



HARVARD UNIVERSITY
JOHN F. KENNEDY
SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT

NPR/Kaiser Family Foundation/Kennedy School Poll Attitudes Toward Government

Methodology

The NPR/Kaiser/Kennedy School Poll is an ongoing project of National Public Radio, the Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation, and Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government. Representatives of the three sponsors worked together to develop the survey questionnaire and to analyze the results, with NPR maintaining sole editorial control over its broadcasts on the surveys. The project team includes:

From NPR - Marcus D. Rosenbaum, Special Projects Editor

From the Kaiser Family Foundation - Drew Altman, President and Chief Executive Officer; Mollyann Brodie, Vice President, Director of Public Opinion and Media Research

From the Kennedy School - Robert J. Blendon, a Harvard University Professor who holds joint appointments in the School of Public Health and the Kennedy School of Government; John Benson, Deputy Director for Public Opinion and Health/Social Policy at the Harvard School of Public Health; Stephen R. Pelletier, Research Coordinator

The results of this project are based on a telephone survey conducted May 26-June 25, 2000, among a nationally representative sample of 1,557 respondents 18 years of age and older, including an oversample of 177 Hispanics and 175 African-Americans (results are weighted to reflect the actual distribution in the nation). Field work by ICR/International Communications Research of Media, PA. The margin of sampling error is plus or minus 3 percentage points. For results based on subsets of respondents, the margin of error is higher.

As shown, some questions were asked only of subsets of respondents (e.g., people who said they had decided how they would vote). Unless otherwise indicated, the tables reflect percentages of the subset that was asked the question, not percentages of the overall population. An asterisk () indicates a response of less than 1%. A cross (†) indicates a volunteered response.*

1. All in all, do you think things in the nation are headed in the right direction or do you feel that things are on the wrong track?

	%
Right direction	44
Wrong track	47
Don't know†	9

Asked of respondents who think that things in the nation are headed in the right direction.

2. And what do you think is the main thing that is going right in the nation today? (Open-ended responses.)

	%
Economy/Stock Market/Jobs (NET)	56
Good/expanding economy; economic prosperity	38
Stock market is up/doing well	1
Good/stable interest rates	*
Plenty of job opportunities; low unemployment; increased choices	14
Good/better/wages; being able to make a good living	*
Growth of business/private sector	1
Other economy/stock market/job mentions	1
Government (NET)	6
Clinton/Gore administration has done a good job	1
Good politics; the way the nation is being run by the government (unspec)	1
Having an election; changing of presidents	1
The military is in good shape; military is building up its forces	*
Other government mentions	3
International Relations (NET)	3
International situations; relations have improved	1
Peacetime; not at war; no wars	2
Other international relations mentions	*
Values/Morality (NET)	4
Resurgence/increased spirituality/religion	2
Resurgence/increased focus on morals/morality	1
Families/return to family values	1
People having more conscience; people caring about the less fortunate/trying to help find solutions to problems around them	1
Other values/morality mentions	1
Crime/Violence/Guns (NET)	2
Dropping crime rate	1
Less violence	*
Gun control awareness; trying to get better control of guns	*
Other crime/violence/gun mentions	*
Increased Information/Awareness (NET)	1
Increased access to information; more information relayed more efficiently	*
People's increased awareness of issues/problems/the less fortunate	1
Other increased information/awareness mentions	*
Civil Rights (NET)	1
Civil rights; human rights; equal opportunity rights	*
Improved racism problems/issues	1
Other civil rights mentions	*
Growth of technology/computers	2
More environmental issues are being addressed; more focus on the environment	1
Increased focus on health care; everybody's health care (kids, seniors, etc)	1
Increased importance put on education	3
Freedom of choice; more opportunities; more choices available for people	1
Everybody is happy/doing well	1
Everything	*
Other	3
Don't know	15

Asked of respondents who think that things in the nation are on the wrong track.

