

The Star-Ledger/**Eagleton-Rutgers Poll**

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A story based on the survey findings presented in this release and background memo will appear in the Sunday, July 9 Star-Ledger. We ask users to properly attribute this copyrighted information to “*The Star-Ledger/Eagleton-Rutgers Poll*”

WHAT NEW JERSEYANS ARE LIKE:

A PERSONALITY SELF -ASSESSMENT

We’re Hardworking, Ambitious, Aggressive and Smart, but *Not Rude*

What are New Jerseyans like? What distinguishes people who live in the Garden State from those who have the misfortune to live in one of the other 49 states?

This was the question the *Star-Ledger/Eagleton-Rutgers Poll* put to its statewide sample of 802 adult residents, interviewed by phone between June 8 and 13th of this year. Poll interviewers read 15 adjectives to respondents, asking them for their judgments as to whether each word does or does not fit New Jerseyans better than people who live elsewhere. By and large, the majority of New Jerseyans embrace each descriptor read them—flattering or not.

Topping the list of New Jerseyans’ self-assessment are the descriptors “hardworking” and “ambitious”—three-quarters of those living here feel these words better characterize New Jerseyans than people living elsewhere. The next two words are “aggressive” and “smart.” Two-thirds feel these better describe Garden State residents than people who live elsewhere.

In assessing the results the poll’s director Cliff Zukin commented, “While difficult to specify precisely, the best summary description is that there is an *edge* to New Jerseyans—at least in how they see themselves. It’s a combination of fast-paced assertiveness, self-confidence and industriousness. But it also says ‘if you can’t keep up with us, get out of the way.’ There is little here in the way of empathy.”

The Star-Ledger/Eagleton-Rutgers Poll • Eagleton Institute of Politics

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The reverse side of this “edge” is found at the tail end of the list of 15 attributes—those traits New Jerseyans do *not* think they have in abundance over others. The bottom three includes two of what might be termed “softer” qualities—including the words “compassionate” (49%) and “religious” (47%). However, believe it or not, the quality that ranks dead last when New Jerseyans look in the mirror is “rude.” Despite embracing being aggressive and ambitious, just 42 percent go so far as to say that New Jerseyans are ruder than people who live elsewhere.

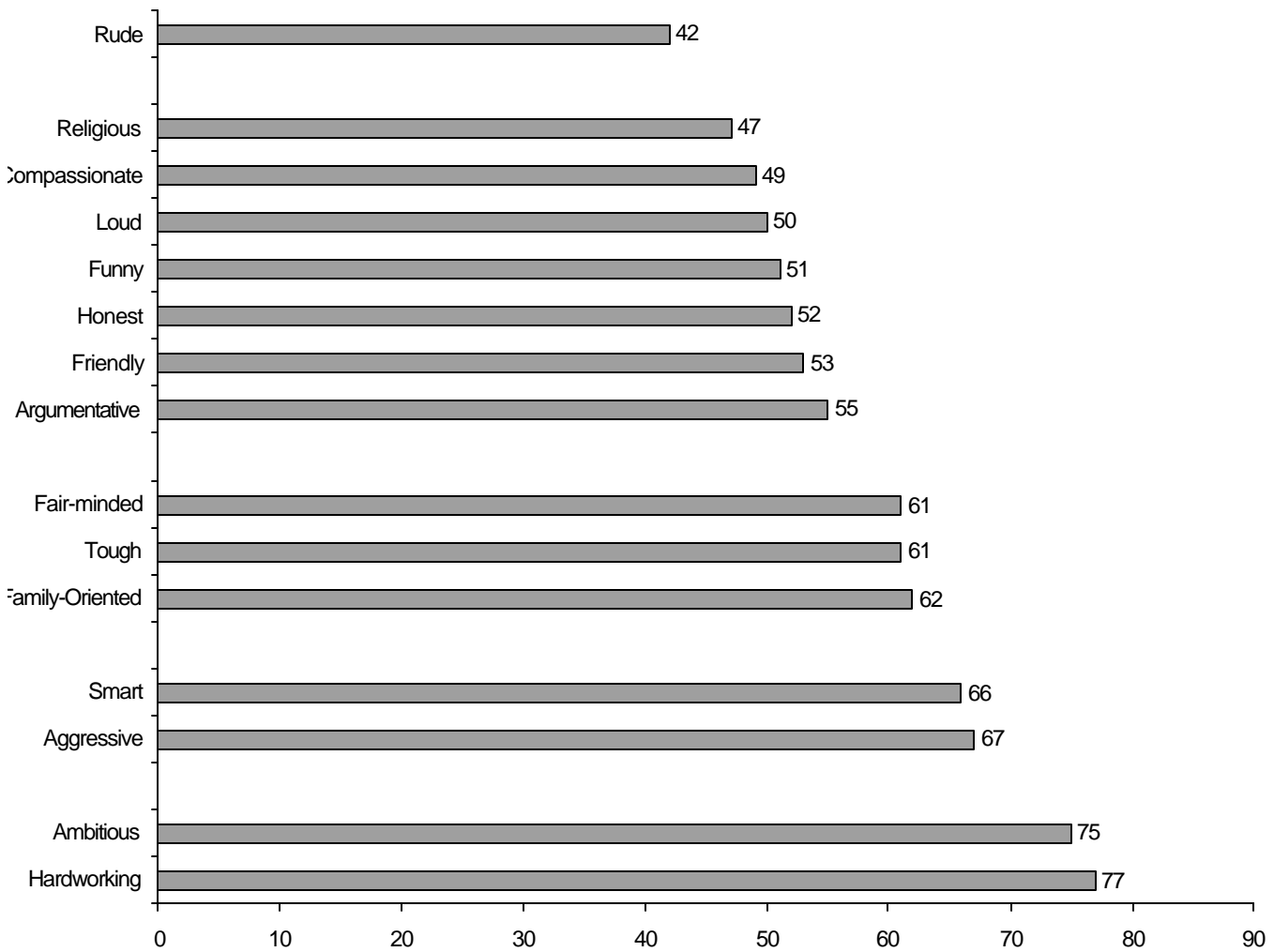
There are a number of conflicting qualities in the middle of the personality profile. About half of state residents say the following words describe Garden State residents better than people living elsewhere: on the negative side are “loud” and “argumentative,” while the positive side includes “friendly,” “honest,” and “funny.”

