

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

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THE SORRY STATE OF TURNOUT IN NEW JERSEY ELECTIONS

Cliff Zukin, Patrick Murray and Robert Suls¹

In a survey we conducted for the Star-Ledger last month, just one registered voter in ten could tell us what offices are at stake in next month's election. For the record, all 80 seats in the state assembly and 40 seats in the state senate are up for election on November 4.

We expect turnout in this election to be dismal, by any standard. Just 36 percent of the registered voters we talked to said they will "definitely" vote in the election. And frankly, we think this self-reported number is likely to be too high! Four years ago, just 31 percent of registered voters turned out to vote in the state's legislative elections.

But unattractive as this portrait is, the underlying subject is even uglier. When we take into account those who are able to vote but are not even registered, turnout in the 1999 elections actually was about 26 percent of eligible New Jersey citizens.

There is a major problem in voting participation in the Garden State. In fact, with one exception, turnout in each of the four types of elections—presidential, gubernatorial, congressional and state legislative—has declined over the last three cycles, encompassing the previous 12 years. Given that a representative democracy depends on citizen participation for the essential job of selecting leadership, this trend begs fundamental questions: Does the fact that fewer and fewer people are voting compromise the representative character of elections? Whose voices are being heard, and whose are not?

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

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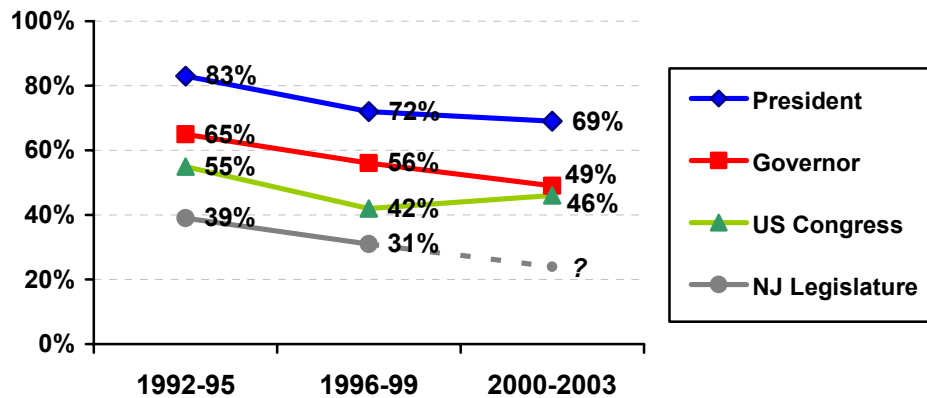
Here we look at trends in turnout in the state, identify who is and who is not participating, and speculate on what it all means.

The Turnout Trend—Decidedly Down

When James E. McGreevey beat Bret Schundler in the gubernatorial election of 2001, turnout was 49 percent of registered voters, the first time it had dipped below the majority mark in a gubernatorial race since 1972 when 18 year olds were given the right to vote. And this was a dramatic decline from four years earlier, where McGreevey lost a close race to incumbent Christie Whitman with 56 percent of registered voters going to the polls. And turnout in that 1997 election itself represented a significant decline from the 65 percent of registered voters who turned out to give Whitman a narrow victory over then-Governor James Florio in 1993.

But it is not only in the state’s gubernatorial elections where turnout is down. In fact, the downward trend is apparent over the last three presidential elections, the last set of legislative elections, and probably the last set of congressional elections as well. We say probably because while turnout increased slightly from 42 to 46 percent between 1998 and 2002 in the congressional elections, but there was no election for U.S. Senate in 1998. Even though Senator Robert Torricelli’s withdrawal and his replacement with former Senator Frank Lautenberg certainly added some top-of-the-ticket spice in last year’s congressional elections, turnout was 9 percentage points lower than the last non-presidential senate election in 1994.

**Turnout among Registered Voters
for Last Three Election Cycles**



Why Turnout is Down

There are no shortage of suspects as to why turnout is down in New Jersey. We might start with the state's recent nefarious political history, which is full enough of the ethically challenged, indicted and convicted so that even a brief recap is well beyond the space we have for review. It is a recent history that only Tony Soprano could be proud of: Janisewski, Treffinger, DiFrancesco, Torricelli, Milan, Bost, Barnes, Russo, billboard millionaires, a moving gubernatorial primary, a substitute senate candidate and the ever-present practice of pay-to-play. Our polling has documented a decline in state residents' ratings of the quality of their government, and it's hard to argue with them. There are good reasons why cynicism should flourish in the Garden State, and it would not be hard to understand why depressed voter turnout would be a consequence.

