

UCF | PUERTO RICO RESEARCH HUB



2026 Orange County, FL Primary Election - Exit Poll Results

Full Report



FOCUS:

Orange County, FL Voters Motivations and Priorities 2026 Orange County Primary Election Exit Poll

Our Survey

The 2026 Orange County Exit Poll was designed to provide a timely understanding of the voting experiences, priorities, and demographic characteristics of Orange County voters. The study examines respondents' voting behaviors within the 2026 election context, their opinions on key issues included in the Puerto Rico Research Hub exit poll survey, and the demographic characteristics of those who participated. Consistent with the mission of UCF's Puerto Rico Research Hub, the study also gives focused attention to the experiences and perspectives of Puerto Rican voters in Orange County, while recognizing the limitations associated with the subgroup's small sample size. Where sufficient data are available, the analysis explores differences across key demographic groups to identify potentially meaningful variations in respondents' priorities, attitudes, and voting experiences.

The *2026 Orange County, FL Primary Election Exit Poll (Summer 2026)* was conducted during the primary election early voting dates of August 3 – August 13, 2026. The University of Central Florida's Puerto Rico Research Hub (PRRH) partnered with the company Summit Survey Research to distribute the survey to voters leaving the early voting site through iPad/tablet intercept surveys. To qualify, respondents had to have just voted at the University of Central Florida (UCF) early voting site located at the Barbara Ying Building on the main UCF campus, be 18 years of age, and be residents of Orange County, Florida.

The survey distribution and analyses were conducted with approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at Biomedical Research Alliance of New York (BRANY). The IRB consists of a committee established to advocate for the protection of the rights and welfare of human participants involved in research.

Responses from 96 individuals were collected via in-person iPad interview (n=94) and online through QR code provided on a flyer for individuals wishing to take the survey from home (n=2) using the survey software, Qualtrics, a secure online survey tool. The response rate was 59%, with 96 completed surveys and 68 refusals among 164 eligible respondents. Respondents to this exit poll are slightly younger, more often white, and more frequently belong to the Democratic party compared to the general Orange County population. Results in this report are broken out by demographics to compare responses across these groups.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

At a glance: voters arrived with urgency, low trust and a clear cost-of-living mandate

85%

DISSATISFIED WITH NATIONAL DIRECTION

RESULTS BY PARTY AFFILIATION

Democrat 93% | Republican 56%

82%

LOW OR NO TRUST IN FEDERAL OFFICIALS

RESULTS BY PARTY AFFILIATION

Democrat 88% | Republican 68%

49%

SELECTED LOWER EVERYDAY COSTS

RESULTS BY PARTY AFFILIATION

Democrat 47% | Republican 63%

WHAT STANDS OUT

- **Civic motivation was prominent.** More than one-third (35%) named routine voting or civic duty as the top reason for participating; democracy followed at 21%. The same three leading reasons appeared among both major-party groups, though emphasis varied. Democrats versus Republicans, respectively, were: routine voting/civic duty (33% vs. 42%), democracy (27% vs. 16%), and economy/cost of living (13% vs. 21%).
- **Economic pressure led the issue agenda.** Lower everyday costs ranked first (49%), ahead of improving schools/education (38%), affordable housing (35%) and healthcare access (35%). These results are consistent across party affiliation.
- **Respondents looked first to government for change.** Federal officials were selected most often (34%), with state and local officials tied at 22% each.
- **The sample reflects deep local roots.** Nearly half had lived in Orange County for 20 years or more; 72% had lived in Florida that long.
- **Puerto Rican subgroup findings comprise a small portion of the sample.** Only eight respondents identified as Puerto Rican; one response equals 13 percentage points.

The final sample includes 96 respondents. Political affiliation results include the 79 respondents who provided party affiliation to the two major parties.

Everyday costs led a broad agenda of economic and public-service concerns

MOST IMPORTANT PROBLEMS FACING THE COUNTRY

Respondents could select up to three issues; percentages therefore exceed 100%. Overall sample: n=96.



WHAT SHOULD ELECTED OFFICIALS FOCUS ON FIRST?

