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Contact:  
**PATRICK MURRAY**  
732-979-6769 (cell); 732-263-5858 (office)  
[pdmurray@monmouth.edu](mailto:pdmurray@monmouth.edu)  
**Follow on Twitter: @PollsterPatrick**

## **NEW JERSEY: MENENDEZ IN STRONG POSITION DESPITE TRIAL BAGGAGE**

*Republican Hugin is not well-known*

West Long Branch, NJ – Democrat Bob Menendez holds a sizable advantage over Republican Bob Hugin in the 2018 race for U.S. Senate according to an early *Monmouth University Poll* of all New Jersey registered voters. Menendez starts out the campaign with weak approval ratings in part due to fallout from his recent corruption trial. But these negatives are more than offset by the fact he has a “D” next to his name. Hugin, on the other hand, is known to few New Jersey voters at this stage of the race.

Among all registered voters in New Jersey, a majority of 53% say they would vote for the incumbent Menendez and 32% would choose former Celgene Executive Chairman Hugin if the election for senator was today. Menendez is backed by 92% of his fellow Democrats while Hugin is supported by 84% of his fellow Republicans. Independents split 41% for Menendez and 33% for Hugin. Removing “leaners” from the mix – about one-fifth of all registered voters only “lean toward” a candidate at this time – Menendez has a 42% to 22% edge. Both Menendez and Hugin are the prohibitive favorites for their respective parties’ nominations in the June primary.

“Let’s be honest. It’s very unlikely that these results are predictive of the final margin on Election Day. New Jersey voters do not tune in to midterm elections until sometime in October and fewer than half of the voters we polled now will actually show up to vote then. However, the current state of the race does speak to what is perhaps the incumbent’s biggest strength: being a Democrat in a blue state in a year that is looking very good for Democrats,” said Patrick Murray, director of the independent Monmouth University Polling Institute.

A major advantage for Menendez is the fact that New Jersey Democrats have a 15 point advantage over Republicans in party registration (37% to 22%) according to state voter rolls. And they

have a 17 point advantage in voters' self-reported party identification (39% to 22%) according to the Monmouth poll.

One dark cloud in these findings for Menendez, though, is that he kicks off the 2018 contest in a somewhat weaker position regarding his overall job performance than he did in prior campaigns. Registered voters render a split decision on the job he is doing as New Jersey's senior U.S. Senator – 37% approve and 38% disapprove, with 25% offering no opinion. Even fewer voters (28%) have a favorable opinion of Menendez personally, with 35% holding an unfavorable view and 37% expressing no opinion.

Menendez enjoyed more positive personal ratings in his prior runs. He held a 29% favorable and 13% unfavorable rating in July 2006, when he was running for his first full term after being appointed to fill out the seat Jon Corzine vacated earlier in the year. Menendez's personal rating in his re-election bid six years later, in July 2012, was also higher at 36% favorable and 20% unfavorable.

“There's no question that Bob Menendez is starting off this year's race under a cloud because of his recent legal troubles. Many voters are already aware of this and have figured it into their vote calculation, but this information is news to some current Menendez supporters and could impact his support,” said Murray.

Most voters (76%) are aware that Menendez was recently on trial for bribery and misuse of office, which ultimately ended in a mistrial. Just over half (51%) say this situation makes them less likely to vote for Menendez while 42% say it has no impact on their vote. Currently, about 15% of all registered voters prefer Menendez for Senate and are unaware of his legal troubles. Just over half of this group say they are less likely to support the incumbent after hearing this information which provides an opening for Hugin to pick up some support.

“If the Republican nominee can swing over every Menendez voter who is just learning about his court case, this race could get a lot closer. But that is a big ‘if.’ For one, many of these low information voters are unlikely to turn out in November anyway. But more importantly, it does not take into account how tenacious Menendez can be once campaigning starts in earnest. It will take a very concerted and effective messaging effort by Hugin to turn this issue into a net gain for him,” said Murray.

The poll finds that Hugin is basically a blank slate for New Jersey voters. Fully 82% say they do not know enough about him to form an opinion. The remainder are split between holding favorable (10%) and unfavorable (8%) views of the Republican. Only 1-in-5 registered voters (20%) are aware that Hugin is a former pharmaceutical company executive. In an atmosphere where health care costs are a top national concern, just 30% of New Jersey voters say that knowing this piece of Hugin's résumé makes them less likely to support him for U.S. Senate. Another 7% say it makes them more likely to support him and 58% say it has no impact on their vote.

