

Marist Institute for Public Opinion

Marist College • Poughkeepsie, N.Y. 12601 • 845.575.5050

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Contact: Dr. Lee M. Miringoff
Dr. Barbara L. Carvalho
Marist College
845.575.5050

This Marist College Institute for Public Opinion poll reports:

Direction of New York State

- **Views flip-flop:** Only 39% of registered voters express a positive outlook about the direction of New York State. 52% currently think things are headed in the wrong direction. These findings contrast with a poll conducted in late October when 51% of registered voters thought the state was headed in the right direction and 40% thought things were going badly.

Question Wording: In general, thinking about the way things are going in New York State, do you feel things are going in the right direction or that things are going in the wrong direction?

Registered Voters	Right Direction	Wrong Direction	Unsure
December 2002	39%	52%	9%
October 30, 2002	51%	40%	9%
October 1, 2002	55%	37%	8%
September 2002	56%	38%	6%
May 2002	65%	28%	7%
April 2002	66%	28%	6%
December 2001	65%	25%	10%
December 2000	64%	30%	6%
September 1999	65%	25%	10%
October 1998	68%	23%	9%
October 1997	58%	33%	9%
November 1996	51%	37%	12%
September 1995	35%	48%	17%
November 1994	25%	62%	13%
November 1993	26%	59%	15%
September 1990	28%	56%	16%

- **Economic recession:** 71% of registered voters think New York State is currently in a recession.

Question Wording: Do you think that New York State is currently in a recession, or not?

Registered Voters	Yes	No	Unsure
December 2002	71%	26%	3%
October 1, 2002	71%	26%	3%
September 2002	71%	25%	4%
May 2002	62%	33%	5%
April 2002	68%	28%	4%
December 2001	76%	19%	5%
September 1998	23%	71%	6%
October 1997	36%	58%	6%
November 1996	48%	45%	7%
September 1995	56%	34%	10%
October 1994	67%	27%	6%
March 1991	84%	13%	3%

- **How long will it last:** 71% of registered voters who think the state is in a recession think it will last more than a year.

Question Wording: How long do you think the recession will last? (Asked of those who think New York State is in a recession)

Registered Voters	Less than Six Months	Six Months to a Year	More than a Year	Unsure
December 2002	3%	24%	71%	2%

- **Economic matters:** 50% of New York State's registered voters consider jobs to be the most important economic concern.

Question Wording: What do you consider to be the most important concern for the economy?

Registered Voters	Unemployment	Stock Market	Inflation	Interest Rates	Unsure
December 2002	50%	24%	16%	8%	2%

- **Future personal finances:** 63% of registered voters think their personal finances will remain unchanged in the coming year.

Question Wording: In the coming year, do you feel you will be economically better off, worse off, or about the same as you are now?

Registered Voters	Better Off	Worse Off	About the Same
December 2002	19%	18%	63%

The Public's Agenda

- **Priorities:** New York State's registered voters rank increasing security to prevent terrorism, creating more jobs, making health care more affordable, reducing crime, and improving the public schools as the top five issues for the governor and the New York State Legislature.
- **By region:** Registered voters both in New York City and in the suburbs rank increasing security to prevent terrorism as their top priority. Upstate voters rank making health care more affordable at the top of their list.

Issue Ranking: Voters rated each issue on a scale of 0 through 10.* The ratings for each issue were averaged to obtain an overall mean score for the issue. The rank is based on this average.

Registered Voters	Rank			
	Total	Upstate	NYC	Suburbs
Increase security to prevent terrorism	1	3	1	1
Create more jobs	2	2	2	4
Make health care more affordable	3	1	4	3
Reduce crime	4	4	3	2
Improve the public schools	5	5	5	5
Reduce the cost of prescription drugs	6	6	8	6
Protect the environment	7	9	7	7
Deal with the state budget deficit	8	7	10	8
Reduce poverty	9	8	6	9
Increase the amount of affordable housing	10	11	11	12
Reduce taxes	11	10	13	10
Improve race relations	12	12	12	11
Improve public transportation	13	14	9	13
Reform campaign financing	14	13	14	14

- **Emergency preparedness:** Most residents in the state do not think their community is prepared to respond adequately to a terrorist attack.

Question Wording: In the event of a terrorist attack in your area, do you think your community has an adequate emergency response plan currently in place, or not?

NYS Residents	Yes	No	Unsure
December 2002	22%	68%	10%
Upstate	28%	62%	10%
New York City	18%	72%	10%
Suburbs	15%	75%	10%

* **Question Wording:** Now I want to ask you about several issues facing New York State. Using the numbers zero through ten with 10 being a top priority for the governor and the New York State Legislature and 0 being not a priority at all, please tell me how you would rate each of the following issues.

