

Other editions: [Mobile](#) | [News Feeds](#) | [E-Newsletters](#) | [Text Alerts](#)

[Find it: Jobs](#) | [Cars](#) | [Real Estate](#) | [Apartments](#) | [Shopping](#) | [Classifieds](#) | [Grocery Coupons](#)



SEARCH ALL

SPONSORED BY:

[HOME SERVICE](#) [NEWS](#) [SPORTS](#) [WEATHER](#) [OBITUARIES](#) [OPINION](#) [DATA UNIVERSE](#) [ENTERTAINMENT](#) [MY LIFE](#) [PHOTOS & VIDEOS](#) [BUY/SELL](#) [CUSTOMER](#)

[Middlesex Co.](#) [Somerset Co.](#) [Hunterdon Co.](#) [Union Co.](#) [Business](#) [Money](#) [Nation & World](#) [State](#) [Health](#) [Education](#) [Politics](#) [Crime](#)

Comment, blog & share photos
[Log in](#) | [Become a member](#) | [Search people](#)

POWERED BY YOU AND [Courier News](#) · [HOME NEWS TRIBUNE](#)

Asian Americans in New Jersey seen favoring Obama in recent Rutgers-Eagleton poll

BY ERICA HARBATKIN • STAFF WRITER • OCTOBER 14, 2008

[Read Comments\(1\)](#) [Recommend](#) [Print this page](#) [E-mail this article](#) [Share](#)

RUTGERS —While nearly half of Asian Americans in New York and New Jersey do not identify with either major political party, Democrat Barack Obama holds a considerable lead in the region among likely Asian American voters, according to a Rutgers-Eagleton poll released yesterday.

Nearly half of Asian American likely voters in New Jersey remain undecided — significantly more than the general population, where undecided voters make up about 8 percent of the electorate in national polls conducted since the conventions.

Asian American likely voters in New Jersey favor Obama over Republican John McCain, 37 percent to 18 percent, while 45 percent are undecided. In New Jersey's Senate race, Democratic incumbent Frank Lautenberg holds a 33 percent to 11 percent lead over Republican challenger Dick Zimmer, while half remain undecided.

The poll's faculty coordinator, Jane Junn, attributes the number of undecided voters to the high rate of immigrants among the Asian American population.

"When you say 'Democrat' or 'Republican' to a person who is foreign-born, they may sort of know what you're talking about, but not really, because they don't affiliate with parties to the same degree as the general population," Junn said, noting that 8 in 10 Asian adults in the United States are immigrants. "It's very difficult for people who were raised in another country to come to the United States and all of a sudden have a political position on something."

The poll was conducted in eight different languages, with surveys translated into each language and native speakers conducting interviews. The process was complex and expensive, making this type of survey unprecedented — and Asian voter preferences something of a mystery.

"We don't know how the Asian vote affected previous races because we never had any data on it," Junn said, adding that recent demographic surge among Asians in New Jersey makes the demographic a new force in elections.

But the Asian American population turns out to vote at a higher rate than the country as a whole, making the demographic a potentially key — and often overlooked — contingent.

In New Jersey, 69 percent of Asian American citizens are considered likely voters.

And while many remain undecided on their presidential pick, their priorities indicate a preference for the Democrat, the poll shows.

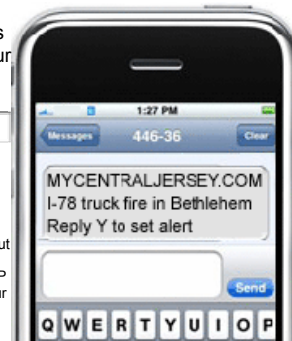
The economy was cited as the "most important problem facing the United States today" by 74 percent of Asian American likely voters in New Jersey, and national polls have consistently found that voters who say the economy is the most important issue tend to favor Obama.

"When you look at the people who have decided who they're going for, there's a big gap for Barack Obama," said Junn, an associate professor of political science at Rutgers. "And while Asian American likely

My Central Jersey Alerts

Get breaking local news as it happens. Enter your phone number:

Standard Messaging Rates or other charges apply. To Opt-out text STOP to 4INFO (44636). For more information text HELP to 4INFO (44636). Contact your carrier for more details. Powered by 4INFO.



More News Headlines

[As economy falters, more people rush to sell gold, jewelry and coins](#)

[Rutgers collects cell phones for emergency use by victims of domestic violence](#)

[Watchung Hills students eager to join political fray, plan mock election](#)

[Local voters will face ballot questions on Election Day](#)

[Warren Board of Health to discuss resident's application for above-ground septic system](#)

Latest Headlines

[Rutgers collects cell phones for emergency use by victims of domestic violence](#)

[Watchung Hills students eager to join political fray, plan mock election](#)

[Fraud a problem for 11 states with bottle deposits](#)

[Local voters will face ballot questions on Election Day](#)

[Plainfield businessman publishes book of state poems](#)

voters are still undecided about who they're going with, when you look at the issues and their policy positions they look a lot more like Democrats."

Asians constitute 7.4 percent of New Jersey's population, according to 2006 data from the U.S. Census' American Community Survey, the most recent data available. Asians constitute 4.4 percent of the national population.

The New Jersey survey is a component of the National Asian American Survey, a joint project by Rutgers, the University of Southern California, University of California-Berkeley and University of California-Riverside.

National results were released Oct. 6 and California-specific results are slated for release today.

In Your Voice

READ REACTIONS TO THIS STORY

You must be logged in to leave a comment. [Login](#) | [Register](#)

1000 characters left



Partners: [Jobs: CareerBuilder.com](#) [Cars: Cars.com](#) [Apartments: Apartments.com](#) [Shopping: ShopLocal.com](#)

[HOME](#) | [NEWS](#) | [SPORTS](#) | [WEATHER](#) | [OBITUARIES](#) | [OPINION](#) | [DATA UNIVERSE](#) | [ENTERTAINMENT](#) | [MY LIFE](#) | [PHOTOS & VIDEOS](#) | [Buy/Sell](#) | [CUSTOMER SERVICE](#) | [Site Map](#)

[Terms of Service](#) | [Privacy Policy](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [About Us](#) | [Subscribe](#)

Copyright ©2007 ...
Use of this site signifies your agreement to the [Terms of Service](#) and [Privacy Policy](#) , updated March 2007.