



# INSTITUTE OF POLITICS UMBC Poll

**Results embargoed until 12:01 a.m. on Tuesday, April 28, 2026**

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## **Topics:**

- Direction of Baltimore City and County
- Attitudes toward the future of Baltimore City and County
- Trust in Baltimore City and County government
- Trust in Baltimore-based news organizations
- Quality of life issues facing Baltimore City and County residents
- Satisfaction with Baltimore City and County government services
- Expected length of residency

**Tuesday, April 28, 2026 (Baltimore):** The UMBC Poll surveyed adult residents of Baltimore City (**n=666, MOE=±3.8%**) and County (**n=602, MOE=±4.0%**) from **Tuesday, April 14 to Sunday, April 19, 2026**. Please refer to the methodology statement for information regarding data collection, sample demographics, and the topline results for the questions as worded in the order in which they were administered to respondents.

[Click here for results by demographics.](#)

The UMBC Institute of Politics will release **Part 2** of this survey on **Wednesday, April 29, at 12:01 a.m.** For previous UMBC Poll results and information about the UMBC Institute of Politics, go to: <https://politics.umbc.edu/>

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## Direction, optimism, and residency plans in Baltimore City and County

Baltimore City and County residents were asked about the direction of their jurisdictions and their optimism about their future.

### Among Baltimore City residents:

**Forty-one percent** of residents think the city is heading in the right direction, **45 percent** say it's off on the wrong track, and **10 percent** don't know.

- *April 2025:* 41 percent of residents thought the city was heading in the right direction, 47 percent said it was off on the wrong track, and 11 percent didn't know.

**Sixty-one percent** of residents are optimistic about the future of Baltimore City, and **34 percent** are pessimistic.

### Among Baltimore County residents:

**Thirty-one percent** think the county is heading in the right direction, **50 percent** say it's off on the wrong track, and **17 percent** don't know.

- *April 2025:* 34 percent of residents thought the county was heading in the right direction, 51 percent said it was off on the wrong track, and 15 percent didn't know.

**Forty-eight percent** of residents are optimistic about the future of Baltimore County, and **43 percent** are pessimistic.

Pluralities of Baltimore City (**38 percent**) and County (**35 percent**) residents plan to live in their jurisdiction for "more than 20 years" or for "the rest of my life." **Nineteen percent** of residents plan on staying in Baltimore City for 3 years or less, as do **14 percent** of Baltimore County residents.

## Trust in local governments and Baltimore-based news organizations

Residents were asked how often they could trust their local government to do what is right and how much they trust the news and information reported by Baltimore-based news organizations.

### Among Baltimore City residents:

**Sixty-two percent** say they can trust their local government “never” or “only some of the time,” and **35 percent** say they can trust their local government “just about always” or “most of the time.”

- *April 2025:* 65 percent of residents said they could trust their local government “never” or “only some of the time,” and 32 percent said they could trust their local government “just about always” or “most of the time.”

**Sixty-one percent** of Baltimore City residents say they have “a lot” or “some” trust that the local news and information from Baltimore-based news organizations is fair and accurate, and **38 percent** say they have no trust at all or “only a little” bit of trust.

- *April 2025:* 62 percent of Baltimore City residents said they had “a lot” or “some” trust that the local news and information from Baltimore-based news organizations is fair and accurate, and 34 percent said they had no trust at all or “only a little” bit of trust.

### Among Baltimore County residents:

**Sixty-three percent** of Baltimore County residents say they can trust their local government “never” or “only some of the time,” and **32 percent** say they can trust their local government “just about always” or “most of the time.”

- *April 2025:* 60 percent of residents said they could trust their local government “never” or “only some of the time,” and 37 percent said they could trust their local government “just about always” or “most of the time.”

**Fifty-five percent** of county residents say they have “a lot” or “some” trust that the local news and information from Baltimore-based news organizations is fair and accurate, and **42 percent** say they have no trust at all or “only a little” bit of trust.

