

# 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 Thursday, July 4 Star-Ledger. We ask users to properly attribute this copyrighted information to "*The Star-Ledger/Eagleton-Rutgers Poll.*"

## ATTITUDES TOWARDS IMMIGRATION TAKE A HIT FROM 9/11

### *New Jerseyans Like Their Immigrant Neighbors, But Aren't Sure They Want More*

Most New Jerseyans would like to see legal immigration into the United States reduced, if not stopped altogether. Nearly six in ten favor reduction of current immigration levels. These attitudes stem at least in part from the terrorist attacks of September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001. Just over half of residents report they have become more opposed to immigration as a result of the terrorist attacks last year on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon.

At the same time, however, most residents live in areas that are also populated by recent immigrants, and among these residents views of local immigrants are generally favorable, according to the *Star-Ledger/Eagleton-Rutgers Poll*. Residents who live near recent immigrants see little impact from immigration, either positive or negative, in their neighborhoods.

The *Star-Ledger/Eagleton-Rutgers Poll* was conducted by telephone June 5 - 9, among a scientifically selected random sample of 801 New Jersey adults. The margin of sampling error for the survey is plus or minus 3.5 percentage points.

"New Jerseyans have ambivalent views towards legal immigration," says Monika McDermott, a senior researcher at the Eagleton Institute who directed the poll. "On a personal level, many residents have regular contact with recent immigrants in their own neighborhoods, and they view them favorably. In the abstract though, they're opposed to current immigration policies and would like to see fewer, if any, immigrants allowed into the United States."

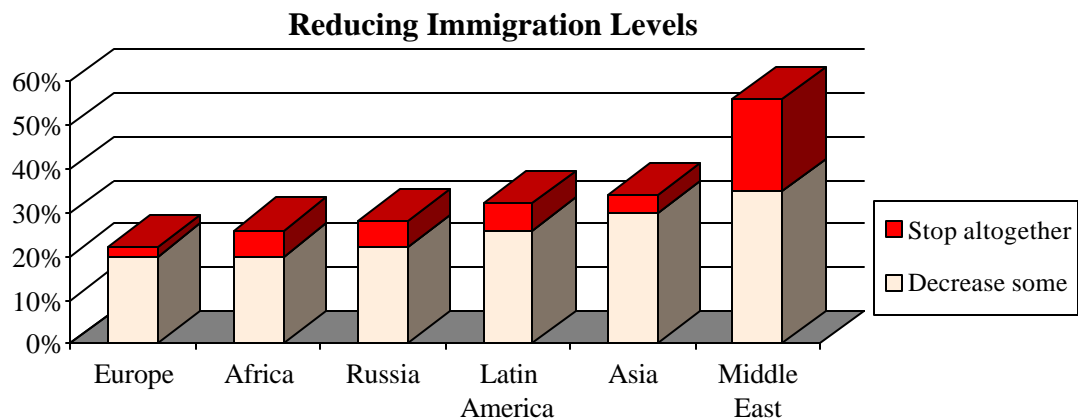
### **Immigration in General**

New Jerseyans support either reducing legal immigration levels, or stopping legal immigration altogether. Fifty-nine percent of residents think current immigration levels should be decreased – 35 percent think they should be decreased some and another 24 percent think immigration should be stopped entirely. Only 12 percent of residents would like to see

immigration levels increased, and 26 percent would like to keep the current levels as they are.

Residents admit that some of their negative attitudes towards immigration stem directly from the terrorist attacks of September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001. Fifty-two percent say that they are more opposed to immigration now than they were before the attacks, while only 38 percent say the attacks had no effect on their attitudes. Among those who say they are more opposed to immigration as a result of the attacks, a total of three quarters – 76 percent – would like to either decrease or stop immigration – 43 percent would like to see immigration levels reduced and another 33 percent would like immigration stopped entirely. Among those whose attitudes were unaffected by the attacks, only a total of 42 percent would like to either reduce or stop immigration.

Perhaps also as a result of the attacks, residents are more interested in reducing immigration levels for Middle Easterners than they are for many other potential immigrants. Among those who are open to at least some immigration (those who do not want all immigration stopped entirely) majorities think immigration levels from each of the areas of Latin America, Asia, Europe, Africa and Russia should be kept at their present levels. In contrast, a 56 percent majority would like to see immigration levels for the Middle East reduced – 35 percent say lower the levels some, and 21 percent say stop Middle Eastern immigration altogether.