Approval Ratings

- **Governor Pataki:** 57% of New York State's registered voters rate the job Governor George Pataki is doing in office as excellent or good.

Question Wording: Would you rate the job Governor George Pataki is doing in office as excellent, good, fair, or poor?

Registered Voters	Excellent/ Good	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Unsure/ DK
December 2002	57%	12%	45%	31%	10%	2%
October 30, 2002	57%	14%	43%	33%	9%	1%
October 1, 2002	61%	14%	47%	30%	8%	1%
September 2002	60%	12%	48%	31%	7%	2%
May 2002	72%	14%	58%	23%	5%	0%
April 2002	64%	15%	49%	28%	6%	2%
December 2001	65%	15%	50%	27%	4%	4%
April 2001	53%	10%	43%	34%	8%	5%
December 2000	55%	11%	44%	30%	10%	5%
March 2000	51%	9%	42%	35%	11%	3%
September 1999	51%	10%	41%	38%	9%	2%
July 1999	55%	15%	40%	31%	11%	3%
March 1999	61%	12%	49%	28%	10%	1%
October 1998	60%	14%	46%	31%	8%	1%
September 1998	62%	16%	46%	31%	6%	1%
April 1998	59%	11%	48%	33%	7%	1%
February 1998	60%	11%	49%	32%	6%	2%
October 1997	49%	7%	42%	39%	10%	2%
March 1997	47%	6%	41%	38%	12%	3%
November 1996	47%	8%	39%	36%	14%	3%
March 1996	39%	6%	33%	40%	17%	4%
September 1995	39%	5%	34%	38%	17%	6%
March 1995	36%	8%	28%	28%	16%	20%

Registered Voters	Excellent/ Good	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Unsure/ DK
December 2002	57%	12%	45%	31%	10%	2%
Upstate	60%	16%	44%	29%	8%	3%
New York City	50%	9%	41%	34%	15%	1%
Suburbs	61%	10%	51%	29%	9%	1%
Democrats	43%	6%	37%	40%	16%	1%
Republicans	77%	21%	56%	18%	4%	1%
Non-enrolled	51%	10%	41%	34%	11%	4%

- **Senator Clinton:** Senator Hillary Clinton's approval rating is 44% among New York State's registered voters. 48% do not rate her job performance positively.

Question Wording: Would you rate the job Senator Hillary Clinton is doing in office as excellent, good, fair, or poor?

Registered Voters	Excellent/ Good	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Unsure/ DK
December 2002	44%	10%	34%	28%	20%	8%
April 2002	47%	11%	36%	27%	20%	6%
December 2001	45%	11%	34%	23%	23%	9%
April 2001	35%	9%	26%	26%	22%	17%
February 2001	30%	10%	20%	22%	20%	28%

- **Senator Schumer:** Senator Charles Schumer's approval rating is currently 53% among New York State's registered voters. 36% do not rate his job performance positively.

Question Wording: Would you rate the job Senator Charles Schumer is doing in office as excellent, good, fair, or poor?

Registered Voters	Excellent/ Good	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Unsure/ DK
December 2002	53%	11%	42%	28%	8%	11%
April 2002	55%	11%	44%	26%	6%	13%
December 2001	54%	12%	42%	24%	7%	15%
April 2001	49%	12%	37%	26%	8%	17%
December 2000	51%	13%	38%	22%	9%	18%
March 2000	39%	9%	30%	27%	7%	27%
September 1999	44%	9%	35%	31%	8%	17%
March 1999	41%	7%	34%	23%	10%	26%

- **President Bush:** President George W. Bush's approval rating is currently 57% among New York State's registered voters. 42% do not rate his job performance positively.

Question Wording: Would you rate the job President George W. Bush is doing in office as excellent, good, fair, or poor?

Registered Voters	Excellent/ Good	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Unsure/ DK
December 2002	57%	24%	33%	23%	19%	1%
April 2002	72%	33%	39%	17%	10%	1%
December 2001	79%	43%	36%	15%	5%	1%
April 2001	40%	11%	29%	30%	23%	7%

Nature of the Sample: 1,029 New York State Residents

This survey was conducted from December 4th through 9th, 2002. 1,029 residents were interviewed by telephone in proportion to the population in each county in the state. There are 817 registered voters. Results are statistically significant at $\pm 3\%$ for residents and $\pm 3.5\%$ for registered voters. The error margin increases for cross-tabulations.