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New Jerseyans Report More Difficulty Affording Everyday Necessities

Eight in 10 rate the national economy negatively, while three-quarters say the same of the state

NEW BRUNSWICK, N.J. (Oct. 7, 2026) – New Jerseyans are reporting even deeper struggles affording basic costs these days than earlier this year, and negative feelings about the state and national economies continues to be negative, according to the latest Rutgers-Eagleton Poll.

Residents report feeling the pinch of the economy in their personal finances. Among those to whom costs were applicable, about three-quarters find it either “very” or “somewhat” difficult to afford education costs, including student loans (45% “very,” up 10 points since it was last polled in [March](#), and 29% “somewhat,” down 4 points) and childcare expenses (46% “very” and 27% “somewhat,” a new measure).

About two-thirds find it difficult to afford gasoline and transportation costs (34% “very,” up 10 points, and 32% “somewhat,” down 3 points) and housing costs (32% “very,” up 4 points, and 33% “somewhat,” down 1 point). About 6 in 10 have difficulty affording healthcare and medical costs (31% “very,” up 5 points, and 32% “somewhat,” down 2 points), utility bills (28% “very,” up 2 points, and 33% “somewhat,” down 4 points), and groceries and food costs (26% “very,” up 6 points, and 35% “somewhat,” down 4 points).

Overall difficulty has risen since March in five of the six categories the Poll tracks, and the shift is sharpest at the most severe end of the scale. Since March, the share of residents saying the cost of an item or service is “very difficult” to afford is up 10 points for both education and gasoline and transportation, 6 points for groceries, 5 points for healthcare, 4 points for housing and 2 points for utility bills. Increases in intensity on education, gasoline and transportation, groceries and healthcare are statistically significant; changes in housing and utility bills aren’t.

“What we are seeing is less about how many New Jerseyans are struggling and more about how intense the struggle is,” said [Ashley Koning](#), an assistant research professor and director of the

[Eagleton Center for Public Interest Polling](#) at [Rutgers University-New Brunswick](#). “In most categories the overall numbers moved only slightly, if at all. The real movement is underneath them: in every single category we track, fewer residents call these costs 'somewhat difficult' and more call them 'very difficult.' Difficulty may be spreading to some extent, but more than that, it is deepening.”

Personal financial struggles go hand in hand with New Jerseyans’ views on economic conditions. More than three-quarters of residents have a negative view of the state economy, with 35% calling it “poor” and 42% calling it “only fair,” while 18% rate it as “good” and 1% as “excellent.” Overall negativity is up 2 points since [March](#), when last polled, though the share calling the state economy “poor” has increased by 6 points.

New Jerseyans feel even more negatively about the national economy: Eight in 10 give the national economy subpar ratings, with more than half (51%) saying it is “poor” and 29% “only fair.” Sixteen percent say the national economy is “good” and 2% say “excellent.” Overall negativity remains relatively consistent from March, increasing by 1 point, though the share calling the national economy “poor” has increased by 5 points.

“New Jerseyans have been sour on the economy, especially the national one, for some time now, and nothing in these numbers suggests that mood is lifting,” said Koning. “What is striking, however, is how views on the two are differently shaped. Party is the main driver of how someone rates the national economy, whereas partisans look nearly identical on the state economy.”

Democrats and independents are more pessimistic about the national economy than Republicans, though a majority of Republicans still view the economy negatively. Ninety-one percent of Democrats (65% “poor,” 26% “only fair”) and 85% of independents (56% “poor,” 29% “only fair”) give the national economy a negative rating, compared with 55% of Republicans (20% “poor,” 35% “only fair”).

There are no statistically significant differences in the way the different parties rate New Jersey’s economy.

Across groups by gender, race and ethnicity, age, income, region and education, 7 in 10 or more give a negative rating to both the state economy and national economy.