3. And what do you think is the main thing that is going wrong in the nation today? (Open-ended responses)

	%
Government (NET)	33
Corrupt/crooked/greedy politicians; government/politicians looking after their own interests; politicians who lie; politicians with no morals	6
Clinton is not a good president; president doesn't have any morals	4
Government shouldn't be taking care of other countries before our own; shouldn't be sending money overseas because we need it here	1
Too much government interference; government is getting involved where it shouldn't be	2
Politicians fighting with each other	1
Poor leadership; poor government/politics/politicians/policy-making; government not doing their job (unspecified)	5
Taxes are too high	2
Government spending; elaborate budget; overspending; putting money into the wrong things	1
Don't like government trying to take away our right to carry arms	*
Too many lobbyists/special interest groups making politicians corrupt	-
Justice system; judicial system is not in balance/fair; prison terms are not sufficient	2
Government trade agreements; China trade policies	1
Other government mentions	8
Crime/Violence/Drugs (NET)	11
Crime; high crime rate; violence	2
Too much violence/killings	3
Drugs; too many drugs	3
Kids with guns	1
Other crime/violence/drug mentions	2
Family Breakdowns (NET)	6
Lack of parental responsibility; parents not spending enough time with their kids/not disciplining kids/not instilling values and morals in their children	2
Taking parents' rights away from them; parents not allowed to discipline their children	1
Breakdown of family unit; families falling apart; lack of family values	3
Other family breakdowns mentions	*
Education/School Systems (NET)	5
Education (unspecified)	1
Education system is below standards; not teaching children what it should be	1
No religion; no prayer in schools	1
Violence in schools	1
Other education/school system mentions	1
Spirituality/Warped Morals/Personal Virtues (NET)	23
Lack of religion/spirituality	6
Society's lack of morals/values	11
People have no respect/no respect for others	2
Lack of discipline; no discipline in the country	*
No one is responsible for themselves; everyone wants to blame everyone else; no individual responsibility	1

Racism against others; racial discrimination	1
Other spirituality/warped morals/personal virtues mentions	2
Economy (NET)	7
Economy; economy is not very good	1
Inflation/high prices	1
Rising fuel/gas prices	1
Unemployment	1
Too much poverty	*
Corporations are running our country instead of the government	*
Other economy mentions	2
Media/TV/radio programs are a bad influence on kids (violence drugs, etc.)	1
Youths behavior is out of control; no control over children; undisciplined youth; youths with no respect/no values	3
Other	7
Don't know	5

4. How much (credit/blame) do you give the federal government in Washington for that? A great deal, a fair amount, only a little, or none?

	Great deal/Fair amount			A little/None			Don't know†
	NET	Great deal	Fair amount	NET	Little	None	
Right/Wrong	75	36	38	23	19	4	2
Right	69	21	47	29	25	4	2
Wrong	80	50	30	18	14	4	2

Questions 1-4 Summary Table

	%
Right Direction (NET)	44
Great deal/fair amount (NET)	30
A great deal	9
A fair amount	21
A Little/None (NET)	13
Only a little	11
None	2
Wrong Track (NET)	47
Great deal/fair amount (NET)	38
A great deal	24
A fair amount	14
A Little/None (NET)	8
Only a little	6
None	2
Don't know†	9

5. Do you think the moral climate in the country was better in the 1980s or in the 1990s, or was there little difference between the two decades?

Better in the 1980s	Better in the 1990s	Little difference	Don't know†
45	16	35	4

6. Now thinking about the nation's economy, how satisfied are you with the way the economy is going these days – very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, not very satisfied, or not satisfied at all?

	%
Satisfied (NET)	75
Very	27
Somewhat	48
Not Satisfied (NET)	24
Not very	15
Not at all	9
Don't know†	1

7. And is your personal financial situation getting better, getting worse, or staying about the same?

	%
Better	37
Worse	13
Same	49

8. Do you think that the decisions that got the economy moving and led to today's prosperity were made mainly in the 1980s when the Republicans held the White House, or in the 1990s when the Democrats held the White House, or do you think other things were important?

Primarily in the '80s	Primarily in the '90s	Other things more important	Don't know†
25	39	28	8

9. Thinking back to the last few times you voted, which elections were of most interest to you?

National	State	Local	All equally†	None/never voted†	Don't know†
49	15	20	8	7	1

10. How closely do you follow what goes on in the government in Washington – very closely, somewhat closely, not too closely, or not at all?

