

A COMMISSION SURVEY

1983

**CHANGING
PUBLIC ATTITUDES
ON GOVERNMENTS
AND TAXES**

**Advisory Commission on
Intergovernmental Relations**
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20575 • 1983



S-12

Foreword

This publication presents the 12th annual survey of public attitudes toward government and taxes conducted for the Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations (ACIR). The first 11 were conducted by the Opinion Research Corporation of Princeton, NJ, on their ORC Caravan, a national personal interview service. This year the ACIR was obliged to change pollsters when ORC decided to discontinue its personal interview surveys. ACIR staff believed that using a different survey methodology would destroy comparability with prior survey results.

The Gallup Organization was chosen competitively to conduct the 1983 survey using the Gallup Personal Omnibus. Every effort was made to ensure comparability with the previous surveys by duplicating the methods and analysis of prior years. All of our tests and checks indicate that comparability has been maintained.

This year ACIR asked nine questions, eight on government revenues and spending and one on public attitudes toward political parties and interest groups. This publication presents both the current results and the cumulative record.

Susannah E. Calkins, senior analyst in the Taxation and Finance section, prepared this study. Many members of the ACIR staff participated in developing the questions and reviewing the results. Typing assistance was provided by Ruth Phillips and Arlene Preston.

All interpretations of the data are those of the ACIR staff.

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The 1983 Survey

HIGHLIGHTS

Sales Taxes are Favored if More Revenues are Needed

When additional tax revenues are needed, the public views higher sales taxes as the least objectionable way to collect them, according to the 12th annual poll of public opinion conducted for the Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations:

- At the national level, respondents were asked to choose between higher individual income tax rates and a new national sales tax on all purchases other than food. The 52% who preferred a sales tax was more than double the 24% who endorsed an increase in income tax rates. The remaining 25% said they didn't know. (Table 3)
- At the state level, respondents were asked to choose between obtaining more state revenues from a state individual income tax or a state sales tax. Again, support for a sales tax at 57% was two and a half times the 23% preferring a state income tax. Respondents choosing "Don't know" amounted to 20%. (Table 5)
- At the local level, the range of alternatives was larger with a choice among a local income tax, the local sales tax, and a local property tax. Here, too, the clear preference was for the local sales tax with 45% choosing it, 19% choosing the local property tax, and 12% choosing a local income tax. Those choosing "Don't know" amounted to 24%. (Table 6)

As might be expected, respondents tend to

vote their pocketbook interests. High levels of support for the sales tax at all levels of government came from the upper income groups; a lower-than-average level of support for sales taxes was found among lower income groups.

When compared to the results of earlier ACIR polls, the state sales tax is increasing its popularity over its major competitor, the state income tax. In 1972 and 1976, the state sales tax popularity lead was 21 and 20 percentage points respectively. In 1983, the sales tax margin over the state income tax had increased to 34 points. (Table D)

High public acceptance of the sales tax as a revenue source was borne out by responses to another 1983 question: which tax was the worst tax—that is, the least fair? (Table 2) Far more respondents (35% and 26%) chose the federal income and the local property tax as the least fair than the 13% selecting the state sales tax. (See table below.)

Over the past three years, answers to this question have been remarkably consistent with the only change being a slow decline in the percentage of those who chose the local property tax as the worst tax—from 33% in 1981 to 26% in 1983, close to the figures for 1979 and 1980.

The growing preference for sales taxes might be attributed in large part to the growing burden of payroll taxes (income taxes and social security), the perceived inequities in the present income tax, and the long-standing public resistance to more intensive use of the property tax. Support for sales taxes can also be attributed to the fact that they are paid frequently and in small amounts. Moreover, many taxpayers like the idea

Which Do You Think is the Worst Tax— That is, the Least Fair?

	May 1983	May 1982	Sept. 1981	May 1980	May 1979	May 1978	May 1977	May 1975	April 1974	May 1973	March 1972
Federal Income Tax	35	36	36	36	37	30	28	28	30	30	19
State Income Tax	11	11	9	10	8	11	11	11	10	10	13
State Sales Tax	13	14	14	19	15	18	17	23	20	20	13
Local Property Tax	26	30	33	25	27	32	33	29	28	31	45
Don't Know	15	9	9	10	13	10	11	10	14	11	11

Suppose your federal, state, and local government must raise taxes, which way would be a better way to do it?

Region	Income Tax			Sales Tax		
	Federal	State	Local	Federal	State	Local
All United States	24	23	12	52	57	45
Northeast	31	30	17	40	48	33
North Central	21	23	12	58	60	48
South	21	17	9	55	61	49
West	24	22	10	52	60	48

Note: Responses other than income and sales taxes not included.
Source: Tables 3, 5, and 6.

that they can control somewhat the size of their payments by saving rather than consuming and that all citizens are paying something.

Compared to other industrial countries, the United States makes below average use of consumer-type levies. Value-added taxes are heavily relied upon by most European countries.

Growing public support for using the sales tax at all three levels of government drives another final nail into the coffin of tax separation—a now obsolete doctrine that staked out the income tax field as the predominant preserve of the federal government, the sales tax as the province of the states, and the property tax as the domain of local governments—only the latter remains true.

Regional Patterns in Tax Preferences

For the most part, interregional variations in attitudinal patterns reflect the current regional tax structure. The Northeast, which leans rather heavily on the state income tax, is well above the national average in its support for the income tax as the instrument of choice for raising additional revenue at all three levels of government. (See table above.)

Reforming the Nation's Tax System

Questions about the best options for the tax increases at the various levels of government were followed with a "reform" question—What would be the most important single change for making the nation's tax system more fair? "Make upper income taxpayers pay more" was the choice of 49%; only 13% chose "reduce taxes on lower income taxpayers"; and 6% chose "make

business firms pay more, even if it reduces the number of jobs." (Table 7) The second largest percentage opted for no change: 16% chose "leave the tax system alone—it is about as fair as you are ever going to get."

Judging from the "Don't Know" responses, the American public has fewer doubts about the ills of the present tax system and how to cure them than it has about how to raise additional revenue. About 9% of the respondents replied "Don't Know" when asked to give their views on tax reform. The "Don't Know" response rate ranged between 20% and 25% when the respondents were asked which tax they would like if additional revenue had to be raised by any of the three levels of government.

Groups with above average "Don't Know" responses tended to be those with lower incomes, lower educational levels, nonwhites, and persons over 65 years of age. The large percentages of "Don't know" responses this year show a sharp increase from the 10-16% ranges found for comparable questions in 1972, 1976, and 1981. The increase may reflect growing public indifference, inability or reluctance to make judgments concerning details of an increasingly complex tax system, or the fact that public debate has not focused on the choice of a new tax instrument.

Rating Governments

In each of the 12 years the ACIR has conducted the public opinion poll (Table 1), respondents have been asked to choose the level of government from which they get the most for their money. In 1983, the federal government and local

**From Which Level of Government Do You Feel You Get the Most
For Your Money—Federal, State, or Local?**

	Percent of U.S. Public											
	May 1983	May 1982	Sept. 1981	May 1980	May 1979	May 1978	May 1977	March 1976	May 1975	April 1974	May 1973	March 1972
Federal	31	35	30	33	29	35	36	36	38	29	35	39
State Local	31	28	33	26	33	26	26	25	25	28	25	26
State	20	20	25	22	22	20	20	20	20	24	18	18
Don't Know	19	17	14	19	16	19	18	19	17	19	22	17

government were tied for first place at 31% each; state government received 20%, and 19% said they didn't know. (See table above.)

Since 1978, the percentages favoring federal government and local government have been flipping with each sector winning a plurality in alternate years; the percent choosing the federal government has ranged from 29% to 35%, while the percent choosing local government has ranged between 26% and 33%. State government, chosen by 20% of the respondents, is in its traditional third place—since 1975, with one exception, it has been chosen by 20% to 22%.

