

ISIS STRIKES FEAR IN MAJORITY OF NJ RESIDENTS

New Jersey residents view the terrorist group Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) as a major threat to regional stability in the Middle East as well as to Americans in the United States, according to the most recent statewide survey by Fairleigh Dickinson University's survey research group PublicMind. Despite feeling threatened by ISIS, New Jerseyans are sharply split on whether the U.S. should send soldiers to combat the terrorists, or even if the U.S. should have an active military presence in the Middle East.

Seventy-one percent of those surveyed believe that ISIS poses a threat to Americans by disrupting stability in the Middle East while 87 percent of respondents say that Americans abroad are in danger from ISIS. Nearly three-in-four (72%) believe that ISIS poses a threat to the safety of Americans living in the U.S.

"The group's brutality and deft use of social media has clearly made an impact on New Jersey residents. The threat they pose reaches well beyond Iraq and Syria, and is seen by many as menacing those in the U.S.," said Krista Jenkins, professor of political science and director of PublicMind. "Despite this, we don't see any unity of opinion over what to do in response to the ISIS threat."

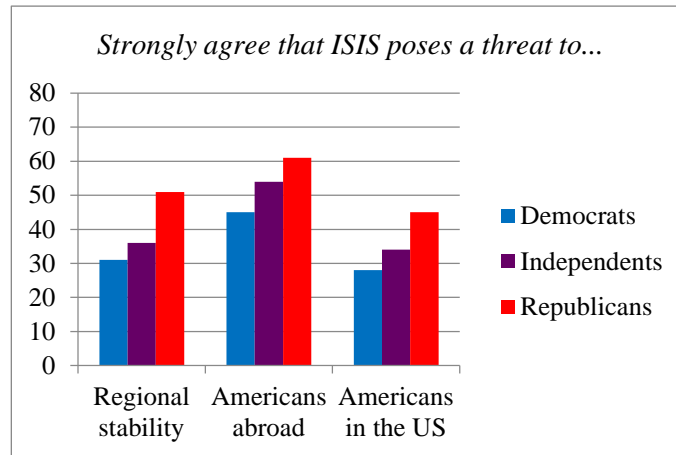
When it comes to putting boots on the ground in regions affected by ISIS control, opinion is split: forty percent favor troop deployment, while 49 percent oppose. When asked about U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East in general, opinion is sharply divided. Forty-two percent say the U.S. should back off its military involvement in the Middle East and 49 percent counter with the view that the U.S. is the only country that can be looked to for leadership and military force in the region.

"There is no consensus over what to do about the threat of ISIS. Putting troops in harm's way is unjustified to some, while others believe it's a rational response. The numbers regarding foreign policy in the Middle East reflect the unease New Jersey residents seem to have with continuing the pattern of the U.S. acting as the world's policeman. About the only thing these numbers do prove is that ISIS has captivated the attention of the public with over half say they're paying very close attention to ISIS developments, with another third who are paying slightly less attention," said Jenkins.

Seeing things differently: Partisanship and age

Despite the strong majority of state residents who view ISIS as a threat, opinion is split along party lines, with Republicans seeing ISIS as more of a threat than Democrats. Half of all Republicans (51%) strongly believe ISIS poses a threat by disrupting stability in the Middle East, compared with

around a third of Democrats who believe the same thing (31%). Similar patterns emerge when considering the other ways ISIS poses a threat, and in all cases Republicans are more emphatic in their beliefs.



Republicans (59%) are also more supportive than either Democrats (31%) or independents (34%) of sending troops into ISIS-controlled areas in order to defeat them.

“These numbers reflect the difficulty that policy leaders face when making foreign policy decisions based on public opinion. There’s no consensus over what to do, and partisanship divides opinion even more. The imagery that flows from ISIS propaganda touches a nerve with Republicans more than with Democrats, though,” said Jenkins.

With regard to age differences, it’s notable that Millennials are, across the board, the least hawkish on Middle East foreign policy in general and the ISIS response specifically, as well as being the least concerned about the threat that ISIS poses both domestically and abroad. They’re the only age group where a majority opposes putting troops into ISIS regions (55%) and endorse backing off U.S. involvement in the Middle East (52%).