Closely (NET)	72
Very	19
Somewhat	53
Not closely (NET)	27
Not too	22
Not at all	5
Don't know†	1

11. What do you think is the single most important problem for the federal government to address today? (Open-ended responses.)

Government (NET)	29
<i>International Relations/Trade Relations (subnet)</i>	3
World peace; avoid conflicts with other nations; avoid wars	1
Address trade relations with China; shouldn't be trading with China if they won't trade with us	1
Foreign trade (unspecified)	*
Stay on top of global economy; other countries' economies collapsing	*
Foreign affairs/relations/policies (unspecified)	1
Other international relations/trade relations mentions	1
<i>Budget/Spending (subnet)</i>	4
Cut back on spending; careless spending; cut the pork-barrel spending	1
Change spending priorities/allocation of government funds	*
The federal budget; federal finances/spending (unspecified)	1
Eliminate the national debt/deficit	2
Other budget/spending mentions	1
<i>Taxes (subnet)</i>	4
Taxes are too high	2
Entire tax system need to be restructured	*
Other taxes mentions	1
<i>Social Security (subnet)</i>	5
Social Security (unspecified)	4
Funding of Social Security	*
Other Social Security mentions	1

<i>Military/National Defense (subnet)</i>	2
Deployment of soldiers overseas; shouldn't be sending military overseas to police the world	*
National defense; defense of our nation; beef up our military; stop closing military bases	1
Stay on top of nuclear arms; stay ahead of other countries; keep out of wrong hands	*
Other military/national defense mentions	1
<i>Overbearing Government (subnet)</i>	2
Downsize government; government is too big	1
Get government out of our lives; too much government interference in our lives	1
Other overbearing government mentions	*
<i>Dissatisfaction with Politicians (subnet)</i>	4
Fighting between the Democrats and Republicans; politicians need to work together	1
Corrupt/greedy politicians/government; lack of morality; lack of honesty of politicians	2
Need to get Clinton out of office	*
Other dissatisfaction with politicians mentions	1
<i>Law Enforcement/Judicial System (subnet)</i>	1
Enforcement of existing laws	*
Improve judicial system; crooked judicial system; repeat offenders getting out	*
Other law enforcement/judicial system mentions	*
Campaign finance reform	*
Government needs to stop helping other countries and start taking care of people in this country; start taking care of our own	1
All aspects of government need to be reformed	*
Need to change the negative image of government; people's negative image of government; people's lack of trust in the government	*
Other government mentions	1
Crime/Violence/Drugs (NET)	14
Crime; high crime rate	2
Violence/murders	1
Drugs	3
Gun control; gun violence	5
Juvenile violence; crimes of children	1
Violence in schools; school shootings	1
Other crime/violence/drug mentions	1
Education/School Systems (NET)	8
Education; the education system (unspecified)	6
Need better education; kids are graduating who shouldn't be	1
More funding for education/schools	1
Other education/school system mentions	1
Spirituality/Warped Morals/Personal Virtues (NET)	4
Religion/prayer should be back in schools	*
Address lack of moral values in society; bring back morality/honesty	3
Anger among youth	*
Other spirituality/warped values/personal virtues mentions	1
Economy (NET)	13
The economy	2
Inflation	1
High cost of living	1

High gas/oil prices	2
Increase the minimum wage	*
Unemployment	2
Poverty	1
The homeless; homelessness	2
The hungry people in our country	*
Inequitable distribution of wealth	1
Other economy mentions	1
Health Care System/Coverage (NET)	8
Address health care system; widespread lack of health care insurance; unaffordable health care system; restricted coverage	4
Lower cost/more comprehensive health care; prescriptions for senior citizens; good health care for the elderly	1
Universal health care system; health care for everybody	1
Address Medicare problems	1
Health issues (unspecified)	1
Other health care system/coverage mentions	*
Welfare of Children/Families/Family Values (NET)	3
Concern for children/children's welfare; spend more time and money on children	1
Promote families/family values; more active parents' roles	1
Welfare/Medicaid issues	*
Other welfare of children/families/family value mentions	1
Race relations; ending stereotyping; equal rights for minorities	1
Taking care of the elderly; the elderly need more help (unspecified)	1
Focus on environment issues; preservation of natural resources	1
Right to keep and bear arms; no gun control	*
Immigration	1
Other	4
None	2
Don't know	10

