

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

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RELEASE (EP131-7)

A story based on the survey findings presented in this release and background memo will appear in the Sunday, May 20 Star-Ledger. We ask users to properly attribute this copyrighted information to "*The Star-Ledger/Eagleton-Rutgers Poll.*"

NEW JERSEYANS AND THEIR NEIGHBORHOODS

A STARK CONTRAST IN BLACK AND WHITE

Over three-quarters of New Jerseyans think their neighborhood is a good place to live, and just under that number think the same about their own city or town. And given the opportunity, a majority would choose to stay in the neighborhood in which they currently reside, rather than move to another neighborhood or even another state.

But underlying these positive attitudes are stark differences by race. African-American New Jerseyans are divided over the quality of the towns and cities in which they reside, and they are markedly less positive about their neighborhoods than are whites. Black New Jerseyans are also less satisfied than whites with the quality of their housing, their local environment, and their local schools. And given the chance, most of New Jersey's black residents would move out of their current neighborhoods.

New Jersey's black and white residents are separated not only by these attitudes, but also by geography. In line with recent census figures, the Star-Ledger/Eagleton-Rutgers Poll shows that while New Jersey's diversity grows overall, many neighborhoods are racially separate.

When it comes to race relations, New Jerseyans see problems in the state as a whole, but less in their own backyards – a majority think racial and ethnic discrimination is a problem in New Jersey, but only one-third see racial tensions in their own towns or cities. On both measures, blacks see more problems than do whites.

The Star-Ledger/Eagleton-Rutgers Poll was conducted by telephone with a scientifically selected sample of 802 New Jersey residents between April 11 and 17, 2001. The sampling error for the survey is ± 3.5 percentage points.

In summing up the poll results, Monika McDermott, associate director of the Rutgers based poll explains: "Most residents are positive about their neighborhoods, regardless of race. But relative levels of satisfaction reveal sharp racial disparities in New Jerseyans' quality of life."

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

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Neighborhood Diversity

Residents say diversity is on the rise in New Jersey. But while most Garden Staters describe their neighborhoods as racially integrated, blacks and whites report living in neighborhoods with distinctly different racial compositions. Fifty-seven percent of New Jerseyans say that the number of minorities in their town or city is increasing – 25 percent say it has been increasing a lot, and 32 percent say a little. One-third (33 percent) say that the number of minorities in their town is staying about the same, and only 2 percent say it is decreasing. And on this measure, whites report greater increases than do blacks and Hispanics. In addition, 55 percent of Garden Staters consider their neighborhood to be “racially integrated,” including 54 percent of whites and 59 percent of blacks and Hispanics.

But despite this increasing diversity overall, most New Jerseyans live in neighborhoods that are racially homogeneous. Seventy-eight percent of white New Jerseyans live in neighborhoods where “most” or “nearly all” of the residents are white. In contrast, 52 percent of blacks live in neighborhoods in which “fewer than half” of the residents are white, and another quarter live in neighborhoods that are “about half” white. Only 23 percent of African-American New Jerseyans report living in neighborhoods that are mostly or nearly all white.

Neighborhood Satisfaction

Residents’ relative satisfaction with their neighborhoods also divides along racial lines. Among whites, 41 percent describe their neighborhood as an “excellent” place to live, and another 43 percent describe it as “good.” But satisfaction is lower among blacks, although still positive overall – only 20 percent describe their neighborhood as “excellent” and 37 percent say it’s “good.” Income also plays a role: only 30 percent of those with household incomes under \$35,000 a year rate their neighborhood as “excellent” compared to 46 percent of those who make over \$70,000.



Attitudes towards residents' towns and cities are even more distinct when viewed through the prism of race. Overall, 28 percent of New Jerseyans rate their town or city as an "excellent" place to live, and another 45 percent say their town or city is "good." Among whites, 31 percent rate their town or city as "excellent" and 46 percent rate it as "good." African-American residents, however, are divided: 51 percent rate their town or city as "excellent" or "good," but 49 percent rate it as "only fair" or "poor."

Given these differences in attitudes, it comes as little surprise that most blacks would choose to move from their current neighborhood if they had the opportunity, but most whites would not. Fifty-eight percent of whites would choose to stay in their neighborhood, given the opportunity to move, but only 34 percent of blacks would. Nearly two-thirds of blacks would move if they could: ten percent would like to move to another neighborhood in their town, 26 percent would like to move to another city or town, and 27 percent would prefer to move out of New Jersey altogether. Only 40 percent of whites would move if they had the chance: 4 percent within the same town, 18 percent to another town, and 18 percent to another state.