### **Immigration In New Jersey Neighborhoods**

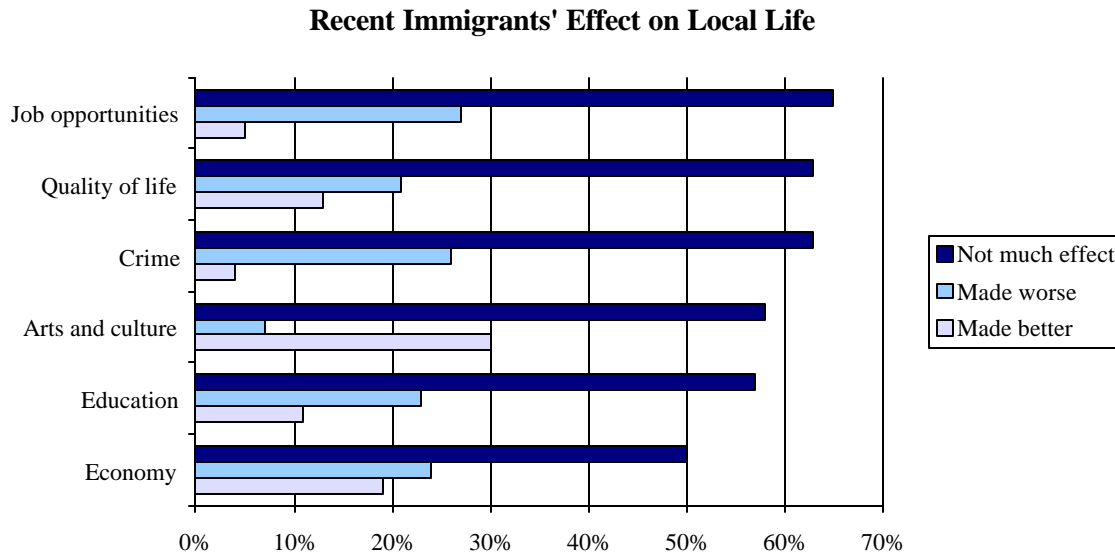
Most New Jerseyans have regular contact with immigrants. Forty-three percent of residents report that there are “many” recent immigrants living in their area, and another 24 percent say “some” live in their area. Twenty-three percent of residents report having “a few” immigrants in their area, and only 4 percent say they live in an area with no recent immigrants. And among those who have recent immigrants in their area, interacting with them is a common occurrence. Four in ten residents who have immigrants living in their area say that they interact with them on a daily basis, and another 21 percent interact with recent immigrants at least a few times a week. Fifteen percent report having contact with immigrants only a few times a month, and 22 percent interact less frequently than that.

New Jerseyans who live near at least a few recent immigrants have a favorable impression of the immigrants in their neighborhoods. Forty-five percent have a favorable impression of recent immigrants in their area, only 14 percent have an unfavorable impression, and 41 percent have no opinion. Residents who were themselves born outside of the United States have the most positive opinions – 52 percent view immigrants in their area favorably and only 6 percent view them unfavorably. But residents in areas with higher concentrations of recent immigrants have views that are less favorable than average – 23 percent of them view the immigrants in their area unfavorably, while 43 percent view them favorably.

When asked about recent immigrants throughout the state, residents are less favorably disposed. Among residents who live near immigrants, only 28 percent view immigrants throughout New Jersey favorably, while 22 percent view them unfavorably and half have no opinion. Here again, those who live in areas with more immigrants have less favorable opinions – 31 percent view immigrants throughout the state favorably but 28 percent view them unfavorably. Among residents born outside the United States views are much more favorable as 40 percent view immigrants throughout the state favorably, and only 7 percent view them unfavorably.

Overall, residents do not see a lot of differences in their areas as a result of recent immigration. Half of residents who live near at least a few recent immigrants report that they have had little effect on their local economy, and nearly six in ten report not much effect from recent immigrants – either positive or negative – on public education or local culture. Nearly

two-thirds report that recent immigrants have not really affected job opportunities, crime or the overall quality of life in their area.

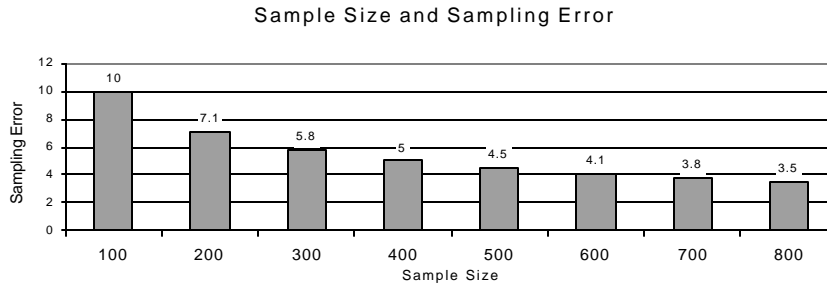


Among those who do see an impact of immigration in their area, the results are largely viewed as negative. Twenty-seven percent of residents who live in areas with recent immigrants feel that immigrants have made local job opportunities worse, 26 percent believe that crime has gotten worse as a result of recent immigration into their area, and 23 percent believe that recent immigrants have had a negative impact on the local public schools. Only in the area of local food, music, arts and culture do people see more of a positive than a negative impact – 30 percent of residents feel that recent immigrants in their area have made local culture better while only seven percent say they have made it worse. On the overall quality of local life, 21 percent of those living in an area with recent immigrants feel that immigrants have made it worse and 13 percent feel they have made it better.

