RUTGERS–NEW BRUNSWICK
Eagleton Institute of Politics
Eagleton Center for Public Interest Polling

Eagleton Institute of Politics
Rutgers University–New Brunswick
191 Ryders Lane
New Brunswick, New Jersey 08901

eagletonpoll.rutgers.edu
poll@eagleton.rutgers.edu
848-932-8940

CONTACT:
Ashley Koning, Director
Office: 848-932-8940
akoning@rutgers.edu

All news releases are available at https://eagletonpoll.rutgers.edu/press_releases/. Follow the Rutgers-Eagleton Poll on Facebook and Bluesky.

Most Voters Give Negative Ratings to National and New Jersey Economies, Noting They Have Difficulty Affording Basic Necessities

Half say they are currently "holding steady" financially, but slightly less than half say they are financially worse off than their parents were at the same age, according to a Rutgers-Eagleton Poll

NEW BRUNSWICK, N.J. (Nov. 4, 2025) – New Jersey voters give subpar ratings to both the state and national economies and a growing share say they have difficulty affording basic necessities, according to the latest Rutgers-Eagleton Poll.

Nearly 7 in 10 likely voters view the national economy negatively: Thirty-seven percent describe it as "poor" and 32% say "only fair." Twenty-five percent say it is "good" and 5% say "excellent."

Seven in 10 voters also view New Jersey's economy negatively, with 28% describing it as "poor" and 42% as "only fair." Twenty-six percent say the state economy is "good" and 2% say "excellent."

"For most New Jerseyans, pessimism continues to permeate their views on both the state and national economies," said Ashley Koning, an assistant research professor and director of the Eagleton Center for Public Interest Polling at Rutgers University-New Brunswick. "This negativity about the economic and political landscape is rooted in personal, daily experiences. When half of voters say they struggle to afford basics like groceries or utilities, and they're worse off than their parents financially, it's clear that affordability remains the defining issue in this race and a central lens through which voters are viewing this year's gubernatorial election."

A majority of likely voters give both the national and state economies negative ratings, regardless of gender, race and ethnicity, age, income, and education.

Republicans (60%) are more likely than other partisans to rate the national economy positively (60%). Majorities of independents (75%) and Democrats (92%), on the other hand, rate it negatively. Majorities of Republicans (83%) and independents (74%) view the state economy negatively, while Democrats are split – 46% rate it as "excellent" or "good," and 52% say it is "only fair" or "poor."

More than half of voters say the national economy is worse now compared with a year ago (53%). Fifteen percent say it is about the same and 32% say it is better.

Nearly half say New Jersey's economy also has gotten worse over the last year (49%). Forty-three percent say it is "about the same" and 5% say it has gotten better.

Most Republicans say the national economy has gotten better (70%), while most independents (59%) and Democrats (88%) say it has gotten worse. Half of Republicans say the state economy has gotten worse. Views on the state economy are more mixed: Among Democrats, 50% say it is doing about the same while 45% say worse, 52% of independents say worse while 42% say it is doing the same and 50% of Republicans say worse while 38% say it is about the same.

Difficulty Affording Basic Necessities

The share of New Jerseyans who find it difficult at some level to afford basic costs such as housing, health care, and utilities has increased since these issues were last polled in June.

The largest change in respondent sentiment since June, unsurprisingly, comes with utility bills. Seven in 10 voters say they find it difficult to afford utilities such as electricity and water (30% "very," 40% "somewhat") – up 22 points since June.

Among those to whom it was applicable, 7 in 10 say they find it difficult at some level to afford education costs, including student loans (43% "very," 27% "somewhat").

Two-thirds of likely voters say they find it difficult to afford groceries and other food (27% "very," 40% "somewhat"). About two-thirds say the same about affording their rent or mortgage (29% "very," 37% "somewhat") – up from 51% in June.

More than 6 in 10 find it difficult to afford health care or medical costs (26% "very," 37% "somewhat").

Slightly more than half of voters find it difficult to afford gasoline or other transportation costs (13% "very," 39% "somewhat").

"While partisanship is often the focus during gubernatorial campaigns, it matters little for voters' opinions on the affordability of necessities like housing, health care, and electricity," said David Martin, a research associate at ECPIP. "Instead, the major differences are by race and ethnicity, income, and education. Nonwhite residents, those living in households making less than $100,000 annually, and those who do not have a college degree find it more difficult to afford costs like housing, health care, and groceries."