Affordability by Key Demographics

Race and ethnicity drive the widest gaps across every category. Black and Hispanic residents are far more likely than white residents to say these costs are at least “somewhat difficult” to afford: Groceries and food (75% of Black residents and 85% of Hispanic residents, versus 53% of white residents), utility bills (79% and 84%, versus 51%), housing (82% and 82%, versus 54%), gasoline and transportation (84% and 83%, versus 59%), and healthcare and medical costs (70% and 83%, versus 55%). Residents of another race or ethnicity fall between these groups on most items, from 59% on groceries to 69% on healthcare. Among those for whom these costs apply,

non-white residents are also more likely than white residents to report difficulty affording education costs (81% versus 66%) and childcare (80% versus 64%).

Income separates residents just as sharply. Those earning \$50,000 or less are the most likely to report difficulty in every category, including 83% on both housing and groceries and 84% on utilities, and difficulty declines steadily as income rises. On education and childcare, the dividing line falls at \$100,000: 82% of those earning less than that say childcare is difficult to afford, compared with 60% of those earning more.

Educational attainment follows the same pattern. Residents with some college education or less are more likely than those with a four-year degree or more to report difficulty affording healthcare, utilities, groceries, gasoline and transportation, and childcare (80% versus 66%).

Age cuts in both directions. Difficulty generally declines as residents get older, and those 65 and older are the least likely of any age group to struggle with housing (42%), groceries and food (44%) and utility bills (48%). Education costs follow the same pattern. Childcare is the exception: Residents 50 and older are more likely than those 49 and younger to say it is difficult to afford (77% versus 61%).

Gender and geography matter on specific costs. Women are more likely than men to report at least some difficulty affording housing (68% versus 60%). Residents in New Jersey's urban areas are less likely than those elsewhere to report difficulty affording gasoline and transportation costs, though half (50%) still say these costs are at least "somewhat difficult."

Results are from a statewide poll of 1,004 adults contacted through the probability-based Rutgers-Eagleton/SSRS Garden State Panel from Sept. 24 to Sept. 27. The full sample has a margin of error of +/- 4.1 percentage points.

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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.

ABOUT THE RUTGERS-EAGLETON/SSRS GARDEN STATE PANEL

The [Rutgers-Eagleton/SSRS Garden State Panel](#) is a probability-based panel of New Jersey adults age 18 or older. The panel is managed and maintained by [SSRS](#), a full-service research firm based in Glen Mills, PA. Panelists are recruited randomly based on statewide representative ABS (Address Based Sample) design. The ABS sample is drawn from the Delivery Sequence File (DSF) maintained by the U.S. Postal Service, which provide population coverage in the 98%-99% range. The Rutgers-Eagleton/SSRS Garden State Panel is a multi-mode panel. Internet households participate via web while all non-internet households (including those who have internet but are unwilling to take surveys online) participate via phone. Panelists also have the option of taking surveys in their preferred language (English or Spanish).

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 adults 18+ unless otherwise noted; all percentages are of weighted results. Interpret groups with samples sizes under 100 with extreme caution. Crosstabs may be suppressed or condensed in order to maintain statistical rigor

E1. How would you rate the condition of each of the following?

The national economy

Excellent	2%
Good	16%
Only fair	29%
Poor	51%
Don't know	1%
Unweighted N=	1004

	Party ID			Gender		Race or Ethnicity				Age			
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Man	Woman	Wht	Blk	Hisp	Other	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+
Excellent	<1%	1%	6%	3%	1%	3%	3%	2%	<1%	1%	2%	3%	2%
Good	7%	11%	38%	18%	14%	20%	5%	13%	14%	11%	10%	16%	26%
Fair	26%	29%	35%	30%	29%	32%	18%	19%	38%	29%	24%	33%	30%
Poor	65%	56%	20%	48%	54%	45%	71%	65%	46%	57%	61%	46%	42%
Don't know	1%	2%	1%	1%	2%	1%	3%	2%	2%	1%	3%	2%	<1%
Unwt N=	437	376	190	417	580	577	124	180	121	228	272	263	241

