



Voice of Young Philadelphia: Decide, Discuss, Vote Survey: Top 5 Issues of 2007

Young America PAC, Young Involved Philadelphia and the Greater Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce's Young Professional Network with support from the Committee of Seventy announces the issues important to young professionals this election year.

489 of the Philadelphia region's young adults responded to the survey released by "Voice of Young Philadelphia: Decide, Discuss, Vote," sponsored by Young America PAC, Young Involved Philadelphia and the Greater Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce's Young Professional Network with support from the Committee of Seventy. The survey conducted over a 2-week period asked participants to choose 5 issues which they saw as important this election year, out of a predetermined list of 35. Additionally, respondents were asked to answer optional demographic questions. These included: zip code of residence, age, sex, race/ethnicity, occupation, and educational background.

What was important to the Young Philadelphians surveyed?

The overall top-ranked issue by those responding to the survey was Crime/Gun Control and Criminal Justice at 65.2%. Breaking down this information further, it was in the top 5 of responses in every neighborhood. A surprising number 2 in overall rankings was Mass/Public Transportation at 42.1%.

Issues that were not ranked in the top 5 overall but did rank in the top 5 in specific communities include Taxes, Poverty/Homelessness/Housing, and Neighborhood/Community Development.

The Top 5 Issues based on this overall survey results:

1. Crime/Gun Control/Criminal Justice (65.2%)
2. Mass/Public Transit (42.7%)
3. Economic Development (41.1%)
4. Education and Early Education (37%)
5. Job Growth and Retention (35.8%)

Respondents were also offered the opportunity to share their thoughts or comments about the selections they made. With the information provided from this survey, the three organizations above will be working together on events focused on the issues most important to the Young Philadelphians represented in the survey results – with the goal to discuss and educate on the issues, so that individuals are informed when they got to the polls in May.

For more detailed information on the survey results, please contact Patty Byrnes at 267-228-4601 or Marlon Satchel at 215-681-6921.

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Insight by Survey Participants

The survey asked participants to rank what they believed to be the Top 5 issues facing the City of Philadelphia at this time. The second question in our survey asked participants to share some of their comments or thoughts about their selections. Below is a sampling of those responses.

"The crime/gun violence in this city is point blank too high and getting scarier each day. I've found myself starting to fear being out in the dark nearly anywhere in the city, whether it's known as a "good" neighborhood or not. I have children in the school who come in completely desensitized after their sibling or parent is shot in a drive-by, committed suicide, etc. This is what our children are growing up in and what they turn to."

- Female, 26, Southwest Philadelphia

"As a young Philadelphian and dedicated urbanite who plans to have children in the next few years, it's important to me that the City know I would plan to move out of center city rather than subject my children to Philadelphia's public school system."

- Female, 28, Center City

"Improving the mass transit and making it more affordable will improve so many of the other options listed on this survey - give people a chance to get to work, to work at all, kids get to school, a way to cut down on cards, etc. and the city has nowhere to go but up."

- Female, 26, Southwest Philadelphia

"Taxes - my paycheck takes a significant hit for the city tax . . . I love the city, but for many this tax is reason enough to live outside of the city."

- Male, 26, South Philadelphia

"I would like to see a lot of things done with Philadelphia to make it a beautiful place to live in and visit, but obviously higher up on the list are things like fixing a broken city by stopping the violence, ending homelessness (a lofty goal, but it shouldn't be), creating jobs/building up industry and selfishly how about better cleaner and more reliable transit options."

- Female, 27, Fairmount

"A solid job and tax based is the key in order to afford the various city services."

- Male, 33, Center City

"With crime rates involving Philadelphia's youth increasing, I believe that we should focus on empowering children to become better citizens. This is why I believe this is one of the most paramount issues our city is being faced with today. 'Our children are our future leaders'."

- Female 23, University City

". . . But, I do think that one of the strategies that we should use to address a lot of problems facing Philadelphia is start off our youngest generation on the right foot. That means proper healthcare, housing, education, and stable family networks and communities."

Female, 29, Fairmount

"Crime is out of control. If the next mayor does not resolve the problem, we will leave the city and I think many young people will decide not to stay."

- Female, 29, Center City

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Who responded to this poll?

- Of the 476 who shared their gender, 52.7% were female, 47.3% male
- The ages of our respondents ranged from 18-63, although of the 471 respondents who gave their age, 266 were between the ages of 20-29, and 174 were between the ages of 30-39.
- Of the 465 who shared their racial background, 84.7% considered themselves to be white, 10.1 % Black or African-American; 1.5% Hispanic or Latino, 2.4% Asian, and 4.7% other races. Several respondents considered themselves to be of more than one race.
- Of the 468 respondents who shared their zip codes, 103 live in South Philadelphia, 91 in Center City, 48 in the Art Museum/Fairmount section, 43 in West Philadelphia, 36 in Germantown/Chestnut Hill/Mt. Airy, 25 in North and Northeast Philadelphia, 21 in Southwest Philadelphia, 20 in Roxborough/Manayunk, 16 in Northern Liberties, and 10 in New Jersey. 55 other respondents hail from the greater Philadelphia region.
- Of the 477 respondents who told us about their educational background, 46.3% have completed graduate school of some sort, 46.1% have completed college, 7% have had some college courses.
- Respondents came from a variety of careers. 16.1% work in the non-profit field, 13.3% in law, 9.9% in government and politics, 8% in education, and 7.4% in finance. 3.6% were students.

About Surveying Organizations

Young America PAC (YA PAC)

The Young America PAC has served as an organization for over 10 years; reaching out to Young Professionals in the Philadelphia region and encouraging them to get involved in the electoral and governmental processes. By holding “Grip and Grins,” Issues and Policy Forums and Happy Hours, the Young America PAC has increased the awareness of issues most important to Young Professionals in our area. By bringing in the decision-makers for informal discussions and questions, a true connection and understanding of how politics works and policies are enacted, can be created. For more information, visit our website at <http://www.youngamericapac.org/>.

Contact: Patty Byrnes at 267-228-4601 or patricia.byrnes@bipc.com

Young Involved Philadelphia (YIP)

Young Involved Philadelphia is a non-profit organization that aims to increase civic engagement among young Philadelphians and to facilitate reforms that help create a better Philadelphia. We aim to create an environment where we can become fully integrated citizens who are aware of the social, political, and cultural climate around us. We also strive to engineer reforms that improve this city and make a better place to live, work, and play. YIP achieves these goals via education about civic affairs, advocacy around key issues facing the city, and social events and outings. While YIP's primary mission is to engage young adults, it brings together the young and young-at-heart to work for a brighter future for Philadelphia. To find out more about YIP, please stop by our webpage at <http://www.younginvolvedphila.org/>.

Contact: Marlon Satchell at 215-681-6921 or marlon.satchell@pobox.com

Greater Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce's Young Professional Network (YPN)

YPN is a personal and professional development program of the Greater Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce designed to allow young business people to interact socially, exchange ideas and share

common interests and provides an insider's view of the regional business scene. YPN has always been involved in issues that affect young professionals across the region. For more information call (215) 545-1234 or visit <http://www.ypnphilly.com/>.
Contact: Barbara Saverino at 215.790.3647 or bsaverino@greaterphilachamber.com

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