

Illinois Issues

IN-DEPTH

Methodology

The University of Illinois Springfield Survey Research Office (SRO) is dedicated to the principles of transparency in research and is a charter member of the American Association for Public Opinion Research (AAPOR) [Transparency Initiative](#). Membership entails adherence to AAPOR's code of ethics as well as a commitment to promoting understanding of survey methodology and how it relates to survey quality. For more information about project methodology please contact the UIS Survey Research Office at sro@uis.edu.

The 2019 *Illinois Issues Survey* was designed and analyzed by the staff of the Center for State Policy and Leadership, the Institute for Legal, Legislative, and Policy Studies and the Survey Research Office at the University of Illinois Springfield. This project is co-sponsored by the Center for State Policy and Leadership, NPR Illinois and the Institute for Legal, Legislative, and Policy Studies at the University of Illinois Springfield. The study was conducted in English by the Survey Research Office via the Qualtrics Research Suite. The online panel was provided by Qualtrics.

The survey was fielded from **September 13-September 23, 2019** among a sample of **1012 registered voters, all at least 18 years or older, in Illinois**. For **all respondents the credibility interval** is plus or minus **3.5**. While a margin of error is often used to express uncertainty in polling, for online surveys credibility intervals are used to measure the accuracy, or uncertainty, of the survey. When examining subgroups, the credibility interval will increase. The survey includes quotas for gender, age, race/ethnicity, education, income, and region of the state. The sample was weighted based the demographic composition of these groups in Illinois using the most recent population estimates provided by the US Census Bureau's 2017 American Community Survey. For additional information weighting please click [here](#). All sample surveys and polls may be subject to multiple sources of error, including, but not limited to sampling error, coverage error, and measurement error.

The survey included various checks to ensure the validity of the data collected from respondents. Click [here](#) for an extended explanation for all the checks Qualtrics does for their panels.

Notes for reading the results:

- Percentages may not always add up to 100 percent due to rounding.
- Values less than 0.5 percent are indicated by an asterisk (*).

Survey Sample Compared to Illinois

Group	Weighted Sample	Illinois
Male	48%	49%
Female	52%	51%
18 to 34	24%	24%
35 to 44	18%	18%
45 to 59	29%	29%
60 and Older	29%	29%
Cook County	40%	40%
Collar Counties	25%	25%
Downstate	35%	35%
White	62%	62%
Black	14%	14%
Hispanic	13%	17%
Other	10%	7%
High School Diploma or Less	31%	34%
Between a HS Diploma and Four-Year Degree	33%	32%
Four-Year Degree or More	36%	34%
Under \$45,000	46%	46%
\$45,001 and \$100,000	30%	30%
Greater than \$100,001	24%	24%
Democrat/Democrat Leaning	53%	
Non-Leaning Independent	15%	
Republican/Republican Leaning	30%	

Despite Increased Optimism and a Positive Evaluation of the Governor, More Illinois Voters Say They've Considered Moving Out of the State

Illinois voters are more optimistic about the direction of the state compared to 2018 according to the latest *Illinois Issues Survey* conducted by the Survey Research Office at the University of Illinois Springfield. Compared to the 2018 edition of this survey (14%), twice as many respondents (28%) in 2019 describe Illinois as heading in the right direction. Nearly three in ten Republicans and Republican-leaning independents (29%) and Democrats and Democrat-leaning independents (31%) say the state is heading in the right direction compared to less than one-fifth (17%) of non-leaning independents. There is a slight variation across the different regions of the state. Nearly three in ten respondents living in Cook County (29%) and downstate (29%) say Illinois is on the right track compared to slightly under a quarter (24%) of voters in the collar counties. Men (32%) and women (24%) differ in beliefs about whether Illinois is heading in the right direction. There is also variation across age, with those respondents ages 18 to 34 (36%) the most likely to report Illinois as heading in the right direction and those ages 45 to 59 (24%) least likely. When it comes to race and ethnicity, Black respondents (35%) are most likely to report Illinois is heading in the right direction and white respondents (25%) least likely.

In 2018, 15% of respondents described the economy of Illinois as “excellent” or “good.” In 2019, this has risen to 23%. While nearly a quarter of voters in Cook County (24%) and the collar counties (24%) rate the economy “excellent” or “good,” slightly less (21%) of downstate voters do. A quarter (26%) of Democrats and Democratic-leaning independents describe the economy of Illinois as “excellent” or “good.” A similar percentage of Republican and Republican-leaning independents (24%) do as well. Interestingly, non-leaning independents are not as favorable, as less than one in five (19%) of non-leaning independents have a positive assessment of the Illinois economy. There is a difference between men (28%) and women (19%) rating the economy as “excellent” or “good.” Respondents ages 18 to 34 (31%) are the most likely age group to evaluate the economy as “excellent” or “good”, while respondents ages 60 and older (17%) are least likely. Black respondents (39%) are nearly twice as likely as white (21%) respondents to rate the economy as “excellent” or “good.”