**Economy and Cost of Living
Rutgers-Eagleton Poll**

	Income				Region					Education			
	<\$50K	\$50K- <\$100K	\$100K- <\$150K	\$150K+	Urban	Suburb	Exurban	Phil/ South	Shore	HS or less	Some college	College grad	Grad work
Excellent	1%	4%	<1%	3%	1%	3%	3%	3%	0%	1%	<1%	5%	2%
Good	13%	17%	18%	16%	10%	14%	20%	16%	24%	18%	18%	13%	14%
Fair	26%	28%	25%	36%	30%	30%	29%	27%	28%	27%	27%	29%	33%
Poor	56%	51%	55%	45%	57%	52%	47%	51%	48%	51%	55%	51%	49%
Don't know	4%	<1%	2%	0%	2%	2%	0%	3%	0%	3%	0%	1%	1%
Unwt N=	246	311	182	261	125	319	163	240	156	241	206	255	302

**Economy and Cost of Living
Rutgers-Eagleton Poll**

E1. How would you rate the condition of each of the following?

New Jersey's economy

Excellent	1%
Good	18%
Only fair	42%
Poor	35%
Don't know	4%
Unweighted N=	1003

	Party ID			Gender		Race or Ethnicity				Age			
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Man	Woman	Wht	Blk	Hisp	Other	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+
Excellent	1%	<1%	5%	1%	1%	1%	3%	1%	<1%	2%	1%	<1%	2%
Good	20%	16%	18%	19%	18%	19%	15%	14%	21%	16%	16%	17%	23%
Fair	45%	39%	40%	44%	40%	44%	35%	32%	48%	39%	34%	46%	48%
Poor	30%	40%	33%	33%	36%	31%	44%	50%	27%	38%	45%	36%	22%
Don't know	4%	5%	3%	3%	5%	5%	3%	3%	4%	4%	5%	2%	5%
Unwt N=	436	376	190	417	579	576	124	180	121	228	272	262	241

	<\$50K	\$50K- <\$100K	\$100K- <\$150K	\$150K+	Urban	Suburb	Exurban	Phil/ South	Shore	HS or less	Some college	College grad	Grad work
Excellent	2%	2%	1%	0%	0%	1%	<1%	3%	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%
Good	13%	17%	18%	24%	16%	19%	28%	14%	13%	13%	17%	20%	23%
Fair	36%	43%	44%	44%	39%	38%	40%	42%	53%	41%	37%	44%	45%
Poor	44%	37%	31%	27%	38%	38%	30%	36%	29%	40%	44%	29%	26%
Don't know	6%	1%	6%	5%	7%	4%	3%	5%	3%	3%	2%	5%	6%
Unwt N=	246	311	182	260	125	318	163	240	156	241	206	255	301

E2. Given your current financial situation, how difficult is it for you to afford each of the following?

Rent or mortgage payments

Very difficult	32%
Somewhat difficult	33%
Not very difficult	22%
Not at all difficult	13%
Don't know	1%
Unweighted N=	846

	Party ID			Gender		Race or Ethnicity				Age			
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Man	Woman	Wht	Blk	Hisp	Other	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+
Very	32%	34%	25%	30%	32%	22%	55%	46%	26%	41%	40%	25%	17%
Somewhat	34%	32%	32%	29%	36%	32%	27%	36%	36%	36%	31%	38%	25%
Not very	20%	22%	24%	24%	19%	28%	11%	10%	22%	15%	20%	22%	32%
Not at all	13%	11%	18%	15%	12%	18%	7%	5%	14%	7%	10%	14%	26%
Don't know	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%	<1%	0%	3%	2%	2%	0%	1%	0%
Unwt N=	370	320	156	343	497	453	118	170	104	207	263	229	147

	Income				Region					Education			
	<\$50K	\$50K- <\$100K	\$100K- <\$150K	\$150K+	Urban	Suburb	Exurban	Phil/ South	Shore	HS or less	Some college	College grad	Grad work
Very	57%	32%	24%	15%	39%	33%	21%	36%	22%	42%	34%	27%	22%
Somewhat	26%	39%	34%	31%	34%	32%	29%	31%	38%	26%	40%	35%	33%
Not very	10%	20%	23%	32%	18%	23%	26%	17%	25%	20%	16%	23%	27%
Not at all	6%	9%	16%	23%	8%	11%	24%	15%	15%	12%	10%	13%	17%
Don't know	<1%	<1%	4%	0%	2%	1%	0%	0%	<1%	1%	0%	2%	1%
Unwt N=	216	261	144	223	117	274	126	205	123	195	181	218	252

E2. Given your current financial situation, how difficult is it for you to afford each of the following?