“Millennials have been steeped in foreign conflict. From their perspective, they may wonder whether the cost of U.S. involvement is worth it, both in terms of lives and economic resources for countries that remain unstable even after the U.S. has left,” said Jenkins.

The Fairleigh Dickinson University poll of 901 adults in New Jersey was conducted by telephone with both landline and cell phones from February 23 through March 1. The margin of error is +/- 3.3 percentage points.

Methodology, questions, and tables on the web at: <http://publicmind.fdu.edu>

Radio actualities at 201.692.2846 For more information, please call 201.692.7032

Methodology

The most recent survey by Fairleigh Dickinson University's PublicMind was conducted by telephone from February 23 through March 1 using a randomly selected sample of 901 adults in New Jersey. One can be 95 percent confident that the error attributable to sampling has a range of +/- 3.3 percentage points. The margin of error for subgroups is larger and varies by the size of that subgroup. Survey results are also subject to non-sampling error. This kind of error, which cannot be measured, arises from a number of factors including, but not limited to, non-response (eligible individuals refusing to be interviewed), question wording, the order in which questions are asked, and variations among interviewers.

PublicMind interviews are conducted by Opinion America of Cedar Knolls, NJ, with professionally trained interviewers using a CATI (Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing) system. Random selection is achieved by computerized random-digit dialing. This technique gives every person with a landline phone number (including those with unlisted numbers) an equal chance of being selected.

Landline households are supplemented with a separate, randomly selected sample of cell-phone respondents interviewed in the same time frame. The total combined sample is mathematically weighted to match known demographics of age, race and gender.

The sample was purchased from Marketing Systems Group and the research was funded by Fairleigh Dickinson University.

Tables

As I read you the following statements, please tell me if you agree or disagree:

<i>ISIS poses a threat to all Americans by disrupting stability in the Middle East</i>													
	PID				Gender		Race		Self/someone in military post 9/11		Age		
	All	Dem	Ind	Repub	Male	Female	White	Non-white	Yes	No	18-34	35-59	60+
Strongly agree	38	31	36	51	37	38	42	30	38	37	18	44	45
Agree	33	35	35	33	32	35	35	32	34	33	37	31	34
Neither agree nor disagree	9	9	13	5	7	12	6	14	10	8	15	8	6
Disagree	15	21	10	9	18	12	13	19	15	16	23	13	12
Strongly disagree	4	4	6	3	6	2	4	5	3	6	7	4	3
DK (vol)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Both (vol)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

ISIS poses a threat to the safety of Americans living abroad

	All	PID			Gender		Race		Self/someone in military post 9/11		Age		
		Dem	Ind	Repub	Male	Female	White	Non-white	Yes	No	18-34	35-59	60+
Strongly agree	51	45	54	61	52	50	52	49	53	49	37	56	56
Agree	36	40	37	31	34	38	37	33	36	36	42	35	32
Neither agree nor disagree	7	7	5	3	5	8	4	10	6	7	11	5	5
Disagree	4	6	3	4	6	3	4	5	4	5	7	3	4
Strongly disagree	2	2	2	1	3	1	2	2	1	3	2	1	2
DK (vol)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Both (vol)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

ISIS poses a threat to the safety of Americans living in the United States

	All	PID			Gender		Race		Self/someone in military post 9/11		Age		
		Dem	Ind	Repub	Male	Female	White	Non-white	Yes	No	18-34	35-59	60+
Strongly agree	34	28	34	45	32	36	37	28	34	33	20	38	39
Agree	38	37	37	38	37	38	38	38	39	36	36	38	38
Neither agree nor disagree	8	8	10	6	6	11	6	12	8	8	12	8	6
Disagree	15	21	13	8	17	13	14	17	14	16	21	13	12
Strongly disagree	5	6	6	3	9	2	5	5	4	7	10	3	4
DK (vol)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Both (vol)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Right now, do you favor or oppose [rotate] putting American troops in ISIS controlled territory in order to defeat them?