12. Now I'm going to read you a list of five things that might influence your vote in this year's presidential election. Please tell me which ONE of them will be MOST important when you decide who to vote for. Will it be the candidates'...? (*Items scrambled.*)

	%
Positions on the issues	25
Leadership abilities	21
Character and moral values	25
Views on expanding or shrinking the role of government	10
Experience	15
Not interested/don't plan to vote†	1
None of these/other factor†	1
Don't know†	2

13. And which will be SECOND most important when you decide who to vote for? Will it be the candidates'...? (*Items scrambled in same order as Question 12.*)

	%
Positions on the issues	18
Leadership abilities	27
Character and moral values	21
Views on expanding or shrinking the role of government	12
Experience	17
Not interested/don't plan to vote†	-
None of these/other factor†	*
Don't know†	1
No first choice	4

Question 12/13 Summary Table

Percentage choosing reason in Question 12 or Question 13

	%
Positions on the issues	44
Leadership abilities	47
Character and moral values	46
Views on expanding or shrinking the role of government	22
Experience	31
Not interested/don't plan to vote†	1
None of these/other factor†	1
Don't know†	2

14. If the November general election for president were held tomorrow and the candidates were Vice President Al Gore and Governor George W. Bush, for whom would you vote?

Al Gore	George W. Bush	Other†	Don't know†
41	44	5	10

Asked of respondents who answered Gore or Bush to Question 14.

15. Have you definitely decided to vote for (GORE/BUSH) in November, or is there a chance you might change your mind?

	Have definitely decided	Might change mind	Don't know†
Gore or Bush	54	44	2
Gore	55	44	1
Bush	54	43	3

Question 14/15 Summary Table

GORE			BUSH			Other†	Don't know†
NET	Definitely decided	Might change mind	NET	Definitely decided	Might change mind		
41	23	18	44	24	19	5	10

Asked of respondents who have not decided to vote for Gore or Bush.

16. Right now are you leaning more toward Vice President Gore or Governor Bush?

Gore	Bush	Don't know†
26	24	50

Questions 15/16 Summary Table

Gore	Bush	Other†	Don't know†
44	46	5	5

Questions 14/14b/15 Summary Table

	%
Gore (NET)	44
Have definitely decided	22
Might change mind	18
Leaned voters	3
Bush (NET)	46
Have definitely decided	24
Might change mind	19
Leaned voters	2
Undecided†	5
Other†	5

17. If George W. Bush is elected president, do you think he will expand the role of government, shrink the role of government, or keep government about the same as it is now?

Expand the role of government	Shrink the role of government	Keep government the same as it is now	Don't know†
20	24	49	8

18. What about Al Gore? If Al Gore is elected president, do you think he will expand the role of government, shrink the role of government, or keep government about the same as it is now?

Expand the role of government	Shrink the role of government	Keep government the same as it is now	Don't know†
34	8	51	7

19. If you were to grade the overall performance of the (READ FIRST ITEM) government, what grade would you give — A, B, C, D or F? (*Order of items rotated between federal-state-local and local-state-federal.*)

	A/B			C/D			F	Don't know†
	NET	A	B	NET	C	D		
Federal	37	5	32	53	38	15	9	1
State	48	7	41	42	31	12	7	2
Local	47	9	38	41	31	10	9	3

20. How much of the time do you trust the (READ FIRST ITEM) government to do what is right: just about always, most of the time, only some of the time, or none of the time?

How about the (READ NEXT ITEMS) government? How much of the time do you trust it to do what is right: just about always, most of the time, only some of the time, or none of the time? (*Order of items rotated the same as rotation in Question 19.*)

Federal Government	%
Always/Most of the time (NET)	29
Always	5
Most	24
Some/None of the time (NET)	70
Some	59
None	11
Don't know†	1

State Government	%
Always/Most of the time (NET)	39
Always	5
Most	33
Some/None of the time (NET)	60
Some	52
None	8
Don't know†	1

Local Government	%
Always/Most of the time (NET)	39
Always	7
Most	33
Some/None of the time (NET)	59
Some	49
None	10
Don't know†	2

21. When the government in Washington decides to solve a problem, how much confidence do you have that the problem will actually be solved – a lot, some, just a little, or none at all?