Similar rates of respondents think Illinois will be better off in twelve months (29%) as worse off (30%). 41% think the state will be the same. There is a sizeable partisan difference in this assessment. Four in ten (40%) Democrats and Democratic-leaning independents think Illinois will be better off. In comparison, less than one-fifth (17%) of Republicans and Republican-leaning independents are as optimistic. Approximately one-fifth (19%) of non-leaning independents think Illinois will be better off in twelve months. There is also variation across the regions of the state, though it is not as dramatic as partisan differences. One-third (33%) of Cook County voters think Illinois will be better off in twelve months. Just under three in ten (28%) downstate voters and less than a quarter (24%) of collar county voters think the state will be better off. Respondents ages 18 to 34 (43%) are the most likely age group to report optimism about where Illinois will be in twelve months and those ages 45 to 59 (22%) are the least likely. Black respondents (39%) have higher rates of respondents reporting Illinois will be better off in twelve months compared to other racial and ethnic groups, while white respondents (25%) are the least optimistic.

In 2018, a bit over half (53%) of respondents said they had considered moving out of Illinois in the previous 12 months. In 2019, this has risen to slightly more than six in ten (61%). Survey responses reflect a substantial partisan difference. 70% of Republicans and Republican-leaning independents say they have considered moving out of Illinois. This result compares to just over half (53%) of Democrats and Democrat-leaning independents. Splitting the difference are nearly two-thirds (64%) of non-leaning independents who say they've considered moving out of the state. 59% of voters in Cook County have said they considered moving out of Illinois compared to 63% of those in the collar counties and 61% of those in the downstate region. Respondents ages 18 to 34 (69%) are the most common age group to say they've considered moving out of Illinois in the past year. Respondents reporting a household income of more than \$100,000 a year (68%) are nearly ten percentage points higher than other income groups to say they've considered moving out of the state, with those reporting a household income lower than \$45,000 (58%) being least likely..

While a majority of voters say they have considered moving out of Illinois, far fewer report having taken steps to do so. Over a quarter of respondents who have considered moving out of Illinois say they've looked up the cost of living in another state (28%) and looked at housing in a new state (26%). However, only 2% have submitted paperwork to rent or buy housing in a new state. Further, 16% of respondents who have considered moving have looked at jobs elsewhere, but only 5% report applying for jobs.

The three most common reasons cited for moving by voters who have considered leaving the state are lower state taxes (27%), state government policies (17%), and better weather (15%). Over a quarter of Republicans and Republican-leaning independents say lower state taxes (27%) and state government policies (26%) are why they've considered leaving. Coming in third for Republicans and Republican-leaning independents is better weather at 14%. For Democrats and Democrat-leaning independents lower state taxes (26%), better weather (16%), and better job opportunities (15%) are the top three motivations. For non-leaning independents, lower state taxes (27%), better job opportunities (14%), and lower crime (13%) are the three primary reasons given. While there is some notable partisan variation in motivations for leaving the state, all three partisan groups are similar on state taxes, Republicans and Democrats are similar on weather, and Democrats and non-leaning independents are similar on job opportunities. The most likely group to say they have considered leaving Illinois over better job opportunities are respondents ages 18 to 34 (17%). The most likely group to cite better weather as their reason is respondents ages 60 and older (20%). The group most likely to cite lower state taxes as their motivation is respondents ages 45 to 59 (30%). Black respondents (20%) are most likely to cite lower crime as their motivation for considering moving out of Illinois. Republicans and Republican-leaning independents are most likely to cite state government policies as their reasoning (26%).

For all respondents who say they have considered moving out of Illinois, Florida (10%), Indiana (8%), Texas (8%), Tennessee (6%), and California (6%) are the top five most-cited destinations. Respondents could offer up to three states in their response. Florida, Indiana, and Texas are consistently three of the top five destinations when we look at variation across partisanship and region of the state. For Republicans and Republican-leaning independents, Tennessee and Arizona round out their top five. As for Democrats and Democratic-leaning independents, it is

California and Colorado. Non-leaning independents are a combination of the partisan groups, as it is California and Arizona. The top five for Cook County are Florida, Texas, Indiana, California, and Arizona. For the collar counties, the top five are Tennessee, Florida, Wisconsin, Arizona, and Indiana. Downstate voters selected Missouri, Indiana, Florida, Texas, and Tennessee for their top five.