51%

OF EVERYDAY-COST RESPONDENTS
RANKED THIS ISSUE FIRST

41%

OF AFFORDABLE-HOUSING RESPONDENTS
RANKED THIS ISSUE FIRST

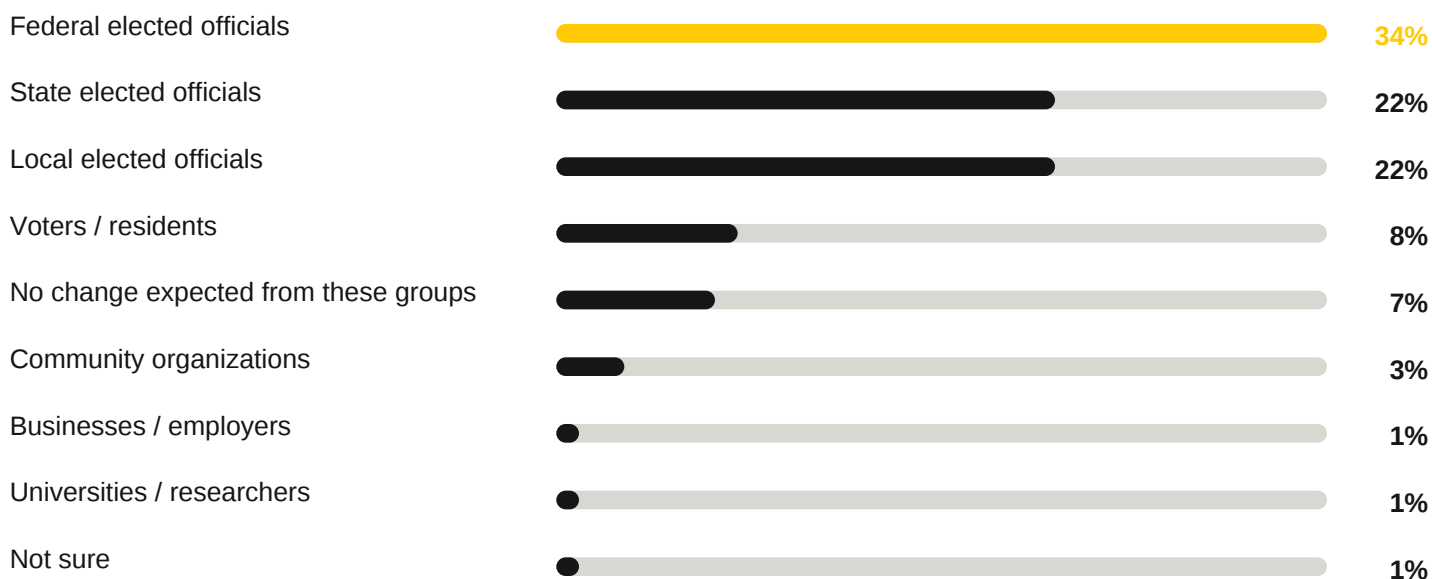
The rank-order exercise reinforces the economic message: cost relief and housing affordability were not only commonly selected, but were also among the concerns respondents most wanted officials to address first.

Party comparisons include Democrats and Republicans who provided affiliation (n=79). Improving healthcare access was the only listed problem with a statistically significant party difference: Democrats were more likely than Republicans to select this issue (42% vs. 16%).

Respondents expected government to act, even as confidence in federal officials remained weak

WHO IS MOST EXPECTED TO HELP MAKE CHANGE?

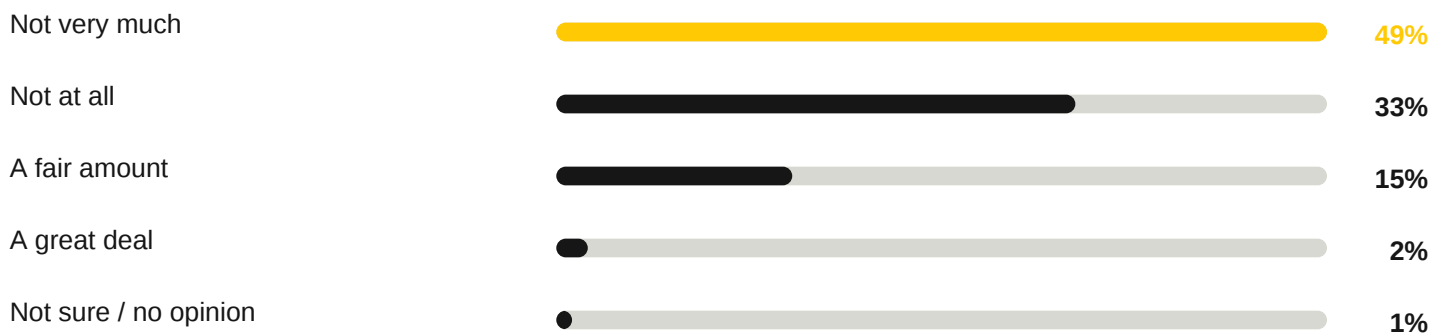
Base: n=95.