Healthcare and medical costs

Very difficult	31%
Somewhat difficult	32%
Not very difficult	21%
Not at all difficult	15%
Don't know	1%
Unweighted N=	964

	Party ID			Gender		Race or Ethnicity				Age			
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Man	Woman	Wht	Blk	Hisp	Other	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+
Very	31%	33%	28%	30%	31%	24%	40%	52%	32%	37%	40%	29%	20%
Somewhat	32%	32%	32%	31%	33%	31%	30%	31%	37%	31%	29%	34%	33%
Not very	20%	19%	25%	21%	21%	25%	20%	9%	17%	17%	19%	19%	26%
Not at all	16%	14%	16%	17%	13%	20%	10%	7%	11%	11%	12%	16%	21%
Don't know	2%	1%	0%	1%	2%	1%	<1%	2%	4%	3%	0%	1%	<1%
Unwt N=	423	357	183	402	555	560	118	168	116	213	260	256	235

	Income				Region					Education			
	<\$50K	\$50K- <\$100K	\$100K- <\$150K	\$150K+	Urban	Suburb	Exurban	Phil/ South	Shore	HS or less	Some college	College grad	Grad work
Very	51%	36%	24%	15%	39%	34%	20%	34%	25%	37%	38%	30%	20%
Somewhat	27%	39%	31%	28%	31%	29%	33%	34%	36%	34%	36%	29%	29%
Not very	14%	17%	23%	29%	20%	19%	27%	19%	21%	18%	15%	23%	26%
Not at all	7%	8%	20%	27%	9%	16%	20%	13%	19%	11%	11%	15%	23%
Don't know	2%	<1%	2%	1%	2%	2%	<1%	0%	0%	1%	0%	3%	1%
Unwt N=	227	302	176	255	120	311	158	223	151	221	198	250	295

E2. Given your current financial situation, how difficult is it for you to afford each of the following?

Gasoline or other transportation costs

Very difficult	34%
Somewhat difficult	32%
Not very difficult	21%
Not at all difficult	12%
Don't know	1%
Unweighted N=	987

	Party ID			Gender		Race or Ethnicity				Age			
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Man	Woman	Wht	Blk	Hisp	Other	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+
Very	35%	35%	29%	32%	35%	26%	41%	63%	29%	41%	44%	32%	19%
Somewhat	29%	37%	29%	31%	33%	33%	43%	20%	35%	30%	31%	31%	37%
Not very	22%	17%	27%	23%	19%	25%	8%	11%	25%	17%	16%	24%	26%
Not at all	12%	10%	15%	13%	12%	16%	6%	5%	9%	11%	8%	11%	18%
Don't know	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%	0%	2%	2%	1%	1%	0%	2%	0%
Unwt N=	428	370	188	411	569	572	118	176	119	224	269	257	237

	Income				Region					Education			
	<\$50K	\$50K- <\$100K	\$100K- <\$150K	\$150K+	Urban	Suburb	Exurban	Phil/ South	Shore	HS or less	Some college	College grad	Grad work
Very	62%	37%	24%	14%	37%	36%	21%	41%	29%	44%	38%	35%	18%
Somewhat	22%	41%	35%	29%	37%	30%	29%	33%	35%	32%	37%	24%	36%
Not very	10%	17%	24%	33%	19%	20%	30%	16%	24%	13%	20%	28%	24%
Not at all	6%	5%	14%	24%	7%	14%	19%	9%	13%	10%	5%	11%	21%
Don't know	1%	0%	2%	0%	1%	<1%	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%	1%	1%
Unwt N=	238	307	182	256	121	310	162	240	153	236	205	251	295

E2. Given your current financial situation, how difficult is it for you to afford each of the following?