Lastly, 59% of voters approve of the way Governor Pritzker is handling his job. Unsurprisingly, there is a partisan slant to assessments of Governor Pritzker. While 79% of Democrats and Democrat-leaning independents approve of the job Governor Pritzker is doing, just 32% of Republicans and Republican-leaning independents do. 49% of non-leaning independents approve of Governor Pritzker. When looking across the regions of Illinois, 69% of Cook County voters, 56% of collar county voters, and 51% of downstate voters approve of Governor Pritzker. Women (63%) are more likely than men (55%) to approve of Governor Pritzker. White voters (50%) are less likely than voters from Illinois' minority communities to approve of the job Governor Pritzker is doing. For example, 83% of Black respondents report approving of the job Governor Pritzker is doing. Voters ages 18 to 34 (64%) are the most likely age group to approve of the job Governor Pritzker is doing with voters ages 45 to 59 (53%) least likely.

Crosstabs

Generally speaking, would you say that things in Illinois are heading in the right direction or are they off on the wrong track? (Rows may not total up to 100% due to rounding)

Group	Right Direction	Wrong Track	Can't Say
All Respondents	28%	56%	16%
Male	32%	54%	13%
Female	24%	58%	18%
18 to 34	36%	44%	20%
35 to 44	28%	55%	17%
45 to 59	24%	64%	12%
60 and Older	25%	59%	16%
Cook County	29%	53%	17%
Collar Counties	24%	60%	16%
Downstate	29%	57%	14%
White	25%	59%	16%
Black	35%	47%	18%
Hispanic	31%	55%	14%
Other	31%	50%	19%
High School Diploma or Less	30%	50%	20%
Between a HS Diploma and Four-Year Degree	22%	64%	14%
Four-Year Degree or More	33%	54%	14%
Under \$45,000	30%	51%	18%
\$45,001 and \$100,000	26%	61%	13%
Greater than \$100,001	24%	60%	16%
Democrat/Democrat Leaning	31%	51%	19%
Non-Leaning Independent	17%	62%	21%
Republican/Republican Leaning	29%	62%	9%

How would you describe the economy of Illinois today? (Rows may not total up to 100% due to rounding)

Group	Net Excellent/ Good	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
All Respondents	23%	4%	19%	39%	38%
Male	28%	5%	23%	37%	36%
Female	19%	3%	16%	41%	40%
18 to 34	31%	10%	21%	36%	32%
35 to 44	26%	2%	24%	35%	38%
45 to 59	21%	2%	19%	37%	42%
60 and Older	17%	2%	15%	44%	39%
Cook County	24%	4%	20%	43%	33%
Collar Counties	24%	3%	21%	34%	42%
Downstate	21%	4%	17%	38%	41%
White	21%	3%	18%	36%	42%
Black	39%	6%	23%	47%	24%
Hispanic	23%	2%	21%	41%	36%
Other	27%	8%	19%	43%	30%
High School Diploma or Less	26%	3%	23%	39%	35%
Between a HS Diploma and Four-Year Degree	22%	2%	20%	33%	44%
Four-Year Degree or More	23%	7%	16%	44%	34%
Under \$45,000	25%	5%	20%	41%	34%
\$45,001 and \$100,000	23%	4%	19%	38%	40%
Greater than \$100,001	21%	3%	18%	36%	43%
Democrat/Democrat Leaning	26%	4%	22%	43%	32%
Non-Leaning Independent	19%	4%	15%	43%	38%
Republican/Republican Leaning	24%	5%	19%	30%	46%

Twelve months from now, do you expect Illinois to be better off than it is today, the same as it is today, or worse than it is today? (Rows may not total up to 100% due to rounding)

Group	Better Off	Same As Today	Worse Off
All Respondents	29%	41%	30%
Male	30%	39%	31%
Female	28%	43%	28%
18 to 34	43%	36%	21%
35 to 44	26%	44%	30%
45 to 59	22%	41%	36%
60 and Older	26%	42%	31%
Cook County	33%	44%	22%
Collar Counties	24%	39%	37%
Downstate	28%	39%	33%
White	25%	42%	34%
Black	39%	44%	17%
Hispanic	37%	41%	23%
Other	35%	32%	33%
High School Diploma or Less	29%	45%	25%
Between a HS Diploma and Four-Year Degree	27%	39%	34%
Four-Year Degree or More	33%	39%	28%
Under \$45,000	32%	42%	25%
\$45,001 and \$100,000	24%	41%	35%
Greater than \$100,001	30%	37%	33%
Democrat/Democrat Leaning	40%	42%	18%
Non-Leaning Independent	19%	50%	31%
Republican/Republican Leaning	17%	34%	49%