Housing, Schools and the Local Environment

The quality of life as experienced by black and white New Jerseyans is also vastly different in their relative levels of satisfaction with housing, environmental quality and the performance of their local schools. When asked about their current housing, nearly twice as many whites say they are "very satisfied" -- 63 percent of whites say so, compared to only 32 percent of blacks. Twenty-eight percent of blacks are "dissatisfied" with their housing, while only 10 percent of whites are.

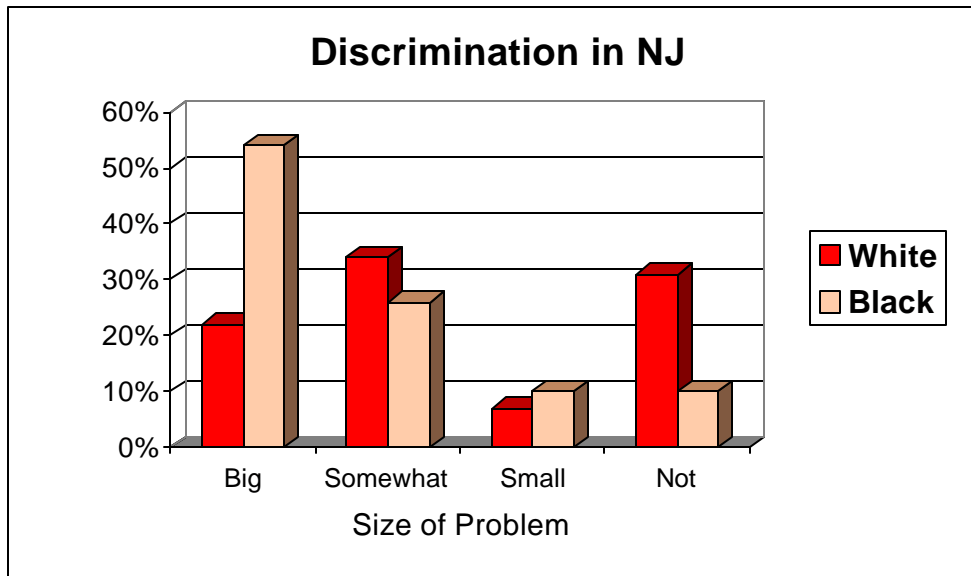
Minority residents are much less likely than whites to own their own homes -- potentially contributing to lower levels of housing satisfaction. Only 38 percent of African-American and Hispanic New Jerseyans say they own the residence in which they currently live, while twice that many whites -- 78 percent -- own their own homes. But this may not be an intractable situation: 65 percent of blacks and Hispanics who currently rent their homes are satisfied with their *chances* of owning their own home.

Overall, New Jerseyans are pleased with the environment where they live -- 70 percent rate it as "good" or "excellent" while only 29 percent describe it as "fair" or "poor." But blacks and Hispanics, while giving their local environment positive marks, are substantially less pleased than are whites. Three-quarters of whites rate their local environment positively, but only 53 percent of blacks and Hispanics do the same. Income differences are also stark: only 54 percent of those residents with household incomes under \$35,000 a year rate their local environment positively, compared to an astounding 81 percent of those with incomes over \$70,000.

On schools, blacks are nearly evenly divided -- 50 percent rate their local schools as "excellent" or "good," while 44 percent dub them "only fair" or "poor." In contrast, 69 percent of white New Jerseyans rate their local schools positively and fewer than a third give them negative marks.

Race Relations

Racial and ethnic discrimination is seen as a problem in New Jersey as a whole, especially by blacks. Overall, 27 percent of New Jerseyans say racial and ethnic discrimination is a “big problem” in New Jersey, and another 31 percent say it is “somewhat” of a problem. But among blacks, the numbers are significantly higher: 54 percent of blacks describe discrimination as a “big problem,” and another 26 percent say it is “somewhat” of a problem.



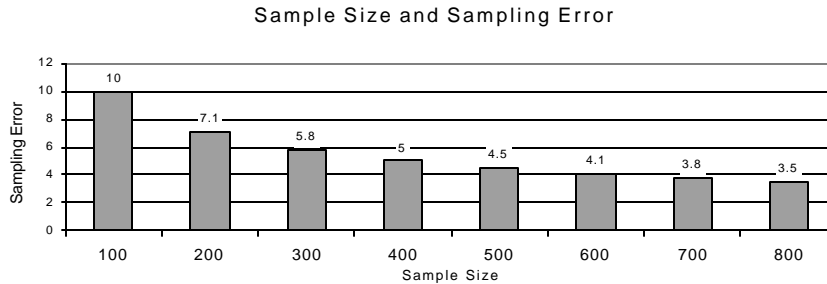
On the local level, racial and ethnic problems are less evident. Only 32 percent of New Jerseyans see at least “some” racial or ethnic tension in their cities or towns, but again perceptions are affected by race: 30 percent of whites see racial tensions around them, but 45 percent of blacks do. And perceptions of local race relations have improved slightly over the past five years. The 32 percent of New Jerseyans who currently see at least some racial or ethnic tension among people in their town is down slightly from 36 percent five years ago. Much of this improvement comes from perceptions among blacks – in 1996, 54 percent of African-Americans said there was at least some racial tension in their town or city, compared to the 45 percent who say so now.

