

The Star-Ledger/Eagleton-Rutgers Poll

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(Release 143-6)

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A story based on the survey findings presented in this release and background memo appears in the Sunday, May 25, 2003 Star-Ledger. We ask users to properly attribute this copyrighted information to "*The Star-Ledger/Eagleton-Rutgers Poll.*"

NEW JERSEY VACATION PLANS - READY FOR TAKEOFF

War, terrorism, a bad economy? Fuggedaboutit! New Jersey is going on vacation. The latest *Star-Ledger/Eagleton-Rutgers Poll* found that most residents plan on taking time off for fun and sun this summer. And many are traveling out of state to do so.

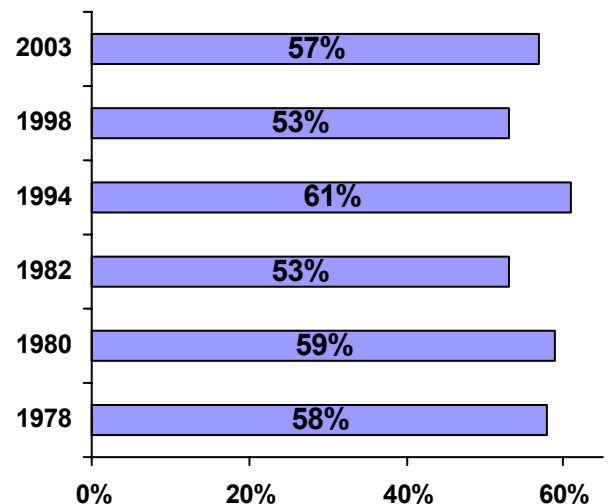
The poll also found that vacation itineraries over the past 12 months are not much different than they were in the 1990s. In the past year, 57 percent of New Jerseyans took a vacation of a week or more away from home.

Among these vacationers, 14 percent spent their last vacation in the Garden State, 17 percent visited another Northeast state, and 48 percent traveled elsewhere in the United States. Another 20 percent spent their last vacation in another country. These results are not significantly different from polls taken in 1998 and 1994.

"Despite the threat of terrorism and a stagnating economy, New Jerseyans are still getting away from home in numbers comparable to the pre-September 11 era," observed the poll's associate director, Patrick Murray.

Few residents say that the war in Iraq and the threat of terrorism have caused them to change their vacation plans for this coming summer. Nine-in-ten (89%) residents say they

TOOK A VACATION IN PAST YEAR



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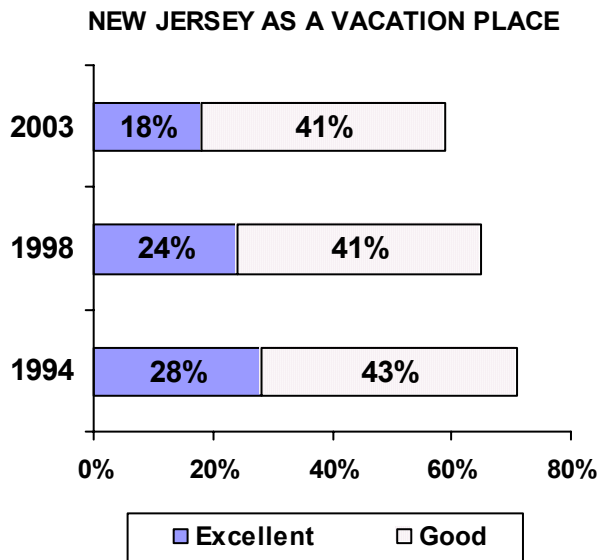
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will follow through on their normal vacation plans while only 8 percent say their plans have changed due to these security concerns.

For the summer of 2003, a majority of residents (54%) say they plan to take a vacation out of the state, including 13 percent who say they will travel overseas. One-third (34%) of New Jerseyans say they will spend at least a week vacationing in the Garden State this year. These findings are similar to the vacation plans residents had in 1998 and 1994.



At the same time, opinions about New Jersey as a place to take a vacation – while positive overall – have slipped a bit over the past decade. Currently, nearly 6-in-10 residents give the state an excellent (18%) or good (41%) rating as a vacation spot. Another 28 percent say it is fair and 11 percent see their home state as a poor place to take a vacation.

In 1994, 71 percent of residents gave New Jersey positive ratings as a place to take a vacation. This declined to 65 percent in 1998 and 59 percent in the current survey. However,

it should also be noted that South Jerseyans (71%) are more likely than those in the northern (54%) and central (55%) regions to say their home state is an excellent or good vacation spot.

