



FRIDAY, OCT. 16, 2026

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](#), [Bluesky](#), and [LinkedIn](#).

More Than Half of New Jerseyans Say Data Center Costs Outweigh the Benefits

A plurality of residents are negative on AI's impact on jobs and the environment, while opinion on daily life and education is more mixed

NEW BRUNSWICK, N.J. (Oct. 16, 2026) – Most New Jerseyans say the costs of a data center outweigh the benefits, do not want one built in their area or the state and are mixed or negative about artificial intelligence's (AI) impact on education, jobs and the environment, according to the latest Rutgers-Eagleton Poll.

This is despite how routine AI has become for residents, whether they are using it intentionally or encountering it as part of the technology they use every day.

Asked to weigh the jobs and tax revenue data centers could bring against their use of electricity and water and the prospect of higher utility bills, 55% of New Jerseyans say the costs outweigh the benefits, 11% say the benefits outweigh the costs, and 19% say costs and benefits are about equal. Sixteen percent are unsure.

New Jerseyans oppose data centers wherever they might be built in the state, though opposition eases somewhat as the proposed location moves farther from home.

Seventy-two percent are opposed to a data center being built in their town or city (54% "strongly," 18% "somewhat"), while 21% are supportive (6% "strongly," 15% "somewhat").

Sixty-four percent are opposed to one in a neighboring county (42% "strongly," 22% "somewhat") and 26% are supportive (7% "strongly," 19% "somewhat").

Sixty-two percent are opposed to a data center being built in the state generally (39% "strongly," 23% "somewhat"), versus 30% who are supportive (10% "strongly," 20% "somewhat").

Data Centers and AI Rutgers-Eagleton Poll

“What stands out about data centers is that no group reaches majority support anywhere - not in their own town, not in a neighboring county, not in the state at large,” said [Ashley Koning](#), an assistant research professor and director of the [Eagleton Center for Public Interest Polling](#) at Rutgers University-New Brunswick. “The main difference across groups is how strongly they object, and the only place any group softens is when the project is far away from them.”

Thirty percent of residents say AI has a positive impact on their day-to-day life (10% “very,” 20% “somewhat”), while 21% say it has a negative impact (10% “very,” 11% “somewhat”); 42% say both positive and negative and 7% don’t know.

Twenty percent say AI has a positive impact on education (7% “very,” 13% “somewhat”), while 39% say it has a negative impact (21% “very,” 18% “somewhat”); 38% say it is a mix of positive and negative and 4% don’t know.

When it comes to jobs, 14% say AI has a positive impact (3% “very,” 11% “somewhat”) and 43% say it has a negative impact (24% “very,” 19% “somewhat”). Thirty-five percent say it has both a positive and negative impact and 6% are unsure.

Residents are most pessimistic about the impact of AI on the environment: Forty-eight percent think it has a negative impact on the environment (31% “very,” 17% “somewhat”), while 12% say it has a positive impact (3% “very,” 9% “somewhat”). Twenty-six percent say AI has both a positive and negative impact on the environment and 14% don’t know.

“Residents are willing to say AI helps their own day-to-day life, but they turn negative as soon as the question moves beyond them to education, jobs and the environment,” said Koning. “They personally find it useful but are skeptical about its broader impact.”

More than a third of New Jerseyans say they purposefully use AI tools such as a chatbot, writing or image generator or an AI assistant at least once a day. Eight percent say they use these tools almost constantly, 17% say several times a day and 11% about once a day. Fifteen percent say they use AI tools several times a week and 25% say they use them less often. About one in five say they never use AI tools (21%).

Fifty-five percent say they interact with AI through everyday technology with built-in AI functions, such as search engines or social media, at least once a day. Eleven percent say they interact with AI in this way almost constantly, 31% say several times a day and 13% say about once a day. Fourteen percent say they interact with AI in this way several times a week, 21% say less often and 8% say they never interact with AI like this.

“AI is uncharted, complex territory, and views on it depend greatly on what you are asking about and how you ask it,” said Koning. “A sizeable share of residents uses AI both actively and passively, yet they do not want the data centers that house it built anywhere near them. That is a difficult place for any new technology to be and a difficult one for policymakers to legislate

around.”

Partisans are indistinguishable from one another when it comes to how they use AI, but Republicans stand apart from their counterparts on what they think of it.

