

# Government's Top 10 Greatest Achievements

from the *Government's 50 Greatest Endeavors of the Second Half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century* Survey,  
a project of the Brookings Institution, supported by the Ford Foundation. <http://www.brookings.edu/Endeavors>

## 1. ***Rebuild Europe After World War II.***

Action to support post-World War II economic recovery and political stability. e.g., Establishment of the International Monetary Fund under the Bretton-Woods Agreement Act 1945, Foreign Assistance Act 1948, North Atlantic Treaty 1949.

## 2. ***Expand the Right to Vote.***

Action to guarantee the right to vote for all Americans over 18. e.g., Civil Rights Act 1964, 24th Amendment 1964, Voting Rights Act 1965, 26th Amendment 1971.

## 3. ***Promote Equal Access to Public Accommodations.***

Action to desegregate public facilities and require handicapped accessibility. e.g., Civil Rights Act 1964, Open Housing Act 1968, Americans with Disabilities Act 1990.

## 4. ***Reduce Disease.***

Action to prevent and treat disease through research, direct assistance and regulation. e.g., Polio Vaccine Act 1955, National Cancer Act 1971.

## 5. ***Reduce Workplace Discrimination.***

Action to prohibit employers from discriminating based on race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age or disability. e.g., Equal Pay Act 1963, Civil Rights Act 1964, Age Discrimination Act 1967, Americans with Disabilities Act 1990.

## 6. ***Ensure Safe Food and Drinking Water.***

Action to establish and enforce food and water quality standards. e.g., Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act 1947; Wholesome Meat Act 1967; Safe Drinking Water Act 1974.

## 7. ***Strengthen the Nation's Highway System.***

Action to build, improve and maintain the interstate highway system. e.g., Federal Aid to Highway Act 1956, Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act 1991.

## 8. ***Increase Access to Health Care for Older Americans.***

Action to provide health insurance to older Americans. e.g., Medicare 1965, Catastrophic Health Insurance for the Aged 1988.

## 9. ***Reduce the Federal Budget Deficit.***

Action to balance the federal budget. e.g., Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act (Gramm-Rudman-Hollings) 1985, Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act 1990, Omnibus Budget Reconciliation 1993, Balanced Budget Act 1997.

## 10. ***Promote Financial Security in Retirement.***

Action to raise Social Security benefits, expand the number of recipients, ensure program's solvency, protect private pensions and encourage individual savings for retirement. e.g., Social Security expansions, Supplemental Security Income program 1972, Employment Retirement Income Security Act 1974.