Martin added that younger New Jerseyans, especially those ages 18 to 34, are more likely to say that affording housing costs are very difficult compared with those 65 and older.

Personal Finances

Forty-seven percent of voters say they are worse off than their parents were financially at the same age, a third say they are better off (33%), and 18% say they are doing about the same as their parents were.

As age decreases, likelihood of saying one is worse off than their parent increases. Two-thirds of those ages 18 to 34 say they are worse off financially than their parents were at the same age (67%). On the other hand, half of voters 65 and older say they are better off than their parents (49%).

Likely voters earning less than $100,000 in annual household income are more likely to say they are worse off (53%) than those earning more (42%).

Half of likely voters say they are "holding steady" financially (50%), 43% say they are "falling behind," and 6% say they are "getting ahead" – these numbers virtually unchanged since June 2025.

Nonwhite voters are more likely to say that they are falling behind financially (53%) compared with white respondents (38%); white voters are more likely to say they are holding steady (54%). Belief that one is falling behind financially decreases as age increases. Those in households less than $100,000 annually (56%) and those with some college education or less schooling (49%) are more likely than their counterparts to say they are falling behind financially.

Why Young Adults Can't Get Ahead

Voters also note a number of obstacles they say prevent young adults in particular from getting ahead financially nowadays.

Eighteen percent say cost of living is the biggest obstacle and another 18% point to housing affordability specifically. Thirteen percent say the cost of education and student loans, 10% say the job market, and another 10% say income not keeping pace with prices.

Five percent think the biggest obstacle is a lack of work ethic among young adults, 4% say the economy, 3% say taxes, another 3% say lack of preparedness or financial education, and 1% say government policies. Sixteen percent suggest something else.

Income Inequality

More than three-quarters of likely voters agree differences in income in the nation are too large (53% "strongly," 24% "somewhat"). A majority of voters agree regardless of partisanship, gender, race and ethnicity, age, education, and income.

Voters' opinions on how to deal with income inequality, however, are more mixed. More than half of all respondents agree that the federal government should take measures to reduce differences in income levels (32% "strongly," 21% "somewhat"). Four in 10 disagree (27% "strongly," 13% "somewhat").

Partisan differences emerge on this item: Seventy-eight percent of Democrats agreed with the idea compared with 56% of independents and 26% of Republicans.

Results are from a statewide poll of 795 voters contacted via live calling and texting from Oct. 3 to Oct. 17. The likely voter sample has a margin of error of +/- 4.7 percentage points. The registered voter sample has a margin of error of +/- 4.6 percentage points.

# # #

Broadcast interviews: Rutgers University-New Brunswick has broadcast-quality television and radio studios available for remote live or taped interviews with Rutgers experts. For more information, contact Kiana Miranda at kiana.miranda@eagleton.rutgers.edu.

ABOUT THE EAGLETON CENTER FOR PUBLIC INTEREST POLLING

Home of the Rutgers-Eagleton Poll, the Eagleton Center for Public Interest Polling (ECPIP) was established in 1971 and is the oldest and one of the most respected university-based statewide polling operations in the United States. Now in its 52nd year and with the publication of over 200 polls, ECPIP's mission is to provide scientifically sound, nonpartisan information about public opinion. To read more about ECPIP and view all of our press releases, published research and data archive, please visit our website: eagletonpoll.rutgers.edu. You can also visit our Facebook and Bluesky.

ABOUT THE EAGLETON INSTITUTE OF POLITICS

The Eagleton Center for Public Interest Polling is a unit of the Eagleton Institute of Politics at Rutgers University–New Brunswick. The Eagleton Institute studies how American politics and government work and change, analyzes how the democracy might improve and promotes political participation and civic engagement. The Institute explores state and national politics through research, education and public service, linking the study of politics with its day-to-day practice. To learn more about Eagleton programs and expertise, visit eagleton.rutgers.edu.