**State Responsibility to Make up
Cutbacks in Federal Financial Aid
to Local Governments**

Recognizing the ongoing debate about federal cutbacks in financial aid to local government, the 1983 ACIR poll asked for respondents' views on whether states should try to "make up" almost all, some, or none of the cutbacks. Forty-six percent of the respondents believed that state governments should try to make up "only some of the federal cutbacks in financial aid to local government." Higher income groups, those with some college and college graduates, and professional-managerial workers gave high levels of support (57% to 62%) to this view. The percentages choosing not to make up any of the cutbacks, and to make up almost all were about the same (16% and 18%), and 20% chose the "Don't Know" alternative. (Table 8)

On tough issues, most Americans often tend to avoid either extreme position and to gravitate towards the middle course. Responses to the cutback question clearly reflect that middle-of-the-road tendency

Attitudes Toward Political Representation

In 1983, the ACIR launched a study of how changes in the political party system affect federalism. To measure the extent of erosion of public support for the two major political parties, a new question was asked to determine whether citizens felt their interests were best represented by organized special interest groups (business, labor, environmental and civil rights groups) or by the two major political parties. Organized groups were chosen by 45%, and the two major political parties by 34%. Other political parties were selected by 3% of the sample, and 17% of the respondents said they didn't know. (Table 9)

Analysis of the responses indicates that as age increases, identification with the two major political parties increases: 41% of the over 35 age group chose the major political parties compared to the national total of 34%; only 25% of those under 35 chose the two major political parties. As education increases, identification with the two major political parties remains relatively constant (ranging between 32% and 39%), but the percentage choosing organized interest groups increases from 34% for those not completing high school to 57% for the college graduates. As income increases, the percentage of respondents choosing political parties increases—from 29% for the under \$15,000 group to 44% for the \$40,000 and over group.

Regional differences are also noteworthy with 52% of the Northeast region's residents choosing interest groups, considerably more than the 41% choosing them in the South and 43% in the North Central region. The two major political parties were chosen by 26% of the respondents in the Northeast, but by percentages ranging from 35% to 38% in the other three regions.

THE POLL

This report presents the findings of a personal interview research survey conducted among a probability sample of 1,517 men and women, 18 years of age or over, living in private households in the United States.

Interviewing for this survey was completed from April 29 through May 2, 1983, by members of the Gallup Personal Omnibus national interviewing staff. All interviews were conducted in the homes of respondents.

To ensure the representativeness of the sample, data were weighted to take into account demographic variables. Therefore, the results may be projected to the total adult civilian population, 18 years of age or over, living in the United States.

Introduction to Detailed Findings

The tables contained in this report present detailed findings of the various survey results. Percentages may not add to 100 because of rounding.

The following definitions are provided for some of the standard breakdowns by which the data are analyzed. Other breakdowns are self-explanatory.

Occupation refers to the occupation of the respondent. The types of positions included in each category are listed below. The fourth classification is retired persons.

Professional/Manager/Owner

Executives, Professionals, Technical and Kindred Workers, Managers, Officials, and Proprietors.

White Collar, Sales, Clerical

Clerical, Office and Secretarial Workers, and Sales Agents and Workers.

Blue Collar

Semi-skilled, Laborers, and Service workers: Craftsmen, Foremen, Kindred Workers, Maintenance Repairmen, Carpenters, Plumbers and Electricians; Operatives and Kindred Workers, Apprentices, and As-

sembly Line Workers; Housekeepers in Private Household, Institutional and Public; Police, Security Guards; Beauticians and Barbers.

Metro size groupings are determined by the U.S. Bureau of the Census population figures for the metropolitan area. Nonmetro areas are those not in a metropolitan area, with populations under 50,000. Central city areas have populations of 50,000 or more in a central city of a metropolitan area. Fringe areas have populations of 50,000 or more in metropolitan areas outside a central city.

The four *geographic regions* are defined as follows: Northeast—Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania; North Central—Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, Missouri, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas; South—Delaware, Maryland, District of Columbia, Virginia, West Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Kentucky, Tennessee, Alabama, Mississippi, Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, Texas; West—Montana, Idaho, Wyoming, Colorado, New Mexico, Arizona, Utah, Nevada, Washington, Oregon, California, Hawaii, Alaska.

Income groups respondents by 1983 total household income before taxes.

Sampling tolerances for the survey are ± 3 percentage points at the 95% level of confidence.

Further detail on the survey methods and sampling tolerances are available from ACIR.

Previous Classifications

Data for 1972-81 are presented in the *Appendix Tables, Detailed Results of 1981-72 Surveys* (p. 29). Descriptions of classifications used in these years may be found in the volumes for the relevant years.

Because major classification changes were made in 1982, tables for 1982 and 1983 are presented separately; they appear on the following pages.

**Detailed Results:
1983-82 Surveys**

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TABLE 1
1983-82*

From Which Level of Government Do You Feel You Get the Most for Your Money—Federal, State, or Local

(in percent)

	1983				1982			
	1. Federal	2. State	3. Local	4. Don't Know	1.	2.	3.	4.
Total public	31	20	31	19	35	20	28	17
Male	33	20	32	16	38	20	29	13
Female	29	20	31	21	33	19	28	20
Head of Household	30	19	32	19	36	18	28	18
Male Head	32	20	33	16	37	20	29	14
Female Head	28	19	32	22	34	17	28	21
Under 35 Years of Age	31	23	30	16	35	24	27	14
18-24	36	24	23	17	37	27	23	13
25-34	27	23	35	15	33	21	30	16
35-44	27	22	37	15	27	26	36	11
45-65	30	18	32	20	34	15	31	20
Over 65	37	11	26	25	46	11	19	24
High School Incomplete	37	18	20	26	44	13	22	21
High School Graduate	29	18	33	19	32	23	27	18
College Incomplete	30	23	36	11	30	24	31	15
College Graduate	23	23	44	10	30	19	43	8
Household Income								
Under \$15 K	37	16	24	24	42	15	21	22
15-24.9 K	26	24	34	16	37	20	30	13
\$25 K+	26	23	39	12	25	24	36	15
\$25-29.9 K	28	28	35	9	24 ^a	23 ^a	35 ^a	18 ^a
\$30-39.9 K	26	23	38	13	26 ^b	26 ^b	36 ^b	12 ^b
\$40 K+	26	20	42	12	—	—	—	—
Own	28	19	35	17	32	20	31	17
Rent	39	18	22	21	42	19	22	17
White	27	21	34	18	32	20	30	18
Nonwhite	51	12	16	21	57	13	19	11
Employed	27	21	37	16	30	23	32	15
Employed Female	27	20	36	18	27	25	31	17
Not Employed	35	18	25	22	38	17	26	19
Not Employed Female	31	19	27	23	37	16	27	20
Prof., Manager, Owner	24	21	44	11	28	17	43	12
White Collar, Sales, Clerical	32	19	33	16	29	34	24	13
Blue Collar	29	21	30	19	31	24	28	17
Retired	41	12	24	23	43	13	21	23
Married	29	21	33	18	33	19	32	16
Not Married	34	18	29	20	38	20	22	20
Household Size								
1-2 People	34	14	31	21	38	17	24	21
3-4 People	26	26	32	16	31	23	31	15
5+ People	32	20	31	18	37	20	31	12
Children in Household								
Children under 18	28	23	33	16	31	22	33	14
No children	33	17	30	20	38	18	24	20
Northeast	31	14	31	24	32	14	33	21
North-Central	27	20	38	15	33	24	24	19
South	34	20	28	18	39	18	26	17
West	30	26	28	16	35	21	31	13
Nonmetro	29	23	28	20	35	21	28	16
Metro—50,000 and over	—	—	—	—	35	19	28	18
Fringe	27	17	42	14	—	—	—	—
Central City	36	17	27	21	—	—	—	—

^a \$25-34.9 K

^b \$35 K+

* 1972-1981 data appear in Appendix Tables A-1, A-2.