Some of this negativity shows up in residents’ opinions of whether immigration has been a benefit or a drawback for New Jersey – they are evenly divided. Among those who live in areas with recent immigrants, 45 percent feel that immigration has been a good thing for New Jersey, but 44 percent believe it has been a bad thing.

**BACKGROUND MEMO – RELEASE (EP137-4) July 4, 2002**

The latest *Star-Ledger*/Eagleton-Rutgers Poll was conducted by telephone from June 5 to June 9 with a scientifically selected random sample of 801 New Jersey adults. 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 for all respondents in this survey is  $\pm 3.5$  percent, at a 95 percent confidence interval. Thus if 50 percent of New Jersey residents were found to think that recent immigrants were having a positive effect on their local schools, one would be 95 percent sure that the true figure would be between 46.5 and 53.5 percent ( $50 \pm 3.5$ ) had all New Jersey 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 those born in the United States and those born in another country, 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 I have some questions about LEGAL immigrants--people who come from other countries to live here in the United States. In your opinion, should immigration be kept at its present level, increased, or decreased? IF DECREASED: Should it be decreased some, or stopped altogether? [IM1]

	<u>Current level</u>	<u>Increased</u>	<u>Decreased some</u>	<u>Stopped altogether</u>	<u>DK</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
<b>June 2002</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>(801)</b>
<i>Where born</i>							
--United States	25	9	37	25	3	99	(677)
--Another country	30	25	27	14	4	100	(117)
<i>9/11 effect on immigration attitudes [QIM9]</i>							
--More opposed now	16	7	43	33	1	100	(400)
--Not much effect	38	15	26	16	5	100	(319)

**ASKED OF THOSE WHO DID NOT SAY IMMIGRATION SHOULD BE “STOPPED ALTOGETHER” IN QUESTION IM1:**

Now I'd like to ask you about some specific areas of the world and the immigrants that come from those areas. For each area I read, please tell me whether you think immigration for people from that area should be kept at its present level, increased, or decreased. Should immigration for people from [RANDOMIZE: A. Latin America; B. Asia; C. The Middle East; D. Europe; E. Africa; F. Russia] be kept at its present level, increased or decreased? IF DECREASED: Should it be decreased some, or stopped altogether? [IM2]

	<b>Current level</b>	<b>Increased</b>	<b>Decreased some</b>	<b>Stopped altogether</b>	<b>DK</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>(n)</b>
<b>June 2002</b>							
<b>Latin America</b>	<b>54%</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>(641)</b>
<i>Where born</i>							
--United States	55	7	26	6	5	99	(529)
--Another country	49	10	26	4	10	99	(107)
<b>Asia</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>(641)</b>
<i>Where born</i>							
--United States	52	8	29	5	7	101	(529)
--Another country	43	13	35	1	8	100	(107)
<b>Middle East</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>(641)</b>
<i>Where born</i>							
--United States	32	7	35	19	8	101	(529)
--Another country	20	3	40	29	7	99	(107)
<b>Europe</b>	<b>59%</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>(641)</b>
<i>Where born</i>							
--United States	61	11	20	2	6	100	(529)
--Another country	52	17	23	--	8	100	(107)
<b>Africa</b>	<b>55%</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>(641)</b>
<i>Where born</i>							
--United States	57	12	19	6	7	101	(529)
--Another country	46	13	27	5	9	100	(107)
<b>Russia</b>	<b>55%</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>(641)</b>
<i>Where born</i>							
--United States	57	9	22	5	7	100	(529)
--Another country	50	12	24	5	10	101	(107)

How many RECENT immigrants would you say live in your area--many, some, only a few, or none?  
[IM3]

	<u>Many</u>	<u>Some</u>	<u>Few</u>	<u>None</u>	<u>DK</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
<b>June 2002</b>	<b>43%</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>101%</b>	<b>(801)</b>
<i>Where born</i>							
--United States	41	25	23	5	7	101	(677)
--Another country	56	17	19	1	7	100	(117)

**QUESTIONS IM4 – IM8 ASKED OF THOSE WHO HAVE AT LEAST A FEW RECENT IMMIGRANTS LIVING IN THEIR AREA**

How often do you interact with recent immigrants in your area – on a daily basis, a few times a week, a few times a month, or less than that? [IM4]

