



AP Poll: Most Mexicans See Immigrants As Having A Negative Effect On Country

New York, NY (AP) — Most Mexicans believe immigrants have a bad influence on their country, reflecting an apparent fear of cultural erosion and job losses to newcomers, according to an Associated Press poll.

The Associated Press Poll is conducted by Ipsos-Public Affairs. Between May 7-17, 2004, the AP/Ipsos poll interviewed a representative sample of about 1,000 residents of Britain, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Spain and the United States. The margin of error is +/- 3 for all adults. Please reference the topline results for the complete list of number of interviews and margin of error for each country.

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Associated Press

New York, NY (AP) — Most Mexicans believe immigrants have a bad influence on their country, reflecting an apparent fear of cultural erosion and job losses to newcomers, according to an Associated Press poll.

Fifty-three percent of the 1,005 Mexicans polled had a negative view, of which 24 percent thought immigrants' influence was very bad as opposed to somewhat bad. Thirty-six percent had a positive view and 11 percent weren't sure, according to the poll conducted by the Ipsos research firm.

Mexico is not a country built on immigration. Most of its people are descendants of native Indian populations and/or Spanish ancestors. Ipsos found that immigrants make up less than 1 percent of the 100 million population in the 2000 census.

"In spite of so many Mexicans migrating to the United States, Mexicans have very harsh views of immigration in general," said Jorge Buendia of Ipsos-Bimsa in Mexico. Mexico has limited experience with immigrants, though more are passing through Central America en route to the United States.

The Mexican poll respondents had a more negative view of immigration than those in other North American countries. In the United States, 42 percent said immigrants were a good influence and 46 percent said they were bad. Canadians were more positive, with 73 percent seeing immigrants as a good influence and 21 percent as bad.

Forty percent of Mexicans polled believe immigrants steal jobs from citizens. However, nearly half — 49 percent — say newcomers are filling jobs that Mexicans don't want. Eleven percent weren't sure.

As the United States' neighbor to the south, Mexico deals with an influx of cheap labor when Central Americans who crossed illegally into the United States are sent back to Mexican border towns.

Mexicans also feel strongly about preserving their culture. Seventy-one percent say it's better for the country if nearly everyone shares the same customs and traditions. Twenty-six percent disagreed and 2 percent weren't sure.

The respondents favored variety in religion. Sixty-five percent say it's better to have many different religions; 31 percent disagreed and 4 percent were unsure.

The AP/Ipsos poll was conducted between May 13-17 and has a margin of sampling error of plus or minus 3 percentage points.

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Ipsos Public Affairs

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