But when asked about the problem of racial and ethnic discrimination in New Jersey in general, blacks have seen an increasingly large problem, possibly due to increased awareness of the issue of racial profiling. Currently, over half – 54 percent – of blacks describe racial and ethnic discrimination in New Jersey as a “big problem,” and another 26 percent label it “somewhat” of a problem. Just five years ago, only 34 percent of blacks saw racial and ethnic discrimination as a “big problem” in the state. Over the same time period whites’ perceptions of racial and ethnic discrimination changed little. Currently, 56 percent of white New Jerseyans think it is at least “somewhat” of a problem.

McDermott sums up the findings: “These results demonstrate that personal satisfaction in New Jersey is at least partially conditioned by race. Black New Jerseyans, who live in a world in which discrimination and racial tensions are frequently a reality, do not find the level of satisfaction in their neighborhoods and towns that white New Jerseyans, who see few racial problems, seem to find.”

BACKGROUND MEMO – RELEASE (EP131-7) May 20, 2001

The latest *Star-Ledger/Eagleton-Rutgers* Poll was conducted by telephone from April 11-17 with a scientifically selected random sample of 802 New Jersey adult residents. The figures in this release are based on this sample size. 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 sampling error is ± 3.5 percent, at a 95 percent confidence interval. Thus if 50 percent of New Jersey adult residents were found to believe that racial discrimination was a big problem, one would be 95 percent sure that the true figure would be between 46.5 and 53.5 percent (50 ± 3.5) had all New Jersey adult residents 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 Republicans, Independents or Democrats, 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:

“How would you rate your own town or city as a place to live -- excellent, good, only fair, or poor?”
(NJ5)

	<u>Excellent</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Only Fair</u>	<u>Poor</u>	<u>DK</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
April 2001	28%	45%	21%	6%	--	100%	(802)
<u>Race</u>							
-- White	31	46	18	5	--	100	(582)
-- Black	18	33	39	10	--	100	(101)
-- Blacks & Hispanics	20	39	32	9	--	100	(155)
<u>Income</u>							
--Under \$35K	25	41	25	9	--	100	(184)
--\$35 to less than \$70K	23	48	24	6	--	101	(246)
--\$70K+	36	44	16	3	--	99	(287)
<u>Area where live</u>							
-- Suburb	33	47	15	3	1	99	(236)
-- Small city / town	26	45	23	6	--	100	(390)
-- Rural area	38	48	12	3	--	101	(107)
<u>Previous surveys</u>							
--May 1995	30	40	21	8	--	99	(802)
--June 1994	31	41	19	9	--	100	(801)
--September 1988	26	46	18	9	1	100	(500)
--October 1984	30	41	21	7	1	100	(999)
--June 1980	23	44	24	9	--	100	(1005)
--May 1977	25	41	24	10	--	100	(1005)

“And how would you rate your neighborhood as a place to live -- excellent, good, only fair, or poor?”
(NJ6)

	<u>Excellent</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Only Fair</u>	<u>Poor</u>	<u>DK</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
April 2001	37%	42%	16%	5%	--	100	(802)
<i>Race</i>							
-- White	41	43	12	4	--	100	(582)
-- Black	20	37	35	8	--	100	(101)
-- Blacks & Hispanics	26	35	30	9	--	100	(155)
<i>Income</i>							
--Under \$35K	30	41	21	8	--	100	(184)
--\$35 to less than \$70K	36	40	17	7	1	101	(246)
--\$70K+	46	39	13	2	--	100	(287)
<i>Area where live</i>							
-- Suburb	39	44	15	2	--	100	(236)
-- Small city / town	35	42	16	7	--	100	(390)
-- Rural area	54	36	5	5	--	100	(107)
<i>Whites in Neighborhood (B7)</i>							
--More than half	46	42	9	3	1	101	(554)
--Half or fewer	20	41	29	10	--	100	(231)
Previous surveys							
--May 1999	34	45	15	5	--	99	(802)
--June 1980	32	45	16	6	--	99	(1005)
--May 1977	31	44	18	7	--	100	(1005)