<u>Federal Government</u>	%
A lot/Some of the time (NET)	51
A lot	8
Some	43
Just a little/None (NET)	48
Just a little	35
None	13
Don't know†	1

22. How about your STATE government? When it decides to solve a problem, how much confidence do you have that the problem will actually be solved – a lot, some, just a little, or none at all?

<u>State Government</u>	%
A lot/Some of the time (NET)	64
A lot	10
Some	54
Just a little/None (NET)	34
Just a little	28
None	7
Don't know†	2

23. And your LOCAL government? How much confidence do you have that it can solve the problems it sets out to solve – a lot, some, just a little, or none at all?

<u>Local Government</u>	%
A lot/Some of the time (NET)	65
A lot	16
Some	49
Just a little/None (NET)	33
Just a little	24
None	9
Don't know†	2

24. If you wanted to express your opinion about something going on in the U.S. Congress and you contacted your congressional representative, do you think that he or she would pay a lot of attention to what you say, some attention, very little attention, or none at all?

Federal	%
A lot/Some (NET)	50
A lot	10
Some	40
Very little/None (NET)	48
Very little	34
None	14
Don't know†	2

Asked of one-half of total respondents.

25. If you wanted to express your opinion about something going on in your state legislature and you contacted your state representative, do you think that he or she would pay a lot of attention to what you say, some attention, very little attention, or none at all?

State	%
A lot/Some (NET)	58
A lot	11
Some	47
Very little/None (NET)	41
Very little	29
None	11
Don't know†	1

Asked of one-half of total respondents.

26. If you wanted to express your opinion about something going on in your local government and you contacted your local government representative like your city council member, do you think that he or she would pay a lot of attention to what you say, some attention, very little attention, or none at all?

<u>Local</u>	%
A lot/Some (NET)	67
A lot	19
Some	48
Very little/None (NET)	31
Very little	21
None	10
Don't know†	2

27. Some people believe that religious, charitable and community organizations can do the best job of providing services to people in need. Others believe that the government can do the best job of providing services to people in need. Which is closer to your view? (*Items rotated.*)

Religious/charitable/community organizations can do the best job	The government can do the best job	Both	Neither	Don't know†
62	28	6	2	3

28. Some people think criticism of the way the federal government does its job is justified, while others think the government often does a better job than it is given credit for. Which comes closer to your views? (*Items rotated.*)

Government criticism is justified	Government does better job than given credit for	Don't know†
56	39	5

29. In general, do you agree or disagree with the following statement: Government has gone too far in regulating business and interfering with the free enterprise system?

Agree	Disagree	Don't know†
60	36	4

(Order of Questions 30, 31, and 32 rotated between federal-state-local and local-state-federal.)

30. Considering what you get from the FEDERAL government, do you think you pay more than your fair share of federal taxes, less than your fair share, or about your fair share?

Pay more	Pay less	Pay fair share	Don't know†
55	2	42	1

31. Considering what you get from your STATE government, do you think you pay more than your fair share of state taxes, less than your fair share, or about your fair share?

Pay more	Pay less	Pay fair share	Don't know†
40	3	55	2

32. Considering what you get from your LOCAL government, do you think you pay more than your fair share of local taxes, less than your fair share, or about your fair share?

Pay more	Pay less	Pay fair share	Don't know†
39	4	55	2

33. Now I'm going to read you the names of some institutions in American society. Please tell me how much confidence you, yourself, have in each one – a great deal, quite a lot, some, or very little. First, how much confidence do you have in [READ FIRST ITEM]? Next, how about [READ EACH ITEM]? (*Items a-d scrambled together, and Items e-h scrambled together.*)

a. The Military

	%
Great deal/Quite a lot (NET)	64
Great deal	34
Quite a lot	30
Some/Very little (NET)	34
Some	26
Very little	9
None†	1
Don't know†	1

c. The U.S. Congress

	%
Great deal/Quite a lot (NET)	19
Great deal	5
Quite a lot	14
Some/Very little (NET)	78
Some	56
Very little	22
None†	2
Don't know†	1

b(1). The U.S. Supreme Court

Asked of one-half of respondents.