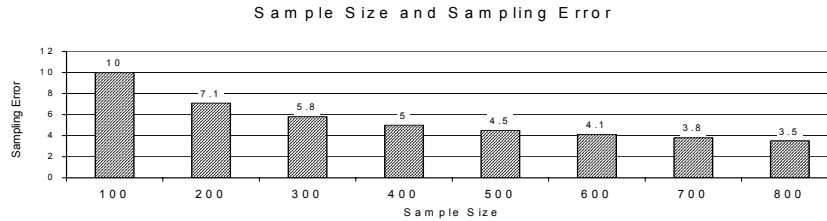
The most recent *Star-Ledger/Eagleton-Rutgers Poll* was conducted by telephone with a random sample of 501 New Jersey adults from April 24 to May 4. The poll has a margin of sampling error of + 4.5 percent.

The poll also found that New Jerseyans feel that flying in a plane remains a safe way to travel. Nearly half (49%) say airplane travel is very safe right now, 38 percent say it is somewhat safe, and only 1-in-10 say it is not very (7%) or not at all (4%) safe.

Comparing the relative safety of flying in a plane and traveling by car, New Jersey opinion is split on which is the safer mode of transportation. When asked to take into consideration all the things that affect travel safety – 47 percent say that flying is safer compared to 48 percent who give driving the nod as the safer form of travel. Another 3 percent say that the two modes are equally safe.

BACKGROUND MEMO – RELEASE (EP143-6) May 25, 2003

The latest *Star-Ledger*/Eagleton-Rutgers Poll was conducted by telephone from April 24 to May 4 with a scientifically selected random sample of 501 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 501 is ± 4.5 percent, at a 95 percent confidence interval. Thus if 50 percent of New Jersey residents were found to be less likely to agree with a statement, one would be 95 percent sure that the true figure would be between 45.5 and 54.5 percent (50 ± 4.5) 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 residents of North, Central and South Jersey, 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:

“Have you taken a vacation of a week or more away from home in the last 12 months?” [V1]

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
May 2003	57%	43%	100%	(501)
PAST SURVEYS				
--June 1998	53	47	100	(602)
--June 1994	61	39	100	(801)
--September 1982	53	47	100	(500)
--September 1980	59	41	100	(601)
--May 1978	58	42	100	(1002)

“Did you spend your **last** vacation somewhere in New Jersey, another state in the Northeast, a different part of the country, or out of the country?” [V2] *

	<u>New Jersey</u>	<u>Northeast</u>	<u>Other State</u>	<u>Other Country</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
May 2003	14%	17%	48%	20%	1%	100%	(311)
PAST SURVEYS							
--June 1998	15	22	38	24	1	100	(343)
--June 1994	17	20	41	23	--	100	(529)
--September 1982	21	22	43	11	2	99	(263)
--September 1980	29	24	33	13	1	100	(383)
--May 1978	21	17	39	15	8	100	(753)

* This question was only asked to respondents who had taken a vacation away from home in the last 12 months.

“Now thinking about this upcoming summer -- Do you think you will [READ ITEM]?” [V3]

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
Take a vacation of a week or more in New Jersey this summer May 2003	34%	65%	1%	100%	(501)

PAST SURVEYS

--June 1998	32	67	1	100	(602)
--June 1994	36	59	4	99	(801)

Take a vacation of a week or more
outside New Jersey

May 2003	54%	44%	1%	99%	(501)
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PAST SURVEYS

--June 1998	54	45	1	100	(602)
--June 1994	54	42	4	100	(801)

Take a vacation overseas this summer

May 2003	13%	86%	1%	100%	(501)
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“Some people report that they have changed their vacation plans this year because of the war in Iraq and the threat of terrorism. Have you changed your vacation plans for this summer OR will you do what you normally would have done?” [V4]

	<u>Changed plans</u>	<u>Normal plans</u>	<u>NA/DK</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
May 2003	8%	89%	4%	101%	(501)

Have plans this summer

--Yes	7	90	2	99	(378)
--No	8	84	8	100	(123)

“How safe is it to fly on an airplane right now – very safe, somewhat safe, not very safe, or not at all safe?” [V5]

	<u>Very Safe</u>	<u>Somewhat Safe</u>	<u>Not very safe</u>	<u>Not at all safe</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
May 2003	49%	38%	7%	4%	2%	100%	(501)

“Considering all the things that affect travel safety, which form of travel do you feel is safer overall – [ROTATE:] flying in a plane or driving a car?” [V6]

	<u>Flying in a plane</u>	<u>Driving a car</u>	<u>Same (VOL)</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
May 2003	47%	48%	3%	2%	101%	(501)

“Overall, how would you rate the state of New Jersey as a place to take a vacation--excellent, good, only fair or poor?” [NJ7]

	<u>Excellent</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Only Fair</u>	<u>Poor</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
May 2003	18%	41%	28%	11%	1%	99%	(501)
<i><u>Region</u></i>							
--North	18	36	33	12	2	101	(228)
--Central	13	42	28	15	2	100	(123)
--South	22	49	22	7	--	100	(143)
<i>PAST SURVEYS</i>							
--June 1998	24	41	26	7	1	99	(602)
--June 1994	28	43	22	5	2	100	(801)