Second, campaigns have become more negative and more expensive over the last dozen or so years. Our polling here also indicated a backlash in citizen reaction, for example, to Senator Jon Corzine's spending of over 60 million dollars in his Senate campaign of 2000. But third, we must also consider that the *nature of the electorate itself has changed*, with generational replacement of the World War II generation with GenX and a new group we call the Dot.Nets (18 to 26 year olds). And it is here we think we find the main culprit for the decline in turnout, taking nothing away from the contributions of the other explanations.

Who's Not There?

Elections are the primary mechanism by which citizens voices are heard in terms of which issues are important to them, and how they are divided on these issues. Politicians are, if nothing else, attentive to those who vote them into or out of office. Registering to vote is the ante in the game of politics. If you're not even registered, you're not a player, and those at the table have no reason to seriously consider you or anything you might want. So, we began our inquiry into non-voting in New Jersey with the basic question of "*Who is missing from the table?*"

We have pooled information collected on the last four statewide surveys of the Star-Ledger/Eagleton-Rutgers Poll, to encompass some 3,400 residents of New Jersey, dividing them into registered and non-registered voters. These combined

samplings give an estimate of 76 percent statewide who say they are registered, very close to the N.J. Election Division’s number of 73 percent. Here’s what we learned:

	<u>Registered</u>
Feb-Sept 2003	76%
<i><u>Party Affiliation</u></i>	
--Democrat	80
--Independent	77
--Republican	85
<i><u>Age</u></i>	
-- 18-29	55
-- 30-49	75
-- 50-64	86
-- 65 and older	92
<i><u>Race/Ethnicity</u></i>	
-- White	79
-- Black	75
-- Hispanic	66
-- Asian	55
<i><u>Education</u></i>	
-- HS or less	72
-- Some College	77
-- College Graduate	85
<i><u>Gender</u></i>	
-- Male	74
-- Female	78
<i><u>Income</u></i>	
-- Under \$35K	70
-- \$35K to < 70K	76
-- \$70K +	81

- There is a small partisan difference that accrues to the Republicans’ advantage. It is 85 percent of Republicans who are registered, compared to 80 percent of Democrats and 77 percent of independents. Far fewer of those not identifying as being in one of these three groups are registered.
- There are also slight socio-economic status differences. Better educated and wealthier New Jerseyans are more likely to be registered to vote.
- Racial and ethnic differences are slight between whites and blacks, and much larger between these two groups on the one hand and Hispanics and Asians on the other. These differences persist even when looking only at those eligible to register (excluding non-citizen immigrants, for example).

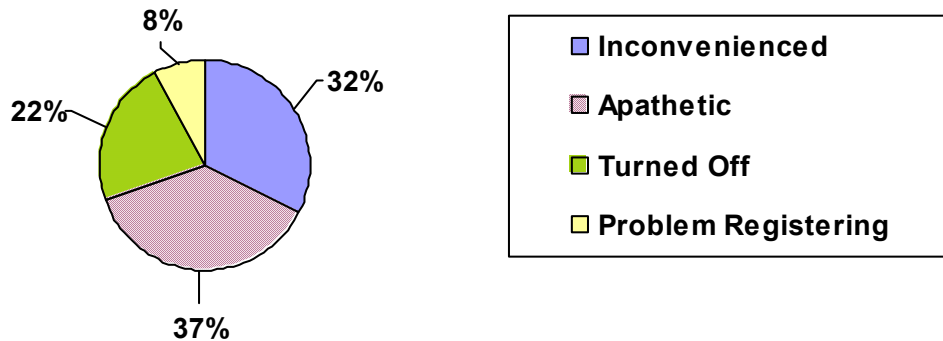
- *But the biggest difference in terms of those whose voices are absent from the political process is in age:* it is barely a majority of those under 30 (55 percent) who are even registered to vote, and much less actually turn out to do so. In contrast, 75 percent of those between 30 and 49 report being registered to vote, as do 86 percent of those between 50 and 64, and 92 percent of those over 65.

Why People Don't Participate

In various surveys conducted over the last 12 months, we've asked those people who are not registered *why* they are not, and also asked those who are registered but don't vote in every election *why* they don't. It's a complex picture. Let's turn first to what people tell us when we ask them why they are not registered to vote—excluding those who are not eligible to register even if they wanted to do so (non-citizens; felons, etc.) Thus we are talking here about a slice of the pie that is made up of roughly one-quarter of all state citizens.