ABOUT RUTGERS UNIVERSITY-NEW BRUNSWICK

Rutgers University-New Brunswick is where Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, began more than 250 years ago. Ranked among the world's top 60 universities, Rutgers's flagship university is a leading public research institution and a member of the prestigious Association of American Universities. It is home to internationally acclaimed faculty and has 12 degree-granting schools and a Division I Athletics program. It is the Big Ten Conference's most diverse *university. Through its community of teachers, scholars, artists, scientists and healers, Rutgers is equipped as never before to transform lives.*

QUESTIONS AND TABLES START ON THE FOLLOWING PAGE

Questions and Tables

The questions covered in this release are listed below. Column percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding. Respondents are New Jersey likely voters unless otherwise noted; all percentages are of weighted results. Interpret groups with samples sizes under 100 with extreme caution. Certain crosstabs may be condensed or omitted due to sample size.

M1A. How would you rate the conditions of each of the following?

The national economy

	LV*	RV**
Excellent	5%	5%
Good	25%	24%
Only fair	32%	33%
Poor	37%	38%
Don't know	1%	1%
Unweighted N=	793	793

	Party ID			Gender		Race or Ethnicity		Age			
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Man	Woman	Non-Hispanic white	Nonwhite	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+
Excellent	1%	4%	9%	8%	2%	6%	2%	3%	3%	6%	7%
Good	5%	20%	51%	29%	21%	31%	12%	17%	31%	27%	25%
Only fair	31%	36%	29%	36%	30%	33%	32%	34%	29%	26%	40%
Poor	61%	39%	10%	27%	46%	29%	51%	44%	36%	39%	27%
Don't know	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%	2%	1%	1%	<1%
Unwt N=	251	314	228	429	349	581	186	169	208	189	227

* LV indicates likely voter
** RV indicates registered voter

	Income		Education	
	<$100K	$100K+	Some college or less	4-year college degree +
Excellent	4%	6%	6%	4%
Good	20%	29%	26%	25%
Only fair	31%	35%	32%	33%
Poor	44%	30%	36%	38%
Don't know	1%	1%	1%	1%
Unwt N=	302	428	327	465

M1B. How would you rate the conditions of each of the following?

New Jersey's economy

	LV	RV
Excellent	2%	2%
Good	26%	27%
Only fair	42%	42%
Poor	28%	27%
Don't know	2%	3%
Unweighted N=	792	792

	Party ID			Gender		Race or Ethnicity		Age			
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Man	Woman	Non-Hispanic white	Nonwhite	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+
Excellent	2%	2%	<1%	1%	2%	1%	3%	2%	2%	2%	1%
Good	44%	20%	16%	27%	27%	31%	20%	19%	23%	26%	37%
Only fair	40%	49%	37%	44%	41%	41%	44%	40%	43%	42%	43%
Poor	12%	25%	46%	27%	27%	26%	29%	33%	31%	29%	18%
Don't know	2%	4%	1%	1%	3%	1%	4%	6%	1%	1%	1%
Unwt N=	250	314	228	429	348	580	186	168	208	189	227

	Income		Education	
	<$100K	$100K+	Some college or less	4-year college degree +
Excellent	1%	2%	2%	1%
Good	24%	30%	18%	35%
Only fair	43%	41%	47%	38%
Poor	31%	25%	32%	24%
Don't know	1%	2%	2%	2%
Unwt N=	303	426	327	464

M2A. Compared to a year ago, do you think each of the following has gotten better, worse, or stayed about the same?

The national economy

	LV	RV
Better	32%	30%
Worse	53%	54%
About the same	15%	15%
Don't know	<1%	1%
Unweighted N=	783	783

	Party ID			**Gender**		**Race or Ethnicity**		**Age**			
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Man	Woman	Non-Hispanic white	Nonwhite	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+
Better	1%	26%	70%	38%	26%	38%	17%	25%	35%	40%	27%
Worse	88%	59%	10%	43%	62%	45%	70%	59%	45%	50%	58%
Same	10%	15%	20%	19%	12%	17%	13%	15%	20%	10%	15%
Don't know	0%	0%	1%	<1%	1%	<1%	1%	1%	0%	1%	0%
Unwt N=	251	308	224	424	344	574	184	167	204	187	225

	Income		**Education**	
	<$100K	$100K+	Some college or less	4-year college degree +
Better	33%	31%	39%	24%
Worse	54%	53%	45%	60%
Same	13%	16%	15%	15%
Don't know	<1%	1%	1%	<1%
Unwt N=	299	421	322	460

M2B. Compared to a year ago, do you think each of the following has gotten better, worse, or stayed about the same?

