subgroups. Surveys are subject to other error sources as well, including sampling coverage error, record error, and respondent error.

The following are the 26 questions used to create the four groups of Philadelphians, along with results from the entire sample. Questions in which respondents were asked to choose between two statements were posed this way: “I’m going to read you some pairs of statements about Philadelphia. Please just tell me which comes closest to your view, even if neither is exactly right.” In other questions—such as “How would you rate the job public schools are doing in Philadelphia?”—in which respondents were given four choices, the two positive answers (good and excellent) were grouped together in tallying responses as were the two negative answers (only fair and poor).

1. I hope to live the rest of my life in the city (37 percent), or it would be easy for me to leave the city if the right circumstances came along (61 percent).
2. Philadelphia is an underappreciated city with a lot going for it (54 percent), or Philadelphia is a city with more than its share of problems (41 percent).

3. You often don't have enough money to make ends meet (43 percent), or paying the bills is generally not a problem for you (54 percent).
4. Almost all police are trustworthy and do their jobs properly (33 percent), or not all police are trustworthy and do their jobs properly (62 percent).
5. In Philadelphia, race is often a major factor in government decisions and policies (55 percent), or in Philadelphia, race is rarely a major factor in government decisions and policies (36 percent).
6. Reducing the city tax on businesses will help create jobs (57 percent), or reducing the city business taxes will only help businesses to make more profit (33 percent).
7. Poor people today have it easy because they can get government benefits without doing anything in return (33 percent), or poor people have hard lives because government benefits don't go far enough to help them live decently (56 percent).
8. A thriving Center City is the key to Philadelphia's economic well-being (28 percent), or too much attention has been paid to Center City and not enough to the city's neighborhoods (66 percent).
9. The city should do more to attract and retain new residents (28 percent), or the city should do more for longtime residents (64 percent).
10. How would you rate the job public schools are doing in Philadelphia? Excellent or good, 19 percent; only fair or poor, 77 percent.
11. Most people who want to get ahead in Philadelphia can make it if they work hard (70 percent), or hard work and determination are no guarantee of success for most people who live here (27 percent).
12. The city should do more to attract middle- and upper-income people to struggling neighborhoods (26 percent), or the city should do more to help longtime residents stay in their neighborhoods when housing costs rise (67 percent).
13. Philadelphia's best days are behind it (26 percent), or Philadelphia's best days are ahead of it (65 percent).
14. Immigrants bring new people and vitality to Philadelphia's neighborhoods (66 percent), or immigrants create or add to the problems in city neighborhoods (24 percent).
15. Do you think things in Philadelphia are generally headed in the right direction (48 percent), or would you say that things are pretty seriously off on the wrong track (33 percent)?
16. Are you satisfied or not very satisfied with your current housing? Satisfied 83 percent, not satisfied 16 percent.
17. Thinking about how your own life might unfold over the next 5 to 10 years, how likely are you to be living in Philadelphia? Likely 67 percent, not likely 30 percent.
18. How would you rate your neighborhood as a place to live? Excellent or good 61 percent, only fair or poor 39 percent.
19. Would you say that religion is a very important part of your life (69 percent), or religion is not that important to you (29 percent)?
20. How safe do you feel when you are out in your neighborhood at night? Safe 60 percent, unsafe 37 percent.
21. How often do you go to a church or a house of worship in an average month? More than once, 43 percent; once or less, 54 percent.

22. Would you say that you have a lot in common with the people who live around you in your neighborhood (54 percent), or not very much in common (39 percent)?
23. How would you rate Philadelphia as a place to live? Excellent or good, 64 percent; only fair or poor, 35 percent.
24. How would you rate your personal financial situation? Excellent or good, 40 percent; only fair or poor, 59 percent.
25. All things considered, do you think you would or would not recommend Philadelphia to a friend as a place to live? Would 70 percent, would not 24 percent.
26. How friendly are you with the neighbors who live next to your house or apartment? Friendly 87 percent, not friendly 10 percent.

Acknowledgments

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Endnotes

- 1 Pew Research Center, “Beyond Red vs. Blue: The Political Typology” (June 26, 2014), <http://www.people-press.org/2014/06/26/the-political-typology-beyond-red-vs-blue>.
- 2 The poll on which this report is based covered a wide range of topics beyond the 26 questions used to delineate the four groups of Philadelphians. Once the groups were established, we went back and looked at how the members of each one had answered all of the survey questions—including those that were not used to create the delineations. We used the answers to several of those questions, including the one cited here concerning police treatment of blacks and whites, to provide a fuller picture of the four groups.
- 3 Several of these questions were not among the 26 used in the cluster analysis, which was primarily about delineating differences rather than shared attitudes.

About the Philadelphia research initiative

Pew's Philadelphia research initiative provides timely, impartial research and analysis on key issues facing Philadelphia for the benefit of the city's residents and leaders.

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