

Example of Questionnaire: The Federal Government's Greatest Priorities of the Next 50 Years

Prepared by Princeton Survey Research Associates for The Brookings Institution

(This is an example of the questionnaire that respondents took on the Internet. Flow chart directions (in blue) simulate the options and decisions with the Internet-based questionnaire. The list of 50 endeavors is at the end of this example.)

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.

Should the federal government be involved to any extent in this endeavor?

Yes No

If Yes

Should the federal government be involved because it is a ...

- very important issue
- somewhat important issue
- not too important issue

Should the federal government be involved because the government has a...

- large responsibility to address this issue
- moderate responsibility to address this issue
- small responsibility to address this issue

Should pursuing this endeavor be ...

- one of the top priorities of the federal government
- a major priority but not a top priority
- a minor priority

If No

Why shouldn't the government be involved... (Mark as many as apply)

- because it's not an important issue?
- because it's not the federal government's responsibility?
- because past government efforts to address this issue have failed?

Respondent is asked the same set of questions for 50 possible endeavors (the endeavors are listed at the end of this document).

Then, if respondent has selected more than 10 endeavors as top priorities, and if more than 10 endeavors to discontinue, they are sent to the screens below to select their top 10.

Top 10 Endeavors to Discontinue

Below are the endeavors you think the government should discontinue. Of these, please select the 10 the government should give the greatest priority to discontinuing.

(list of endeavors respondent selected to continue is displayed--respondent prioritizes them)

Top 10 Priorities

Below are the endeavors you selected as top priorities for the government to pursue. Of these, please select the top 10 endeavors the federal government should pursue over the next 50 years.

(list of endeavors respondent selected as top priorities is displayed--respondent prioritizes them)

One last question: Is there any issue that should be a top government priority over the next 50 years but was not on the list? **(Respondent writes in answer)**

Please tell us about yourself

What is your gender?

- Male
- Female

What is your age?

- 18-29
- 30-39
- 40-49
- 50-59
- 60-69
- 70 and older

In politics today, which best describes you?

- Republican
- Democrat
- Independent, lean Republican
- Independent, lean Democrat
- Independent, do not lean

In politics today, which best describes you?

- Very conservative
- Conservative
- Moderate
- Liberal
- Very liberal

Would you be interested in participating in future projects?

- Yes
- No

What best describes your ethnic background?

- White
- Black or African-American
- Hispanic or Latino
- Asian
- Native American
- Other _____

Where do you fit on the following scale?

Generally speaking, government programs should be...

- ① cut back to reduce the power of government
- ②
- ③
- ④
- ⑤
- ⑥ expanded to deal with important

What best describes your current work?

- Tenured university or college professor
- Tenure track professor
- Non-tenure track university or college instructor
- Employed outside academe
- Other _____

Could we please have your email address?

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.

Expand and Protect 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.

Ensure 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.

Enhance Consumer Protection

Action to create safety standards and raise awareness of potential hazards. e.g., Amendments to Food, Drug and Cosmetics Act 1962; Fair Packaging and Labeling Act 1966; Consumer Product Safety Act 1972.

Enhance Workplace Safety

Action to reduce workplace hazards. e.g., Federal Coal Mine Health and Safety Act 1969, Occupational Safety and Health Act 1970.

Help Victims of Disasters

Action to assist in disaster relief, prevention, and risk sharing. e.g., Disaster Relief Act 1950, National Flood Insurance Act 1968.

Reduce Crime

Action to increase law enforcement officers, strengthen penalties, control guns and support prevention programs. e.g., Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act 1968, 1994; Brady Handgun Violence Prevention Act 1993.

Reduce Illegal Drug Use

Action to rehabilitate addicts and strengthen penalties for using and dealing drugs. e.g., Narcotic Control Act 1970, Anti-drug Abuse Amendments 1988.

Increase Access to Post-Secondary Education

Action to provide assistance for higher education through loans, grants and fellowships and to build and improve facilities. e.g., Higher Education Facilities Act 1963, Higher Education Act 1965.

Improve Elementary and Secondary Education

Action to enhance education from preschool through high school. e.g., National Defense Education Act 1958, Elementary and Secondary Education Act 1965, Head Start 1967.

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.

Expand Job Training and Placement

Action to create jobs and provide vocational training. e.g., Employment Act 1946, Small Business Act 1953, Economic Opportunity Act 1964, Comprehensive Employment and Training Act 1973, Job Training Partnership Act 1982.

Reduce Dependency Among Welfare Recipients

Action to increase self-sufficiency among welfare recipients. e.g., Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act 1981, Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act 1996.

Provide Assistance for the Working Poor

Action to raise the income of the working poor through tax credits, assistance with expenses and a guaranteed minimum wage. e.g., Earned Income Tax Credit 1975, Family Support Act 1988, increases to the minimum wage.

Expand Home Ownership

Action to promote ownership through home loans and mortgages. e.g., Housing Act 1950, 1959; Tax Reform Act 1986.

Increase the Supply of Low-Income Housing

Action to develop new public housing and subsidize rents in private units. e.g., Housing Act 1949; Housing and Community Development Act 1965, 1974.

Develop and Renew Impoverished Communities

Action to improve the quality of life in poor rural and urban areas. e.g., Appalachian Regional Development Act 1965, Demonstration Cities Act 1966, Community Renewal and New Markets Act 2000.

Increase Older Americans' Access to Health Care

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

Increase Low-Income Families' Access to Health Care

Action to provide health insurance to poor Americans. e.g., Medicaid 1965, Children's Health Insurance Program 1997.