New Jersey's economy

	LV	RV
Better	5%	5%
Worse	49%	48%
About the same	43%	43%
Don't know	2%	3%
Unweighted N=	780	780

	Party ID			**Gender**		**Race or Ethnicity**		**Age**			
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Man	Woman	Non-Hispanic white	Nonwhite	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+
Better	2%	4%	9%	6%	5%	5%	5%	4%	6%	7%	4%
Worse	45%	52%	50%	45%	52%	44%	57%	60%	47%	47%	41%
Same	50%	42%	38%	48%	40%	48%	35%	31%	46%	43%	53%
Don't know	3%	2%	3%	2%	3%	3%	2%	4%	1%	3%	2%
Unwt N=	251	306	223	423	343	572	183	168	204	187	221

	Income		**Education**	
	<$100K	$100K+	Some college or less	4-year college degree +
Better	4%	7%	6%	4%
Worse	50%	48%	50%	48%
Same	44%	43%	42%	45%
Don't know	1%	3%	2%	3%
Unwt N=	295	423	321	458

M3. Thinking about your own personal financial situation, do you feel like you are…

	LV	RV
Getting ahead financially	6%	6%
Holding steady financially	50%	49%
Falling behind financially	43%	43%
Don't know	1%	1%
Unweighted N=	794	794

	Party ID			Gender		Race or Ethnicity		Age			
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Man	Woman	Non-Hispanic white	Nonwhite	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+
Ahead	4%	5%	8%	9%	3%	7%	5%	4%	8%	7%	4%
Steady	55%	45%	50%	50%	50%	54%	41%	39%	44%	50%	66%
Behind	39%	49%	39%	39%	46%	38%	53%	55%	47%	42%	28%
Don't know	1%	<1%	3%	1%	1%	2%	<1%	2%	1%	<1%	2%
Unwt N=	252	314	228	430	349	582	186	169	208	189	228

	Income		Education	
	<$100K	$100K+	Some college or less	4-year college degree +
Ahead	1%	11%	4%	8%
Steady	41%	56%	45%	55%
Behind	56%	33%	49%	37%
Don't know	1%	1%	1%	1%
Unwt N=	303	428	328	465

M5A. Given your current financial situation, how difficult is it for you to afford each of the following?

Rent or mortgage payments

	LV	RV
Very difficult	29%	30%
Somewhat difficult	37%	36%
Not very difficult	19%	19%
Not at all difficult	14%	15%
Don't know	<1%	<1%
Unweighted N=	650	650

	Party ID			Gender		Race or Ethnicity		Age			
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Man	Woman	Non-Hispanic white	Nonwhite	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+
Very	28%	28%	31%	21%	37%	26%	36%	43%	28%	28%	16%
Somewhat	37%	36%	37%	40%	34%	36%	37%	34%	37%	41%	35%
Not very	18%	20%	20%	21%	17%	24%	11%	13%	20%	19%	26%
Not at all	16%	15%	12%	17%	12%	14%	16%	8%	15%	12%	23%
Don't know	0%	<1%	<1%	<1%	0%	<1%	<1%	1%	0%	0%	0%
Unwt N=	198	261	191	358	280	464	163	135	197	160	158

	Income		Education	
	<$100K	$100K+	Some college or less	4-year college degree +
Very	36%	23%	37%	22%
Somewhat	42%	32%	39%	35%
Not very	15%	23%	15%	24%
Not at all	6%	22%	9%	20%
Don't know	<1%	0%	<1%	0%
Unwt N=	246	367	273	376

M5B. Given your current financial situation, how difficult is it for you to afford each of the following?

Healthcare and medical costs

	LV	RV
Very difficult	26%	26%
Somewhat difficult	37%	36%
Not very difficult	20%	20%
Not at all difficult	16%	16%
Don't know	1%	1%
Unweighted N=	762	762

	Party ID			Gender		Race or Ethnicity		Age			
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Man	Woman	Non-Hispanic white	Nonwhite	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+
Very	25%	28%	24%	21%	30%	24%	29%	32%	27%	29%	15%
Somewhat	35%	39%	35%	35%	39%	36%	35%	37%	32%	41%	36%
Not very	23%	17%	23%	23%	18%	23%	17%	15%	22%	19%	26%
Not at all	17%	15%	16%	20%	12%	16%	17%	12%	18%	10%	23%
Don't know	<1%	1%	2%	2%	1%	1%	2%	4%	1%	<1%	0%
Unwt N=	240	308	214	416	333	560	178	156	202	179	225

	Income		Education	
	<$100K	$100K+	Some college or less	4-year college degree +
Very	34%	17%	34%	18%
Somewhat	42%	34%	38%	36%
Not very	13%	26%	14%	26%
Not at all	9%	23%	11%	20%
Don't know	2%	0%	3%	<1%
Unwt N=	285	418	308	453

M5C. Given your current financial situation, how difficult is it for you to afford each of the following?