Roughly a third of Democrats (36%), independents (37%) and Republicans (34%) purposefully use AI tools at least once a day. Republicans are the only partisan group where as many as 4 in 10 call any of AI’s impacts positive, with 41% saying it has a positive effect on their day-to-day life.

Democrats and independents are generally more pessimistic about AI’s impact than Republicans. Fifty-two percent of Democrats and 46% of independents say AI has a negative impact on jobs, compared with 24% of Republicans. Fifty-seven percent of Democrats and 53% of independents think AI has a negative environmental impact, compared with 25% of Republicans.

Education is one of two items where Democrats and independents separate, with Democrats more likely to say AI has a negative impact (46%) compared with independents (36%) and Republicans (30%). The other is day-to-day life, where 27% of Democrats say AI’s impact is negative compared with 16% of independents and 17% of Republicans.

The same pattern holds for data centers: Thirty-four percent of Republicans either strongly or somewhat support one in their own town, compared with 19% of independents and 14% of Democrats. Thirty-seven percent of Republicans say the costs of building data centers outweigh the benefits, compared with 57% of independents and 63% of Democrats.

“Who uses AI is a question of age, education, income and where you live – not partisanship,” said Koning. “Party takes over once you ask what people think, both about AI’s impact and about data centers, though it is far from the only divide.”

While younger residents are using AI more than older residents, the former are much more negative on the topic than the latter. Fifty-three percent of those ages 18 to 34 and 46% of those 35 to 49 use AI tools on purpose at least once a day, compared with 30% of those 50 to 64 and 19% of those 65 and older. The same gap appears on built-in AI in everyday technology (65% for ages 18 to 34 and 60% for ages 35 to 49 versus 48% for those 50 to 64 and 45% for those 65 and older).

Yet residents 18 to 49 are more negative on education (52% of those 18 to 34 and 42% of those 35 to 49) than those 50 and older. Residents 18 to 34 are more negative about AI’s impact on jobs (58%) and the environment (69%) compared with their older counterparts. Those 18 to 34 are the most opposed to data centers being built in the state (73%) and the most likely to say the costs outweigh the benefits (66%).

Gender divides residents on AI’s personal and educational impact and on data centers, though

not on how often they use it. Women are more negative than men about AI's impact on their own day-to-day life (26% versus 13%) and on education (44% versus 32%).

Race and ethnicity impact residents' thoughts on what AI does to them personally. Forty-seven percent of residents who identify as multiracial or another race or ethnicity say AI has a positive impact on their day-to-day life, compared with 30% of Hispanic, 28% of white and 26% of Black residents. Black residents are more negative than white residents on jobs (54% versus 40%).

Residents with a high school education or less are less likely to use AI tools on purpose at least once a day (20%), compared with 41% of those with some college education, 44% of college graduates, and 44% of those who have done graduate work. The share saying AI has a positive impact on their day-to-day life rises with educational attainment, from 20% among those with a high school education or less to 38% among those who have done graduate work.

The share of residents saying AI has a positive impact on their daily life increases with household income, from 23% among those earning under \$50,000 to 37% among those earning \$150,000 or more.

Urban and suburban residents are the heaviest intentional users of AI tools, with 52% and 41% using them at least once a day, compared with 28% in exurban areas, 27% in the Philadelphia/South Jersey region and 28% at the shore.

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.

###

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 55th 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

AI1. How often, if at all, do you interact with artificial intelligence in each of the following ways?

By using AI tools on purpose, such as ChatGPT, Claude, or another chatbot, an AI writing or image generator, or an AI assistant

Almost constantly	8%
Several times a day	17%
About once a day	11%
Several times a week	15%
Less often	25%
Never	21%
Don't know	2%
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+
Alm. constant	8%	7%	8%	8%	8%	3%	10%	9%	23%	15%	9%	5%	2%
Several/day	19%	18%	13%	21%	13%	13%	19%	21%	28%	21%	25%	15%	10%
Once/day	9%	12%	13%	10%	12%	11%	8%	17%	9%	17%	12%	10%	7%
Several/week	14%	12%	23%	17%	14%	16%	17%	8%	19%	14%	18%	18%	12%
Less often	27%	26%	20%	23%	27%	26%	35%	23%	15%	23%	26%	25%	26%
Never	22%	21%	22%	19%	24%	28%	12%	19%	5%	8%	10%	25%	41%
Don't know	1%	3%	2%	2%	3%	3%	<1%	3%	<1%	2%	1%	2%	3%
Unwt N=	437	376	190	417	580	577	124	180	121	228	272	263	241