“The good thing for Hugin is that health care costs are not as much of a burning issue in New Jersey as they are nationally. The bad news for Hugin is that the Menendez team has yet to sink its teeth into this aspect of his background. The question is whether Bob Hugin is able to introduce himself to New Jersey voters or if Bob Menendez will get to do it for him,” said Murray.

The *Monmouth University Poll* also measured the public’s perception of New Jersey’s junior U.S. Senator. Cory Booker earns a solid 54% approve and 31% disapprove rating from Garden State voters and a 54% approve to 30% disapprove rating from all adult residents.

The *Monmouth University Poll* was conducted by telephone from April 6 to 10, 2018 with 703 New Jersey adults, including a subset of 632 registered voters. The results in this release have a margin of error of +/- 3.7 percent for the full sample and +/- 3.9 percent for voters. The poll was conducted by the Monmouth University Polling Institute in West Long Branch, NJ.

## QUESTIONS AND RESULTS

(\* Some columns may not add to 100% due to rounding.)

[Q1 and Q4 held for future release.] [Q2-3 previously released.]

[QUESTIONS 5 & 6 WERE ROTATED]

### 5. Do you approve or disapprove of the job Bob Menendez is doing as United States Senator?

All adults	<b>April 2018</b>
Approve	<b>38%</b>
Disapprove	<b>37%</b>
(VOL) No opinion	<b>26%</b>
(n)	<b>(703)</b>

TREND: Registered voters	<b>April 2018</b>	July 2017	May 2016	July 2015	May 2015	Feb. 2015	Sept. 2014	June 2014	April 2014	Feb. 2014	Dec. 2013	April 2013	Feb. 2013
Approve	<b>37%</b>	41%	41%	38%	42%	49%	45%	47%	51%	49%	47%	44%	41%
Disapprove	<b>38%</b>	35%	31%	38%	38%	27%	30%	34%	31%	30%	27%	38%	31%
(VOL) No opinion	<b>25%</b>	23%	28%	23%	20%	24%	26%	19%	18%	21%	26%	18%	28%
(n)	<b>(632)</b>	(758)	(703)	(453)	(441)	(712)	(680)	(717)	(690)	(690)	(698)	(694)	(697)

TREND: Registered voters continued	April 2012	Feb. 2012	Oct. 2011	Aug. 2011	May 2011	July 2010	Oct. 2008	April 2008	Jan. 2008
Approve	40%	41%	43%	38%	46%	38%	34%	41%	37%
Disapprove	25%	26%	29%	33%	28%	33%	25%	31%	25%
(VOL) No opinion	35%	33%	28%	29%	26%	29%	41%	28%	37%
(n)	(692)	(709)	(693)	(730)	(725)	(747)	(900)	(720)	(698)

6. Do you approve or disapprove of the job Cory Booker is doing as United States Senator?

All adults	<b>April 2018</b>
Approve	<b>54%</b>
Disapprove	<b>30%</b>
(VOL) Don't know	<b>16%</b>
(n)	<b>(703)</b>

TREND: Registered voters	<b>April 2018</b>	July 2017	May 2016	July 2015	May 2015	Feb. 2015	Sept. 2014	June 2014	April 2014	Feb. 2014	Dec. 2013
Approve	<b>54%</b>	50%	53%	45%	51%	51%	42%	48%	47%	47%	37%
Disapprove	<b>31%</b>	31%	21%	24%	21%	21%	23%	25%	23%	20%	21%
(VOL) Don't know	<b>15%</b>	20%	27%	31%	27%	27%	35%	27%	30%	32%	43%
(n)	<b>(632)</b>	(758)	(703)	(453)	(441)	(712)	(680)	(717)	(690)	(690)	(698)

[Q7 and Q12 held for future release.] [Q8-11 previously released.]

[THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS WERE ASKED OF REGISTERED VOTERS ONLY: moe=+/-3.9%]

13. As you may know there will be an election for U.S. Senate in November. If the election for senator was today, would you vote for ... Bob Hugin the Republican, Bob Menendez the Democrat, or some other candidate? [If OTHER/UNDECIDED: If you had to vote for one of the following at this moment, do you lean more toward Bob Hugin or more toward Bob Menendez?]

[NAMES WERE ROTATED]

Registered voters with leaners	<b>April 2018</b>
Bob Hugin the Republican	<b>32%</b>
Bob Menendez the Democrat	<b>53%</b>
Other candidate	<b>7%</b>
(VOL) Undecided	<b>7%</b>
(VOL) Will not vote	<b>1%</b>
(n)	<b>(632)</b>

[QUESTIONS 14 & 15 WERE ROTATED]

14. Is your general impression of Bob Hugin favorable or unfavorable, or do you have no opinion of him?

	<b>April 2018</b>
Favorable	<b>10%</b>
Unfavorable	<b>8%</b>
No opinion	<b>82%</b>
(n)	<b>(632)</b>

15. Is your general impression of Bob Menendez favorable or unfavorable, or do you have no opinion of him?

TREND: Registered voters	<b>April 2018</b>	Feb. 2013	Sept. 2012	July 2012	Oct. 2006	Sept. 2006	July 2006
Favorable	<b>28%</b>	39%	41%	36%	33%	29%	29%
Unfavorable	<b>35%</b>	29%	23%	20%	27%	22%	13%
No opinion	<b>37%</b>	32%	35%	44%	40%	49%	57%
(n)	<b>(632)</b>	(697)	(715)	(678)	(647)	(630)	(670)

[QUESTIONS 16-17 & 18-19 WERE ROTATED]

16. Are you aware that Senator Menendez was recently on trial for bribery and misuse of public office which ended in a mistrial, or have you not heard about this before?

	<b>April 2018</b>
Aware	<b>76%</b>
Not heard	<b>24%</b>
(n)	<b>(632)</b>

17. Does knowing that Menendez was recently on trial make you more or less likely to vote for him, or doesn't this impact your vote?

	<b>April 2018</b>
More likely	<b>3%</b>
Less likely	<b>51%</b>
Does not impact	<b>42%</b>
(VOL) Depends	<b>3%</b>
(VOL) Don't Know	<b>2%</b>
(n)	<b>(632)</b>

18. Are you aware that Bob Hugin is a former pharmaceutical company executive or have you not heard about this before?

	<b>April 2018</b>
Aware	<b>20%</b>
Not heard	<b>80%</b>
(n)	<b>(632)</b>

19. Does knowing that Hugin is a former pharmaceutical executive make you more likely or less likely to vote for him, or doesn't this impact your vote?

	<b>April 2018</b>
More likely	<b>7%</b>
Less likely	<b>30%</b>
Does not impact	<b>58%</b>
(VOL) Depends	<b>2%</b>
(VOL) Don't Know	<b>3%</b>
(n)	<b>(632)</b>

[Q20-39 held for future release.]

## METHODOLOGY

The *Monmouth University Poll* was sponsored and conducted by the Monmouth University Polling Institute from April 6 to 10, 2018 with a random sample of 703 New Jersey adults age 18 and older, in English. This includes 421 contacted by a live interviewer on a landline telephone and 282 contacted by a live interviewer on a cell phone. Telephone numbers were selected through random digit dialing and landline respondents were selected with a modified Trol Dahl-Carter youngest adult household screen. Monmouth is responsible for all aspects of the survey design, data weighting and analysis. Final sample is weighted for region, age, education, gender and race based on US Census information. Data collection support provided by Braun Research (field) and SSI (RDD sample). For results based on this sample, one can say with 95% confidence that the error attributable to sampling has a maximum margin of plus or minus 3.7 percentage points (unadjusted for sample design). Sampling error can be larger for sub-groups (see table below). In addition to sampling error, one should bear in mind that question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of opinion polls.