Gasoline or other transportation costs

	LV	RV
Very difficult	13%	13%
Somewhat difficult	39%	39%
Not very difficult	32%	31%
Not at all difficult	16%	17%
Don't know	1%	<1%
Unweighted N=	768	768

	Party ID			Gender		Race or Ethnicity		Age			
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Man	Woman	Non-Hispanic white	Nonwhite	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+
Very	12%	12%	15%	12%	13%	12%	14%	14%	18%	12%	7%
Somewhat	34%	39%	44%	35%	42%	36%	44%	39%	37%	42%	37%
Not very	34%	33%	28%	33%	30%	34%	27%	33%	30%	30%	33%
Not at all	18%	17%	14%	20%	13%	17%	14%	15%	14%	14%	22%
Don't know	2%	0%	0%	0%	1%	<1%	1%	0%	0%	2%	0%
Unwt N=	246	300	222	415	338	563	180	157	203	185	223

	Income		Education	
	<$100K	$100K+	Some college or less	4-year college degree +
Very	15%	11%	15%	11%
Somewhat	50%	28%	45%	32%
Not very	24%	38%	25%	38%
Not at all	9%	23%	14%	19%
Don't know	1%	0%	1%	<1%
Unwt N=	292	422	313	454

M5D. Given your current financial situation, how difficult is it for you to afford each of the following?

Utility bills, like electricity or water

	LV	RV
Very difficult	30%	29%
Somewhat difficult	40%	40%
Not very difficult	17%	18%
Not at all difficult	12%	12%
Don't know	1%	1%
Unweighted N=	750	750

	Party ID			Gender		Race or Ethnicity		Age			
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Man	Woman	Non-Hispanic white	Nonwhite	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+
Very	32%	30%	29%	28%	33%	25%	42%	37%	32%	30%	25%
Somewhat	36%	39%	46%	38%	42%	45%	30%	34%	39%	51%	35%
Not very	18%	18%	14%	18%	16%	18%	14%	17%	15%	12%	23%
Not at all	15%	11%	9%	15%	9%	11%	12%	10%	14%	6%	17%
Don't know	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%	<1%	1%	2%	0%	<1%	1%
Unwt N=	239	294	217	405	330	554	171	140	202	186	222

	Income		Education	
	<$100K	$100K+	Some college or less	4-year college degree +
Very	35%	27%	35%	25%
Somewhat	46%	35%	44%	36%
Not very	13%	19%	11%	23%
Not at all	5%	19%	9%	15%
Don't know	1%	<1%	1%	<1%
Unwt N=	280	415	309	440

M5E. Given your current financial situation, how difficult is it for you to afford each of the following?

Groceries and other food

	LV	RV
Very difficult	27%	26%
Somewhat difficult	40%	40%
Not very difficult	20%	21%
Not at all difficult	13%	13%
Don't know	0%	0%
Unweighted N=	785	785

	Party ID			Gender		Race or Ethnicity		Age			
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Man	Woman	Non-Hispanic white	Nonwhite	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+
Very	29%	28%	22%	22%	30%	22%	35%	33%	32%	25%	17%
Somewhat	34%	41%	46%	37%	43%	44%	33%	37%	36%	45%	42%
Not very	22%	18%	21%	24%	17%	23%	16%	17%	18%	20%	25%
Not at all	15%	13%	11%	17%	9%	11%	16%	13%	14%	9%	16%
Don't know	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Unwt N=	250	310	225	422	348	576	183	164	208	186	227

	Income		Education	
	<$100K	$100K+	Some college or less	4-year college degree +
Very	33%	20%	33%	20%
Somewhat	47%	33%	45%	35%
Not very	16%	26%	14%	26%
Not at all	4%	21%	8%	18%
Don't know	0%	0%	0%	0%
Unwt N=	301	424	325	459

M5F. Given your current financial situation, how difficult is it for you to afford each of the following?

