

Attitudes toward Guest Immigrant Workers Media Release Points Volume 1, no. 8

Ask-Alabama Poll, Fall 2004

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Significant Findings

- 1. A majority of respondents (58%) believe that guest immigrant workers take jobs away from Americans.**
 - a. 34% strongly agree
 - b. 24% somewhat agree
 - c. 19% somewhat disagree
 - d. 21% strongly disagree

- 2. A majority of Alabamians (55%) do not agree that guest immigrants bring needed skills into Alabama:**
 - a. 13% strongly agree
 - b. 26% somewhat agree
 - c. 21% somewhat disagree
 - d. 34% strongly disagree

Alabamians are uncomfortable with the presence of immigrant workers. Many feel that immigrants are taking lower skills jobs that could be better filled by local residents.

- 3. Only 1 in 9 Alabamians (11%) strongly believe that the State should provide assistance to new guest immigrants to ease their transition into local communities.**
 - a. 11% strongly agree
 - b. 28% somewhat agree
 - c. 19% somewhat disagree
 - d. 37% strongly disagree

Most Alabamians do not want to encourage immigration or immigrant competition for jobs in their community by providing social services or assistance. The motivation for this seems to be recognition that the local demand for services and community needs are overstretched.

- 4. When asked whether State or local government should offer or expand specific types of services for new immigrant guest workers, most said “yes”**

to offering each type of assistance. This is particularly true for services, such as facility with English that affect day to day interactions in the community.

- a. 73% support English classes
- b. 70% support offering information about citizenship
- c. 65% support educational assistance for children in K-12
- d. 64% support offering information about social services
- e. 55% support job training programs
- f. 55% support access to affordable healthcare

Clearly, Alabamians are more likely to be supportive of assistance for immigrant workers when they are aware of the specific types of programs being sponsored by State and local funds. Alabamians are sending a clear message that State and local governments should focus upon assistance programs aimed at bridging immigrant workers into citizenship.

Poll Facts

Dates of Survey: October 12 - October 27, 2004
Sample Size: 1012 Alabama residents
Estimated Margin of Error: +/- 3%
Type of Survey: Random telephone survey of Alabamians 19 or older