In the past year, have you considered moving out of Illinois? (Rows may not total up to 100% due to rounding)

Group	Yes	No
All Respondents	61%	39%
Male	60%	40%
Female	61%	39%
18 to 34	69%	31%
35 to 44	60%	40%
45 to 59	65%	35%
60 and Older	50%	50%
Cook County	59%	41%
Collar Counties	63%	37%
Downstate	61%	39%
White	60%	40%
Black	64%	36%
Hispanic	62%	38%
Other	55%	45%
High School Diploma or Less	56%	46%
Between a HS Diploma and Four-Year Degree	63%	37%
Four-Year Degree or More	63%	37%
Under \$45,000	58%	42%
\$45,001 and \$100,000	59%	41%
Greater than \$100,001	68%	32%
Democrat/Democrat Leaning	53%	47%
Non-Leaning Independent	64%	36%
Republican/Republican Leaning	70%	30%

(Asked only if they said yes to considering moving out of Illinois) As part of considering moving out of Illinois, which of the following actions have you done? (Rows may not total up to 100% due to rounding)

Group	Looked at Jobs in a New State	Applied for Jobs in a New State	Looked at Housing in a New State	Applied for Housing in a New State
All Respondents	16%	5%	26%	2%
Male	18%	6%	27%	2%
Female	14%	4%	25%	2%
18 to 34	22%	8%	21%	3%
35 to 44	18%	6%	26%	2%
45 to 59	18%	4%	25%	1%
60 and Older	2%	1%	35%	2%
Cook County	15%	6%	25%	2%
Collar Counties	15%	4%	29%	1%
Downstate	16%	5%	24%	2%
White	16%	4%	25%	2%
Black	18%	7%	24%	3%
Hispanic	15%	4%	30%	2%
Other	9%	7%	27%	4%
High School Diploma or Less	13%	5%	23%	2%
Between a HS Diploma and Four-Year Degree	15%	3%	28%	3%
Four-Year Degree or More	16%	7%	28%	2%
Under \$45,000	15%	6%	23%	2%
\$45,001 and \$100,000	16%	3%	25%	2%
Greater than \$100,001	15%	6%	30%	1%
Democrat/Democrat Leaning	16%	6%	25%	2%
Non-Leaning Independent	14%	3%	26%	3%
Republican/Republican Leaning	15%	5%	27%	2%

As part of considering moving out of Illinois, which of the following actions have you done?–
Continued

Group	Looked up the Cost of Living in a New State	Looked up the Cost of Moving to a New State	Told Friends or Family You Were Moving to a New State
All Respondents	28%	15%	9%
Male	28%	14%	7%
Female	28%	16%	10%
18 to 34	25%	15%	7%
35 to 44	24%	18%	7%
45 to 59	28%	15%	10%
60 and Older	36%	12%	11%
Cook County	27%	15%	9%
Collar Counties	30%	12%	9%
Downstate	27%	18%	8%
White	29%	16%	8%
Black	26%	12%	10%
Hispanic	24%	13%	11%
Other	25%	18%	8%
High School Diploma or Less	28%	18%	13%
Between a HS Diploma and Four-Year Degree	28%	14%	9%
Four-Year Degree or More	28%	13%	7%
Under \$45,000	27%	18%	9%
\$45,001 and \$100,000	30%	14%	9%
Greater than \$100,001	27%	13%	8%
Democrat/Democrat Leaning	27%	15%	9%
Non-Leaning Independent	28%	16%	11%
Republican/Republican Leaning	29%	15%	7%

If so, please choose which of the following reasons you personally have considered moving out of Illinois (Please select up to three options below). **Totals do not add up to 100% due respondents selecting up to three options.**

Group	Job Opportunities	Better Weather	Lower State Taxes
All Respondents	12%	15%	27%
Male	14%	14%	26%
Female	14%	15%	26%
18 to 34	17%	14%	24%
35 to 44	15%	12%	25%
45 to 59	14%	13%	30%
60 and Older	2%	20%	27%
Cook County	14%	15%	25%
Collar Counties	9%	15%	28%
Downstate	17%	13%	25%
White	12%	14%	28%
Black	17%	14%	21%
Hispanic	17%	13%	27%
Other	12%	18%	18%
High School Diploma or Less	14%	10%	23%
Between a HS Diploma and Four-Year Degree	12%	15%	27%
Four-Year Degree or More	13%	19%	25%
Under \$45,000	17%	14%	24%
\$45,001 and \$100,000	11%	13%	27%
Greater than \$100,001	11%	16%	28%
Democrat/Democrat Leaning	15%	16%	26%
Non-Leaning Independent	14%	12%	27%
Republican/Republican Leaning	8%	14%	27%