Utility bills, like electric or water

Very difficult	28%
Somewhat difficult	33%
Not very difficult	24%
Not at all difficult	14%
Don't know	1%
Unweighted N=	977

	Party ID			Gender		Race or Ethnicity				Age			
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Man	Woman	Wht	Blk	Hisp	Other	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+
Very	28%	29%	29%	27%	30%	21%	49%	50%	19%	34%	40%	24%	17%
Somewhat	36%	34%	27%	31%	35%	30%	30%	34%	48%	38%	27%	37%	31%
Not very	20%	26%	27%	26%	22%	30%	15%	9%	21%	19%	22%	24%	29%
Not at all	16%	11%	17%	16%	13%	18%	6%	6%	12%	8%	11%	14%	23%
Don't know	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%	<1%	0%	2%	1%	1%	0%	1%	<1%
Unwt N=	419	370	187	410	560	563	116	176	120	216	268	255	238

	Income				Region					Education			
	<\$50K	\$50K- <\$100K	\$100K- <\$150K	\$150K+	Urban	Suburb	Exurban	Phil/ South	Shore	HS or less	Some college	College grad	Grad work
Very	55%	34%	15%	11%	37%	25%	12%	42%	26%	40%	33%	26%	14%
Somewhat	29%	38%	37%	29%	35%	39%	30%	26%	29%	31%	40%	30%	33%
Not very	12%	22%	28%	32%	18%	20%	37%	20%	29%	20%	16%	28%	29%
Not at all	3%	7%	19%	27%	9%	14%	20%	11%	16%	8%	11%	14%	23%
Don't know	1%	0%	2%	0%	1%	1%	0%	<1%	<1%	<1%	0%	1%	1%
Unwt N=	231	307	178	257	123	309	157	235	152	232	201	248	296

E2. Given your current financial situation, how difficult is it for you to afford each of the following?

Groceries and other food

Very difficult	26%
Somewhat difficult	35%
Not very difficult	25%
Not at all difficult	13%
Don't know	<1%
Unweighted N=	996

	Party ID			Gender		Race or Ethnicity				Age			
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Man	Woman	Wht	Blk	Hisp	Other	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+
Very	30%	25%	23%	22%	31%	20%	36%	46%	21%	30%	37%	25%	14%
Somewhat	30%	43%	29%	36%	34%	33%	39%	39%	38%	43%	31%	37%	30%
Not very	24%	22%	32%	27%	23%	29%	22%	9%	27%	18%	22%	25%	33%
Not at all	15%	10%	16%	15%	12%	18%	4%	5%	13%	8%	10%	12%	23%
Don't know	<1%	1%	0%	1%	<1%	0%	0%	2%	1%	1%	0%	1%	0%
Unwt N=	432	375	188	414	575	573	123	178	120	223	272	261	240

	Income				Region					Education			
	<\$50K	\$50K- <\$100K	\$100K- <\$150K	\$150K+	Urban	Suburb	Exurban	Phil/ South	Shore	HS or less	Some college	College grad	Grad work
Very	49%	27%	21%	10%	28%	28%	18%	35%	21%	40%	28%	23%	13%
Somewhat	34%	46%	27%	30%	47%	33%	27%	32%	37%	31%	45%	36%	31%
Not very	13%	20%	35%	33%	16%	24%	33%	23%	30%	22%	18%	26%	32%
Not at all	4%	7%	15%	28%	7%	15%	22%	10%	12%	7%	9%	14%	23%
Don't know	0%	0%	2%	0%	1%	<1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%
Unwt N=	245	307	181	259	125	314	162	239	155	240	206	252	298

E2. Given your current financial situation, how difficult is it for you to afford each of the following?