	%
Great deal/Quite a lot (NET)	45
Great deal	20
Quite a lot	25
Some/Very little (NET)	52
Some	37
Very little	15
None†	1
Don't know†	2

d. Large Business Corporations

	%
Great deal/Quite a lot (NET)	24
Great deal	8
Quite a lot	16
Some/Very little (NET)	72
Some	45
Very little	27
None†	2
Don't know†	2

b(2). The Courts

Asked of one-half of respondents.

	%
Great deal/Quite a lot (NET)	29
Great deal	10
Quite a lot	19
Some/Very little (NET)	68
Some	42
Very little	26
None†	2
Don't know†	1

e. Medicine

	%
Great deal/Quite a lot (NET)	54
Great deal	25
Quite a lot	29
Some/Very little (NET)	45
Some	32
Very little	13
None†	1

f. The News Media

	%
Great deal/Quite a lot (NET)	22
Great deal	9
Quite a lot	13
Some/Very little (NET)	77
Some	39
Very little	38
Don't know†	1

h. The Entertainment Industry

	%
Great deal/Quite a lot (NET)	18
Great deal	9
Quite a lot	9
Some/Very little (NET)	80
Some	37
Very little	43
Don't know†	2

g. Churches and Synagogues

	%
Great deal/Quite a lot (NET)	62
Great deal	34
Quite a lot	28
Some/Very little (NET)	37
Some	27
Very little	9
Don't know†	1

34. I am going to read you a list of federal government programs. For each one please tell me if you have a favorable or an unfavorable opinion of that program. How about [READ ITEM], do you have a favorable or an unfavorable opinion? (*Items scrambled.*) [GET ANSWER, THEN ASK] Is that a [very favorable or somewhat favorable/very unfavorable or somewhat unfavorable] opinion?

	Favorable			Unfavorable			Don't know†
	NET	Very	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Very	
Social Security	69	32	37	30	16	14	1
Food stamp program	53	18	35	41	19	22	5
National defense programs	78	32	46	19	12	7	3
Federal drug enforcement programs	59	26	33	38	17	22	2
Federal environmental programs	71	26	45	26	15	11	3
Medicare	70	29	41	28	16	12	3
Federal education programs	66	29	37	32	17	15	3

35. How much of a problem, if at all, is government corruption today? Is it a very important problem, somewhat important, not too important, or not a problem at all?

Important			Not Important			Don't know†
NET	Very	Somewhat	NET	Not too	Not at all	
89	55	34	9	6	3	2

Asked of respondents who said government corruption is a problem.

36. If you had to choose, which do you think is most corrupt – the federal government, your state government, or your local government?

Federal	State	Local	All†	None†	Don't know†
59	13	15	8	1	4

Questions 35/36 Summary Table

		%
Very Important	NET	55
	Federal	34
	State	6
	Local	7
	All of them†	6
Somewhat Important	NET	34
	Federal	19
	State	5
	Local	6
	All of them†	2
	None of them†	1
Not too Important	NET	6
	Federal	2
	State	1
	Local	2
Not a problem at all		3
Don't know†		2

37. Do you think the (INSERT) government threatens your own personal rights and freedoms or not?

How about the (ITEM) government. Do you think the (ITEM) government threatens your own personal rights and freedoms or not?

(Order of items rotated between federal-state-local and local-state-federal.)

Asked of respondents who feel specific governments threaten their own personal rights and freedoms.

38. Is this a MAJOR threat or a MINOR threat?

Questions 37/38 Summary Table

	NET	Major threat	Minor threat
Federal government	46	23	23
State government	31	9	21
Local government	26	9	17
None of these	41		
Don't know†	1		

39. How much impact do you think the FEDERAL government has on your daily life? A lot, some, just a little, or no impact at all?

40. How much impact do you think your STATE government has on your daily life? A lot, some, just a little, or no impact at all?

41. How much impact do you think your LOCAL government has on your daily life? A lot, some, just a little, or no impact at all?