DEMOGRAPHICS (weighted)	
ALL ADULTS	REGISTERED VOTERS
Self-Reported	Self-Reported
21% Republican	22% Republican
41% Independent	39% Independent
38% Democrat	39% Democrat
48% Male	49% Male
52% Female	51% Female
28% 18-34	25% 18-34
36% 35-54	37% 35-54
36% 55+	38% 55+
60% White	61% White
13% Black	12% Black
17% Hispanic	16% Hispanic
10% Asian/Other	11% Asian/Other

MARGIN OF ERROR		ALL ADULTS		REGISTERED VOTERS	
		unweighted sample	moe (+/-)	unweighted sample	moe (+/-)
TOTAL		703	3.7%		
REGISTERED VOTER	Yes	632	3.9%	632	3.9%
	No	71	11.6%		
SELF-REPORTED PARTY ID	Republican	152	8.0%	144	8.2%
	Independent	276	5.9%	237	6.4%
	Democrat	262	6.1%	241	6.3%
GENDER	Male	342	5.3%	309	5.6%
	Female	361	5.2%	323	5.5%
AGE	18-34	142	8.2%	116	9.1%
	35-54	231	6.5%	210	6.8%
	55+	320	5.5%	298	5.7%
RACE	White non-Hispanic	473	4.5%	431	4.7%
	Other	201	6.9%	175	7.4%
COLLEGE GRADUATE	No degree	310	5.6%	263	6.1%
	4 year degree	389	5.0%	365	5.1%
INCOME	<\$50K	163	7.7%	134	8.5%
	\$50 to <100K	202	6.9%	182	7.3%
	\$100K+	285	5.8%	269	6.0%
REGION	North	323	5.5%	294	5.7%
	Central	185	7.2%	167	7.6%
	South	189	7.1%	167	7.6%

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Monmouth University Poll -- NEW JERSEY -- 4/12/18

		TOTAL	REG VOTER		PARTY ID			GENDER		AGE 3	
			Yes	No	Rep	Ind	Dem	Male	Female	18-34	35-54
Q5. Do you approve or disapprove of the job Bob Menendez is doing as United States Senator?	Approve	38%	37%	40%	20%	31%	54%	39%	36%	35%	38%
	Disapprove	37%	38%	32%	62%	39%	22%	40%	34%	31%	37%
	[VOL] Dont Know	26%	25%	28%	17%	31%	24%	20%	30%	34%	25%

		AGE 3	RACE 2		COLLEGE GRAD		INCOME			REGION OF STATE
		55+	White	Other	No degree	4 yr degree	<\$50K	\$50-100K	\$100K+	North
Q5. Do you approve or disapprove of the job Bob Menendez is doing as United States Senator?	Approve	41%	37%	38%	36%	41%	40%	41%	34%	39%
	Disapprove	40%	41%	29%	36%	39%	36%	30%	42%	38%
	[VOL] Dont Know	19%	22%	33%	28%	21%	25%	29%	24%	23%

		REGION OF STATE	
		Central	South
Q5. Do you approve or disapprove of the job Bob Menendez is doing as United States Senator?	Approve	40%	31%
	Disapprove	30%	43%
	[VOL] Dont Know	30%	26%

		TOTAL	REG VOTER		PARTY ID			GENDER		AGE 3	
			Yes	No	Rep	Ind	Dem	Male	Female	18-34	35-54
Q6. Do you approve or disapprove of the job Cory Booker is doing as United States Senator?	Approve	54%	54%	52%	21%	52%	77%	49%	59%	60%	54%
	Disapprove	30%	31%	23%	64%	33%	9%	38%	22%	26%	28%
	[VOL] Dont Know	16%	15%	25%	15%	16%	14%	14%	18%	14%	18%

		AGE 3	RACE 2		COLLEGE GRAD		INCOME			REGION OF STATE
		55+	White	Other	No degree	4 yr degree	<\$50K	\$50-100K	\$100K+	North
Q6. Do you approve or disapprove of the job Cory Booker is doing as United States Senator?	Approve	51%	48%	63%	52%	58%	55%	53%	53%	60%
	Disapprove	33%	35%	21%	31%	28%	24%	28%	35%	30%
	[VOL] Dont Know	16%	17%	16%	17%	14%	21%	19%	11%	10%

		REGION OF STATE	
		Central	South
Q6. Do you approve or disapprove of the job Cory Booker is doing as United States Senator?	Approve	58%	39%
	Disapprove	23%	36%
	[VOL] Dont Know	19%	25%