Both major-party groups ranked federal, state and local elected officials as their top three expected sources of change; Democrats were more likely than Republicans to select federal officials. Party comparison base: n=79.

TRUST IN FEDERALLY ELECTED OFFICIALS

Base: n=95.

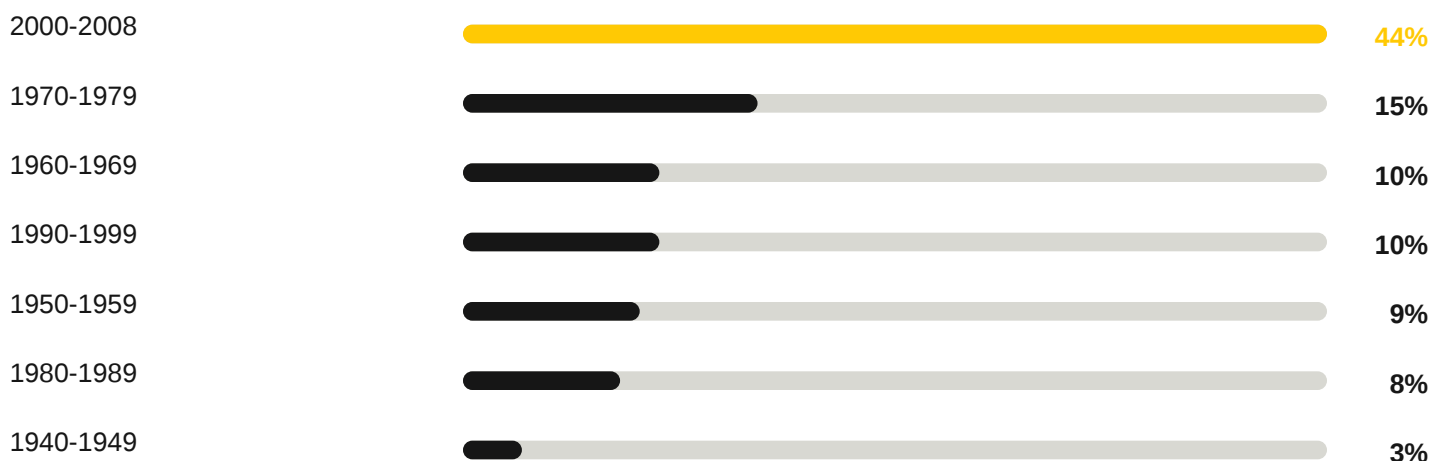


Low trust was similar across party groups: 52% of Democrats and 47% of Republicans reported that they did not trust federally elected officials. Party comparison base: n=79.

The respondent pool combined younger adults with long-term Florida and Orange County residents

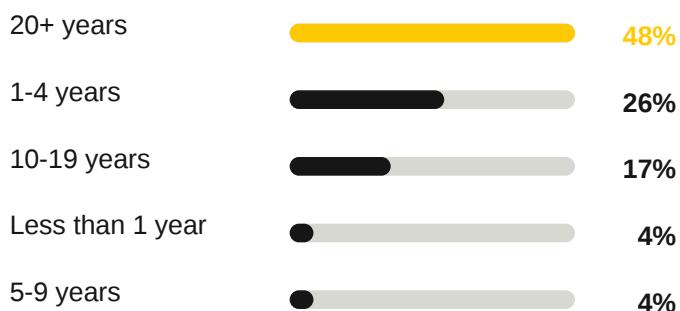
BIRTH-YEAR DISTRIBUTION

Base: n=88. Mean age 39, median age 32.