- *April 2025:* 60 percent of Baltimore County residents said they had “a lot” or “some” trust that the local news and information from Baltimore-based news organizations is fair and accurate, and 34 percent said they had no trust at all or “only a little” bit of trust.

## Key issues facing Baltimore City and County residents

Baltimore City and County residents were asked to rate whether a series of issues were a major, minor, or not an issue facing residents in their respective jurisdictions.

The percentages in the table below represent a “major” issue:

	Baltimore City	Baltimore County
The cost and availability of housing	74	67
The condition of roads and highways	71	56
The amount of traffic or commute times	44	52
The amount of local taxes and fees that residents pay	71	69
The quality of K-12 public schools	69	56
The availability and quality of public transportation	45	33
Crime and public safety	78	67
The cost of household energy bills	83	82
Economic growth and development	68	53
Services that support families and children	58	45
The availability of parks, public spaces, and rec facilities	35	28
Poverty and homelessness	83	58

## Ratings of public services in Baltimore City and County

Baltimore City and County residents were asked to rate their satisfaction or dissatisfaction with how their local governments were handling public services.

The percentages in the table below represent a rating of “very satisfied” or “satisfied”:

	Baltimore City	Baltimore County
Trash pickup	64	84
Recycling pickup	65	80
The responsiveness of emergency services	54	74
Policing and public safety	40	57
Water billing and administration	32	49
Parking enforcement	42	56
Courts and the criminal justice system	32	42
K-12 public schools	28	41
Maintaining local infrastructure, streets, and public spaces	29	47

## Methodology Statement

The UMBC Poll is conducted under the auspices of the UMBC Institute of Politics (IoP) and is funded by the UMBC College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences.

The UMBC Poll surveyed adult residents of Baltimore City (**n=666**) and County (**n=602**) from **Tuesday, April 14 to Sunday, April 19, 2026**. The poll was conducted by live interviewers and text-to-web utilizing a dual-frame (landline and cell phone) random sample stratified by county.

Text-to-web: **48 percent** (Baltimore City) / **45 percent** (Baltimore County)

Live-caller cell phone: **44 percent** (Baltimore City) / **53 percent** (Baltimore County)

Live-caller landline: **8 percent** (Baltimore City) / **2 percent** (Baltimore County)

Interviews were conducted from 1 to 8 p.m., and interviewers attempted to reach respondents with working phone numbers up to 5 times. Braun Research provided the sample of telephone numbers and the data collection.

There is a 95 percent probability that the survey results have the following percentage point sampling error from the actual population distribution for any given survey question:

**MOE=±3.8%** for the sample of **666** Baltimore City residents

**MOE=±4.0%** for the sample of **602** Baltimore County residents

The margin of sampling error is higher for subgroups and is not adjusted for design effects. Like all public opinion polls, the UMBC Poll is also subject to non-sampling error, including non-response bias, question-order effects, and question-wording effects. The topline results include the questions as worded in the order in which they were administered to respondents.

Mileah Kromer, Director of the UMBC Institute of Politics, and Ian Anson, Associate Director, analyze the data collected by the UMBC Poll. Under their supervision, research assistants Trisha Sirsat, Audrey Grutzik, and Sofia Cabrera support all aspects of the IoP's work as part of UMBC's commitment to innovative teaching and learning, research across disciplines, and civic engagement.

The UMBC Poll is committed to methodological transparency. If you have questions about the poll's methodology, contact Mileah Kromer, Director, UMBC Institute of Politics, at [mkromer@umbc.edu](mailto:mkromer@umbc.edu).

## Sample Demographics (in percent) and Weighting

Survey data were weighted by gender, age, race, educational attainment, and income to align with Baltimore City and County adult population parameters derived from the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimates. All results are reported as column percentages; figures may not sum to exactly 100 percent due to rounding and the application of survey weights.