Questions 39/40/41 Summary Table

	A lot/Some			Little/No impact			Don't know†
	NET	A lot	Some	NET	Just a little	No impact at all	
Federal	79	41	38	20	15	5	1
State	76	30	46	23	18	5	1
Local	68	30	38	31	24	7	1

42. I want to ask you about several things that may affect the quality of life in your community. How much do you feel government, at any level, is currently involved in each of these – is it very involved, somewhat involved, not very involved or not involved at all? How about [READ EACH ITEM]? (*Items scrambled.*)

	Involved			Not Involved			Don't know†
	NET	Very	Somewhat	NET	Not very	Not at all	
The quality of air and water	82	32	50	16	10	6	2
Keeping people safe from crime	82	32	51	16	11	5	1
The price of gasoline	67	40	26	30	15	16	3
The availability of adequate roads and highways	88	47	42	11	7	4	1

Asked of one-half of respondents.

43a. When it comes to the (READ ITEM) government, in which level of government do you have the most confidence — the federal, state, or local? How about (READ ITEMS)? (*Items scrambled.*)

	Federal	State	Local	All equal†	None†	Don't know†
(a) Law enforcement	20	29	44	3	3	2
(b) Environmental protection	39	36	19	2	2	2
(c) Food safety	50	26	18	2	1	2
(d) The court system	34	29	26	3	4	3

(*Items 43b(a)-43b(d) scrambled.*)

Items 43b(a)-43b(d) asked of one-half of respondents.

43b(a). When it comes to law enforcement, do you have more confidence in the FBI, your state police, or your local police?

The FBI	State police	Local police	All equal†	None†	Don't know†
26	26	36	5	4	4

43b(b). When it comes to environmental protection, do you have more confidence in the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), your state's environmental agency, or your local environmental agency?

EPA	State environmental protection agency	Local environmental protection agency	All equal†	None†	Don't know†
34	30	28	3	2	4

43b(c). When it comes to food safety, do you have more confidence in the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, your state health department, or your town or city's restaurant health inspectors?

U.S Food & Drug Administration	State health department	Town/city's restaurant health inspectors	All equal†	None†	Don't know†
42	29	18	3	5	2

43b(d). When it comes to the courts, do you have more confidence in federal courts, your state courts, or your local courts?

Federal courts	State courts	Local courts	All equal†	None†	Don't know†
32	23	29	5	6	5

43aa/43ba Law Enforcement Summary Table

Federal/FBI	State/State police	Local/Local police	All equal†	None†	Don't know†
23	27	40	4	3	3

43ab/43bb Environmental Protection Summary Table

Federal/EPA	State/State environmental agency	Local/Local environmental agency	All equal†	None†	Don't know†
37	33	23	2	2	3

43ac/43bc Food Safety Summary Table

Federal/U.S. Food & Drug Administration	State/State health department	Local/Town or city's restaurant health inspectors	All equal†	None†	Don't know†
46	28	18	2	3	2

43ad/43bd The Court System Summary Table

Federal/Federal courts	State/State courts	Local/Local courts	All equal†	None†	Don't know†
33	26	28	4	5	4

One-half of total respondents asked Items a-d; one-half asked Items e-h.

44a. I am going to read you a list of activities that the federal government is involved in or might be involved in. Please tell me whether you'd like to see more federal government involvement in that area, less involvement, about the same amount of involvement, or no federal government involvement at all. (*Items scrambled.*)

	More/Same			Less/No			Don't know†
	NET	More	Same	NET	Less	No	
a. Ensuring clean air and water	91	67	24	9	6	3	1
b. Ensuring access to affordable health care	86	73	13	13	7	6	1
c. Promoting values and morality in the society	65	50	15	35	17	17	1
d. Reducing poverty	83	69	14	16	11	5	1
e. Protecting and preserving public lands	81	54	27	17	11	7	2
f. Providing a decent standard of living for the elderly	92	73	20	7	6	1	1
g. Making sure that food and medicines are safe	95	73	22	5	3	1	1
h. Setting minimum educational standards for school	81	64	17	18	10	8	1

45. Next, I'd like to ask you about a few things that the government at one level or another now regulates or could regulate. For each one, please tell me whether you think there is too much government regulation, not enough government regulation, or about the right amount of government regulation. How about [READ EACH ITEM]? (*Items scrambled.*)

Items a-e asked of one-half of total respondents; Items f-j asked of the other half of total respondents; Item k asked of all respondents.