Table 2
1983-82*

Which Do You Think Is the Worst Tax, That Is The Least Fair
(in percent)

	1983					1982				
	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.
	1. Federal Income Tax	2. State Income Tax	3. State Sales Tax	4. Local Property Tax	5. Don't Know	1. Federal Income Tax	2. State Income Tax	3. State Sales Tax	4. Local Property Tax	5. Don't Know
Total Public	35	11	13	26	15	36	11	14	30	9
Male-	35	12	14	27	13	36	12	16	29	7
Female	36	11	11	25	17	35	10	13	31	11
Head of Household	38	11	12	26	14	36	11	13	30	10
Male Head	37	11	13	27	12	37	12	14	29	8
Female Head	38	10	12	25	16	35	9	13	31	12
Under 35 Years of Age	33	15	13	25	14	39	11	15	29	6
18-24	26	14	14	27	19	36	13	18	27	6
25-34	40	16	12	23	11	41	10	12	30	7
35-44	38	10	16	25	11	31	12	16	33	8
45-65	40	10	11	26	13	36	12	11	30	11
Over 65	27	6	11	32	23	31	5	17	33	14
High School Incomplete	29	9	14	27	22	28	8	16	32	16
High School Graduate	38	12	12	27	12	38	12	13	32	5
College Incomplete	36	14	14	22	14	36	13	17	25	9
College Graduate	41	13	10	27	9	45	8	12	29	6
Household Income										
Under \$15 K	30	10	14	25	21	30	9	17	32	12
15-24.9 K	39	12	12	27	10	36	12	14	31	7
\$25 K+	42	13	11	28	7	41	12	11	30	6
\$25-29.9 K	37	9	14	30	10	39 ^a	12 ^a	12 ^a	31 ^a	6 ^a
\$30-39.9 K	39	19	9	27	6	44 ^b	11 ^b	10 ^b	28 ^b	7 ^b
\$40 K+	48	10	11	26	6	—	—	—	—	—
Own	37	11	11	29	11	37	9	13	33	8
Rent	30	13	16	19	22	33	13	17	24	13
White	37	11	12	27	14	36	11	15	29	9
Nonwhite	28	15	16	21	20	33	11	11	34	11
Employed	38	13	12	27	11	38	12	13	30	7
Employed Female	39	13	9	28	10	36	11	13	32	8
Not Employed	32	10	13	26	19	35	9	15	30	11
Not Employed Female	33	10	12	24	21	35	8	15	31	11
Prof., Manager, Owner	40	14	11	30	5	48	13	14	20	5
White Collar, Sales, Clerical	33	16	13	26	13	37	15	10	30	8
Blue Collar	36	11	12	27	13	32	11	12	36	9
Retired	28	8	14	30	21	29	8	18	32	13
Married	39	11	13	26	11	39	10	12	31	8
Not Married	29	12	12	26	21	29	11	18	30	12
Household										
1-2 People	35	11	12	25	17	35	11	14	29	11
3-4 People	39	13	11	28	11	38	9	15	30	8
5+ People	30	11	17	26	17	32	13	14	33	8
Children in Household										
Children under 18	35	13	14	27	12	36	9	15	31	9
No Children	35	10	12	25	17	35	11	14	30	10
Northeast	29	17	15	23	16	37	11	16	24	12
North-Central	34	15	10	29	12	32	11	12	37	8
South	36	6	12	28	17	38	10	10	33	9
West	43	8	14	21	14	34	12	24	22	8
Nonmetro	39	8	12	27	14	34	13	14	29	10
Metro—50,000 and Over	—	—	—	—	—	36	9	15	31	9
Fringe	33	13	13	30	11	—	—	—	—	—
Central City	32	14	13	22	19	—	—	—	—	—

^a \$25-34.9 K

^b \$35 K+

* 1972-81 data appear in Appendix Tables F-1, F-2.

TABLE 3
1983

If the Federal Government Had To Raise Taxes Substantially,
Which Would Be a Better Way To Do It?

(in percent)

	Increasing Individual Income Taxes	A New National Sales Tax on All Purchases Other Than Food	Don't Know
Total Public	24	52	25
Male	25	53	22
Female	23	51	27
Head of Household	24	51	25
Male Head	27	52	22
Female Head	22	51	27
Under 35 Years of Age	26	52	22
18-24	24	56	20
25-34	27	49	24
35-44	22	56	23
45-65	24	52	24
Over 65	21	44	35
High School Incomplete	19	47	35
High School Graduate	22	55	23
College Incomplete	26	59	15
College Graduate	37	46	17
Household Income			
Under \$15K	22	47	32
\$15-24.9K	23	54	23
\$25K+	28	58	15
\$25-29.9K	29	55	16
\$30-39.9K	28	60	12
\$40K+	26	58	17
Own	23	54	22
Rent	25	45	30
White	25	52	23
Nonwhite	16	49	36
Employed	27	53	20
Employed Female	30	49	21
Not Employed	20	50	30
Not Employed Female	18	52	30
Prof, Manager, Owner	29	53	18
White Collar, Sales, Clerical	28	52	20
Blue Collar	20	55	25
Retired	27	44	30
Married	25	54	22
Not Married	23	48	29
Household			
1-2 People	25	50	26
3-4 People	25	53	22
5+ People	21	54	26
Children in Household			
Children under 18	22	54	24
No Children	25	50	25
Northeast	31	40	29
North-Central	21	58	21
South	21	55	24
West	24	52	25
Nonmetro	21	57	22
Metro—50,000 and Over			
Fringe	27	50	23
Central City	25	46	30

TABLE 4
1983
If the Federal Income Tax Collections Must Be Increased,
Which Way Is the Best?

(in percent)

1. Raise individual income tax rates
2. Cut back on current tax exemptions such as social security, pensions, interest on municipal bonds, etc.
3. Cut back on all itemized deductions, such as those for state and local taxes, interest paid on mortgages and consumer loans, and charitable contributions
4. Don't know

	1.	2.	3.	4.
Total Public	21	14	39	26
Male	23	14	40	23
Female	19	14	38	29
Head of Household	22	14	38	26
Male Head	25	14	39	22
Female Head	20	13	38	30
Under 35 Years of Age	20	19	40	22
18-24	16	19	47	18
25-34	23	18	35	25
35-44	24	13	41	22
45-65	24	10	41	26
Over 65	16	12	32	40
High School Incomplete	16	11	37	36
High School Graduate	23	13	40	25
College Incomplete	19	20	46	15
College Graduate	30	17	35	18
Household Income				
Under \$15K	19	10	38	33
\$15-24.9K	22	18	40	21
\$25K+	23	17	42	18
\$25-29.9K	25	18	43	14
\$30-39.9K	23	21	39	18
\$40K+	21	13	45	21
Own	22	15	40	24
Rent	20	13	38	29
White	22	14	40	24
Nonwhite	15	13	33	38
Employed	24	16	40	20
Employed Female	22	15	41	22
Not Employed	18	12	38	31
Not Employed Female	17	14	36	33
Prof, Manager, Owner	24	23	36	17
White Collar, Sales, Clerical	21	16	47	16
Blue Collar	22	10	43	25
Retired	24	10	31	36
Married	23	14	40	23
Not Married	17	15	37	31
Household				
1-2 People	23	12	37	28
3-4 People	20	16	39	25
5+ People	18	15	44	23
Children in Household				
Children under 18	19	15	40	25
No children	22	13	38	27
Northeast	27	9	35	29
North-Central	20	16	40	24
South	19	16	39	26
West	18	15	44	23
Nonmetro	18	15	39	27
Metro—50,000 and Over				
Fringe	29	11	41	18
Central City	18	14	37	30

TABLE 5
1983

Suppose Your State Government Must Raise Taxes Substantially,
Which Would Be a Better Way To Do It?

(in percent)

	State Individual Income Tax	State Sales Tax	Don't Know
Total Public	23	57	20
Male	24	59	17
Female	22	56	23
Head of Household	22	58	20
Male Head	24	60	16
Female Head	21	56	24
Under 35 Years of Age	25	59	17
18-24	25	59	16
25-34	24	59	17
35-44	22	58	20
45-65	23	58	19
Over 65	19	52	30
High School Incomplete	20	47	33
High School Graduate	21	60	19
College Incomplete	25	66	10
College Graduate	30	63	7
Household Income			
Under \$15K	23	50	28
\$15-24.9 K	23	61	16
\$25K+	23	67	10
\$25-29.9K	23	65	12
\$30-39.9K	22	67	11
\$40 K+	23	69	8
Own	22	62	16
Rent	24	47	29
White	23	59	18
Nonwhite	20	48	32
Employed	25	61	14
Employed Female	30	57	14
Not Employed	20	54	26
Not Employed Female	15	56	29
Prof. Manager, Owner	31	61	8
White Collar, Sales, Clerical	27	61	13
Blue Collar	23	57	20
Retired	20	54	26
Married	21	62	17
Not Married	26	50	25
Household			
1-2 People	27	53	20
3-4 People	20	62	19
5+ People	18	59	23
Children in Household			
Children under 18	18	62	21
No children	27	54	20
Northeast	30	48	22
North-Central	23	60	17
South	17	61	22
West	22	60	18
Nonmetro	19	62	19
Metro—50,000 and Over			
Fringe	29	56	15
Central City	22	53	25