		Balt City population parameter	Balt City sample estimate <b>n=666</b> <b>±3.8%</b>	Balt Co population parameter	Balt Co sample estimate <b>n=602</b> <b>±4.0%</b>
Gender	Male	45	45	47	47
	Female	54	55	53	53
Age	18-24	11	11	11	11
	25-34	23	23	17	17
	35-44	18	18	17	17
	45-54	13	13	16	15
	55-64	16	16	18	18
	65+	19	19	22	22
Race	White	29	29	55	56
	Black	58	59	29	29
	Hispanic/Latino	6	6	6	6
	Asian	3	3	6	6
	All other	10	3	5	3
Education	High school diploma or less	40	41	33	34
	Some college or associate's degree	25	25	27	28
	Bachelor's degree	18	18	22	22
	Graduate or professional degree	16	16	16	17
Income	Under \$40,000	26	29	15	16
	\$40,000 to under \$75,000	23	25	19	21
	\$75,000 to under \$125,000	20	22	23	26
	\$125,000 or more	22	24	33	37

## Other sample demographics (in percent)

The data are not weighted by these characteristics.

		Balt City population parameter	Balt City sample estimate <b>n=666</b> <b>±3.8%</b>	Balt Co population parameter	Balt Co sample estimate <b>n=602</b> <b>±4.0%</b>
Party*	Democrat	73	71	52	45
	Republican	7	11	24	31
	Unaffiliated	18	17	22	24
	Other	2	0	2	1
Ideology	Conservative	--	21	--	31
	Moderate	--	40	--	49
	Progressive	--	39	--	20
Residency length	Less than a year	--	3	--	3
	One to 5 years	--	11	--	10
	6 to 10 years	--	9	--	10
	More than 10 years	--	77	--	77
Children in home	No	--	68	--	66
	Yes	--	32	--	34

\*The "party" population parameter is established by the Maryland State Board of Elections Voter Registration Activity Report (March 2026).

### Question design codes:

- **Bracketed items [ ]**: Items in brackets in the questions are administered in a randomized order.
- **Probe (p)**: Response options that include a (p) indicate the use of a probe maneuver to determine a respondent's intensity of expressed opinion. Example: Do you have a [favorable or unfavorable] opinion of <item>? Would you say very favorable/unfavorable?
- **Open-ended**: Open-ended questions have no defined set of response options.
- **Volunteer (v)**: Response options that include a (v) indicate that the respondent offered a response not read to them in the question.

The UMBC Institute of Politics is a member of the [American Association for Public Opinion Research's Transparency Initiative](#) and provides the required elements of disclosure with every release.



## Topline Results

The topline results below represent the sample of **666** Baltimore City residents (**MOE=±3.8%**) and **602** Baltimore County residents (**MOE=±4.0%**). Results are reported as column percentages and may not sum to exactly 100 due to weighting and rounding. [Click here for results by demographics.](#)

Label	Question	Baltimore City Adults n=666 ±3.8%	Baltimore County Adults n=602 ±4.0%
<b>Q: TRACK</b>	To get started, do you think that things in <b>Baltimore City / Baltimore County</b> [are heading in the right direction or are off on the wrong track]?	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Percent</b>
	Wrong track	45	50
	Right direction	41	31
	Don't know (v)	10	17
	Refused (v)	3	2
<b>Q: AHEAD</b>	In general, are you [pessimistic or optimistic] about the future of <b>Baltimore City / Baltimore County</b> ?	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>PROBE</b>	Very pessimistic (p)	16	18
	Pessimistic	18	25
	Optimistic	43	38
	Very optimistic (p)	18	10
	Don't know (v)	4	9
	Refused (v)	1	1
<b>Q: GOVT_TRUST</b>	How often can you trust your local <b>Baltimore City / Baltimore County</b> government to do what is right:	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Percent</b>
	Never	21	18
	Only some of the time	41	45
	Most of the time	28	27
	Just about always	7	5
	Don't know (v)	2	5
	Refused (v)	1	1
<b>Q: NEWS_TRUST</b>	In general, how much do you trust that the local news and information reported by Baltimore-based news organizations is fair and accurate:	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Percent</b>
	Not at all	14	17
	A little	24	25
	Some	41	40
	A lot	20	15
	Don't know (v)	1	3
	Refused (v)	0	0

