

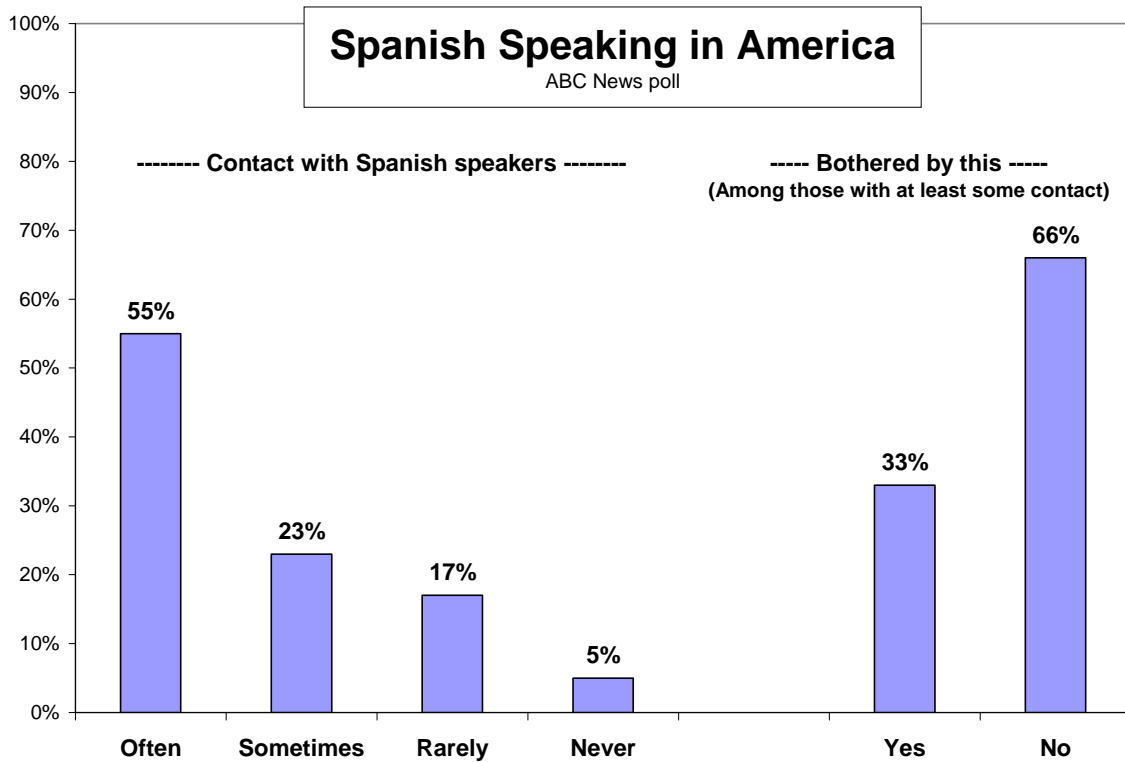
## **Aquí Se Habla Español – and Two-Thirds Don’t Mind**

Spanish speaking in the United States is widespread and accepted by most Americans. But a third who experience this language difference are troubled by it – and they have distinctly more negative attitudes about immigrants and Hispanics generally.

Just 10 percent of Americans concede any personal prejudice against Hispanics – far fewer than the number who, in previous polls, have self-reported prejudice on the basis of race, against overweight people, or against Arabs and Muslims.

Nonetheless, among the nearly eight in 10 who hear others who speak mainly in Spanish, a third say it bothers them.

All told, 78 percent in this ABC News Good Morning America poll say they often or sometimes come into contact with people in this country who speak mainly Spanish rather than English – including 55 percent who encounter it “often.”



Being bothered by Spanish isn't affected by how often people hear it, meaning other factors are at play. People bothered by Spanish, instead, are those who are more apt to call for stricter immigration rules and to have negative views on immigration generally, particularly on illegal immigration. (This survey, it should be noted, was done in English.)

**IMMIGRATION** – Immigration remains a political challenge; reform efforts fell flat last spring and the public remains of two minds on enforcement. On one hand, just two in 10 say the government is doing enough to keep illegal immigrants out of the country; on the other, most, 58 percent, favor a path to citizenship for those here now – a program giving illegal immigrants the right to legal status if they pay a fine and meet other requirements.

People who are bothered by interactions with Spanish speakers are decidedly more negative about immigration policy. In this group, 92 percent think the government isn't doing enough to keep illegal immigrants out; that drops to 55 percent of those who are not bothered by Spanish speakers. Support for a path to legal status, similarly, is 19 points higher among people who don't mind Spanish than it is among those who do.