Education costs, including student loans

	LV	RV
Very difficult	43%	44%
Somewhat difficult	27%	26%
Not very difficult	12%	12%
Not at all difficult	15%	15%
Don't know	3%	3%
Unweighted N=	421	421

	Party ID			Gender		Race or Ethnicity		Age			
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Man	Woman	Non-Hispanic white	Nonwhite	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+
Very	53%	40%	39%	31%	57%	37%	51%	47%	39%	44%	42%
Somewhat	17%	29%	32%	33%	19%	33%	18%	20%	31%	33%	23%
Not very	12%	13%	10%	12%	12%	12%	13%	12%	15%	11%	5%
Not at all	14%	16%	15%	19%	11%	15%	17%	17%	12%	11%	23%
Don't know	4%	2%	4%	4%	2%	4%	2%	4%	3%	1%	6%
Unwt N=	124	185	112	238	173	270	137	127	143	98	53

	Income		Education	
	<$100K	$100K+	Some college or less	4-year college degree +
Very	53%	38%	40%	46%
Somewhat	22%	29%	32%	22%
Not very	9%	14%	11%	13%
Not at all	12%	19%	11%	19%
Don't know	5%	0%	6%	1%
Unwt N=	148	240	163	258

M6. Thinking of your parents when they were your age, would you say you are better off, worse off, or about the same financially as they were?

	LV	RV
I am better off	33%	33%
I am worse off	47%	47%
I am doing about the same financially	18%	17%
Don't know	3%	3%
Unweighted N=	792	792

	Party ID			Gender		Race or Ethnicity		Age			
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Man	Woman	Non-Hispanic white	Nonwhite	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+
Better off	35%	30%	35%	34%	32%	34%	30%	19%	26%	37%	49%
Worse off	49%	46%	45%	46%	46%	44%	52%	67%	57%	38%	26%
Same	13%	21%	19%	15%	20%	19%	16%	11%	16%	22%	21%
Don't know	3%	4%	1%	4%	2%	3%	2%	3%	<1%	3%	5%
Unwt N=	252	313	227	430	347	581	185	169	207	189	227

	Income		Education	
	<$100K	$100K+	Some college or less	4-year college degree +
Better off	23%	41%	29%	37%
Worse off	53%	42%	45%	48%
Same	21%	15%	22%	13%
Don't know	3%	2%	4%	2%
Unwt N=	303	426	328	463

M7. What do you believe is the biggest obstacle young adults face nowadays to get ahead financially?
Note: This question was originally asked in an open-ended format.

	LV	RV
Affordability/cost of living	18%	18%
Housing/housing affordability	18%	17%
Cost of education/student loans	13%	13%
Job market	10%	12%
Income not keeping up with prices	10%	10%
Unwilling to work hard	5%	4%
Economy	4%	4%
Taxes	3%	3%
Unprepared for real world/lack of financial education	3%	3%
Government/government policies	1%	1%
Other	16%	16%
None	<1%	<1%
Don't know	<1%	<1%
Unweighted N=	771	771

	Party ID			Gender		Race or Ethnicity		Age			
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Man	Woman	Non-Hispanic white	Nonwhite	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+
Affordability	14%	19%	21%	16%	20%	21%	13%	16%	20%	16%	21%
Housing	22%	15%	17%	17%	19%	22%	11%	16%	11%	20%	23%
Cost of ed	17%	11%	11%	14%	12%	11%	15%	12%	9%	20%	10%
Job market	11%	10%	10%	10%	10%	9%	13%	14%	8%	7%	13%
Income	12%	11%	6%	10%	10%	9%	12%	13%	10%	10%	7%
Work ethic	1%	4%	10%	5%	5%	4%	4%	1%	9%	3%	5%
Economy	3%	4%	5%	3%	4%	4%	3%	6%	3%	3%	3%
Taxes	3%	1%	5%	2%	2%	3%	1%	2%	3%	4%	1%
Unprepared	3%	3%	2%	3%	3%	1%	6%	5%	4%	2%	1%
Gov. policies	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%	<1%	<1%	2%	2%	1%
Other	11%	22%	14%	18%	13%	13%	21%	15%	22%	13%	13%
None	1%	<1%	0%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	0%	<1%	<1%	1%
Don’t know	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%
Unwt N=	249	307	215	417	338	565	180	162	204	181	224