TABLE 6
1983

Suppose Your Local Government Must Raise More Revenue,
The Better Way To Do This Would Be—

(in percent)

	Local Income Tax	Local Sales Tax	Local Property Tax	Don't Know
Total Public	12	45	19	24
Male	12	46	22	20
Female	12	44	17	28
Head of Household	12	45	20	23
Male Head	12	47	23	19
Female Head	12	44	17	27
Under 35 Years of Age	12	41	25	22
18-24	13	43	22	22
25-34	11	40	27	22
35-44	14	44	21	21
45-65	11	52	14	23
Over 65	12	38	15	35
High School Incomplete	14	38	13	35
High School Graduate	10	45	20	25
College Incomplete	9	50	28	13
College Graduate	15	54	22	10
Household Income				
Under \$15K	11	38	18	33
\$15-24.9K	13	46	22	19
\$25K+	11	55	20	14
\$25-29.9K	14	43	25	18
\$30-39.9K	11	56	18	15
\$40K+	9	64	18	9
Own	12	51	16	22
Rent	11	32	28	29
White	13	46	20	22
Nonwhite	8	41	16	35
Employed	12	46	23	19
Employed Female	14	44	21	21
Not Employed	12	43	16	29
Not Employed Female	11	43	15	32
Prof, Manager, Owner	14	48	27	12
White Collar, Sales, Clerical	13	45	22	21
Blue Collar	11	43	22	24
Retired	13	44	14	29
Married	12	48	18	22
Not Married	12	39	22	28
Household				
1-2 People	12	44	20	24
3-4 People	11	46	20	23
5+ People	12	45	17	26
Children in Household				
Children under 18	11	46	20	23
No children	12	44	19	25
Northeast	17	33	21	29
North-Central	12	48	20	20
South	9	49	18	23
West	10	48	17	25
Nonmetro	10	48	20	23
Metro—50,000 and Over				
Fringe	13	43	23	21
Central City	13	42	16	28

TABLE 7
1983

Which One of the Changes Would Be the Single Most Important Change That Would Make the Nation's Tax System More Fair?

(in percent)

- | | |
|--|----------------------|
| 1. Make the upper income taxpayers pay more | 5. None of the above |
| 2. Reduce taxes on lower income taxpayers | 6. Don't know |
| 3. Make business firms pay more even if it reduces the number of jobs | |
| 4. Leave the tax system alone—it is about as fair as you are ever going to get | |

	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.
Total Public	49	13	6	16	7	9
Male	50	14	7	15	7	7
Female	48	12	6	17	6	11
Head of Household	49	13	6	16	7	9
Male Head	51	14	6	15	8	6
Female Head	48	12	6	17	7	11
Under 35 Years of Age	46	15	8	16	6	10
18-24	38	17	11	18	5	11
25-34	53	13	5	14	7	8
35-44	54	12	6	13	6	9
45-65	52	12	6	15	8	6
Over 65	41	14	4	22	5	14
High School Incomplete	42	14	6	20	3	16
High School Graduate	52	14	6	15	6	7
College Incomplete	47	14	10	16	10	4
College Graduate	57	8	5	13	12	5
Household Income						
Under \$15K	45	15	6	16	5	13
\$15-24.9K	52	14	6	16	5	6
\$25K +	52	11	7	15	10	4
\$25-29.9K	57	12	6	11	8	5
\$30-39.9K	58	11	7	16	6	3
\$40K +	43	11	7	17	17	5
Own	52	12	7	15	7	7
Rent	43	15	6	17	5	14
White	49	13	6	17	7	8
Nonwhite	46	17	6	12	3	16
Employed	50	15	6	15	8	6
Employed Female	51	14	7	16	7	5
Not Employed	47	12	7	17	5	11
Not Employed Female	46	11	6	17	6	14
Prof, Manager, Owner	54	11	5	15	11	4
White Collar, Sales, Clerical	52	11	7	13	6	10
Blue Collar	49	16	8	16	5	6
Retired	48	15	3	20	6	8
Married	51	12	6	17	7	7
Not Married	45	15	8	14	6	13
Household						
1-2 People	48	13	6	18	6	10
3-4 People	50	15	6	16	8	6
5+ People	49	9	9	13	7	14
Children in Household						
Children under 18	48	13	8	16	6	9
No children	49	13	5	16	7	9
Northeast	47	14	6	13	5	15
North-Central	56	14	5	15	5	5
South	46	12	8	18	5	12
West	45	13	6	18	15	4
Nonmetro	49	14	6	18	6	7
Metro—50,00 and Over						
Fringe	53	11	7	15	7	7
Central City	45	13	7	14	8	13

TABLE 8
1983

With the Cutbacks in Federal Financial Aid to Local Governments, There Is a Debate As To What the States Should Do. Which Statement Comes Closest To Your View?

(in percent)

1. State governments should not try to make up for any of the federal cutbacks in financial aid to local governments
2. State governments should try to make up for only some of the federal cutbacks in financial aid to local governments
3. State governments should try to make up for almost all of the federal cutbacks in financial aid to local governments
4. Don't know

	1.	2.	3.	4.
Total Public	18	46	16	20
Male	21	47	16	16
Female	16	45	16	23
Head of Household	20	45	15	21
Male Head	23	47	14	16
Female Head	17	44	15	24
Under 35 Years of Age	15	51	18	16
18-24	16	49	21	14
25-34	15	52	15	18
35-44	22	49	12	17
45-65	21	45	15	19
Over 65	16	32	16	35
High School Incomplete	17	30	19	34
High School Graduate	21	47	15	18
College Incomplete	16	59	17	8
College Graduate	17	62	13	8
Household Income				
Under \$15K	17	36	20	28
\$15-24.9K	17	51	16	17
\$25K+	22	59	11	9
\$25-29.9K	27	53	10	11
\$30-39.9K	15	61	14	10
\$40K+	24	61	10	6
Own	20	48	14	18
Rent	16	40	21	24
White	20	48	15	17
Nonwhite	10	36	21	33
Employed	22	50	15	14
Employed Female	19	50	15	16
Not Employed	15	42	17	25
Not Employed Female	14	42	16	28
Prof, Manager, Owner	23	57	14	7
White Collar, Sales, Clerical	16	54	12	18
Blue Collar	21	45	17	18
Retired	18	39	16	28
Married	21	49	14	17
Not Married	14	41	20	25
Household				
1-2 People	18	43	17	22
3-4 People	22	48	14	17
5+ People	14	48	17	22
Children in Household				
Children under 18	18	47	15	20
No children	19	45	17	20
Northeast	13	48	17	21
North-Central	23	45	13	18
South	16	42	19	23
West	22	51	12	15
Nonmetro	20	46	13	21
Metro—50,000 and Over				
Fringe	18	51	17	15
Central City	17	42	19	22

TABLE 9
1983

**In General, Which One of the Kinds of Organizations Listed Below
Do You Feel Best Represents the Political Interests of People Like You?**

(in percent)

1. Organized groups concerned with specific issues such as business, labor, environmental and civil rights groups
2. The two major political parties—the Democrats and the Republicans
3. Other political parties
4. Don't know

	1.	2.	3.	4.
Total Public	45	34	3	17
Male	45	38	3	14
Female	45	32	3	20
Head of Household	45	36	3	17
Male Head	45	39	3	13
Female Head	44	33	2	21
Under 35 Years of Age	56	25	5	15
18-24	56	21	5	17
25-34	56	27	4	13
35-44	44	41	3	12
45-65	41	40	2	17
Over 65	27	42	2	29
High School Incomplete	34	34	4	29
High School Graduate	47	34	3	16
College Incomplete	54	39	2	6
College Graduate	57	32	2	9
Household Income				
Under \$15K	40	29	4	27
\$15-24.9K	47	40	2	11
\$25K+	52	38	2	9
\$25-29.9K	54	36	2	8
\$30.39.9K	57	33	2	8
\$40K+	45	44	2	10
Own	43	39	2	16
Rent	51	23	4	22
White	45	36	3	16
Nonwhite	45	27	3	25
Employed	51	34	4	12
Employed Female	55	29	4	12
Not Employed	41	35	3	21
Not Employed Female	40	34	2	24
Prof, Manager, Owner	51	39	3	7
White Collar, Sales, Clerical	53	33	2	12
Blue Collar	51	29	3	16
Retired	34	39	2	24
Married	46	38	3	14
Not Married	45	29	4	23
Household				
1-2 People	43	35	3	19
3-4 People	47	37	2	14
5+ People	46	29	5	21
Children in Household				
Children under 18	48	32	4	16
No Children	43	36	3	18
Northeast	52	26	2	21
North-Central	43	38	3	15
South	41	37	4	19
West	48	35	3	14
Nonmetro	40	38	3	19
Metro—50,000 and Over				
Fringe	51	36	3	10
Central City	48	29	3	21

TABLE 10
1982

**Which of These Statements Comes Closest to Your View
About Government Power Today?**

(in percent)

1. Federal government has too much power.
2. Federal government is using about the right amount of power for meeting today's needs.
3. Federal government should use its powers more vigorously to promote the well being of all segments of the people.