Monmouth University Poll -- NEW JERSEY -- 4/12/18

		REG VOTER	PARTY ID			GENDER		AGE 3			RACE 2
		Yes	Rep	Ind	Dem	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	White
Q13. US SENATE VOTE WITH LEANERS	Bob Hugin	32%	84%	33%	4%	41%	24%	18%	36%	38%	44%
	Bob Menendez	53%	9%	41%	92%	46%	60%	62%	51%	49%	45%
	Other candidate	7%	3%	15%	2%	6%	8%	8%	6%	7%	6%
	[VOL] Undecided	7%	4%	10%	2%	5%	8%	9%	7%	5%	6%
	[VOL] Will not vote	1%	0%	2%	0%	1%	0%	3%	0%	0%	0%

		RACE 2	COLLEGE GRAD		INCOME			REGION OF STATE		
		Other	No degree	4 yr degree	<\$50K	\$50-100K	\$100K+	North	Central	South
Q13. US SENATE VOTE WITH LEANERS	Bob Hugin	14%	31%	35%	24%	29%	40%	27%	40%	34%
	Bob Menendez	66%	53%	53%	59%	56%	50%	59%	48%	48%
	Other candidate	10%	8%	5%	6%	8%	6%	6%	7%	9%
	[VOL] Undecided	8%	7%	6%	11%	7%	3%	6%	5%	8%
	[VOL] Will not vote	2%	1%	0%	0%	0%	2%	2%	0%	0%

		REG VOTER	PARTY ID			GENDER		AGE 3			RACE 2
		Yes	Rep	Ind	Dem	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	White
Q14. Is your general impression of Bob Hugin favorable or unfavorable, or do you have no opinion of him?	Favorable	10%	30%	7%	3%	14%	7%	7%	9%	14%	14%
	Unfavorable	8%	0%	5%	14%	6%	9%	10%	7%	7%	8%
	No opinion	82%	69%	88%	83%	81%	84%	83%	85%	79%	78%

		RACE 2	COLLEGE GRAD		INCOME			REGION OF STATE		
		Other	No degree	4 yr degree	<\$50K	\$50-100K	\$100K+	North	Central	South
Q14. Is your general impression of Bob Hugin favorable or unfavorable, or do you have no opinion of him?	Favorable	5%	10%	10%	5%	11%	13%	10%	8%	14%
	Unfavorable	7%	7%	9%	8%	8%	8%	9%	6%	7%
	No opinion	88%	83%	81%	87%	81%	80%	82%	86%	79%

		REG VOTER	PARTY ID			GENDER		AGE 3			RACE 2
		Yes	Rep	Ind	Dem	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	White
Q15. Is your general impression of Bob Menendez favorable or unfavorable, or do you have no opinion of him?	Favorable	28%	9%	20%	47%	29%	27%	19%	28%	34%	27%
	Unfavorable	35%	63%	40%	14%	43%	26%	21%	38%	40%	44%
	No opinion	37%	29%	39%	39%	28%	47%	60%	34%	26%	30%



Monmouth University Poll -- NEW JERSEY -- 4/12/18

		RACE 2	COLLEGE GRAD		INCOME			REGION OF STATE		
		Other	No degree	4 yr degree	<\$50K	\$50-100K	\$100K+	North	Central	South
Q15. Is your general impression of Bob Menendez favorable or unfavorable, or do you have no opinion of him?	Favorable	30%	25%	33%	27%	29%	27%	27%	30%	27%
	Unfavorable	19%	33%	38%	28%	29%	42%	34%	36%	35%
	No opinion	50%	43%	29%	45%	41%	31%	39%	34%	38%

		REG VOTER	PARTY ID			GENDER		AGE 3			RACE 2
		Yes	Rep	Ind	Dem	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	White
Q16. Are you aware that Senator Menendez was recently on trial for bribery and misuse of public office which ended in a mistrial, or have you not heard about this before?	Aware	76%	91%	75%	68%	84%	68%	45%	80%	91%	83%
	Not heard	24%	9%	25%	32%	16%	32%	55%	20%	9%	17%