**Data Centers and AI
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
Alm. constant	5%	9%	7%	10%	14%	10%	3%	3%	7%	4%	6%	11%	11%
Several/day	16%	13%	19%	21%	24%	18%	17%	15%	12%	10%	19%	23%	19%
Once/day	6%	11%	11%	15%	14%	13%	8%	9%	9%	6%	16%	10%	14%
Several/week	14%	14%	17%	17%	13%	15%	17%	14%	18%	9%	20%	16%	18%
Less often	33%	24%	25%	19%	26%	25%	25%	29%	22%	31%	21%	25%	21%
Never	21%	27%	20%	17%	9%	18%	25%	29%	31%	34%	18%	14%	16%
Don't know	4%	3%	<1%	1%	1%	2%	5%	2%	2%	4%	1%	1%	1%
Unwt N=	246	311	182	261	125	319	163	240	156	241	206	255	302

AI1. How often, if at all, do you interact with artificial intelligence in each of the following ways?

Through using everyday technology that has built-in AI functions, such as search engines, social media feeds, etc.

Almost constantly	11%
Several times a day	31%
About once a day	13%
Several times a week	14%
Less often	21%
Never	8%
Don't know	2%
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+
Alm. constant	10%	11%	12%	12%	10%	6%	9%	20%	22%	22%	10%	6%	5%
Several/day	35%	30%	27%	32%	31%	32%	28%	24%	40%	29%	37%	32%	27%
Once/day	11%	12%	14%	14%	11%	14%	8%	13%	9%	14%	13%	10%	13%
Several/week	14%	12%	18%	12%	15%	14%	14%	12%	16%	10%	12%	21%	12%
Less often	20%	23%	20%	21%	22%	23%	35%	13%	9%	15%	20%	23%	27%
Never	8%	10%	7%	8%	8%	8%	4%	18%	3%	10%	5%	7%	11%
Don't know	1%	3%	2%	1%	3%	3%	2%	0%	0%	1%	2%	1%	5%
Unwt N=	437	376	190	417	580	577	124	180	121	228	272	263	241

**Data Centers and AI
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
Alm. constant	15%	9%	9%	11%	15%	13%	7%	5%	11%	5%	13%	14%	12%
Several/day	20%	31%	33%	40%	36%	33%	29%	29%	26%	24%	32%	33%	37%
Once/day	13%	11%	14%	13%	14%	8%	17%	15%	15%	14%	9%	13%	14%
Several/week	9%	17%	15%	13%	15%	13%	12%	17%	13%	9%	20%	15%	14%
Less often	26%	18%	24%	18%	17%	23%	24%	20%	21%	28%	19%	18%	18%
Never	15%	11%	4%	3%	2%	7%	9%	12%	12%	17%	4%	7%	3%
Don't know	3%	3%	1%	1%	0%	3%	2%	2%	3%	3%	4%	1%	1%
Unwt N=	246	311	182	261	125	319	163	240	156	241	206	255	302

AI2. Do you think AI has a positive or negative impact on each of the following?

Your day-to-day life

Very positive	10%
Somewhat positive	20%
Both positive and negative	42%
Somewhat negative	11%
Very negative	10%
Don't know	7%
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+
Very pos	6%	12%	13%	15%	5%	7%	11%	13%	19%	12%	14%	8%	6%
Smwht pos	20%	16%	28%	19%	22%	21%	15%	17%	28%	16%	22%	24%	19%
Pos and neg	40%	47%	38%	45%	40%	44%	48%	38%	36%	45%	40%	41%	43%
Smwht neg	14%	9%	8%	7%	14%	10%	12%	13%	9%	13%	9%	12%	9%
Very neg	13%	7%	9%	6%	12%	9%	8%	15%	7%	13%	9%	9%	8%
Don't know	6%	10%	5%	8%	7%	10%	7%	4%	<1%	1%	5%	6%	15%
Unwt N=	437	376	190	417	580	577	124	180	121	228	272	263	241

**Data Centers and AI
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
Very pos	6%	10%	14%	11%	16%	11%	8%	8%	7%	6%	8%	13%	13%
Smwht pos	17%	19%	19%	26%	26%	18%	16%	23%	20%	14%	24%	19%	25%
Pos and neg	41%	46%	39%	42%	41%	42%	50%	36%	44%	40%	47%	41%	43%
Smwht neg	11%	9%	14%	9%	6%	15%	10%	11%	6%	12%	6%	14%	10%
Very neg	16%	7%	9%	7%	10%	8%	6%	12%	12%	14%	8%	9%	5%
Don't know	9%	9%	6%	4%	1%	6%	9%	11%	11%	13%	7%	4%	3%
Unwt N=	246	311	182	261	125	319	163	240	156	241	206	255	302

AI2. Do you think AI has a positive or negative impact on each of the following?