**Q: ISSUES** The following is a list of issues. As I read each one, please tell me whether you think it is a [major issue, minor issue, or not an issue] facing **Baltimore City / Baltimore County** residents:

*Q: HOUSING to Q: POVERTY were administered to respondents in a randomized order.*

<b>Q: HOUSING</b>	<i>The cost and availability of housing</i>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Percent</b>
	Not an issue	4	9
	Minor issue	18	20
	Major issue	74	67
	Don't know (v)	4	3
	Refused (v)	0	0
<b>Q: ROADS</b>	<i>The condition of roads and highways in <b>Baltimore City / Baltimore County</b></i>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Percent</b>
	Not an issue	3	9
	Minor issue	24	33
	Major issue	71	56
	Don't know (v)	1	1
	Refused (v)	0	0
<b>Q: TRAFFIC</b>	<i>The amount of traffic or commute times</i>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Percent</b>
	Not an issue	12	12
	Minor issue	39	34
	Major issue	44	52
	Don't know (v)	4	1
	Refused (v)	1	1
<b>Q: PAY</b>	<i>The amount of local taxes and fees that residents pay</i>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Percent</b>
	Not an issue	5	10
	Minor issue	20	17
	Major issue	71	69
	Don't know (v)	3	3
	Refused (v)	1	1
<b>Q: PUBLICEDU</b>	<i>The quality of K-12 public schools</i>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Percent</b>
	Not an issue	7	11
	Minor issue	17	25
	Major issue	69	56
	Don't know (v)	6	7
	Refused (v)	0	1
<b>Q: PUBTRANSIT</b>	<i>The availability and quality of public transportation</i>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Percent</b>
	Not an issue	15	24
	Minor issue	33	35
	Major issue	45	33
	Don't know (v)	7	8
	Refused (v)	0	0

<b>Q: CRIME</b>	<i>Crime and public safety</i>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Percent</b>
	Not an issue	3	6
	Minor issue	18	25
	Major issue	78	67
	Don't know (v)	1	2
	Refused (v)	0	0
<b>Q: BILLS</b>	<i>The cost of household energy bills</i>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Percent</b>
	Not an issue	3	5
	Minor issue	12	12
	Major issue	83	82
	Don't know (v)	2	1
	Refused (v)	0	0
<b>Q: GROWTH</b>	<i>Economic growth and development</i>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Percent</b>
	Not an issue	5	13
	Minor issue	23	30
	Major issue	68	53
	Don't know (v)	4	4
	Refused (v)	1	0
<b>Q: PARENTS</b>	<i>Services that support families and children</i>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Percent</b>
	Not an issue	10	17
	Minor issue	22	26
	Major issue	58	45
	Don't know (v)	10	11
	Refused (v)	1	1
<b>Q: SPACES</b>	<i>The availability of parks, public spaces, and recreational facilities</i>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Percent</b>
	Not an issue	19	33
	Minor issue	40	35
	Major issue	35	28
	Don't know (v)	5	3
	Refused (v)	0	0
<b>Q: POVERTY</b>	<i>Poverty and homelessness</i>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Percent</b>
	Not an issue	2	9
	Minor issue	13	28
	Major issue	83	58
	Don't know (v)	2	4
	Refused (v)	0	1

**Q: SERVICES** The following is a list of services provided by your local government. For each one, please tell me whether you are [dissatisfied or satisfied] with how the **Baltimore City / Baltimore County government handles it.**

*Q: TRASH to Q: MAINTAIN were administered to respondents in a randomized order.*