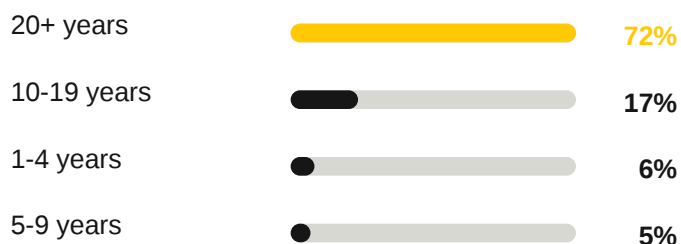


LENGTH OF RESIDENCE

ORANGE COUNTY | n=95



FLORIDA | n=95



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Table S0101, Orange County, FL, 2024 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates.

Race, ethnicity and household composition

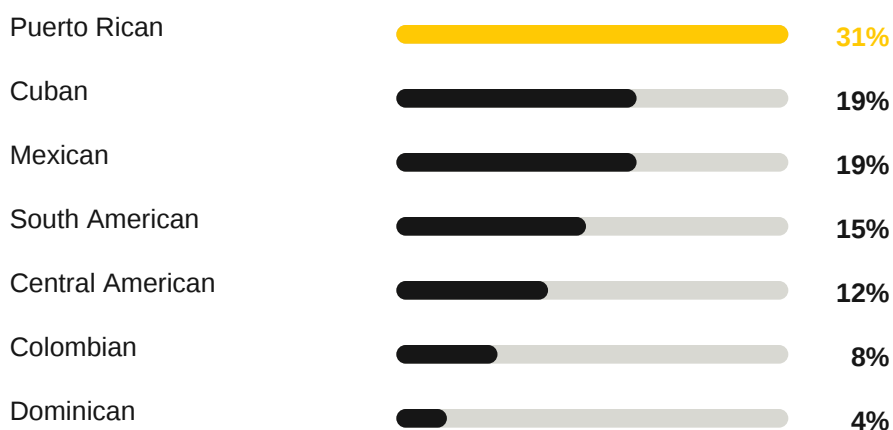
RACE OR ETHNICITY

Select all that apply; percentages exceed 100%. Base: n=93.



HISPANIC OR LATINO IDENTITY

Among Hispanic or Latino respondents. Chart base: n=26.



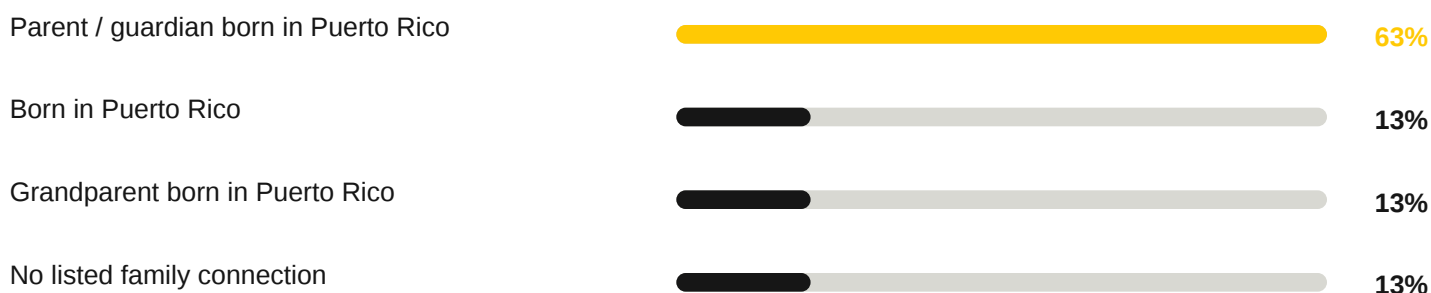
24%
HAD CHILDREN UNDER 18
LIVING IN THE HOUSEHOLD

A small Puerto Rican subgroup reported family ties, work-related migration and openness to return

n=8

IDENTIFIED AS PUERTO RICAN
- PLEASE INTERPRET WITH
CAUTION

CONNECTION TO PUERTO RICO



WHAT ORIGINALLY BROUGHT THE RESPONDENT OR FAMILY TO FLORIDA?