4. No Opinion.	1.	2.	3.	4.
Total Public*	38	18	30	14
Male	38	20	32	10
Female	39	16	29	16
Head of Household	39	17	30	14
Male Head	39	21	30	10
Female Head	39	14	29	18
Under 35 Years of Age	38	17	33	12
18-24	32	19	35	14
25-34	43	15	31	11
35-44	42	17	28	13
45-65	41	18	30	11
Over 65	29	20	29	22
High School Incomplete	28	16	35	21
High School Graduate	41	18	28	13
College Incomplete	42	17	30	11
College Graduate	47	22	27	4
Household Income				
Under \$15K	30	16	36	18
15-24.9K	36	21	30	13
25K+	49	18	24	9
25-34.9K	47	18	26	9
35K+	51	18	22	9
Own	41	18	29	12
Rent	32	16	35	17
White	41	18	28	13
Nonwhite	21	15	45	19
Employed	39	19	31	11
Employed Female	40	16	29	15
Not Employed	39	16	31	14
Not Employed Female	39	15	32	14
Prof, Manager, Owner	51	17	26	6
White Collar, Sales, Clerical	37	26	28	9
Blue Collar	34	16	34	16
Retired	33	17	30	20
Married	42	17	28	13
Not Married	31	19	34	16
Household				
1-2 People	37	19	30	14
3-4 People	37	17	30	16
5+ People	44	13	34	9
No Children in Household	35	20	31	14
Children Under 12	42	15	28	15
Children 12-17	41	14	35	10
Northeast	42	18	30	10
North-Central	36	21	32	11
South	35	16	30	19
West	41	16	29	14
Nonmetro	37	16	31	16
Metro - 50,000-999,999	41	16	29	14
1,000,000 and Over	37	20	32	11

*1978 data appear in Appendix Table L.

TABLE 11
1982

**Considering All Government Services on the One Hand and Taxes on the Other,
Which of the Following Statements Comes Closest to Your View?**

(in percent)

	1. Decrease services and taxes.	2. Keep taxes and services about where they are.	3. Increase services and raise taxes.	4. No Opinion
Total Public*	36	42	8	14
Male	37	40	8	15
Female	34	43	9	14
Head of Household	37	41	8	14
Male Head	40	40	7	13
Female Head	34	43	9	14
Under 35 Years of Age	33	43	10	14
18-24	31	42	9	18
25-34	34	43	11	12
35-44	37	46	8	9
45-65	37	42	8	13
Over 65	39	34	5	22
High School Incomplete	34	41	7	18
High School Graduate	35	43	8	14
College Incomplete	34	41	9	16
College Graduate	44	41	10	5
Household Income				
Under \$15K	33	42	8	17
15-24.9K	36	44	10	10
25K+	39	41	7	13
25-34.9K	34	43	8	15
35K+	44	39	6	11
Own	38	43	6	13
Rent	32	39	13	16
White	37	41	8	14
Nonwhite	28	45	11	16
Employed	38	41	9	12
Employed Female	34	45	8	13
Not Employed	31	44	9	16
Not Employed Female	32	43	11	14
Prof, Manager, Owner	43	41	11	5
White Collar, Sales, Clerical	36	39	8	17
Blue Collar	36	43	7	14
Retired	38	38	5	19
Married	38	43	7	12
Not Married	31	39	10	20
Household				
1-2 People	37	40	7	16
3-4 People	35	42	9	14
5+ People	36	44	9	11
No Children in Household	36	41	8	15
Children Under 12	34	43	8	15
Children 12-17	37	42	10	11
Northeast	36	42	7	15
North-Central	34	42	7	17
South	36	43	8	13
West	37	38	11	14
Nonmetro	37	43	7	13
Metro—50,000-999,999	35	39	9	17
1,000,000 and Over	35	42	9	14

*1975-1980 data appears in Appendix Table B.

TABLE 12-1
1982

Federal grant programs to state and local governments can serve a number of different national goals. But, when the federal budget is tight, it is necessary to make choices among them. Please rate each of these Federal aid programs. If you believe the program is totally unnecessary, you would give it a minus 5; if you believe the program is totally necessary, you would give it a plus 5. You may pick ratings in between the minus 5 and the plus 5. If you have no opinion, or don't know, use the "zero."

1. Federal grant programs that provide special assistance to poor states—that is, states which are below average in ability to raise revenues.

(in percent)

	Totally Unnecessary			No Opinion					Totally Necessary		
	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5
Total Public*	8	1	4	4	3	13	10	16	17	5	19
Male	9	1	4	5	3	9	11	17	18	5	18
Female	7	2	4	3	3	15	9	15	17	5	20
Head of Household	8	1	5	4	3	13	10	15	17	5	19
Male Head	10	1	5	5	3	9	11	14	18	5	19
Female Head	7	1	5	3	3	16	9	15	17	5	19
Under 35 Years of Age	5	2	3	2	3	8	10	21	21	6	19
18-24	1	1	3	1	5	6	8	24	24	7	20
25-34	8	2	3	3	2	10	12	19	18	5	18
35-44	9	2	7	5	5	11	11	14	13	7	16
45-65	9	2	5	5	2	14	13	12	16	4	18
Over 65	11	1	4	3	2	21	5	13	14	3	23
High School Incomplete	9	*	2	2	3	20	8	15	15	2	24
High School Graduate	7	1	5	3	2	11	11	16	18	7	19
College Incomplete	8	3	4	5	4	9	9	14	21	6	17
College Graduate	7	3	6	7	4	5	15	21	16	5	11
Household Income											
Under \$15K	8	1	3	2	3	16	7	15	16	4	25
15-24.9K	6	1	5	4	3	13	13	12	16	6	21
25K+	8	3	5	4	3	8	12	21	20	4	12
25-34.9K	7	2	4	4	3	6	12	23	19	6	14
35K+	9	3	6	4	3	9	11	20	21	3	11

Own	9	2	5	4	3	14	11	16	15	4	17
Rent	6	*	3	2	3	9	8	16	22	7	24
White	8	2	5	4	3	12	11	16	18	5	16
Nonwhite	4	0	3	1	0	13	6	14	15	7	37
Employed	7	1	5	4	3	10	12	16	19	5	18
Employed Female	5	1	5	2	4	14	10	14	19	7	19
Not Employed	8	2	4	3	3	12	8	18	16	6	20
Not Employed Female	8	2	4	4	3	14	9	17	16	4	19
Prof, Manager, Owner	9	2	4	9	3	5	11	15	23	4	15
White Collar, Sales, Clerical	5	2	7	2	6	9	10	19	20	5	15
Blue Collar	6	1	4	3	2	13	12	17	16	5	21
Retired	11	1	3	3	2	21	8	12	16	2	21
Married	9	2	5	5	3	12	10	16	17	5	16
Not Married	5	1	3	2	3	14	10	15	18	5	24
Household											
1-2 People	9	1	3	4	4	16	8	14	17	5	19
3-4 People	7	2	5	3	3	9	12	16	19	5	19
5+ People	8	1	4	5	1	11	11	23	14	3	19
No Children in Household	8	1	3	4	3	14	9	14	19	5	20
Children Under 12	7	1	5	4	3	11	11	18	16	4	20
Children 12-17	8	2	7	4	3	9	11	19	13	6	18
Northeast	3	*	3	3	5	11	11	20	22	6	16
North-Central	6	2	5	4	3	14	11	16	16	4	19
South	10	1	3	4	3	16	9	14	14	6	20
West	12	2	6	5	0	6	10	15	19	4	21
Nonmetro	11	1	2	4	2	17	10	14	15	4	20
Metro — 50,000-999,999	7	2	5	3	2	11	9	17	17	5	22
1,000,000 and Over	6	2	5	5	4	9	12	16	20	5	16
* Less than one-half percent.											

