

ISSP 1996 – Role of Government III

- Questionnaire -

Australia

The Australian National University

Research School of Social Sciences



ISSS

**International Social Science Surveys
Australia**

Australia - Austria - Britain - Bulgaria - Canada - China - Czech Republic - Finland
Germany - Hungary - Ireland - Israel - Italy - Japan - The Netherlands - New Zealand
Norway - The Philippines - Poland - Russia - Slovenia - Spain - Sweden - United States

Confidential

International questions: Government's role

>> These questions are being asked by the International Social Science Survey Programme in 25 nations throughout the world. They are important and we think you will find them interesting.

1. In general, would you say that people should obey the law without exception, or are there exceptional occasions on which people should follow their consciences even if it means breaking the law?

- Obey the law without exception 1
 OR Follow conscience on occasions 2
 (can't choose)

2. There are many ways people or organisations can protest against a government action they strongly oppose. Which of these do you think should be allowed and which not allowed ...

Yes!!	--	Definitely allowed
Yes	--	Probably allowed
No	--	Probably not allowed
No!!	--	Definitely not allowed
-	--	(can't choose)

ALLOWED?

- | | | | | | |
|---|-------|-----|----|------|---|
| a. Organising public meetings to protest against the government..... | Yes!! | Yes | No | No!! | - |
| b. Organising protest marches and demonstrations..... | Yes!! | Yes | No | No!! | - |
| c. Organising a nationwide strike of all workers against the government | Yes!! | Yes | No | No!! | - |

3. Would you or would you not do any of the following to protest against a government action you strongly opposed?

Yes!!	--	Definitely would
Yes	--	Probably would
No	--	Probably would not
No!!	--	Definitely would not
-	--	(can't choose)

- | | | | | | |
|--|-------|-----|----|------|---|
| a. Attend a public meeting organised to protest against the government | Yes!! | Yes | No | No!! | - |
| b. Go on a protest march or demonstration | Yes!! | Yes | No | No!! | - |

4. And **in the past five years** how many times have you done each of the following to protest against a government action you strongly opposed?

- | | | | |
|--|-------|------|----------------|
| a. Attended a public meeting organised to protest against the government | Never | Once | More than once |
| b. Gone on a protest march or demonstration..... | Never | Once | More than once |

5. There are some people whose views are considered extreme by the majority. Consider people who want to overthrow the government by revolution. Do you think such people should be allowed to ...

Yes!!	--	Definitely allowed
Yes	--	Probably allowed
No	--	Probably not allowed
No!!	--	Definitely not allowed
-	--	(can't choose)

ALLOWED?

- a. Hold public meetings to express their views? Yes!! Yes No No!! -
- b. Publish books expressing their views?..... Yes!! Yes No No!! -

6. All systems of justice make mistakes, but which do you think is worse ?

	To convict an innocent person	1
OR	To let a guilty person go free	2
	(can't choose)	-

7. The federal government has a lot of different pieces of information about people which computers can bring together very quickly. Is this ...

A very serious threat to individual privacy.....	1
A fairly serious threat.....	2
Not a serious threat.....	3
Not a serious threat at all to individual privacy	4
(can't choose)	-

8. What is your opinion of the following statement:

"It is the responsibility of the government to reduce the differences in income between people with high incomes and those with low incomes."

Agree strongly	1
Agree.....	2
Neither agree nor disagree	3
Disagree	4
Disagree strongly.....	5
(can't choose)	-

9. Here are some things the government might do for the economy. Circle one word for each action to show whether you are in favour of it or against it.

Yes!!	--	Strongly in favour of
Yes	--	In favour
??	--	Neither for nor against
No	--	Against
No!!	--	Strongly against
-	--	(can't choose)

IN FAVOUR?

- a. Control of wages by law Yes!! Yes ?? No No!! -
- b. Control of prices by law Yes!! Yes ?? No No!! -
- c. Cuts in government spending Yes!! Yes ?? No No!! -

IN FAVOUR?

- d. Government financing of projects to create new jobs Yes!! Yes ?? No No!! -
- e. Less government regulation of business Yes!! Yes ?? No No!! -
- f. Support for industry to develop new products and technology..... Yes!! Yes ?? No No!! -
- g. Support for declining industries to protect jobs..... Yes!! Yes ?? No No!! -
- h. Reducing the work week to create more jobs..... Yes!! Yes ?? No No!! -

10. Listed below are various areas of government spending. Please show whether you would like to see more or less government spending in each area.

>> Remember that if you say "much more", it might require a tax increase to pay for it.