If so, please choose which of the following reasons you personally have considered moving out of Illinois. (Continued)

Group	Better Schools	Lower Crime	Family or Personal Reasons	State Government and Policies
All Respondents	6%	13%	8%	17%
Male	6%	11%	8%	19%
Female	8%	14%	8%	14%
18 to 34	10%	11%	10%	14%
35 to 44	8%	12%	12%	18%
45 to 59	5%	13%	13%	17%
60 and Older	1%	17%	16%	22%
Cook County	7%	17%	8%	12%
Collar Counties	5%	13%	7%	20%
Downstate	8%	7%	9%	19%
White	6%	10%	7%	20%
Black	9%	20%	8%	9%
Hispanic	8%	16%	6%	13%
Other	11%	13%	13%	13%
High School Diploma or Less	8%	17%	8%	16%
Between a HS Diploma and Four-Year Degree	8%	14%	8%	14%
Four-Year Degree or More	7%	13%	6%	16%
Under \$45,000	9%	13%	10%	12%
\$45,001 and \$100,000	7%	12%	8%	19%
Greater than \$100,001	5%	12%	4%	21%
Democrat/Democrat Leaning	6%	15%	9%	12%
Non-Leaning Independent	7%	13%	9%	13%
Republican/Republican Leaning	5%	11%	6%	26%

What other state or states have you considered moving to? (Please select up to three states)

Option	Percentage
Florida	10%
Indiana	8%
Texas	8%
Arizona	6%
California	6%
Tennessee	6%
Colorado	5%
Wisconsin	5%
Georgia	4%
Missouri	4%
Iowa	3%
Kentucky	3%
Michigan	3%
Nevada	3%
North Carolina	3%
Alabama	2%
Minnesota	2%
New York	2%
Arkansas	1%
Hawaii	1%
Kansas	1%
Louisiana	1%
Maryland	1%
Massachusetts	1%
Mississippi	1%
Montana	1%
New Jersey	1%
New Mexico	1%
Ohio	1%
Oklahoma	1%
Oregon	1%
South Carolina	1%
Virginia	1%
Washington	1%

Option	Percentage
Alaska	*
Connecticut	*
Delaware	*
Idaho	*
Maine	*
Nebraska	*
New Hampshire	*
North Dakota	*
Pennsylvania	*
Rhode Island	*
South Dakota	*
Utah	*
Vermont	*
West Virginia	*
Wyoming	*
Alaska	*
Connecticut	*
Delaware	*
Idaho	*
Maine	*
Nebraska	*
New Hampshire	*
North Dakota	*
Pennsylvania	*
Rhode Island	*
South Dakota	*
Utah	*
Vermont	*
West Virginia	*
Wyoming	*

Do you approve or disapprove of the way JB Pritzker is handling his job as Governor? (Rows may not total up to 100% due to rounding)

Group	Approve Net	Strongly Approve	Somewhat Approve	Disapprove Net	Somewhat Disapprove	Strongly Disapprove
All Respondents	59%	16%	43%	41%	22%	19%
Male	55%	19%	36%	46%	22%	24%
Female	63%	14%	49%	37%	22%	15%
18 to 34	64%	20%	46%	34%	23%	11%
35 to 44	58%	14%	44%	42%	23%	19%
45 to 59	53%	18%	35%	46%	24%	22%
60 and Older	59%	12%	47%	41%	17%	24%
Cook County	69%	19%	50%	32%	20%	12%
Collar Counties	56%	13%	43%	44%	22%	22%
Downstate	51%	16%	35%	49%	23%	26%
White	50%	13%	37%	50%	24%	26%
Black	83%	29%	54%	17%	15%	2%
Hispanic	71%	19%	52%	28%	19%	9%
Other	69%	19%	50%	31%	18%	13%
High School Diploma or Less	61%	17%	44%	39%	25%	14%
Between a HS Diploma and Four-Year Degree	60%	17%	43%	40%	20%	20%
Four-Year Degree or More	65%	17%	48%	35%	18%	17%
Under \$45,000	64%	20%	44%	36%	20%	16%
\$45,001 and \$100,000	54%	13%	41%	46%	22%	24%
Greater than \$100,001	56%	14%	42%	44%	24%	20%
Democrat/Democrat Leaning	79%	25%	54%	22%	16%	6%
Independent	49%	6%	43%	51%	29%	21%
Republican/Republican Leaning	32%	8%	24%	48%	27%	41%