Interviewers asked those in this group to tell them “the main reason” why they were not registered and wrote down their full responses, which we later grouped into categories. We call about one-in-three “Inconvenienced”: 32 percent of non-registered New Jerseyans told us they recently moved and haven't gotten around to registering. Slightly larger (37%) are the “Apathetics,” a group that contains another quarter who flat tell us they are apathetic or don't care, to which we add another 12 percent who couldn't even give interviewers a reason why they aren't registered. Somewhat surprisingly, it is only between one-quarter and one-fifth (22%) who are “Turned Off,” rejecting politics, negative campaigning, government, or all of the above. Just eight percent report being dissuaded from registering by difficulties in the process. Thus the key to getting the bulk of non-voters to even register rests largely with showing them the relevance of the political process and outcomes to their lives, rather than turning around negative attitudes or removing any structural barriers to registration!

Why People Aren't Registered

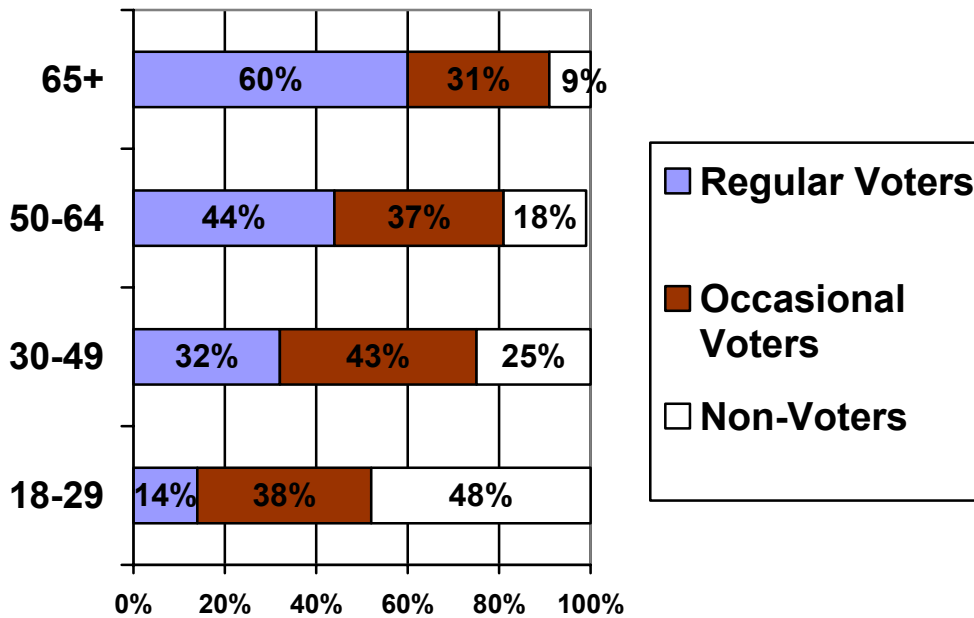


And this is particularly true with regard to young people in New Jersey. Just under half (47%) of those under 30 who are not registered say they just haven't thought about it or give no answer to why they are not registered. The number giving this type of responses drops to one-third of those between 30 and 50, and to one-quarter of those over 50. Older non-registered voters give a higher proportion of answers suggesting they have been turned off by the political system. *Young people haven't really opted out of the political system so much as they have just never opted in.*

In May of this year we went a little further in our assessment of who does and who does not participate in the electoral process. We classified everyone we interviewed in this statewide sampling as falling into one of three groups: *Non-participants*, who are not eligible, not registered or simply don't vote, *occasional* participants who vote sometimes vote and *regular* participants who tell us they vote in every election.

The findings echo and reinforce our findings of the difference between registered and non-registered voters. There are few partisan or gender differences, slight but significant socio-economic status differences in terms of education and income and huge differences by age: Just 14 percent of those under 30 years of age are regular voters, compared to 32 percent of those between 30 and 49, to 44 percent of those between 50 and 54, and to fully 60 percent of those over 65. Virtually half (48%) of those under 30 say they never vote, compared to only a quarter or fewer of their older counterparts.

Type of Voter by Age



Younger People Participating Less is Normal. Yes, BUT...

It is a truism of political life that younger citizens participate less than their older counterparts. So has it always been. But there is also evidence that younger people now participate less *than younger people used to in the past!* Here we rely on exit poll information gathered from sampling voters after they cast ballots in the last three presidential and gubernatorial elections. In addition to asking voters who they supported, statistics were also gathered on demographics of those going to the polls: age, race, education, gender, party and ideology.