Better than three-in-five say New Jerseyans are “tough” but also “fair-minded” when compared with people who live elsewhere. “Family-oriented” also garners this much support.

Poll analysts noted a number of interesting differences by region of the state. Those living in the northern part of the state are more likely to describe New Jerseyans as hardworking. North and central New Jersey residents are more likely to say the words “ambitious,” “aggressive,” “smart” and “tough” fit the Garden State profile than are those living in the southern part of the state.

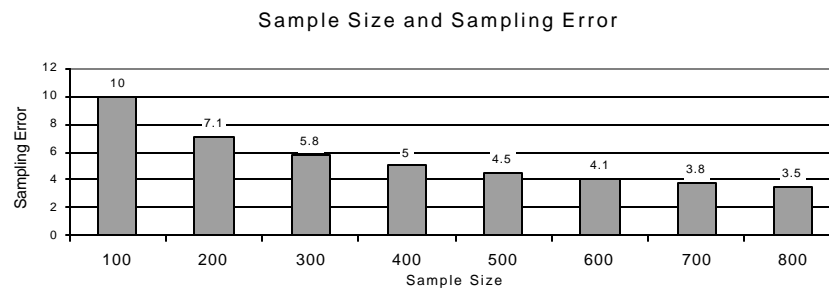
Modest gender differences appear as well. Men are more likely than women to describe New Jerseyans as “smart,” “ambitious,” “tough,” “argumentative” and “funny.” The following graph depicts a complete listing of the adjectives presented to the statewide sample. Displayed are the percentages agreeing that each one fits New Jerseyans better than people living in other places. [Most items were asked of half of the 802 person sample; the sampling error for 401 persons is ± 5 percentage points.]

New Jerseyans' Personality Traits



BACKGROUND MEMO – RELEASE (EP126-5), SUNDAY, JULY 9, 2000

The latest *Star-Ledger/Eagleton-Rutgers* Poll was conducted between June 8-13 with a scientifically selected random sample of 802 New Jersey adult residents interviewed by telephone. 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. Two versions of the questionnaire were used in this study. Not all questions were asked on both versions. Most figures in this release are based on a sample size of 401. The sampling error for this sample size is ± 5 percent, at a 95 percent confidence interval. Thus if 50 percent of New Jerseyans believe that the word 'rude' describes New Jerseyans better than people from other places, one would be 95 percent sure that the true figure would be between 45 and 55 percent (50 ± 5) had all New Jerseyans been interviewed, rather than just a sample. Sampling error increases as the sample size decreases, so statements based on various population subgroups, such as separate figures reported for men and women, are subject to more error than are statements based on the total sample. The following chart shows the relationship between sample size and sampling error.