TABLE 12-2
1982

Federal grant programs to state and local governments can serve a number of different national goals. But, when the federal budget is tight, it is necessary to make choices among them. Please rate each of these Federal aid programs. If you believe the program is totally unnecessary, you would give it a minus 5; if you believe the program is totally necessary, you would give it a plus 5. You may pick ratings in between the minus 5 and the plus 5. If you have no opinion, or don't know, use the "zero."

2. Federal grant programs that provide special assistance to poor cities experiencing economic and financial difficulties.

(in percent)

	Totally Unnecessary		No Opinion						Totally Necessary		
	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5
Total Public*	10	2	5	4	3	11	12	13	15	7	18
Male	12	3	5	4	3	10	12	14	16	5	16
Female	8	2	5	5	3	12	12	12	13	9	19
Head of Household	11	3	4	4	3	11	12	13	14	7	18
Male Head	14	3	5	4	2	9	12	13	16	5	17
Female Head	9	2	4	5	3	13	11	12	13	9	19
Under 35 Years of Age	5	2	3	4	4	10	12	16	16	10	19
18-24	2	1	2	3	5	7	11	19	19	10	21
25-34	8	2	4	5	4	12	12	14	13	10	16
35-44	10	2	8	5	3	10	13	8	17	7	17
45-65	12	3	5	5	1	10	13	12	14	7	18
Over 65	17	4	2	3	4	19	12	9	9	3	18
High School Incomplete	8	2	3	*	2	17	11	11	14	5	27
High School Graduate	11	2	5	5	3	9	12	14	13	10	16
College Incomplete	8	4	7	6	3	12	12	15	14	8	11
College Graduate	14	4	5	8	6	4	13	10	19	5	12
Household Income											
Under \$15K	10	2	2	2	3	14	9	12	12	8	26
15-24.9K	9	1	6	4	3	12	10	9	17	11	18
25K+	10	3	7	6	3	8	17	17	15	4	10
25-34.9K	11	4	6	3	3	9	20	15	14	4	11
35K+	10	3	7	9	3	7	13	19	15	5	9

Own	12	2	5	5	3	13	13	12	14	6	15
Rent	5	2	3	3	3	8	10	15	16	10	25
White	11	3	5	5	3	11	13	13	14	7	15
Nonwhite	3	1	0	0	*	15	5	9	21	8	38
Employed	9	2	6	4	2	10	12	14	17	8	16
Employed Female	7	2	6	4	3	9	14	14	14	10	17
Not Employed	6	2	3	5	4	12	11	12	15	9	21
Not Employed Female	6	2	3	6	4	13	10	11	15	10	20
Prof, Manager, Owner	13	2	7	8	3	6	14	11	20	4	12
White Collar, Sales, Clerical	9	3	7	5	2	6	12	18	13	12	13
Blue Collar	8	2	4	2	2	13	10	15	16	8	20
Retired	18	4	4	2	4	15	14	10	8	3	18
Married	12	2	5	5	3	11	12	13	15	7	15
Not Married	6	3	3	3	3	12	11	13	14	8	24
Household											
1-2 People	12	3	4	3	4	12	12	12	13	7	18
3-4 People	8	2	5	5	3	10	14	13	16	7	17
5+ People	9	1	6	5	2	11	9	14	15	9	19
No Children in Household	10	3	3	3	3	12	12	13	16	7	18
Children Under 12	7	1	5	5	3	10	11	14	15	8	21
Children 12-17	11	2	8	6	2	10	12	11	10	8	20
Northeast	5	2	5	3	4	8	11	20	16	10	16
North-Central	9	2	6	6	3	10	11	12	16	8	17
South	13	2	3	4	3	17	12	10	13	5	18
West	11	4	5	4	2	7	13	12	14	8	20
Nonmetro	10	2	3	4	4	14	12	11	14	7	19
Metro—50,000-999,999	12	3	6	4	3	11	11	11	14	4	21
1,000,000 and Over	8	2	5	4	3	9	12	16	16	10	15
* Less than one-half percent.											

A COMMISSION SURVEY

1983

**CHANGING
PUBLIC ATTITUDES
ON GOVERNMENTS
AND TAXES**

**Advisory Commission on
Intergovernmental Relations**
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20575 • 1983



S-12

Foreword

This publication presents the 12th annual survey of public attitudes toward government and taxes conducted for the Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations (ACIR). The first 11 were conducted by the Opinion Research Corporation of Princeton, NJ, on their ORC Caravan, a national personal interview service. This year the ACIR was obliged to change pollsters when ORC decided to discontinue its personal interview surveys. ACIR staff believed that using a different survey methodology would destroy comparability with prior survey results.

The Gallup Organization was chosen competitively to conduct the 1983 survey using the Gallup Personal Omnibus. Every effort was made to ensure comparability with the previous surveys by duplicating the methods and analysis of prior years. All of our tests and checks indicate that comparability has been maintained.

This year ACIR asked nine questions, eight on government revenues and spending and one on public attitudes toward political parties and interest groups. This publication presents both the current results and the cumulative record.

Susannah E. Calkins, senior analyst in the Taxation and Finance section, prepared this study. Many members of the ACIR staff participated in developing the questions and reviewing the results. Typing assistance was provided by Ruth Phillips and Arlene Preston.

All interpretations of the data are those of the ACIR staff.

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The 1983 Survey

HIGHLIGHTS

Sales Taxes are Favored if More Revenues are Needed

When additional tax revenues are needed, the public views higher sales taxes as the least objectionable way to collect them, according to the 12th annual poll of public opinion conducted for the Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations:

- At the national level, respondents were asked to choose between higher individual income tax rates and a new national sales tax on all purchases other than food. The 52% who preferred a sales tax was more than double the 24% who endorsed an increase in income tax rates. The remaining 25% said they didn't know. (Table 3)
- At the state level, respondents were asked to choose between obtaining more state revenues from a state individual income tax or a state sales tax. Again, support for a sales tax at 57% was two and a half times the 23% preferring a state income tax. Respondents choosing "Don't know" amounted to 20%. (Table 5)
- At the local level, the range of alternatives was larger with a choice among a local income tax, the local sales tax, and a local property tax. Here, too, the clear preference was for the local sales tax with 45% choosing it, 19% choosing the local property tax, and 12% choosing a local income tax. Those choosing "Don't know" amounted to 24%. (Table 6)

As might be expected, respondents tend to

vote their pocketbook interests. High levels of support for the sales tax at all levels of government came from the upper income groups; a lower-than-average level of support for sales taxes was found among lower income groups.

When compared to the results of earlier ACIR polls, the state sales tax is increasing its popularity over its major competitor, the state income tax. In 1972 and 1976, the state sales tax popularity lead was 21 and 20 percentage points respectively. In 1983, the sales tax margin over the state income tax had increased to 34 points. (Table D)

High public acceptance of the sales tax as a revenue source was borne out by responses to another 1983 question: which tax was the worst tax—that is, the least fair? (Table 2) Far more respondents (35% and 26%) chose the federal income and the local property tax as the least fair than the 13% selecting the state sales tax. (See table below.)

Over the past three years, answers to this question have been remarkably consistent with the only change being a slow decline in the percentage of those who chose the local property tax as the worst tax—from 33% in 1981 to 26% in 1983, close to the figures for 1979 and 1980.

The growing preference for sales taxes might be attributed in large part to the growing burden of payroll taxes (income taxes and social security), the perceived inequities in the present income tax, and the long-standing public resistance to more intensive use of the property tax. Support for sales taxes can also be attributed to the fact that they are paid frequently and in small amounts. Moreover, many taxpayers like the idea

Which Do You Think is the Worst Tax— That is, the Least Fair?