More!!	--	Spend much more
More	--	Spend more
Same	--	Spend the same as now
Less	--	Spend less
Less!!	--	Spend much less
-	--	(can't choose)

SPENDING

- a. The environment -- spend more or less?..... More!! More Same Less Less!! -
- b. Health? More!! More Same Less Less!! -
- c. The police and law enforcement? More!! More Same Less Less!! -
- d. Education -- would you like to see more or less government spending?..... More!! More Same Less Less!! -
- e. The military and defence? More!! More Same Less Less!! -
- f. Old age pensions?..... More!! More Same Less Less!! -
- g. Unemployment benefits?..... More!! More Same Less Less!! -
- h. Culture and the arts?..... More!! More Same Less Less!! -

11. Now some questions about power ...

- a. Do you think that trade unions in this country have too much power or too little power?
- b. How about business and industry, do they have too much power or too little power?
- c. And what about the federal government, does it have too much power or too little power?

POWER

Far too much	Too much	About right	Too little	Far too little	-
Far too much	Too much	About right	Too little	Far too little	-
Far too much	Too much	About right	Too little	Far too little	-

12. On the whole, do you think it should or should not be the government's responsibility to ...

Yes!!	--	Definitely should be
Yes	--	Probably should be
No	--	Probably should not be
No!!	--	Definitely should not be
-	--	(can't choose)

GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSIBILITY?

a. Provide a job for everyone who wants one?	Yes!!	Yes	No	No!!	-
b. Keep prices under control?	Yes!!	Yes	No	No!!	-
c. Provide health care for the sick	Yes!!	Yes	No	No!!	-
d. Provide a decent standard of living for the old	Yes!!	Yes	No	No!!	-
e. Provide industry with the help it needs to grow	Yes!!	Yes	No	No!!	-
f. Provide a decent standard of living for the unemployed	Yes!!	Yes	No	No!!	-
g. Reduce income differences between the rich and the poor	Yes!!	Yes	No	No!!	-
h. Give financial help to university students from low-income families	Yes!!	Yes	No	No!!	-
i. Provide decent housing for those who can't afford it ..	Yes!!	Yes	No	No!!	-
j. Impose strict laws to make industry do less damage to the environment	Yes!!	Yes	No	No!!	-

13. How interested would you say you personally are in politics?

Very interested	1
Fairly interested	2
Somewhat interested	3
Not very interested	4
Not at all interested	5
(can't choose)	-

14. How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?

Yes!!	--	Strongly agree
Yes	--	Agree
??	--	Neither agree nor disagree
No	--	Disagree
No!!	--	Strongly disagree
-	--	(can't choose)

AGREE?

a. People like me don't have any say about what the government does	Yes!!	Yes	??	No	No!!	-
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AGREE?

- b. The average citizen has considerable influence on politics Yes!! Yes ?? No No!! -
- c. Even the best politician cannot have much impact because of the way government works..... Yes!! Yes ?? No No!! -
- d. I feel that I have a pretty good understanding of the important political issues facing our country..... Yes!! Yes ?? No No!! -
- e. Elections are a good way of making governments pay attention to what the people think Yes!! Yes ?? No No!! -
- f. I think most people are better informed about politics and government than I am Yes!! Yes ?? No No!! -
- g. People we elect as MPs try to keep the promises they have made during the election..... Yes!! Yes ?? No No!! -
- h. Most public servants can be trusted to do what is best for the country Yes!! Yes ?? No No!! -

15. All in all, how well or badly do you think the system of democracy in Australia works these days?

- It works well and needs no changes.....1
- It works well but needs some changes.....2
- It does not work well and needs lots of changes.....3
- It does not work well and needs to be completely changed4
- (can't choose)

16. If the government had a **choice** between reducing taxes **or** spending more on social services, which do you think it should do?

>> We mean **all taxes together, including income tax, sales tax and all the rest.**

- Reduce taxes, even if this means spending less on social services1
- OR** Spend more on social services, even if this means higher taxes2
- (can't choose)

17. Generally, how would you describe taxes in Australia today?

>> *Again, we mean all taxes together, including income tax, sales tax and all the rest.*

- a. First, for those with **high** incomes, are taxes Much too high Too high About right Too low Much too low -
- b. Next, for those with **middle** incomes, are taxes Much too high Too high About right Too low Much too low -
- c. Lastly, for those with **low** incomes, are taxes Much too high Too high About right Too low Much too low -

18. Do you think each of the following should be run by private organisations or companies, or by the government?

- a. Electricity?
 - Mainly run by private organisations or companies.....1
 - Mainly run by government.....2
 - (can't choose)
- b. Hospitals?
 - Mainly run by private organisations or companies.....1
 - Mainly run by government.....2
 - (can't choose)
- c. Banks?
 - Mainly run by private organisations or companies.....1
 - Mainly run by government.....2
 - (can't choose)

19. If the government *had* to choose between keeping down inflation or keeping down unemployment, to which do you think it should give the highest priority?