There are a number of trends over the last three election cycles worthy of note. But we find the most interesting to be the trend among those under 30: They made up a declining share (19, 15 and 13 percent) of the last three presidential electorates in the state, and of the last three (15, 12 and 9 percent) gubernatorial ones. Clearly, not only are young people voting in lesser numbers than their older counterparts; in New Jersey young people today comprise less of the electorate than their generational counterparts of even five and 10 years ago.

What It All Means: The "So What" Question

Well the first answer to this question is fairly obvious: younger voices are less loud, and thus less well heard by those in Trenton. But less recognized may be the obvious consequence of this. In fact, representative government works pretty well. Elected representatives do in fact try to respond to the voice they hear. Credit this to an enlightened view of democracy or naked self-interest, but they do. The corollary of course is that if you aren't speaking, they don't hear you. So the political system has a bias: some policy demands are heard more clearly than are others. Young people, and to a lesser but still significant extent, the less well educated and less affluent, have a muted voice in the input, and in the output in terms how goodies are given out. The survey findings we released Monday in the Star-Ledger are illustrative: 64 percent of those under 30 favor gay and lesbians being able to marry legally; just 27 percent of those over 50 feel the same way. Guess which voice is louder in Trenton.

Second, young people's lack of interest and engagement shapes the way campaigns are run in the state--which issues are addressed, and which ones are not. Campaign discourse is stilted to those who are responsive: social security over education; economic over social concerns. And this in itself becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy. Younger citizens' concerns are less well addressed, and this reinforces a sense that the political system is irrelevant to them.

What Is To Be Done

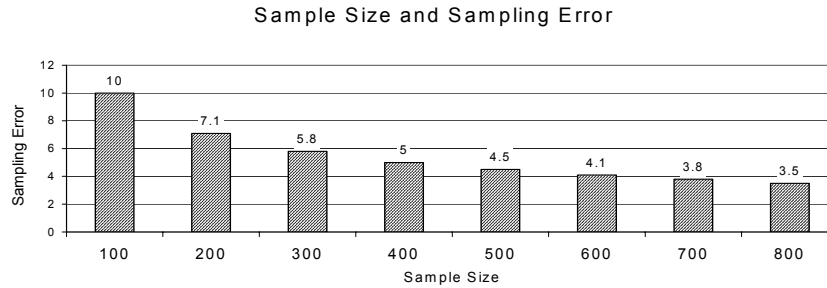
Let us first state our bias: we believe it is important for all citizens to participate in the democratic process. To the extent that participation wanes, the extremes tend to be heard louder than the means. With declining participation, those left in the system have more partisan and shriller voices; the system loses precious ballast and moderation. So, we believe that something should be done to try to draw in the huge number of New Jersey youth that currently are disengaged.

Let us second state our proposed solution: a renewed emphasis on the importance of civic and political engagement in the state's high schools and colleges. Something positive must rail against the pessimism of actual bad behavior, big money and a negative media (largely television) environment that emphasizes the warts in the political culture without a nod to the smooth skin. We cannot afford to raise another generation that is

either turned off or tuned out. A healthy, functioning democracy depends on the transmission from one generation to the next that each is the guardian of sacred norms of participation. We are currently failing in this regard, and we have it in us to do better.

BACKGROUND MEMO – RELEASE (EP144-7) October 5, 2003

The latest *Star-Ledger*/Eagleton-Rutgers Poll was conducted by telephone from September 2 to 8 with a scientifically selected random sample of 658 New Jersey registered voters. 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 ± 3.8 percent, at a 95 percent confidence interval. Thus if 50 percent of New Jersey voters were found to be less likely to agree with a statement, one would be 95 percent sure that the true figure would be between 46.2 and 53.8 percent (50 ± 3.8) had all voters been interviewed, rather than just a sample. This release also includes information based on a sub-sample of 266 “likely” voters with a ± 6 percent margin of error. 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:

“There is an election this November in New Jersey. Even though this has not received a lot of attention yet, do you happen to know which offices are up for a vote?” [AE1]

	<u>Names State Legislature</u>	<u>Names Leg and other office</u>	<u>Names other office</u>	<u>DK</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
September 2003						
Registered Voters	6%	4%	3%	87%	100%	(658)
Likely Voters	14%	6%	7%	73%	100%	(266)
<u>Party Affiliation</u>						
--Democrat	5	4	4	86	99	(236)
--Independent	6	5	2	87	100	(176)
--Republican	9	3	4	85	99	(178)
<u>PAST SURVEYS</u>						
September 1999						
Registered Voters	5	2	11	82	100	(601)