Among other groups, support for tighter borders peaks among non-urban and older Americans, and in the Midwest and South; it's lowest among young adults, Democrats and better-educated Americans. Support for a legal status program is highest among young adults.

**LEGAL vs. ILLEGAL** – Broadly, Americans don't have a problem with immigrants in general – rather with illegal immigrants. Most, 54 percent, say illegal immigrants do more to hurt than to help the country. But 59 percent say the opposite about legal immigrants – that they do more to help the country than hurt it.

Again, sensitivity to language is associated with these attitudes, especially on illegal immigrants. Among people who are bothered by Spanish speaking, 79 percent say illegal immigrants mainly hurt the country. Among those who don't mind the language difference, vastly fewer – 39 percent – agree.

On legal immigrants, the gap in attitudes among those bothered and not bothered by language is both narrower and lower – 39 to 21 percent – but still significant.

	Impact of immigrants on U.S.			
	Illegal		Legal	
	Help	Hurt	Help	Hurt
All	34%	54	59%	26
Bothered by				
Spanish speakers	12	79	50	39
Not bothered	47	39	64	21
Democrats	44	47	59	24
Independents	30	60	58	29
Republicans	29	55	66	24

Partisan differences exist here as well. Majorities of Republicans (55 percent) and independents (60 percent) say illegal immigrants do more to hurt the country than help; Democrats split on this question, 47 percent to 44 percent.

But when it comes to legal immigrants, majorities across the political spectrum see more help than hurt.

PREJUDICE – As noted, asked to honestly assess their feelings of prejudice against Hispanics, one in 10 concedes harboring at least some such feelings. In ABC News polls in past years, six percent have self-reported prejudice against Jews, 27 percent against Muslims, 25 percent against Arabs, 35 percent against overweight people (“negative feelings” rather than prejudice), and 34 percent have reported “some racist feelings.”

Self-reported prejudice rises to 22 percent among people bothered by hearing people who speak mainly Spanish. It’s also a bit higher among Republicans (15 percent) than among Democrats or independents.

Looking at it the other way, among people who concede some prejudice toward Hispanics, 73 percent are bothered by contact with Spanish speakers. Among those who do not reporting feelings of prejudice, far fewer – 28 percent – are bothered by Spanish.

	Some feelings of Hispanic prejudice?	
	Yes	No
All	10%	89
Bothered by Spanish speakers	22	78
Not bothered	4	95
Democrats	8	90
Independents	9	91
Republicans	15	85

METHODOLOGY – This ABC News poll was conducted by telephone Sept. 27-30, 2007, among a random national sample of 1,035 adults. The results have a three-point error margin. Field work by ICR-International Communications Research of Media, Pa.

Analysis by Peyton M. Craighill.

ABC News polls can be found at ABCNEWS.com at <http://abcnews.com/pollvault.html>.

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Full results follow (\*= less than 0.5 percent).

1. Do you think the United States is or is not doing enough to keep illegal immigrants from coming into this country? Do you feel that way strongly or somewhat?

	---- Doing enough ----			-- Not doing enough --			No
	NET	Strg.	Smwt.	NET	Smwt.	Strg.	opinion
9/30/07	22	9	14	67	16	51	11

2. Would you support or oppose a program giving ILLEGAL immigrants now living in the United States the right to live here LEGALLY if they pay a fine and meet other requirements?

	Support	Oppose	No opinion
9/30/07	58	35	7

3. (ASKED OF HALF SAMPLE) Overall, do you think ILLEGAL immigrants do more to (HELP) the country or do more to (HURT) the country?

	Help	Hurt	Neither helps nor hurts (vol.)	No opinion
9/30/07	34	54	6	7

4. (ASKED OF HALF SAMPLE) Overall, do you think LEGAL immigrants do more to (HELP) the country or do more to (HURT) the country?

	Help	Hurt	Neither helps nor hurts (vol.)	No opinion
9/30/07	59	26	5	9

5. How often do you personally come in contact with people in this country who mostly speak Spanish rather than English - often, sometimes, rarely or never?

	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	No opinion
9/30/07	55	23	17	5	*

6. (IF CONTACT WITH SPANISH SPEAKERS OFTEN OR SOMETIMES) When that happens, does it bother you, or not bother you?

	Bothers me	Does not bother me	No opinion
9/30/07	33	66	1

7. If you honestly assessed yourself, would you say that you have at least some feelings of prejudice against Hispanics?

	Yes	No	No opinion
9/30/07	10	89	1

For comparison:

	Yes	No	No opinion
3/5/06 Muslims	27	72	1
3/5/06 Arabs	25	74	1
12/13/05 Overweight people*	35	64	1
8/7/00 Jews	6	93	*
10/19/99 Racist feelings	34	66	*

\* "negative feelings"

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