Sampling error does not take into account other sources of variation inherent in public opinion studies, such as non-response, question wording or context effects. The verbatim wording of all questions asked is reproduced in this background memo. The sample has been stratified based on county and the data have been weighted on age and education to insure an accurate proportional representation of the state. The questions referred to in this release are as follows:

“Now, on a different subject, I’d like to get your views on what New Jerseyans are like as people. Thinking about those who live in this state, please tell me if you think each word I read DOES or does NOT fit New Jerseyans better than people who live elsewhere. The first word is (RANDOMIZE WORDS FOR FORMS A & B)...Does this fit New Jerseyans better than people who live elsewhere or not?”

	Yes, Does fit New Jerseyans <u>Better</u>	No, Does NOT fit New Jerseyans <u>Better</u>	Don't <u>Know</u>	<u>Total %</u>	<u>(n)</u>
Tough	61%	33%	6%	100%	(802)
Rude	42	53	5	100	(401)
Aggressive	67	29	4	100	(401)
Smart	66	29	5	100	(401)
Loud	50	45	5	100	(401)
Hardworking	77	19	4	100	(401)
Honest	52	36	12	100	(401)
Argumentative	55	39	7	101	(401)
Family-oriented	65	29	6	100	(401)
Religious	47	41	12	100	(401)
Ambitious	75	20	5	100	(401)
Compassionate	49	43	8	100	(401)
Friendly	53	41	6	100	(401)
Fair-minded	61	31	8	100	(401)
Funny	51	39	10	100	(401)

PERCENT WHO BELIEVE ADJECTIVE FITS NEW JERSEYANS BETTER THAN OTHERS,
BY REGION, GENDER, GENERATION AND INCOME LEVEL:

	<u>REGION</u>			<u>GENDER</u>		<u>GENERATION*</u>			<u>INCOME LEVEL</u>			
	<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>Central</u>	<u>South</u>	<u>Men</u>	<u>Women</u>	<u>Xers</u>	<u>Boomers</u>	<u>Matures</u>	<u><35,000</u>	<u>35-70,000</u>	<u>>70,000</u>
Hardworking	77	81	75	72	78	77	76	80	75	77	79	75
Ambitious	75	78	77	66	79	71	73	77	73	68	78	76
Aggressive	67	74	69	57	69	66	69	72	61	69	68	68
Smart	66	70	68	61	72	60	73	68	57	63	66	73
Family-Oriented	65	65	66	64	68	62	69	66	61	58	70	67
Tough**	61	64	61	57	66	56	63	69	50	51	69	64
Fair-minded	61	62	67	52	61	61	69	57	61	61	65	57
Argumentative	55	55	49	60	59	50	54	59	50	57	57	50
Friendly	53	55	50	54	50	55	62	44	55	49	51	52
Honest	52	55	52	50	55	49	48	55	54	42	56	57
Funny	51	49	58	46	55	47	62	53	42	44	56	57
Loud	50	52	43	53	53	46	54	54	41	46	53	53
Compassionate	49	46	56	48	45	52	45	46	54	52	43	48
Religious	47	45	46	50	46	48	48	45	48	50	46	40
Rude	42	43	40	44	44	40	46	42	39	46	49	38
(n)	(401)	(175)	(100)	(121)	(202)	(199)	(97)	(153)	(144)	(78)	(126)	(145)

* Gen Xers are people born between the years 1965 and 1981. Boomers are people born between the years 1946 and 1964. Matures are people born between 1901 and 1945.

** The n's for tough are different than for the other adjectives because this adjective was posed to all respondents. The total n for tough is 802. The percentages under gender are based on 399 men and 403 women. For region: 353 from northern Jersey, 222 from central Jersey and 215 from southern Jersey. For generation: 211 Xers, 353 Boomers and 259 Matures. For income: 155 whose family income is less than 35K, 264 whose income is between 35 and 70K, and 268 whose income is over 70K.