	<u>Daily</u>	<u>Few times/ week</u>	<u>Few times/ month</u>	<u>Less</u>	<u>DK</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
<b>June 2002</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>99%</b>	<b>(721)</b>
<i>Where born</i>							
--United States	40	21	15	22	1	99	(607)
--Another country	41	21	17	18	2	99	(107)

Is your general impression of the recent immigrants in your area favorable or unfavorable, or don't you have an opinion of them? [IM5]

	<u>Favorable</u>	<u>Unfavorable</u>	<u>DK/ no opinion</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
<b>June 2002</b>	<b>45%</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>41%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>(721)</b>
<i>Where born</i>					
--United States	44	16	41	101	(607)
--Another country	52	6	42	100	(107)
<i>Immigrants in area</i>					
--Many	43	23	34	100	(338)
--Some	49	4	47	100	(206)
--Few	44	8	48	100	(177)

Is your general impression of recent immigrants throughout New Jersey favorable or unfavorable, or don't you have an opinion of them? [IM6]

	<u>Favorable</u>	<u>Unfavorable</u>	<u>DK/ no opinion</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
<b>June 2002</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>(721)</b>
<i>Where born</i>					
--United States	27	24	49	100	(607)
--Another country	40	7	53	100	(107)
<i>Immigrants in area</i>					
--Many	31	28	41	100	(338)
--Some	28	19	53	100	(206)
--Few	25	13	62	100	(177)

Overall, do you feel that immigration into New Jersey is a good thing for the state, or a bad thing for the state? [IM7]

	<u>Good thing</u>	<u>Bad thing</u>	<u>DK</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
<b>June 2002</b>	<b>45%</b>	<b>44%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>99%</b>	<b>(721)</b>
<i>Where born</i>					
--United States	42	48	10	100	(607)
--Another country	64	23	13	100	(107)
<i>Immigrants in area</i>					
--Many	41	49	10	100	(338)
--Some	49	40	11	100	(206)
--Few	50	40	11	101	(177)

We'd like to know how you feel recent immigrants have affected different aspects of life in your area. I am going to read you a list of things – for each one please tell me if you think recent immigrants in your area have made these things better, or worse, or if they haven't had much effect either way. Have recent immigrants made [RANDOMIZE : A. Local public education; B. Local food, music, arts and culture; C. The local economy; D. Local job opportunities for you and your family; E. The local crime situation; F. The overall quality of life in your area] better or worse, or haven't they had much effect either way? [IM8]

	<u>Better</u>	<u>Worse</u>	<u>Not much effect</u>	<u>DK</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
<b>June 2002</b>						
<b>Public education</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>57%</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>99%</b>	<b>(721)</b>
<i>Where born</i>						
--United States	8	25	59	8	100	(607)
--Another country	23	14	50	13	100	(107)
<b>Arts and culture</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>58%</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>(721)</b>
<i>Where born</i>						
--United States	28	7	62	4	101	(607)
--Another country	43	7	43	8	101	(107)



	<b>Better</b>	<b>Worse</b>	<b>Not much effect</b>	<b>DK</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>(n)</b>
<b>Economy</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>(721)</b>
<i>Where born</i>						
--United States	17	25	52	7	101	(607)
--Another country	35	15	43	7	100	(107)
<b>Job opportunities</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>27%</b>	<b>65%</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>101%</b>	<b>(721)</b>
<i>Where born</i>						
--United States	3	28	66	3	100	(607)
--Another country	13	21	61	5	100	(107)
<b>Crime</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>63%</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>99%</b>	<b>(721)</b>
<i>Where born</i>						
--United States	2	26	66	6	100	(607)
--Another country	13	29	52	7	101	(107)
<b>Quality of life</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>63%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>(721)</b>
<i>Where born</i>						
--United States	11	21	65	3	100	(607)
--Another country	25	24	48	3	100	(107)

Have your attitudes about immigration changed at all as a result of the September 11<sup>th</sup> attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon? IF YES: Are you more likely to support immigration or more likely to oppose immigration now than you were before the attacks? [IM9]

	<b>Yes, more support</b>	<b>Yes, more opposed</b>	<b>No change</b>	<b>DK</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>(n)</b>
<b>June 2002</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>52%</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>(801)</b>
<i>Where born</i>						
--United States	5	53	39	2	99	(677)
--Another country	13	46	31	10	100	(117)

Were you born in the United States, or in another country? [D13]

	<b>U.S.</b>	<b>Another country</b>	<b>DK</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>(n)</b>
<b>June 2002</b>	<b>85%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>101%</b>	<b>(801)</b>