“If you had the opportunity, would you like to move out of your neighborhood or continue to live where you are now? **IF MOVE, ASK:** Would you like to move to another part of your town, or to another town in New Jersey, or to another state?” (NJ7)

	<u>Continue to live in neighborhood</u>	<u>Move in same town</u>	<u>Move in New Jersey</u>	<u>Move to another state</u>	<u>DK</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
April 2001	54%	4%	19%	19%	3%	99%	(802)
<i>Race</i>							
-- White	58	4	18	18	2	100	(582)
-- Black	34	10	26	27	2	99	(101)
-- Blacks & Hispanics	41	7	26	21	4	99	(155)
<i>Income</i>							
--Under \$35K	54	5	22	16	4	101	(184)
--\$35 to less than \$70K	50	5	19	24	1	99	(246)
--\$70K+	55	4	20	19	2	100	(287)
<i>Whites in Neighborhood (B7)</i>							
-- More than half	61	3	16	18	2	100	(554)
-- Half or fewer	41	6	28	22	3	100	(231)

“Do you own or rent the place where you currently live?” (B1)

	<u>Own</u>	<u>Rent</u>	<u>DK</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
April 2001	68%	30%	2%	100%	(802)
<i>Race</i>					
--White	78	20	2	100	(582)
--Black	34	65	1	100	(101)
--Blacks & Hispanics	38	61	1	100	(155)
<i>Income</i>					
--Under \$35K	48	52	1	101	(184)
--\$35 to less than \$70K	67	29	4	100	(246)
--\$70K+	84	15	1	100	(287)

“Are you satisfied or dissatisfied with your current housing? IF SATISFIED / DISSATISFIED: Is that very [satisfied/dissatisfied] or somewhat [satisfied/dissatisfied]?” (B2)

	<u>Very satisfied</u>	<u>Somewhat satisfied</u>	<u>Somewhat dissatisfied</u>	<u>Very dissatisfied</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
April 2001	56%	31%	8%	5%	100	(802)
<i>Race</i>						
-- White	63	27	6	4	100	(582)
-- Black	32	39	21	7	99	(101)
-- Blacks & Hispanics	36	41	16	7	100	(155)
<i>Income</i>						
--Under \$35K	46	35	12	7	100	(184)
--\$35 to less than \$70K	54	33	9	4	100	(246)
--\$70K+	66	26	5	3	100	(287)
<i>Own or rent home</i>						
-- Own	63	29	5	3	100	(574)
-- Rent	40	37	14	10	101	(213)

“Are you satisfied or dissatisfied with your chances of owning your own home?” (B3)

ASKED ONLY OF RENTERS

	<u>Satisfied</u>	<u>Dissatisfied</u>	<u>DK</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
April 2001	56%	36%	7%	99%	(213)
<i>Race</i>					
--White	50	41	10	101	(104)
--Blacks & Hispanics	65	31	4	100	(103)

“Are you satisfied or dissatisfied with your chances of moving to a better home if you wanted to?” (B4)

ASKED ONLY OF HOMEOWNERS

	<u>Satisfied</u>	<u>Dissatisfied</u>	<u>DK</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
April 2001	71%	18%	12%	101%	(574)

“Overall, how would you rate the quality of the environment where you live – excellent, good, only fair, or poor?” (B5)

ASKED OF HALF SAMPLE

	<u>Excellent</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Only Fair</u>	<u>Poor</u>	<u>DK</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
April 2001	27%	43%	22%	7%	1%	100%	(402)

Race

-- White	29	46	18	6	1	100	(287)
-- Blacks & Hispanics	18	35	37	9	0	99	(77)*

* Although the number of respondents in this category is small, the differences in attitudes between the groups are statistically significant.

“About how many of the people who live in your immediate neighborhood are white – nearly all, most, about half, or fewer than half?” (B7)

	<u>Nearly all</u>	<u>Most</u>	<u>About half</u>	<u>Fewer than half</u>	<u>DK</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
April 2001	40%	27%	16%	15%	2%	100%	(802)

Race

--White	50	28	14	7	2	101	(582)
--Black	6	17	25	52	1	101	(101)
--Blacks & Hispanics	12	19	24	45	--	100	(155)

Income

--Under \$35K	31	25	18	24	2	100	(184)
--\$35 to less than \$70K	38	24	21	15	1	99	(246)
--\$70K+	49	28	12	9	2	100	(287)

“Do you consider your neighborhood to be racially integrated, or not?” (B8)