Education costs, including student loans

Very difficult	45%
Somewhat difficult	29%
Not very difficult	14%
Not at all difficult	8%
Don't know	4%
Unweighted N=	559

	Party ID			Gender		Race or Ethnicity		Age		
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Man	Woman	White	Non-white	18-34	35-49	50+
Very	47%	47%	40%	41%	49%	37%	53%	49%	43%	44%
Somewhat	29%	30%	26%	28%	29%	29%	28%	33%	31%	23%
Not very	11%	16%	17%	19%	10%	19%	10%	9%	14%	18%
Not at all	9%	3%	15%	7%	9%	13%	4%	8%	8%	9%
Don't know	4%	4%	3%	5%	3%	3%	5%	1%	4%	6%
Unwt N=	256	201	102	224	332	260	299	167	190	202

	Income		Education			
	<\$100K	\$100K+	HS or less	Some college	College grad	Grad work
Very	57%	31%	53%	60%	36%	37%
Somewhat	26%	32%	25%	27%	30%	33%
Not very	7%	23%	10%	8%	23%	13%
Not at all	5%	12%	6%	1%	7%	16%
Don't know	5%	3%	6%	4%	4%	1%
Unwt N=	324	234	103	115	167	174

E2. Given your current financial situation, how difficult is it for you to afford each of the following?

Childcare costs

Very difficult	46%
Somewhat difficult	27%
Not very difficult	11%
Not at all difficult	7%
Don't know	9%
Unweighted N=	381

	Party ID			Gender		Race or Ethnicity		Age		
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Man	Woman	White	Non-white	18-34	35-49	50+
Very	41%	53%	40%	41%	50%	40%	50%	43%	53%	39%
Somewhat	35%	24%	19%	29%	26%	24%	30%	34%	25%	22%
Not very	5%	11%	20%	15%	7%	16%	7%	9%	12%	11%
Not at all	10%	4%	10%	9%	6%	8%	7%	6%	7%	10%
Don't know	8%	9%	12%	7%	12%	13%	7%	8%	4%	18%
Unwt N=	153	156	71	155	223	168	212	117	156	108

	Income		Education	
	<100K	100K+	Some college or less	College degree or more
Very	53%	36%	52%	40%
Somewhat	29%	24%	28%	26%
Not very	6%	18%	6%	15%
Not at all	2%	13%	3%	11%
Don't know	10%	9%	11%	8%
Unwt N=	225	154	163	218

Methodology

This Rutgers-Eagleton Poll was conducted using the [Rutgers-Eagleton/Garden State Panel](#) Omnibus platform. The Garden State Panel Omnibus is a quarterly, New Jersey statewide, probability-based survey. Data collection was conducted from September 24 to 27, 2026, with a scientifically selected random sample of 1,004 New Jersey adults, 18 or older. The survey was conducted via web and administered in English and Spanish.

The Garden State Panel Omnibus is conducted on the Rutgers-Eagleton/SSRS Garden State Panel. The Rutgers-Eagleton/SSRS Garden State Panel is a joint research venture between the Eagleton Center for Public Interest Polling (ECPIP) at Rutgers University-New Brunswick and SSRS. It is a probability-based panel of New Jersey adults ages 18 or older. Members are recruited randomly based on statewide representative ABS (Address Based Sample) design. ABS sample is drawn from the Delivery Sequence File (DSF) maintained by the U.S. Postal Service. Population coverage of the DSF is in the 98%-99% range. During the recruitment process, full demographic information on panelists is collected.

The Rutgers/SSRS Garden State Panel is a multi-mode panel. For this poll, only Internet households were invited to participate via web; non-internet households were not included. Sample was drawn using a probability proportional to size (PPS) methodology to ensure adequate representation of each demographic group while minimizing the variability of the final weights. The sample was additionally stratified by preferred survey language to meet the sample size targets for each group.

Data were weighted to represent the residential adult population of New Jersey. The data were weighted by first applying a base weight then balancing the demographic profile of the sample to target population parameters.

With the base weight applied, the data were weighted to balance the demographic profile of the sample to the target population parameters.

Data were weighted to distributions of age, race/ethnicity by nativity, gender/sex by age, gender/sex by education, age by education, NJ region, home tenure, number of household adults, civic engagement, frequency of Internet use, and 2024 presidential recalled vote.

The following table shows the data sources used for calibration totals.