		RACE 2	COLLEGE GRAD		INCOME			REGION OF STATE		
		Other	No degree	4 yr degree	<\$50K	\$50-100K	\$100K+	North	Central	South
Q16. Are you aware that Senator Menendez was recently on trial for bribery and misuse of public office which ended in a mistrial, or have you not heard about this before?	Aware	62%	70%	84%	70%	76%	78%	75%	78%	74%
	Not heard	38%	30%	16%	30%	24%	22%	25%	22%	26%

		REG VOTER	PARTY ID			GENDER		AGE 3			RACE 2
		Yes	Rep	Ind	Dem	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	White
Q17. Does knowing that Menendez was recently on trial make you more or less likely to vote for him, or doesnt this impact your vote?	More likely	3%	3%	2%	3%	4%	1%	2%	1%	5%	3%
	Less likely	51%	66%	54%	38%	52%	50%	53%	54%	46%	52%
	Does not impact	42%	29%	37%	55%	40%	44%	39%	42%	44%	40%
	[VOL] Depends	3%	1%	2%	2%	2%	4%	5%	2%	2%	2%
	[VOL] Dont Know	2%	0%	4%	1%	2%	2%	1%	2%	3%	2%

		RACE 2	COLLEGE GRAD		INCOME			REGION OF STATE		
		Other	No degree	4 yr degree	<\$50K	\$50-100K	\$100K+	North	Central	South
Q17. Does knowing that Menendez was recently on trial make you more or less likely to vote for him, or doesnt this impact your vote?	More likely	2%	3%	3%	4%	3%	2%	3%	2%	3%
	Less likely	47%	46%	58%	53%	42%	54%	52%	48%	51%
	Does not impact	45%	44%	39%	36%	51%	41%	39%	48%	41%
	[VOL] Depends	4%	4%	0%	5%	1%	1%	3%	2%	2%
	[VOL] Dont Know	2%	3%	1%	1%	5%	1%	3%	0%	4%

Monmouth University Poll -- NEW JERSEY -- 4/12/18

		REG VOTER	PARTY ID			GENDER		AGE 3			RACE 2
		Yes	Rep	Ind	Dem	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	White
Q18. Are you aware that Bob Hugin is a former pharmaceutical company executive, or have you not heard about this before?	Aware	20%	28%	18%	16%	27%	13%	14%	20%	23%	24%
	Not heard	80%	72%	82%	84%	73%	87%	86%	80%	77%	76%

		RACE 2	COLLEGE GRAD		INCOME			REGION OF STATE		
		Other	No degree	4 yr degree	<\$50K	\$50-100K	\$100K+	North	Central	South
Q18. Are you aware that Bob Hugin is a former pharmaceutical company executive, or have you not heard about this before?	Aware	13%	16%	26%	10%	23%	22%	19%	22%	18%
	Not heard	87%	84%	74%	90%	77%	78%	81%	78%	82%

		REG VOTER	PARTY ID			GENDER		AGE 3			RACE 2
		Yes	Rep	Ind	Dem	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	White
Q19. Does knowing that Hugin is a former pharmaceutical executive make you more likely or less likely to vote for him, or doesnt this impact your vote?	More likely	7%	11%	8%	3%	9%	5%	10%	5%	6%	7%
	Less likely	30%	12%	27%	44%	28%	32%	34%	30%	30%	30%
	Does not impact	58%	75%	58%	49%	59%	58%	47%	63%	61%	59%
	[VOL] Depends	2%	1%	2%	2%	1%	2%	5%	0%	1%	1%
	[VOL] Dont Know	3%	1%	5%	2%	3%	3%	5%	2%	3%	3%

		RACE 2	COLLEGE GRAD		INCOME			REGION OF STATE		
		Other	No degree	4 yr degree	<\$50K	\$50-100K	\$100K+	North	Central	South
Q19. Does knowing that Hugin is a former pharmaceutical executive make you more likely or less likely to vote for him, or doesnt this impact your vote?	More likely	6%	7%	6%	9%	1%	9%	6%	10%	4%
	Less likely	31%	29%	32%	37%	35%	22%	29%	31%	32%
	Does not impact	57%	58%	59%	50%	58%	66%	58%	58%	58%
	[VOL] Depends	3%	2%	1%	2%	0%	2%	3%	0%	1%
	[VOL] Dont Know	4%	4%	2%	3%	5%	2%	4%	1%	4%