WOULD CONSIDER MOVING TO OR BACK TO PUERTO RICO

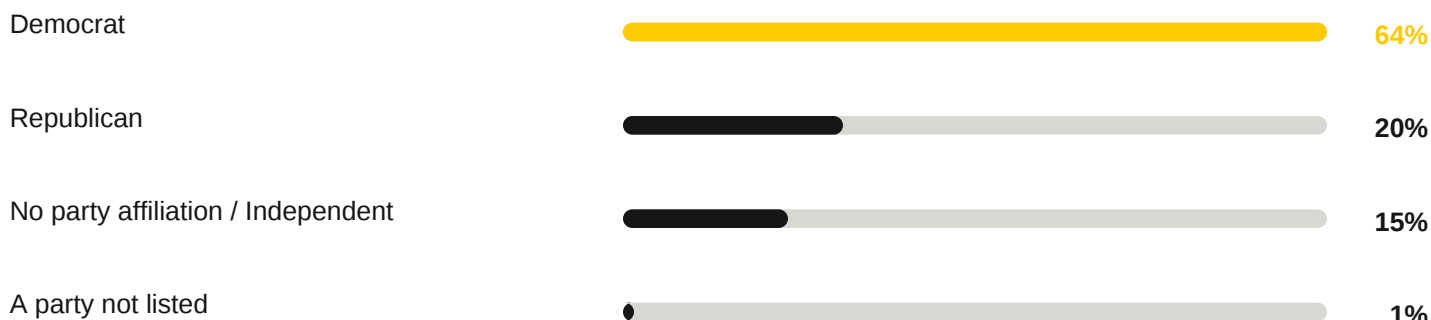


Caution: With n=8, one response equals 13 percentage points. These results provide respondent-level context, not population estimates.

Political affiliation and implications for interpretation

POLITICAL AFFILIATION

Base: n=94.



KEY TAKEAWAYS

1

Cost-of-living is the main priority

Everyday costs, housing, education and healthcare show coherently that affordability and community services are top of mind. These are the top concerns for Democrats and Republicans alike, with only healthcare access selected significantly more often by Democrats than Republicans. Residents are most concerned about the things that currently impact their day-to-day lives.

2

Government officials expected to address issues but there is a trust gap.

Respondents most frequently look to federally-elected officials for change, but confidence in those officials was low across groups in both major political parties. Democrats tended to list federally-elected officials more frequently than Republicans as responsible for fixing their most pressing issues. State and locally elected officials were listed next.

3

Many Puerto Rican residents cite work and job opportunities as the main reason for coming to Florida

While most Puerto Rican residents were not born in Puerto Rico, many have one or more parents/guardians who were born on the island. Most moved to Florida for work and job opportunities and half say they would move back to Puerto Rico now or in the future.

Technical notes and annotated results

STUDY STATUS AND ANALYTIC CONVENTIONS

This report summarizes the final sample of 96 respondents using question-level percentages. Total sample sizes vary across items because of item nonresponse, select-all-that-apply formats and survey routing. Percentages are rounded to whole numbers and may not sum to 100%.

QUESTION / BASE

TOPLINE RESULT

Participation motivation n=96	Civic duty 35%; democracy 21%; economy/cost of living 15%
National satisfaction n=95	Very dissatisfied 68%; somewhat dissatisfied 17%; satisfied 15%
Top national problems n=96	Everyday costs 49%; education 38%; housing 35%; healthcare 35%; select up to three
Expected source of change n=95	Federal 34%; state 22%; local 22%
Trust in federal officials n=95	Not very much 49%; not at all 33%; fair amount/great deal 17%
Birth year n=88	2000-2008: 44%; mean age 39; median age 32
Orange County tenure n=95	20+ years 48%; 1-4 years 26%; 10-19 years 17%
Florida tenure n=95	20+ years 72%; 10-19 years 17%
Children under 18 n=95	Yes 24%; no 76%
Race/ethnicity n=93	White 62%; Hispanic/Latino 28%; Black 14%; select all
Hispanic identity n=26	Puerto Rican 31%; Cuban 19%; Mexican 19%
Puerto Rican ties n=8	Parent/guardian born in PR 63%; respondent born in PR 13%
Move to/back to PR n=8	Yes 50%; no 38%; not sure 13%
Political affiliation n=94	Democrat 64%; Republican 20%; independent/no affiliation 15%

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