“Most people do not vote in the State Legislature elections. How about you -- do you think you definitely will vote, probably will vote or probably not vote in the November election for State Legislature?” [AE2]

September 2003 Registered Voters	<u>Definitely</u> 36%	<u>Probably</u> 37%	<u>Probably Not</u> 22%	<u>Definitely Not</u> 2%	<u>DK/ Undecided</u> 3%	<u>Total</u> 100%	<u>(n)</u> (658)
<i>Party Affiliation</i>							
--Democrat	40	30	23	4	3	100	(236)
--Independent	29	43	22	--	5	99	(176)
--Republican	40	38	18	1	2	99	(178)
<u>PAST SURVEYS</u>							
September 1999	50	35	12	1	2	100	(601)

“And if the election was held today, would you vote for the Republican or Democratic candidates for Assembly in your district?” [AE3]

September 2003 Likely Voters	<u>Democrat</u> 41%	<u>Republican</u> 32%	<u>Split/Other</u> 5%	<u>DK/ Undecided</u> 22%	<u>Total</u> 100%	<u>(n)</u> (266)
<i>Party Affiliation</i>						
--Democrat	88	3	2	7	100	(100)
--Independent	26	25	10	39	100	(66)
--Republican	--	83	5	12	100	(76)
<u>PAST SURVEYS</u>						
September 2001	40	39	1	20	100	(396)
September 1999	31	31	7	31	100	(312)
September 1997	33	30	1	36	100	(501)

“And if the election was held today, would you vote for the Republican or Democratic candidate for Senate in your district?” [AE4]

September 2003 Likely Voters	<u>Democrat</u> 43%	<u>Republican</u> 33%	<u>Other</u> 2%	<u>DK/ Undecided</u> 22%	<u>Total</u> 100%	<u>(n)</u> (266)
<i>Party ID</i>						
--Democrat	85	4	1	10	100	(100)
--Independent	32	31	2	35	100	(66)
--Republican	2	86	--	12	100	(76)
<u>PAST SURVEYS</u>						
September 1997	35	31	1	34	101	(501)

“If Governor McGreevey campaigned for the Democratic candidates in your district would this make you more likely to support them, less likely, or make no difference in how you would vote?” [AE5]

September 2003 Likely Voters	<u>More likely</u> 14%	<u>Less likely</u> 20%	<u>No difference</u> 63%	<u>DK/Undecided</u> 3%	<u>Total</u> 100%	<u>(n)</u> (266)
<i>Party ID</i>						
--Democrat	22	12	60	5	99	(100)
--Independent	10	27	64	--	101	(66)
--Republican	2	22	76	--	100	(76)

The *Star-Ledger/Eagleton-Rutgers Poll* has been collecting information on voter registration throughout the year. The following information is based on a pooled sample of four surveys conducted between February and September 2003 with a total of 3,408 New Jersey adults. The four surveys were combined in order to achieve a sufficient number of cases for reliability in analyzing non-voter information.

“Are you currently registered to vote at the address where you now live?” (*Registered out of the voting age population and registered out of the voting eligible population*)

	<u>Registered out of all voting age population*</u>	<u>(n)</u>	<u>Registered out of all eligible voters</u>	<u>(n)</u>
Feb-Sept 2003	76%	(3408)	81%	(3254)
<i>Party Affiliation</i>				
-- Democrat	80	(1101)	84	(1052)
-- Independent	77	(1002)	80	(963)
-- Republican	85	(846)	87	(832)
<i>Age</i>				
-- 18-29	55	(449)	62	(407)
-- 30-49	75	(1430)	79	(1352)
-- 50-64	86	(861)	88	(844)
-- 65 and older	92	(555)	94	(548)
<i>Race/Ethnicity</i>				
-- White	79	(2538)	82	(2470)
-- Black	75	(367)	80	(346)
-- Hispanic	66	(238)	74	(219)
-- Asian	55	(132)	74	(99)
<i>Education</i>				
-- HS or less	72	(928)	77	(873)
-- Some College	77	(963)	80	(927)
-- College Graduate	85	(1500)	89	(1440)
<i>Gender</i>				
-- Male	74	(1641)	80	(1548)
-- Female	78	(1767)	82	(1706)
<i>Income</i>				
-- Under \$35K	70	(489)	75	(458)
-- \$35K to < 70K	76	(751)	80	(714)
-- \$70K +	81	(1082)	84	(1050)
<i>Region of the State</i>				
-- North	76	(1560)	81	(1476)
-- Central	81	(885)	85	(848)
-- South	75	(899)	78	(876)

Note: There is slight over-reporting of voter registration in the survey data. State records indicate that about 73 percent of the adult population in New Jersey is actually registered.