Enhance the Nation's Health Care Infrastructure

Action to build medical treatment and research facilities. e.g., Hospital Survey and Construction Act 1946; Mental Retardation Facilities Construction Act 1963; Heart Disease, Cancer and Stroke amendments 1965.

Reduce Disease

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

Reduce Hunger and Improve Nutrition

Action to provide food assistance to children and adults. e.g., National School Lunch Act 1946; Food Stamp Act 1964; Special Supplemental Food Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) 1972.

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.

Improve Air Quality

Action to control air pollution and raise air quality standards. e.g., Clean Air Act 1963, Motor Vehicle Pollution Control Act 1965.

Improve Water Quality

Action to control water pollution and raise water quality standards. e.g., Water Pollution Control Act 1948, 1972; Water Quality Act 1965, 1987.

Reduce Exposure to Hazardous Waste

Action to restore the environment and manage hazardous waste. e.g., Resource Conservation and Recovery Act 1976; Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (Superfund) 1980.

Protect the Wilderness

Action to safeguard land from commercial and recreational development. e.g., Wilderness Act 1964, Wild and Scenic Rivers Act 1968, Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act 1980.

Protect Endangered Species

Action to prevent loss of threatened species. e.g., Marine Mammal Protection Act 1972, Endangered Species Act 1973.

Ensure an Adequate Energy Supply

Action to facilitate the development of domestic energy sources and promote conservation. e.g., Atomic Energy Act 1954, trans-Alaskan pipeline 1973, Energy Policy and Conservation Act 1975, Natural Gas Wellhead Decontrol Act 1989.

Stabilize Agricultural Prices

Action to support crop prices, distribute surpluses and control production. e.g., Agriculture Act 1948, 1961; Agriculture Trade Development and Assistance Act 1954; Food Security Act 1985.

Control Immigration

Action to set and enforce standards on immigration, temporary admission, naturalization and the removal of aliens. e.g., Immigration and Nationality Act (McCarran-Walter) 1952, Immigration and Nationality Act amendments 1965, Immigration Reform and Control Act 1986, Immigration Act 1990.

Promote and Protect Democracy

Action to impede communism. e.g., Aid to Greece and Turkey 1947, North Atlantic Treaty 1949, Korean and Vietnam Wars.

Strengthen the National Defense

Action to build and modernize the national defense. e.g., Authorization of tactical and strategic weapons systems, Department of Defense Reorganization Act 1958, Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act 1986.

Support Veterans' Readjustment and Training

Action to assist veterans with their transition back to civilian life. e.g., Serviceman's Readjustment Act 1944, New GI Bill Continuation Act (Montgomery GI Bill) 1987.

Increase International Economic Development

Action to provide aid for development. e.g., Establishment of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development under the Bretton-Woods Agreement Act 1945, Act for International Development 1950, Peace Corps 1961.

Advance Human Rights and Provide Humanitarian Relief

Action to improve social conditions abroad by protecting human rights and providing relief aid. e.g., United Nations charter 1945, Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act 1986, Kosovo intervention 1999.

Increase Arms Control and Disarmament

Action to limit nuclear weapon development and use. e.g., Nuclear Test Ban Treaty 1963, Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty 1969, SALT/ABM Treaty 1972, Intermediate Range Nuclear Force Treaty 1988.

Increase Market Competition

Action to deregulate industries including airlines, banks, utilities and telecommunications. e.g., Airline Deregulation Act 1978, Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act (financial services overhaul) 1999.

Devolve Responsibility to the States

Action to shift power from the federal government to the states. e.g., State and Local Fiscal Assistance Act (general revenue sharing) 1972, Unfunded Mandate Reform Act 1995, Education Flexibility Partnership Act, 1999.

Balance Federal Budget

Action to reduce deficits and maintain a balanced 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.

Increase the Stability of Financial Institutions and Markets

Action to increase access to financial market information, assist ailing institutions and avert potential problems. e.g., Securities and Exchange Act 1975; Insider Trading and Securities Fraud Enforcement Act 1988; Financial Institutions Reform, Recovery and Enforcement Act 1989.

Reform Taxes

Action to lower tax rates. e.g., Revenue Act 1964, Economic Recovery Tax Act 1981, Economic Growth and Tax Relief Act 2001.

Expand Foreign Markets for US Goods

Action to reduce tariff and non-tariff barriers to trade. e.g., Bretton-Woods Agreement Act 1945, North American Free Trade Agreement 1993, Permanent Normal Trade Relations for China 2000.

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.

Improve Mass Transportation

Action to develop improved urban mass transportation and railway systems. e.g., Urban Mass Transportation Act 1964, Rail Passenger Service Act 1970.

Strengthen the Nation's Airways System

Action to create and maintain the air traffic control system and promote the safety and development of the air industry. e.g., Federal Airport Act 1946, Airport and Airways Development Act 1970.

Make Government More Transparent to the Public

Action to increase public access to government activity and reduce administrative abuse. e.g., Administrative Procedures Act 1946; Freedom of Information Act 1966, 1974; Government in the Sunshine Act 1976; Ethics in Government Act 1978; Inspector General Act 1978.

Improve Government Performance

Action to enhance government efficiency. e.g., Civil Service Reform Act 1978, Federal Managers' Financial Integrity Act 1982, Chief Financial Officers Act 1990, Government Performance and Results Acts 1993, Federal Acquisitions Streamlining Act 1994.

Promote Scientific and Technological Research

Action to support basic research and to develop new technologies, such as the Internet. e.g., National Science Foundation Act 1950, Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency 1958, Communications Satellite Act 1962.

Promote Space Exploration

Action to develop the technology for a lunar landing and further space exploration. e.g., National Aeronautics and Space Administration Act 1958, Apollo mission funding 1962, funds for a manned space station 1984.