	May 1983	May 1982	Sept. 1981	May 1980	May 1979	May 1978	May 1977	May 1975	April 1974	May 1973	March 1972
Federal Income Tax	35	36	36	36	37	30	28	28	30	30	19
State Income Tax	11	11	9	10	8	11	11	11	10	10	13
State Sales Tax	13	14	14	19	15	18	17	23	20	20	13
Local Property Tax	26	30	33	25	27	32	33	29	28	31	45
Don't Know	15	9	9	10	13	10	11	10	14	11	11

Suppose your federal, state, and local government must raise taxes, which way would be a better way to do it?

Region	Income Tax			Sales Tax		
	Federal	State	Local	Federal	State	Local
All United States	24	23	12	52	57	45
Northeast	31	30	17	40	48	33
North Central	21	23	12	58	60	48
South	21	17	9	55	61	49
West	24	22	10	52	60	48

Note: Responses other than income and sales taxes not included.
Source: Tables 3, 5, and 6.

that they can control somewhat the size of their payments by saving rather than consuming and that all citizens are paying something.

Compared to other industrial countries, the United States makes below average use of consumer-type levies. Value-added taxes are heavily relied upon by most European countries.

Growing public support for using the sales tax at all three levels of government drives another final nail into the coffin of tax separation—a now obsolete doctrine that staked out the income tax field as the predominant preserve of the federal government, the sales tax as the province of the states, and the property tax as the domain of local governments—only the latter remains true.

Regional Patterns in Tax Preferences

For the most part, interregional variations in attitudinal patterns reflect the current regional tax structure. The Northeast, which leans rather heavily on the state income tax, is well above the national average in its support for the income tax as the instrument of choice for raising additional revenue at all three levels of government. (See table above.)

Reforming the Nation's Tax System

Questions about the best options for the tax increases at the various levels of government were followed with a "reform" question—What would be the most important single change for making the nation's tax system more fair? "Make upper income taxpayers pay more" was the choice of 49%; only 13% chose "reduce taxes on lower income taxpayers"; and 6% chose "make

business firms pay more, even if it reduces the number of jobs." (Table 7) The second largest percentage opted for no change: 16% chose "leave the tax system alone—it is about as fair as you are ever going to get."

Judging from the "Don't Know" responses, the American public has fewer doubts about the ills of the present tax system and how to cure them than it has about how to raise additional revenue. About 9% of the respondents replied "Don't Know" when asked to give their views on tax reform. The "Don't Know" response rate ranged between 20% and 25% when the respondents were asked which tax they would like if additional revenue had to be raised by any of the three levels of government.

Groups with above average "Don't Know" responses tended to be those with lower incomes, lower educational levels, nonwhites, and persons over 65 years of age. The large percentages of "Don't know" responses this year show a sharp increase from the 10-16% ranges found for comparable questions in 1972, 1976, and 1981. The increase may reflect growing public indifference, inability or reluctance to make judgments concerning details of an increasingly complex tax system, or the fact that public debate has not focused on the choice of a new tax instrument.

Rating Governments

In each of the 12 years the ACIR has conducted the public opinion poll (Table 1), respondents have been asked to choose the level of government from which they get the most for their money. In 1983, the federal government and local

**From Which Level of Government Do You Feel You Get the Most
For Your Money—Federal, State, or Local?**

	Percent of U.S. Public											
	May 1983	May 1982	Sept. 1981	May 1980	May 1979	May 1978	May 1977	March 1976	May 1975	April 1974	May 1973	March 1972
Federal	31	35	30	33	29	35	36	36	38	29	35	39
State Local	31	28	33	26	33	26	26	25	25	28	25	26
State	20	20	25	22	22	20	20	20	20	24	18	18
Don't Know	19	17	14	19	16	19	18	19	17	19	22	17

government were tied for first place at 31% each; state government received 20%, and 19% said they didn't know. (See table above.)

Since 1978, the percentages favoring federal government and local government have been flip-flopping with each sector winning a plurality in alternate years; the percent choosing the federal government has ranged from 29% to 35%, while the percent choosing local government has ranged between 26% and 33%. State government, chosen by 20% of the respondents, is in its traditional third place—since 1975, with one exception, it has been chosen by 20% to 22%.

**State Responsibility to Make up
Cutbacks in Federal Financial Aid
to Local Governments**

Recognizing the ongoing debate about federal cutbacks in financial aid to local government, the 1983 ACIR poll asked for respondents' views on whether states should try to "make up" almost all, some, or none of the cutbacks. Forty-six percent of the respondents believed that state governments should try to make up "only some of the federal cutbacks in financial aid to local government." Higher income groups, those with some college and college graduates, and professional-managerial workers gave high levels of support (57% to 62%) to this view. The percentages choosing not to make up any of the cutbacks, and to make up almost all were about the same (16% and 18%), and 20% chose the "Don't Know" alternative. (Table 8)

On tough issues, most Americans often tend to avoid either extreme position and to gravitate towards the middle course. Responses to the cutback question clearly reflect that middle-of-the-road tendency

Attitudes Toward Political Representation

In 1983, the ACIR launched a study of how changes in the political party system affect federalism. To measure the extent of erosion of public support for the two major political parties, a new question was asked to determine whether citizens felt their interests were best represented by organized special interest groups (business, labor, environmental and civil rights groups) or by the two major political parties. Organized groups were chosen by 45%, and the two major political parties by 34%. Other political parties were selected by 3% of the sample, and 17% of the respondents said they didn't know. (Table 9)

Analysis of the responses indicates that as age increases, identification with the two major political parties increases: 41% of the over 35 age group chose the major political parties compared to the national total of 34%; only 25% of those under 35 chose the two major political parties. As education increases, identification with the two major political parties remains relatively constant (ranging between 32% and 39%), but the percentage choosing organized interest groups increases from 34% for those not completing high school to 57% for the college graduates. As income increases, the percentage of respondents choosing political parties increases—from 29% for the under \$15,000 group to 44% for the \$40,000 and over group.

Regional differences are also noteworthy with 52% of the Northeast region's residents choosing interest groups, considerably more than the 41% choosing them in the South and 43% in the North Central region. The two major political parties were chosen by 26% of the respondents in the Northeast, but by percentages ranging from 35% to 38% in the other three regions.

THE POLL

This report presents the findings of a personal interview research survey conducted among a probability sample of 1,517 men and women, 18 years of age or over, living in private households in the United States.

Interviewing for this survey was completed from April 29 through May 2, 1983, by members of the Gallup Personal Omnibus national interviewing staff. All interviews were conducted in the homes of respondents.

To ensure the representativeness of the sample, data were weighted to take into account demographic variables. Therefore, the results may be projected to the total adult civilian population, 18 years of age or over, living in the United States.

Introduction to Detailed Findings

The tables contained in this report present detailed findings of the various survey results. Percentages may not add to 100 because of rounding.

The following definitions are provided for some of the standard breakdowns by which the data are analyzed. Other breakdowns are self-explanatory.

Occupation refers to the occupation of the respondent. The types of positions included in each category are listed below. The fourth classification is retired persons.

Professional/Manager/Owner

Executives, Professionals, Technical and Kindred Workers, Managers, Officials, and Proprietors.

White Collar, Sales, Clerical

Clerical, Office and Secretarial Workers, and Sales Agents and Workers.

Blue Collar

Semi-skilled, Laborers, and Service workers: Craftsmen, Foremen, Kindred Workers, Maintenance Repairmen, Carpenters, Plumbers and Electricians; Operatives and Kindred Workers, Apprentices, and As-

sembly Line Workers; Housekeepers in Private Household, Institutional and Public; Police, Security Guards; Beauticians and Barbers.

Metro size groupings are determined by the U.S. Bureau of the Census population figures for the metropolitan area. Nonmetro areas are those not in a metropolitan area, with populations under 50,000. Central city areas have populations of 50,000 or more in a central city of a metropolitan area. Fringe areas have populations of 50,000 or more in metropolitan areas outside a central city.

The four *geographic regions* are defined as follows: Northeast—Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania; North Central—Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, Missouri, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas; South—Delaware, Maryland, District of Columbia, Virginia, West Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Kentucky, Tennessee, Alabama, Mississippi, Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, Texas; West—Montana, Idaho, Wyoming, Colorado, New Mexico, Arizona, Utah, Nevada, Washington, Oregon, California, Hawaii, Alaska.

Income groups respondents by 1983 total household income before taxes.