Table 1. Calibration Variable Sources

Calibration Variables	Sources
• Gender • Age • Education • Race • Ethnicity • Hispanic nativity • Number of adults in household • Home tenure	2025 Current Population Survey ¹
• NJ Region	ACS 2024 1-Year Estimates ²
• Internet frequency	SSRS Opinion Panel
• Civic engagement	September 2023 CPS Volunteering and Civic Life Supplement ³
• 2024 Presidential recalled vote⁴	National Election Pool

Final calibrated weights are trimmed at the 5th and 95th percentiles to prevent individual interviews from having too much influence on survey-derived estimates.

Post-data collection statistical adjustments require analysis procedures that reflect departures from simple random sampling. We calculate 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 this survey is 1.75.

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. Sampling error should be adjusted to recognize the effect of weighting the data to better match the population. In this poll, the simple sampling error for 1,004 New Jersey adults is +/-3.1 percentage points at a 95% confidence interval. The design effect is 1.75, making the adjusted margin of error +/- 4.1 percentage points. Thus, if 50% of New Jersey adults in this sample favor a particular position, we would be 95% sure that the true figure is between 45.9 and 54.1% (50 +/- 4.1) if all New Jersey adults had been interviewed, rather than just a sample.

¹ Steven Ruggles, Sarah Flood, Matthew Sobek, Daniel Backman, Grace Cooper, Julia A. Rivera Drew, Stephanie Richards, Renae Rodgers, Jonathan Schroeder, and Kari C.W. Williams. IPUMS USA: Version 16.0 [dataset]. Minneapolis, MN: IPUMS, 2025. <https://doi.org/10.18128/D010.V16.0>

² U.S. Census Bureau. “Age and Sex.” American Community Survey, ACS 1-Year Estimates Subject Tables, Table S0101, 2024

³ Sarah Flood, Miriam King, Renae Rodgers, Steven Ruggles, J. Robert Warren, Daniel Backman, Annie Chen, Grace Cooper, Stephanie Richards, Megan Schouweiler, and Michael Westberry (2024). Integrated Public Use Microdata Series, Current Population Survey: Version 12.0 [dataset]. Minneapolis, MN: IPUMS, 2024. <https://doi.org/10.18128/D030.V12.0>

⁴ Recalled vote in the 2024 presidential election is defined as the chosen candidate of panelists who are currently registered to vote, specifically among the following listed candidates: Kamala Harris, Donald Trump, Jill Stein, Chase Oliver, and Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. Panelists who are not currently registered to vote or voted for a non-listed candidate are counted along with those who did not vote in the election.

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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.

This Rutgers-Eagleton Poll was fielded by SSRS through the Rutgers-Eagleton/SSRS Garden State Panel. 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. 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
1,004 New Jersey Adults 18+
Overall Margin of Error = +/- 4.1 percentage points

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

		deff	MOE
Democrat	38%	1.83	+/- 6.3%
Independent	39%	1.76	+/- 6.7%
Republican	23%	1.54	+/- 8.8%
Man	46%	1.68	+/- 6.2%
Woman	54%	1.79	+/- 5.5%
White	58%	1.56	+/- 5.1%
Black	13%	1.89	+/- 12.1%
Hispanic	15%	2.42	+/- 11.4%
Other	14%	1.73	+/- 11.7%
18-34	24%	1.93	+/- 9.0%
35-49	25%	1.87	+/- 8.1%
50-64	25%	1.70	+/- 7.9%
65+	27%	1.50	+/- 7.7%
<50K	23%	2.05	+/- 8.9%
50K-<100K	30%	1.86	+/- 7.6%
100K-<150K	20%	1.60	+/- 9.2%
150K+	26%	1.49	+/- 7.4%
Urban	16%	1.54	+/- 10.9%
Suburb	35%	1.64	+/- 7.0%
Exurban	14%	1.67	+/- 9.9%
Phil/South	17%	2.17	+/- 9.3%
Shore	17%	1.61	+/- 10.0%
HS or less	30%	1.79	+/- 8.4%
Some college	20%	1.76	+/- 9.0%
4-yr college grad	24%	1.73	+/- 8.1%
Grad work	26%	1.55	+/- 7.0%