	Income		**Education**	
	<$100K	$100K+	Some college or less	4-year college degree +
Affordability	19%	17%	20%	16%
Housing	13%	24%	15%	21%
Cost of ed	11%	15%	10%	15%
Job market	12%	8%	10%	10%
Income	10%	10%	10%	10%
Work ethic	4%	4%	5%	4%
Economy	3%	5%	4%	3%
Taxes	3%	2%	4%	1%
Unprepared	5%	1%	2%	3%
Gov. policies	2%	1%	2%	1%
Other	17%	14%	<1%	<1%
None	<1%	1%	17%	15%
Don’t know	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%
Unwt N=	291	422	310	460

IN1. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: Difference in income in the United States are too large.

	LV	RV
Strongly agree	53%	54%
Somewhat agree	24%	24%
Somewhat disagree	9%	8%
Strongly disagree	9%	8%
Don't know	5%	5%
Unweighted N=	793	793

	Party ID			**Gender**		**Race or Ethnicity**		**Age**			
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Man	Woman	Non-Hispanic white	Nonwhite	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+
Strong agree	80%	57%	21%	47%	58%	46%	68%	58%	55%	45%	54%
Smwht agree	18%	21%	35%	22%	27%	27%	20%	23%	21%	29%	24%
Smwht disag	1%	6%	20%	12%	6%	12%	3%	6%	7%	12%	10%
Strong disag	1%	12%	14%	12%	6%	10%	5%	6%	10%	13%	6%
Don't know	<1%	4%	11%	7%	4%	5%	5%	7%	7%	3%	5%
Unwt N=	252	313	228	430	348	582	185	169	207	189	228

	Income		**Education**	
	<$100K	$100K+	Some college or less	4-year college degree +
Strong agree	57%	50%	48%	58%
Smwht agree	26%	25%	26%	23%
Smwht disag	7%	10%	9%	8%
Strong disag	5%	12%	10%	8%
Don't know	6%	4%	7%	3%
Unwt N=	303	427	328	464

IN2. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: The federal government should take measures to reduce difference in income levels

	LV	RV
Strongly agree	32%	33%
Somewhat agree	21%	21%
Somewhat disagree	13%	12%
Strongly disagree	27%	26%
Don't know	6%	7%
Unweighted N=	787	787

	Party ID			Gender		Race or Ethnicity		Age			
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Man	Woman	Non-Hispanic white	Nonwhite	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+
Strong agree	54%	38%	5%	28%	37%	27%	44%	40%	30%	30%	29%
Smwht agree	24%	18%	21%	20%	21%	23%	18%	18%	17%	24%	24%
Smwht disag	10%	13%	16%	13%	13%	12%	15%	16%	14%	9%	13%
Strong disag	4%	28%	50%	35%	20%	31%	18%	19%	35%	31%	25%
Don't know	8%	4%	8%	4%	8%	7%	5%	7%	4%	5%	9%
Unwt N=	250	311	226	426	346	579	183	168	207	187	225

	Income		Education	
	<$100K	$100K+	Some college or less	4-year college degree +
Strong agree	37%	28%	30%	35%
Smwht agree	26%	16%	21%	21%
Smwht disag	11%	16%	11%	14%
Strong disag	17%	36%	29%	26%
Don't know	9%	3%	9%	4%
Unwt N=	302	423	324	462

Methodology

The Rutgers–Eagleton Poll was conducted by telephone using live interviewers October 3-17, 2025, with a random sample of New Jersey likely voters (n=795). Likely-voter status was modeled at the respondent level: Each self-identified voter received an individual turnout probability based on past voting history and reported likelihood of voting. That probability was then incorporated into the post-stratification weights described below. This poll included 140 adults reached through live calling and 655 through one-to-one SMS text messaging by live interviewers that led respondents to an online version of the survey. Distribution of phone use in this sample is:

Cell call	13%
Landline call	4%
Text to web	82%

The data were weighted to represent the population of registered voters in New Jersey. A base weight was not applied, as the sample was selected with equal probability from records that included a phone number. Table 1 outlines the variables used in the calibration process and identifies the sources of the benchmark distributions.