- OR
 - Keeping down inflation1
 - Keeping down unemployment2
 - (can't choose)

20. Suppose the level of taxation in Australia stays the same as it is now. Should the government ...

- OR
 - ... Spend the *same* amount as now on social services, even if this means the national deficit or debt stays as it is?.....1
 - ... Spend less than now on social services, so that the national debt can be reduced?.....2
 - (can't choose).....-

21a. How much tax per year, if any, do you think someone who earns \$25,000 a year *should* pay?.....

\$

>> We mean all taxes that are deducted from one's wages, such as Medicare and income tax

- None ₀₀
- Don't know ₉₈

b. And what about someone who \$50,000 a year? How much tax *should* they pay per year?.....

\$

- None ₀₀
- Don't know ₉₈

c. And what about someone who earns \$100,000 a year? How much tax *should* they pay per year?.....

\$

- None ₀₀
- Don't know ₉₈

d. And what about someone who earns \$200,000 a year? How much tax *should* they pay per year?.....

\$

- None ₀₀
- Don't know ₉₈

Questions for people who are working now

>> *International questions. We want to ask these questions in exactly the same way they were asked overseas, so we will need to go back over some topics we have already covered ...*

1a. Do you feel that a person on your job learns new things that could lead to a better job or to a promotion? ... Yes!! Yes ?? No No!!

b. Can you decide what time to come to work and when to leave, either officially or unofficially?..... Yes!! Yes ?? No No!!

2. About how many times an hour, day, week, month or year does a supervisor check up on your work?

- Every hour or more.....1
- About twice a day.....2
- Every day.....3
- Every week.....4
- Every month or so.....5
- About once a year.....6
- No supervisor.....7

3. What chance do you think there is that you will lose your job completely in the next two years?

>> Give your answer as a percentage between zero and 100..... percent

4. Taking everything into account -- pay, fringe benefits, working conditions, kind of work, etc -- when **most people** think of **average jobs** they think of jobs like telephone operator, carpenter, or payroll clerk. Let's give an average job a rating of 100. Compared to an average job like one of these, I would like to ask you to rate your own job.

- >> *If you think your own job is twice as good as an average job, give it 200.*
- >> *If you think your job is half as good as an average job, give it a 50.*
- >> *You can give any number you like.*

a. **Considering everything**, if an average job is rated 100, how would you rate your job?..... points

b. How do you think your **family** and **friends** rate a job like yours? points

c. How do **other people** in general rate your job? points

5a. How much do you **like** your job?.....

Very	Some	Not	Not at
much	what	much	all

b. All in all, how satisfied are you with your job?.....

Very	Somewhat	Not	Not!!
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c. Compared to your **friends'** jobs, is your job....

Better!!	Better	Same	Worse	Worse!!
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d. Compared to other people as educated, experienced and diligent as you, is your job.....

Better!!	Better	Same	Worse	Worse!!
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e. Compared to what you think you **deserve**, is your job.....

Better!!	Better	Same	Worse	Worse!!
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>> *International questions. These questions are being asked in many other countries so we need to go back over some of the topics we've already covered.*

8. Do you think each of these will improve our way of life in the next 20 years, will have no effect, or it will make things worse?

- a. Computers and information technology Improve No effect Worse Don't know
- b. Biotechnology and genetic engineering..... Improve No effect Worse Don't know
- c. Telecommunications Improve No effect Worse Don't know

9. Scientists are trying to use biotechnology & genetic engineering to change plants, in ways that may be quicker or more precise than traditional breeding programmes, in order to make the plants more useful. For example, make them resistant to diseases or pests, make them ripen faster, or give them the ability to grow in dry or salty soils. Would you say such research is ...

- a. Worthwhile and should be encouraged..... Agree!! Agree No No!!
- b. May involve risks to human health or to the environment... Agree!! Agree No No!!
- c. In any case, needs to be controlled by the government..... Agree!! Agree No No!!

10. Another development is the application of biotechnology and genetic engineering to farm animals, to change them in quicker or more precise ways than traditional breeding programmes, in order to make them more useful: for example, make them resistant to diseases, or grow faster, or produce more or better quality meat or milk. Would you say such research is ...

- a. Worthwhile and should be encouraged..... Agree!! Agree No No!!
- b. May involve risks to human health or to the environment... Agree!! Agree No No!!

11. These new methods of biotechnology and genetic engineering are also being applied to the production and processing of foods. Scientists say that they can improve the quality of food and drink - for example by making it higher in protein, or lower in fat, or making it keep longer, or taste better. Is such research ...

- a. Worthwhile and should be encouraged..... Agree!! Agree No No!!
- b. May involve risks to human health or to the environment... Agree!! Agree No No!!

12. Yet another application of biotechnology and genetic engineering is the development of new medicines and vaccines to improve human health, for example the production of human insulin for the treatment of diabetics. Would you say such research is ...

- a. Worthwhile and should be encouraged..... Agree!! Agree No No!!
- b. May involve risks to human health or to the environment... Agree!! Agree No No!!
- c. In any case, needs to be controlled by the government..... Agree!! Agree No No!!