ASKED OF UNREGISTERED RESIDENTS WHO ARE ELIGIBLE TO VOTE:

“What is the main reason why you are not registered to vote?”

	<u>Just moved*</u>	<u>Apathy/ Not a priority**</u>	<u>Negative about politics†</u>	<u>No jury duty</u>	<u>Regi- stration is hard††</u>	<u>Newly eligible</u>	<u>No answer</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
Feb - Sept 2003	32%	25%	22%	1%	5%	3%	12%	100%	(525)
<u>Party Affiliation</u>									
--Democrat	38	19	22	1	6	3	10	99	(161)
--Independent	36	29	16	--	5	4	8	98	(146)
--Republican	30	35	11	1	8	2	12	99	(84)
<u>Age</u>									
-- 18-29	25	36	12	1	8	7	11	100	(146)
-- 30-49	38	23	24	1	3	--	11	100	(240)
-- 50 and older	34	12	33	2	5	1	13	100	(122)
<u>Race/Ethnicity</u>									
-- White	32	26	23	--	5	2	12	100	(367)
-- Black/Hispanic	32	23	23	2	7	5	8	100	(109)
<u>Education</u>									
-- HS or less	23	29	25	--	5	4	14	100	(195)
-- Some College	37	22	21	4	7	1	9	101	(169)
-- College Graduate	60	19	10	2	4	--	5	100	(156)
<u>Gender</u>									
-- Male	32	25	20	1	5	4	13	100	(246)
-- Female	32	26	23	1	6	2	10	100	(279)
<u>Region of the State</u>									
-- North	34	28	15	2	6	4	11	100	(235)
-- Central	30	29	21	1	5	2	13	101	(113)
-- South	33	20	30	1	5	1	10	101	(166)

* Includes those who say they are registered at another address, old address or just moved.

** Includes those who say they didn't get around to it, have other priorities or call themselves lazy.

† Includes those who say they don't want to vote, believe voting makes no difference or dislike politics and politicians.

†† Includes those who report problems with registration forms, don't know where to register or have no transportation available to them.

Changes in Composition of the Electorate
(based on New Jersey exit polls)

Presidential

Change	Group	1992	1996	2000
↑	Democrat	35	40	41
↔	Independent	26	29	29
↓	Republican	39	31	30
↔	Liberal	20	21	23
↔	Moderate	54	54	55
↔	Conservative	26	25	22
↔	Male	48	45	47
↔	Female	52	55	53
↔	White	80	80	80
↔	Black	10	12	11
↔	Hispanic	8	4	5
↔	Asian	2	4	4
↓	Age 18-29	19	15	13
↔	Age 30-44	37	37	36
↑	Age 45-59	23	23	31
↔	Age 60 +	21	25	20
↓	High School or less	30	29	23
↔	Some College	24	28	25
↑	College Graduate	47	43	52

Gubernatorial

Change	Group	1993	1997	2001
↑	Democrat	34	38	43
↓	Independent	32	28	20
↔	Republican	33	34	36
↔	Liberal	20	18	17
↑	Moderate	52	53	60
↓	Conservative	28	29	23
↔	Male	50	47	48
↔	Female	50	53	52
↓	White	87	83	79
↔	Black	8	11	11
↔	Hispanic	3	3	7
↔	Asian	3	3	3
↓	Age 18-29	15	12	9
↓	Age 30-44	33	31	28
↑	Age 45-59	25	27	34
↔	Age 60 +	27	30	28
↓	High School or less	32	28	25
↔	Some College	25	25	23
↑	College Graduate	42	48	53

In May 2003, the *Star-Ledger/Eagleton-Rutgers Poll* asked registered voters about their frequency of voting and reasons for not voting in every election. These results are presented below.

“Most people don’t vote in all elections. Usually between one-quarter to one-half of those eligible actually come out to vote. Can you tell me how often you vote in local AND national elections – always, most of the time, sometimes, rarely, or never?”