The calibration was accomplished using iterative proportional fitting (IPF). This procedure balances each calibration variable to target benchmarks individually and iteratively. The entire set of calibration variables is cycled through until the weights converge across all dimensions. Weights were trimmed to prevent individual interviews from having too much influence on survey estimates. The use of these weights in statistical analysis ensures that the demographic characteristics of the sample closely approximate the demographic characteristics of the target population.

Table 1. Calibration Variable Definitions and Benchmark Sources

Variable (categories)	Source
Sex (M, F)	L2 voter file
Age (18-34, 35-49, 50-64, 65+)	L2 voter file
Education (HS grad or less, some college / Assoc degree, 4-yr college grad, graduate degree)	CPS 2024 Voting and Registration Supplement PUMS data[3]
Race (White~Hisp, Black~Hisp, Hisp, Asian~Hisp, Other/mixed~Hisp)	CPS 2024 Voting and Registration Supplement PUMS data
Region (urban, suburb, exurban, Phila/south, shore)	L2 voter file
2024 recalled vote (Harris, Trump, other, did not vote)[4]	The American Presidency Project, UC Santa Barbara[5]

Post-data collection statistical adjustments require analysis procedures that reflect departures from simple random sampling. SSRS calculates the effects of these design features so that an appropriate adjustment can be incorporated into tests of statistical significance when using these data. The so-called "design effect" or *deff* represents the loss in statistical efficiency that results from a disproportionate sample design and systematic non-response. The total sample design effect for the likely voter sample is 1.83. The total sample design effect for the registered voter sample is 1.78.

All surveys are subject to sampling error, which is the expected probable difference between interviewing everyone in a population versus a scientific sampling drawn from that population. The survey's margin of error is the largest 95% confidence interval for any estimated proportion based on the total sample — the one around 50%. In this poll, the simple sampling error for 795 New Jersey likely voters is +/-3.5 percentage points at a 95% confidence interval. Sampling error should also be adjusted to recognize the effect of weighting the data to better match the population. The design effect is 1.83, making the adjusted margin of error +/- 4.7 percentage points. Thus, if 50% of New Jersey voters in this sample favor a particular position, we would be 95% sure that the true figure is between 45.3% and 54.7% (50 +/- 4.7) if all New Jersey voters had been interviewed, rather than just a sample. The simple sampling error for registered voters is +/- 3.5% and the adjusted margin of error with the 1.78 design effect is +/- 4.6%.

Sampling error is only one possible source of error in a survey estimate. Sampling error does not consider other sources of variation inherent in public opinion studies, such as selection bias, non-response bias, question wording, context effects, or reporting accuracy, which may contribute additional error of greater or lesser magnitude.

This Rutgers-Eagleton Poll was fielded by Braun Research, Inc. and Rumble Up with sample from L2 Data and Marketing Systems Group (MSG). Special thank you to Siena Research Institute for consultation on likely voter modeling and weighting. The questionnaire was developed and all data analyses were completed in house by the Eagleton Center for Public Interest Polling (ECPIP). Ashley Koning and Jessica Roman led analysis and preparation of this release, with assistance from David Martin. The Rutgers-Eagleton Poll is paid for and sponsored by the Eagleton Institute of Politics at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, a non-partisan academic center for the study of politics and the political process. Full questionnaires are available on request and can also be accessed through our archives at eagletonpoll.rutgers.edu. For more information, please contact poll@eagleton.rutgers.edu.

Weighted Demographics
795 New Jersey Likely Voters
Overall Margin of Error = +/- 4.7 percentage points

Please note: Totals may equal slightly more or less than 100% due to rounding.

		deff	MOE
Democrat	31%	1.83	+/- 8.4%
Independent	37%	1.92	+/- 7.6%
Republican	32%	1.73	+/- 8.5%
Man	48%	1.79	+/- 6.3%
Woman	52%	1.80	+/- 7.0%
Non-Hispanic white	64%	1.78	+/- 5.4%
Nonwhite	36%	1.65	+/- 9.2%
18-34	25%	1.77	+/- 10.0%
35-49	24%	1.94	+/- 9.4%
50-64	26%	1.73	+/- 9.4%
65+	26%	1.85	+/- 8.8%

		deff	MOE
<100K	49%	1.78	+/- 7.5%
100K+	51%	1.82	+/- 6.4%
Some college or Less	50%	1.78	+/- 7.2%
4-Yr College Degree or More	50%	1.76	+/- 6.0%