	<u>Yes, integrated</u>	<u>No, not integrated</u>	<u>DK</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
April 2001	55%	42%	3%	100%	(802)
<i>Race</i>					
--White	54	44	3	101	(582)
--Black	61	38	1	100	(101)
--Blacks & Hispanics	59	37	4	100	(155)
<i>Income</i>					
--Under \$35K	55	42	3	100	(184)
--\$35 to less than \$70K	59	36	4	99	(246)
--\$70K+	51	46	3	100	(287)
<i>Whites in Neighborhood</i>					
<i>(B7)</i>					
--More than half	47	50	3	100	(554)
--Half or fewer	70	27	3	100	(231)

“How much racial or ethnic tension do you think there is among people who live in your town or city – a lot, some, just a little or none at all?” (B9)

	<u>A lot</u>	<u>Some</u>	<u>A little</u>	<u>None at all</u>	<u>DK</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
April 2001	7%	25%	29%	33%	5%	100%	(802)
<i>Race</i>							
--White	6	24	28	37	5	100	(582)
--Black	15	30	34	17	4	100	(101)
--Blacks & Hispanics	13	30	35	18	4	100	(155)
<i>Income</i>							
--Under \$35K	10	21	30	30	8	99	(184)
--\$35 to less than \$70K	9	26	32	29	4	100	(246)
--\$70K+	4	28	27	38	3	100	(287)
<i>Whites in Neighborhood</i>							
<i>(B7)</i>							
--More than half	5	24	28	38	5	100	(554)
--Half or fewer	11	29	33	23	5	101	(231)
August 1996*	9	27	32	29	4	101	(1203)
<i>Race</i>							
--White	8	25	32	32	4	101	(599)
--Black	16	38	25	16	5	100	(399)
--Blacks & Hispanic s	16	36	28	16	5	101	(601)

* New Jersey Race Survey: sponsored by The Partnership for New Jersey, and conducted by the Eagleton Institute of Politics

“In the town or city where you live, has the number of minorities been increasing, decreasing, or staying about the same? IF INCREASE: Has it increased a lot, or just a little?” (B10)

	Increased a lot	Increased a little	Decreasing	Staying about the same	DK	Total	(n)
April 2001	25%	32%	2%	33%	7%	99%	(802)
<i>Race</i>							
--White	25	35	2	33	6	101	(582)
--Black	30	18	2	48	2	100	(101)
--Blacks & Hispanics	29	22	1	42	6	100	(155)
<i>Income</i>							
--Under \$35K	26	28	1	38	7	100	(184)
--\$35 to less than \$70K	24	38	1	31	6	100	(246)
--\$70K+	27	32	4	31	5	99	(287)
<i>Whites in Neighborhood (B7)</i>							
--More than half	20	38	1	34	7	100	(554)
--Half or fewer	37	21	4	34	4	100	(231)
August 1996*	24	29	2	39	6	100	(1203)

* New Jersey Race Survey: sponsored by The Partnership for New Jersey, and conducted by the Eagleton Institute of Politics

“Do you think racial and ethnic discrimination in New Jersey is a problem, or not? IF YES: Is it a big problem, somewhat of a problem, or a small problem?” (RP1)

	Big Problem	Somewhat of a problem	Small Problem	Not a problem	DK	Total	(n)
April 2001	27%	31%	7%	29%	6%	100%	(802)
<i>Race</i>							
-- White	22	34	7	31	5	99	(582)
-- Black	54	26	10	10	--	100	(101)
-- Blacks & Hispanics	47	26	9	16	2	100	(155)
August 1996*	21	41	6	28	4	100	(1203)
<i>Race</i>							
--White	19	43	6	29	4	101	(599)
--Black	34	33	6	21	6	100	(399)
--Blacks & Hispanics	33	33	7	22	5	100	(601)

* New Jersey Race Survey: sponsored by The Partnership for New Jersey, and conducted by the Eagleton Institute of Politics

“How would you rate the job your local schools are doing -- excellent, good, only fair, or poor?” (ED2)

	<u>Excellent</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Only Fair</u>	<u>Poor</u>	<u>DK</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
April 2001	21%	43%	21%	6%	9%	100%	(802)
<i><u>Race</u></i>							
-- White	22	47	18	5	8	100	(582)
-- Black	19	31	29	15	6	100	(101)
-- Blacks & Hispanics	19	34	29	12	6	100	(155)
<i><u>Income</u></i>							
--Under \$35K	20	42	23	8	8	101	(184)
--\$35 to less than \$70K	19	43	20	7	10	99	(246)
--\$70K+	26	46	18	4	6	100	(287)