Education

Very positive	7%
Somewhat positive	13%
Both positive and negative	38%
Somewhat negative	18%
Very negative	21%
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+
Very pos	3%	7%	12%	12%	3%	4%	10%	8%	14%	8%	11%	3%	5%
Smwht pos	11%	13%	16%	14%	12%	11%	17%	16%	14%	8%	12%	17%	14%
Pos and neg	36%	40%	38%	40%	37%	42%	27%	37%	34%	31%	32%	45%	43%
Smwht neg	23%	15%	15%	14%	21%	18%	24%	12%	18%	24%	20%	10%	17%
Very neg	23%	21%	15%	18%	23%	20%	17%	27%	19%	28%	22%	20%	13%
Don't know	4%	4%	4%	3%	4%	5%	5%	1%	1%	1%	2%	3%	8%
Unwt N=	437	376	189	417	579	576	124	180	121	228	272	263	240

**Data Centers and AI
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
Very pos	7%	7%	8%	6%	9%	7%	6%	7%	5%	5%	7%	9%	7%
Smwht pos	14%	13%	15%	10%	15%	14%	7%	13%	13%	13%	14%	13%	11%
Pos and neg	34%	40%	36%	40%	31%	35%	44%	40%	45%	38%	44%	30%	40%
Smwht neg	16%	15%	17%	23%	19%	21%	21%	15%	12%	14%	17%	24%	18%
Very neg	21%	21%	21%	20%	26%	21%	16%	19%	21%	22%	16%	22%	21%
Don't know	8%	4%	2%	<1%	1%	3%	6%	6%	4%	7%	2%	1%	2%
Unwt N=	246	311	181	261	125	319	162	240	156	240	206	255	302

AI2. Do you think AI has a positive or negative impact on each of the following?

Jobs

Very positive	3%
Somewhat positive	11%
Both positive and negative	35%
Somewhat negative	19%
Very negative	24%
Don't know	6%
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+
Very pos	2%	3%	7%	6%	1%	2%	3%	6%	5%	5%	4%	2%	3%
Smwht pos	12%	8%	16%	9%	13%	10%	7%	17%	16%	9%	11%	12%	13%
Pos and neg	27%	37%	46%	39%	32%	40%	30%	25%	32%	26%	37%	42%	35%
Smwht neg	23%	20%	11%	18%	21%	19%	23%	18%	20%	22%	22%	14%	20%
Very neg	29%	26%	13%	23%	24%	21%	31%	29%	26%	36%	22%	23%	16%
Don't know	7%	6%	7%	4%	8%	8%	5%	5%	2%	2%	4%	6%	13%
Unwt N=	437	376	190	417	580	577	124	180	121	228	272	263	241

**Data Centers and AI
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
Very pos	3%	4%	3%	4%	3%	4%	4%	3%	4%	2%	2%	6%	4%
Smwht pos	11%	10%	14%	12%	12%	11%	11%	13%	9%	12%	10%	12%	12%
Pos and neg	29%	36%	36%	40%	36%	30%	38%	37%	41%	32%	35%	32%	42%
Smwht neg	17%	22%	15%	22%	18%	21%	15%	21%	19%	18%	23%	20%	18%
Very neg	30%	21%	28%	19%	31%	26%	21%	18%	21%	26%	25%	27%	18%
Don't know	9%	7%	5%	4%	0%	7%	10%	8%	7%	11%	5%	3%	5%
Unwt N=	246	311	182	261	125	319	163	240	156	241	206	255	302

AI2. Do you think AI has a positive or negative impact on each of the following?