	<u>Always</u>	<u>Occasional</u>	<u>Never</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
May 2003					
Registered Voters	38%	38%	25%	101%	(1002)
<u>Party ID</u>					
--Democrat	42	37	21	100	(313)
--Independent	39	39	22	100	(322)
--Republican	42	38	21	101	(242)
<u>Age</u>					
-- 18-29	14	38	48	100	(123)
-- 30-49	32	43	25	100	(431)
-- 50-64	44	37	18	99	(259)
-- 65 and older	60	31	9	100	(162)
<u>Race/Ethnicity</u>					
-- White	42	37	21	100	(736)
-- Black	30	47	23	100	(114)
-- Hispanic	25	32	43	100	(71)
<u>Education</u>					
-- HS or less	33	39	28	100	(256)
-- Some College	33	37	29	99	(318)
-- College Graduate	49	37	14	100	(426)
<u>Gender</u>					
-- Male	38	34	28	100	(482)
-- Female	38	41	22	101	(520)
<u>Income</u>					
-- Under \$35K	34	33	33	100	(161)
-- \$35K to < 70K	36	39	25	100	(303)
-- \$70K +	42	39	19	100	(424)
<u>Region of the State</u>					
-- North	38	37	25	100	(461)
-- Central	39	42	19	100	(251)
-- South	38	36	26	100	(274)

* “Never vote” includes registered voters who never vote, non-registered citizens, and ineligible adult residents.

ASKED OF REGISTERED VOTERS WHO DO NOT VOTE IN ALL ELECTIONS:

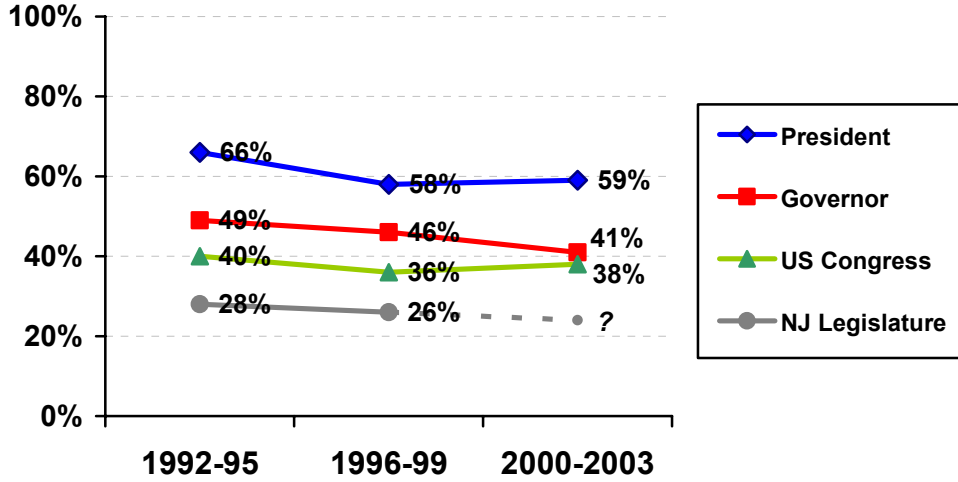
“People don’t vote for a lot of reasons. I’m going to read a short list of possible reasons and would like you to tell me if it is a major reason you didn’t all the time, a minor reason, or not a reason. First... (RANDOMIZE A. I’m not interested in politics, B. There’s no difference between the two parties, C. I really dislike politics and government, D. Voting is too much trouble E. My vote wouldn’t make any difference in what happens in my life, F. I only vote when something important to me is on the ballot, G. It’s too hard to get information about who to vote for, H. I only vote when something is wrong in government or politics—if things are OK there’s no real reason to vote?)... is this a major, minor, or not a reason why you don’t vote in every election?”

May 2003	<u>Major Reason</u>	<u>Minor Reason</u>	<u>Not a Reason</u>	<u>Don’t Know</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
I only vote when something important to me is on the ballot	23%	24%	52%	1%	100%	(403)
It’s too hard to get information about who to vote for	16%	32%	51%	1%	100%	(403)
There’s no difference between the two parties	16%	27%	54%	2%	99%	(403)
I’m not interested in politics	16%	25%	57%	1%	99%	(403)
I really dislike politics and government	16%	25%	57%	2%	100%	(403)
My vote wouldn’t make any difference in what happens in my life	16%	22%	61%	1%	100%	(403)
I only vote when something is wrong in government or politics—if things are OK there’s no real reason to vote	11%	21%	68%	1%	101%	(403)
Voting is too much trouble	8%	25%	66%	1%	100%	(403)

THOSE WHO SAY EACH IS AT LEAST A MINOR REASON FOR NOT VOTING IN ALL ELECTIONS:

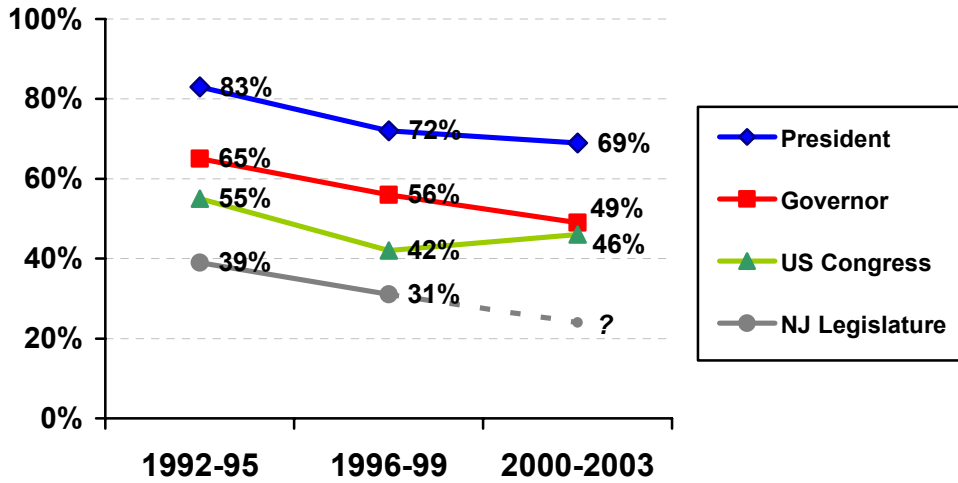
	<u>Only vote when something important to me is on ballot</u>	<u>Hard to get info about who to vote for</u>	<u>No difference between parties</u>	<u>Not interested in politics</u>	<u>Dislike politics and gov't</u>	<u>Wouldn't make a difference</u>	<u>Only vote when something is wrong</u>	<u>Voting is too much trouble</u>	<u>(n)</u>
May 2003	47%	48%	43%	41%	41%	38%	32%	33%	(403)
<i>Party ID</i>									
--Democrat	47	42	35	33	30	31	21	27	(116)
--Independent	47	55	52	49	46	41	35	38	(113)
--Republican	52	56	41	38	40	43	40	32	(103)
<i>Age</i>									
-- 18-34	50	57	49	50	43	43	35	48	(97)
-- 35-49	48	39	41	39	39	37	29	31	(155)
-- 50 and older	44	49	45	41	42	37	31	26	(145)
<i>Race/Ethnicity</i>									
-- White	44	44	40	42	40	36	28	32	(288)
-- Black & Hispanic	54	58	54	37	45	38	40	35	(80)
<i>Education</i>									
-- HS or less	48	49	47	52	49	45	35	38	(106)
-- Some College	50	48	47	38	41	36	36	32	(132)
-- College Grad	42	45	35	26	28	27	20	25	(165)
<i>Gender</i>									
-- Male	52	50	54	45	48	44	37	37	(182)
-- Female	43	46	36	39	35	33	27	30	(221)
<i>Income</i>									
-- Under \$70K	48	52	52	49	46	43	31	34	(181)
-- \$70K +	45	41	34	33	30	30	30	33	(177)
<i>Region of State</i>									
-- North	53	47	48	46	44	42	32	38	(186)
-- Central	41	51	36	39	36	30	28	24	(105)
-- South	40	43	41	32	39	33	28	32	(107)

Turnout among Voting Eligible Population for Last Three Election Cycles



Note: The 1998 Congressional election did not include a statewide US Senate race.

Turnout among Registered Voters for Last Three Election Cycles



Note: The 1998 Congressional election did not include a statewide US Senate race.

New Jersey Voting Eligible and Registered Voter Populations

Year	Election Type	% Eligible among all Adults	% Registered among all Eligible	% Registered among all Adults
2003	Leg	89%	*	*
2002	Sen/Cong	89%	81%	73%
2001	Gub/Leg	88%	83%	73%
2000	Pres/Sen	88%	86%	75%
1999	Asm-Leg	88%	83%	72%
1998	Cong	88%	85%	75%
1997	Gub/Leg	88%	83%	73%
1996	Pres/Sen	88%	81%	71%
1995	Asm-Leg	88%	74%	65%
1994	Sen/Cong	88%	73%	64%
1993	Gub/Leg	87%	75%	66%
1992	Pres	86%	79%	68%

* Registration totals for the 2003 general election are not yet available.