	All	PID			Gender		Race		Self/someone in military post 9/11?		Age		
		Dem	Ind	Repub	Male	Female	White	Non-white	Yes	No	18-34	35-59	60+
Favor	40	31	34	59	48	32	44	34	41	38	32	44	42
Oppose	49	58	55	32	45	53	47	53	49	50	55	46	48
Both (vol)	1	1	3	1	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	1	1
DK (vol)	9	10	6	7	6	12	7	11	8	10	12	8	7
Refused (vol)	1	0	2	1	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	1	2

Some people say that solving problems in the Middle East is the responsibility of governments in the region and the US should back off its military involvement, but others say the US is the only country who can be looked to for leadership and military force in the region. If you had to choose, which side do you think you most agree with?

	PID				Gender		Race		Self/someone in military post 9/11		Age		
	All	Dem	Ind	Repub	Male	Female	White	Non-white	Yes	No	18-34	35-59	60+
Back off	42	49	44	31	40	45	41	46	42	42	52	39	39
Remain in region	49	44	43	63	53	45	51	45	50	48	40	53	53
Both (vol)	1	0	2	1	0	2	1	0	1	1	1	1	1
DK (vol)	7	5	9	5	6	7	6	8	5	8	7	6	6
Refused (vol)	1	1	2	0	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1

How closely, if at all, are you paying to news about the terrorist group known as ISIS and their actions abroad?

	PID				Gender		Race		Self/someone in military post 9/11		Age		
	All	Dem	Ind	Repub	Male	Female	White	Non-white	Yes	No	18-34	35-59	60+
Very	54	51	49	63	58	51	58	46	56	51	33	57	68
Somewhat	34	37	34	29	34	34	32	69	35	32	47	32	25
Not very	7	7	9	4	6	7	7	5	6	7	11	6	4
Not at all	5	4	9	3	3	7	3	9	2	9	9	4	4
DK (vol)	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0
Refused (vol)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Exact Question Wording and Order

US1 and US2 released March 3, 2015

NJ1 through NJ3 released March 3, 2015

EDUC1 through EDUC5 released March 9, 2015

BET1 through AC3 released March 5, 2015

FP1 How closely, if at all, are you paying to news about the terrorist group known as ISIS and their actions abroad?

- 1 Very
- 2 Somewhat
- 3 Not very
- 4 Not at all
- 8 DK (vol)
- 9 Refused (vol)

FP2 Right now, do you favor or oppose [rotate] putting American troops in ISIS controlled territory in order to defeat them?

- 1 Favor
- 2 Oppose
- 3 Both (vol)
- 8 DK (vol)
- 9 Refused (vol)

FP3 Some people say that solving problems in the Middle East is the responsibility of governments in the region and the US should back off its military involvement, but others say the US is the only country who can be looked to for leadership and military force in the region. If you had to choose, which side do you think you most agree with?

- 1 Back off
- 2 US remains needed
- 3 Both (vol)
- 8 DK (vol)
- 9 Refused (vol)

FP4 ISIS poses a threat to all Americans by disrupting stability in the Middle East

FP5 ISIS poses a threat to the safety of Americans living abroad

FP6 ISIS poses a threat to the safety of Americans living in the United States

- 1 Strongly agree
- 2 Agree
- 3 Neither agree nor disagree
- 4 Disagree
- 5 Strongly disagree
- 8 DK (vol)
- 9 Refused (vol)

Weighted sample characteristics

		All respondents N = 901; MoE = +/- 3.3
Gender	<i>Male</i>	49%
	<i>Female</i>	51%
Age	<i>18-34</i>	26%
	<i>35-59</i>	42%
	<i>60+</i>	29%
	<i>Refused</i>	2%
Race	<i>White</i>	61%
	<i>African American</i>	13%
	<i>Hispanic</i>	16%
	<i>Asian</i>	6%
	<i>Other/Refused</i>	5%
Union household	<i>Self</i>	13%
	<i>Someone else</i>	10%
	<i>No/Refused/DK</i>	77%
Party (with leaners)	<i>Dem</i>	45%
	<i>Ind/DK/Refused</i>	25%
	<i>Repub</i>	30%