The environment

Very positive	3%
Somewhat positive	9%
Both positive and negative	26%
Somewhat negative	17%
Very negative	31%
Don't know	14%
Unweighted N=	1002

	Party ID			Gender		Race or Ethnicity				Age			
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Man	Woman	Wht	Blk	Hisp	Other	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+
Very pos	2%	4%	7%	6%	1%	2%	6%	5%	5%	5%	3%	4%	3%
Smwht pos	10%	7%	12%	10%	9%	8%	9%	12%	11%	5%	10%	9%	13%
Pos and neg	21%	26%	34%	28%	24%	25%	26%	23%	33%	17%	25%	36%	25%
Smwht neg	16%	21%	13%	19%	16%	19%	14%	12%	19%	19%	21%	17%	14%
Very neg	41%	32%	12%	25%	35%	29%	28%	41%	29%	50%	31%	21%	21%
Don't know	11%	11%	21%	13%	14%	17%	17%	7%	3%	4%	10%	14%	25%
Unwt N=	437	375	189	416	579	575	124	180	121	228	272	262	240

**Data Centers and AI
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
Very pos	3%	5%	2%	3%	3%	4%	3%	3%	3%	2%	2%	6%	4%
Smwht pos	7%	13%	10%	6%	11%	9%	8%	10%	7%	9%	13%	9%	6%
Pos and neg	29%	23%	27%	26%	26%	23%	30%	32%	22%	29%	23%	19%	30%
Smwht neg	13%	18%	12%	24%	18%	20%	12%	18%	15%	17%	15%	20%	17%
Very neg	32%	29%	31%	31%	34%	33%	28%	24%	33%	27%	30%	34%	32%
Don't know	16%	12%	18%	9%	8%	11%	19%	14%	19%	17%	17%	11%	10%
Unwt N=	246	309	182	261	125	319	161	240	156	240	206	254	302

**Data Centers and AI
Rutgers-Eagleton Poll**

AI3. Data centers are buildings filled with computer equipment that powers AI, streaming services, online banking, and other things. To what extent would you support or oppose the building of a data center in...?

Your town or city

Strongly support	6%
Somewhat support	15%
Somewhat oppose	18%
Strongly oppose	54%
Don't know	7%
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+
Strongly supp	1%	7%	12%	8%	5%	6%	3%	9%	8%	6%	6%	8%	5%
Smwht supp	13%	12%	22%	17%	13%	15%	19%	11%	16%	13%	14%	15%	18%
Smwht opp	17%	18%	19%	18%	18%	18%	25%	15%	17%	15%	24%	19%	15%
Strongly opp	64%	55%	36%	50%	56%	55%	45%	60%	52%	61%	51%	51%	52%
Don't know	5%	8%	10%	6%	7%	7%	8%	5%	7%	5%	5%	8%	9%
Unwt N=	437	376	190	417	580	577	124	180	121	228	272	263	241

	Income				Region					Education			
	<\$50K	\$50K- <\$100K	\$100K- <\$150K	\$150K+	Urban	Suburb	Exurban	Phil/ South	Shore	HS or less	Some college	College grad	Grad work
Strongly supp	3%	9%	3%	8%	4%	8%	5%	6%	4%	3%	5%	8%	9%
Smwht supp	21%	12%	18%	11%	21%	16%	13%	15%	9%	20%	18%	11%	12%
Smwht opp	20%	18%	16%	19%	15%	19%	21%	18%	17%	18%	15%	20%	19%
Strongly opp	47%	56%	56%	56%	57%	50%	52%	52%	62%	52%	54%	56%	53%
Don't know	9%	5%	8%	6%	3%	7%	9%	8%	7%	7%	7%	5%	7%
Unwt N=	246	311	182	261	125	319	163	240	156	241	206	255	302

**Data Centers and AI
Rutgers-Eagleton Poll**

AI3. Data centers are buildings filled with computer equipment that powers AI, streaming services, online banking, and other things. To what extent would you support or oppose the building of a data center in...?

A neighboring county

Strongly support	7%
Somewhat support	19%
Somewhat oppose	22%
Strongly oppose	42%
Don't know	10%
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+
Strongly supp	1%	8%	14%	9%	5%	6%	3%	9%	9%	6%	6%	8%	6%
Smwht supp	16%	16%	28%	21%	17%	19%	23%	14%	20%	16%	19%	19%	22%
Smwht opp	20%	23%	24%	24%	21%	25%	24%	17%	15%	18%	24%	22%	23%
Strongly opp	55%	42%	21%	37%	46%	40%	35%	51%	48%	53%	40%	40%	37%
Don't know	8%	11%	13%	9%	11%	10%	15%	9%	8%	7%	10%	11%	12%
Unwt N=	437	376	190	417	580	577	124	180	121	228	272	263	241