<b>Q: TRASH</b>	<i>Trash pickup</i>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>PROBE</b>	Very dissatisfied (p)	14	4
	Dissatisfied	18	10
	Satisfied	46	52
	Very satisfied (p)	18	32
	Don't know (v)	3	2
	Refused (v)	0	0
<b>Q: RECYCLING</b>	<i>Recycling pickup</i>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>PROBE</b>	Very dissatisfied (p)	13	5
	Dissatisfied	17	9
	Satisfied	46	49
	Very satisfied (p)	19	31
	Don't know (v)	5	5
	Refused (v)	0	1
<b>Q: EMERGENCY</b>	<i>The responsiveness of emergency services</i>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>PROBE</b>	Very dissatisfied (p)	10	5
	Dissatisfied	23	10
	Satisfied	40	44
	Very satisfied (p)	14	30
	Don't know (v)	12	11
	Refused (v)	0	0
<b>Q: POLICING</b>	<i>Policing and public safety</i>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>PROBE</b>	Very dissatisfied (p)	21	13
	Dissatisfied	32	25
	Satisfied	32	43
	Very satisfied (p)	8	14
	Don't know (v)	4	4
	Refused (v)	2	1
<b>Q: WATER</b>	<i>Water billing and administration</i>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>PROBE</b>	Very dissatisfied (p)	29	17
	Dissatisfied	31	21
	Satisfied	23	39
	Very satisfied (p)	9	10
	Don't know (v)	8	11
	Refused (v)	0	2

<b>Q: PARKING</b>	<i>Parking enforcement</i>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>PROBE</b>	Very dissatisfied (p)	17	11
	Dissatisfied	26	14
	Satisfied	33	45
	Very satisfied (p)	9	11
	Don't know (v)	12	18
	Refused (v)	2	1
<b>Q: CRIMINAL</b>	<i>Courts and the criminal justice system</i>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>PROBE</b>	Very dissatisfied (p)	24	18
	Dissatisfied	30	25
	Satisfied	24	34
	Very satisfied (p)	8	8
	Don't know (v)	13	13
	Refused (v)	1	1
<b>Q: PUBSCHOOLS</b>	<i>K-12 public schools</i>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>PROBE</b>	Very dissatisfied (p)	26	17
	Dissatisfied	28	28
	Satisfied	21	30
	Very satisfied (p)	7	11
	Don't know (v)	17	13
	Refused (v)	1	1
<b>Q: MAINTAIN</b>	<i>Maintaining local infrastructure, streets, and public spaces</i>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>PROBE</b>	Very dissatisfied (p)	28	17
	Dissatisfied	39	32
	Satisfied	25	38
	Very satisfied (p)	4	9
	Don't know (v)	4	3
	Refused (v)	0	1
<b>Q: LONGLIVE</b>	<i>How long do you plan on living in Baltimore City / Baltimore County?</i>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Percent</b>
	Less than a year	4	5
	1 - 3 years	15	9
	4 - 6 years	10	9
	7 - 9 years	5	7
	10 to 20 years	10	12
	More than 20 years	15	15
	Forever or the rest of my life (v)	23	20
	Don't know (v)	15	22
	Refused (v)	3	1



### **Our Mission**

UMBC is a dynamic public research university integrating teaching, research and service to benefit the citizens of Maryland. As an Honors University, the campus offers academically talented students a strong undergraduate liberal arts foundation that prepares them for graduate and professional study, entry into the workforce, and community service and leadership.

UMBC emphasizes science, engineering, information technology, human services and public policy at the graduate level. UMBC contributes to the economic development of the State and the region through entrepreneurial initiatives, workforce training, K-12 partnerships, and technology commercialization in collaboration with public agencies and the corporate community. UMBC is dedicated to cultural and ethnic diversity, social responsibility and lifelong learning.

### **Our Vision**

Our UMBC community redefines excellence in higher education through an inclusive culture that connects innovative teaching and learning, research across disciplines, and civic engagement. We will advance knowledge, economic prosperity, and social justice by welcoming and inspiring inquisitive minds from all backgrounds.