	Too much	Not enough	Right amount	Don't know†
a. Automobile safety	12	35	51	2
b. Prescription drug prices	25	50	22	3
c. Cable TV access and cost	29	27	36	8
d. Tobacco	30	37	31	3
e. Health care	20	57	21	3
f. Food and drug safety	8	47	43	2
g. Guns	28	51	19	1
h. TV content	20	41	36	2
i. Access to child pornography	8	76	14	2
j. HMOs and managed care	20	52	23	5
k. Speed limits	17	17	65	2

46. Earlier in this interview, you said you could trust the government in Washington (just about always/most of the time/only some of the time/none of the time). People give different reasons for NOT trusting the government. I'm going to read you a list of some of those reasons. Please tell me if each one is a major reason, a minor reason, or not a reason at all why YOU [often/sometimes] DON'T trust the federal government. How about [READ EACH ITEM]? (*Items scrambled.*)

	Major reason	Minor reason	Not a reason	Don't know†	Don't know how much to trust gov't†
Federal taxes are too high	57	26	15	1	1
The federal government is inefficient and wastes time	73	18	6	2	1
Federal government policies don't reflect your own beliefs and values	42	40	16	2	1
The federal government interferes too much in people's lives	42	37	19	1	1
The problems it focuses on cannot be solved by the federal government	39	39	18	2	1
Special interests have too much influence on the federal government	65	24	8	2	1
Elected officials lack honesty and integrity	64	25	8	1	1
The federal government doesn't do enough to help people who really need it	56	27	15	1	1
Government leaders tell us what they think will get them elected, not what they really believe	80	14	4	1	1
There is too much bickering between political parties	68	20	10	1	1
People in government don't have high moral values	49	33	15	1	1

47. Now I'd like to ask if you happen to know the names of some people who hold different titles. Please answer each question to the best of your knowledge, but if you don't know, just say so. Your congressman, your governor, your state senator, your mayor or county executive. (*Items scrambled.*)

Percent of respondents naming the official. Responses were not checked for accuracy.

NET	Congressman	Governor	State senator	Mayor/county executive	No, don't know name
85	47	75	47	58	15

48. To the best of your knowledge, does the FEDERAL government still have a budget deficit — that is, does it spend more money than it takes in?

Yes	No	Don't know†
65	26	10

49. To the best of your knowledge, which party, the Democrats or the Republicans, has the most members in the U.S. House of Representatives?

Democrats	Republicans	Don't know†
23	61	16

50. In the past ten years, did you seek help or assistance from ANY federal, state, or local government agency?

Asked of respondents who sought help or assistance from a government agency.

51. Did you seek help or assistance from a FEDERAL government agency?

Asked of respondents who sought help or assistance from a federal government agency.

52. Were they responsive to your needs?

Asked of respondents who sought help or assistance from a government agency.

68. Did you seek help or assistance from a STATE government agency?

Asked of respondents who sought help or assistance from a state government agency.

53. Were they responsive to your needs?

Asked of respondents who sought help or assistance from a government agency.

54. Did you seek help or assistance from a LOCAL government agency?

Asked of respondents who sought help or assistance from a local government agency.

55. Were they responsive to your needs?

Questions 50-55 Summary Table

	%
Sought help/assistance from any government agency	29
Federal (subnet)	16
Responsive	12
Non-responsive	3
Did not seek help	12
State (subnet)	18
Responsive	14
Non-responsive	4
Did not seek help	11
Local (subnet)	11
Responsive	8
Non-responsive	3
Did not seek help	17
Did not seek help/assistance from any government agency	70

Asked of respondents who sought help or assistance from more than one government agency.

56. Which government was most responsive to your needs?

Federal	State	Local	Don't know†
29	31	30	10

57. If you had a son or daughter just getting out of school, would you like to see him or her pursue a career in government or not?

Yes	No	Don't know†
43	51	6

Methodology

This study was conducted by telephone May 26-June 25, 2000, among a nationally representative sample of 1,557 respondents 18 years of age and older, including an oversample of 177 Hispanics and 175 African-Americans. Field work by ICR/International Communications Research of Media, PA.