	Income				Region					Education			
	<\$50K	\$50K- <\$100K	\$100K- <\$150K	\$150K+	Urban	Suburb	Exurban	Phil/ South	Shore	HS or less	Some college	College grad	Grad work
Strongly supp	4%	9%	3%	9%	6%	9%	5%	7%	4%	4%	5%	8%	9%
Smwht supp	18%	17%	24%	18%	25%	20%	17%	14%	17%	18%	25%	16%	17%
Smwht opp	19%	22%	21%	25%	17%	23%	32%	21%	17%	24%	16%	26%	21%
Strongly opp	40%	48%	41%	40%	43%	41%	32%	45%	51%	40%	45%	42%	44%
Don't know	19%	4%	12%	8%	10%	7%	14%	12%	11%	13%	9%	8%	9%
Unwt N=	246	311	182	261	125	319	163	240	156	241	206	255	302

**Data Centers and AI
Rutgers-Eagleton Poll**

AI3. Data centers are buildings filled with computer equipment that powers AI, streaming services, online banking, and other things. To what extent would you support or oppose the building of a data center in...?

The state of New Jersey

Strongly support	10%
Somewhat support	20%
Somewhat oppose	23%
Strongly oppose	39%
Don't know	9%
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+
Strongly supp	6%	9%	18%	13%	7%	9%	6%	13%	13%	6%	12%	10%	11%
Smwht supp	14%	20%	29%	21%	19%	21%	22%	14%	21%	15%	20%	22%	23%
Smwht opp	23%	23%	22%	27%	20%	26%	22%	15%	18%	22%	25%	22%	22%
Strongly opp	50%	38%	22%	32%	45%	36%	36%	51%	41%	51%	36%	36%	34%
Don't know	7%	10%	9%	8%	9%	8%	14%	5%	7%	6%	8%	10%	10%
Unwt N=	437	376	190	417	580	577	124	180	121	228	272	263	241

	Income				Region					Education			
	<\$50K	\$50K- <\$100K	\$100K- <\$150K	\$150K+	Urban	Suburb	Exurban	Phil/ South	Shore	HS or less	Some college	College grad	Grad work
Strongly supp	8%	9%	8%	13%	10%	12%	9%	7%	8%	5%	7%	14%	12%
Smwht supp	22%	21%	20%	18%	27%	16%	26%	19%	18%	21%	25%	15%	19%
Smwht opp	20%	21%	24%	27%	19%	24%	22%	29%	18%	25%	16%	26%	23%
Strongly opp	40%	44%	39%	32%	40%	39%	30%	38%	46%	40%	44%	37%	35%
Don't know	10%	5%	10%	10%	5%	9%	13%	7%	9%	8%	7%	7%	11%
Unwt N=	246	311	182	261	125	319	163	240	156	241	206	255	302

**Data Centers and AI
Rutgers-Eagleton Poll**

A15. Some people support building data centers because they can bring jobs and tax revenue. Others are concerned they use large amounts of electricity and water and could increase utility costs. Which of the following comes closest to your view?

The benefits of data centers outweigh the costs	11%
The benefits and costs are about equal	19%
The costs of data centers outweigh the benefits	55%
Don't know	16%
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+
B outw. C	6%	9%	21%	15%	8%	11%	11%	13%	8%	6%	13%	13%	11%
Equal	16%	16%	28%	19%	19%	19%	17%	11%	30%	16%	20%	22%	17%
C outw. B	63%	57%	37%	52%	56%	55%	52%	59%	53%	66%	53%	46%	54%
Don't know	15%	18%	13%	14%	17%	16%	19%	18%	9%	12%	14%	19%	17%
Unwt N=	437	376	190	417	580	577	124	180	121	228	272	263	241

	Income				Region					Education			
	<\$50K	\$50K- <\$100K	\$100K- <\$150K	\$150K+	Urban	Suburb	Exurban	Phil/ South	Shore	HS or less	Some college	College grad	Grad work
B outw. C	7%	10%	12%	14%	9%	13%	12%	10%	8%	10%	11%	10%	12%
Equal	17%	18%	18%	22%	21%	19%	21%	19%	15%	16%	24%	14%	22%
C outw. B	55%	54%	58%	52%	56%	53%	48%	51%	65%	55%	49%	60%	54%
Don't know	21%	18%	11%	13%	14%	14%	19%	20%	13%	19%	16%	16%	12%
Unwt N=	246	311	182	261	125	319	163	240	156	241	206	255	302

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.

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%