Sampling tolerances for the survey are ± 3 percentage points at the 95% level of confidence.

Further detail on the survey methods and sampling tolerances are available from ACIR.

Previous Classifications

Data for 1972-81 are presented in the *Appendix Tables, Detailed Results of 1981-72 Surveys* (p. 29). Descriptions of classifications used in these years may be found in the volumes for the relevant years.

Because major classification changes were made in 1982, tables for 1982 and 1983 are presented separately; they appear on the following pages.

**Detailed Results:
1983-82 Surveys**

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TABLE 1
1983-82*

From Which Level of Government Do You Feel You Get the Most for
Your Money—Federal, State, or Local

(in percent)

	1983				1982			
	1. Federal	2. State	3. Local	4. Don't Know	1.	2.	3.	4.
Total public	31	20	31	19	35	20	28	17
Male	33	20	32	16	38	20	29	13
Female	29	20	31	21	33	19	28	20
Head of Household	30	19	32	19	36	18	28	18
Male Head	32	20	33	16	37	20	29	14
Female Head	28	19	32	22	34	17	28	21
Under 35 Years of Age	31	23	30	16	35	24	27	14
18-24	36	24	23	17	37	27	23	13
25-34	27	23	35	15	33	21	30	16
35-44	27	22	37	15	27	26	36	11
45-65	30	18	32	20	34	15	31	20
Over 65	37	11	26	25	46	11	19	24
High School Incomplete	37	18	20	26	44	13	22	21
High School Graduate	29	18	33	19	32	23	27	18
College Incomplete	30	23	36	11	30	24	31	15
College Graduate	23	23	44	10	30	19	43	8
Household Income								
Under \$15 K	37	16	24	24	42	15	21	22
15-24.9 K	26	24	34	16	37	20	30	13
\$25 K+	26	23	39	12	25	24	36	15
\$25-29.9 K	28	28	35	9	24 ^a	23 ^a	35 ^a	18 ^a
\$30-39.9 K	26	23	38	13	26 ^b	26 ^b	36 ^b	12 ^b
\$40 K+	26	20	42	12	—	—	—	—
Own	28	19	35	17	32	20	31	17
Rent	39	18	22	21	42	19	22	17
White	27	21	34	18	32	20	30	18
Nonwhite	51	12	16	21	57	13	19	11
Employed	27	21	37	16	30	23	32	15
Employed Female	27	20	36	18	27	25	31	17
Not Employed	35	18	25	22	38	17	26	19
Not Employed Female	31	19	27	23	37	16	27	20
Prof., Manager, Owner	24	21	44	11	28	17	43	12
White Collar, Sales, Clerical	32	19	33	16	29	34	24	13
Blue Collar	29	21	30	19	31	24	28	17
Retired	41	12	24	23	43	13	21	23
Married	29	21	33	18	33	19	32	16
Not Married	34	18	29	20	38	20	22	20
Household Size								
1-2 People	34	14	31	21	38	17	24	21
3-4 People	26	26	32	16	31	23	31	15
5+ People	32	20	31	18	37	20	31	12
Children in Household								
Children under 18	28	23	33	16	31	22	33	14
No children	33	17	30	20	38	18	24	20
Northeast	31	14	31	24	32	14	33	21
North-Central	27	20	38	15	33	24	24	19
South	34	20	28	18	39	18	26	17
West	30	26	28	16	35	21	31	13
Nonmetro	29	23	28	20	35	21	28	16
Metro—50,000 and over	—	—	—	—	35	19	28	18
Fringe	27	17	42	14	—	—	—	—
Central City	36	17	27	21	—	—	—	—

^a \$25-34.9 K

^b \$35 K+

* 1972-1981 data appear in Appendix Tables A-1, A-2.

Table 2
1983-82*

Which Do You Think Is the Worst Tax, That Is The Least Fair
(in percent)

	1983					1982				
	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.
	1. Federal Income Tax	2. State Income Tax	3. State Sales Tax	4. Local Property Tax	5. Don't Know	1. Federal Income Tax	2. State Income Tax	3. State Sales Tax	4. Local Property Tax	5. Don't Know
Total Public	35	11	13	26	15	36	11	14	30	9
Male-	35	12	14	27	13	36	12	16	29	7
Female	36	11	11	25	17	35	10	13	31	11
Head of Household	38	11	12	26	14	36	11	13	30	10
Male Head	37	11	13	27	12	37	12	14	29	8
Female Head	38	10	12	25	16	35	9	13	31	12
Under 35 Years of Age	33	15	13	25	14	39	11	15	29	6
18-24	26	14	14	27	19	36	13	18	27	6
25-34	40	16	12	23	11	41	10	12	30	7
35-44	38	10	16	25	11	31	12	16	33	8
45-65	40	10	11	26	13	36	12	11	30	11
Over 65	27	6	11	32	23	31	5	17	33	14
High School Incomplete	29	9	14	27	22	28	8	16	32	16
High School Graduate	38	12	12	27	12	38	12	13	32	5
College Incomplete	36	14	14	22	14	36	13	17	25	9
College Graduate	41	13	10	27	9	45	8	12	29	6
Household Income										
Under \$15 K	30	10	14	25	21	30	9	17	32	12
15-24.9 K	39	12	12	27	10	36	12	14	31	7
\$25 K+	42	13	11	28	7	41	12	11	30	6
\$25-29.9 K	37	9	14	30	10	39 ^a	12 ^a	12 ^a	31 ^a	6 ^a
\$30-39.9 K	39	19	9	27	6	44 ^b	11 ^b	10 ^b	28 ^b	7 ^b
\$40 K+	48	10	11	26	6	—	—	—	—	—
Own	37	11	11	29	11	37	9	13	33	8
Rent	30	13	16	19	22	33	13	17	24	13
White	37	11	12	27	14	36	11	15	29	9
Nonwhite	28	15	16	21	20	33	11	11	34	11
Employed	38	13	12	27	11	38	12	13	30	7
Employed Female	39	13	9	28	10	36	11	13	32	8
Not Employed	32	10	13	26	19	35	9	15	30	11
Not Employed Female	33	10	12	24	21	35	8	15	31	11
Prof., Manager, Owner	40	14	11	30	5	48	13	14	20	5
White Collar, Sales, Clerical	33	16	13	26	13	37	15	10	30	8
Blue Collar	36	11	12	27	13	32	11	12	36	9
Retired	28	8	14	30	21	29	8	18	32	13
Married	39	11	13	26	11	39	10	12	31	8
Not Married	29	12	12	26	21	29	11	18	30	12
Household										
1-2 People	35	11	12	25	17	35	11	14	29	11
3-4 People	39	13	11	28	11	38	9	15	30	8
5+ People	30	11	17	26	17	32	13	14	33	8
Children in Household										
Children under 18	35	13	14	27	12	36	9	15	31	9
No Children	35	10	12	25	17	35	11	14	30	10
Northeast	29	17	15	23	16	37	11	16	24	12
North-Central	34	15	10	29	12	32	11	12	37	8
South	36	6	12	28	17	38	10	10	33	9
West	43	8	14	21	14	34	12	24	22	8
Nonmetro	39	8	12	27	14	34	13	14	29	10
Metro—50,000 and Over	—	—	—	—	—	36	9	15	31	9
Fringe	33	13	13	30	11	—	—	—	—	—
Central City	32	14	13	22	19	—	—	—	—	—

^a \$25-34.9 K

^b \$35 K+

* 1972-81 data appear in Appendix Tables F-1, F-2.

TABLE 3
1983

If the Federal Government Had To Raise Taxes Substantially,
Which Would Be a Better Way To Do It?

(in percent)

	Increasing Individual Income Taxes	A New National Sales Tax on All Purchases Other Than Food	Don't Know
Total Public	24	52	25
Male	25	53	22
Female	23	51	27
Head of Household	24	51	25
Male Head	27	52	22
Female Head	22	51	27
Under 35 Years of Age	26	52	22
18-24	24	56	20
25-34	27	49	24
35-44	22	56	23
45-65	24	52	24
Over 65	21	44	35
High School Incomplete	19	47	35
High School Graduate	22	55	23
College Incomplete	26	59	15
College Graduate	37	46	17
Household Income			
Under \$15K	22	47	32
\$15-24.9K	23	54	23
\$25K+	28	58	15
\$25-29.9K	29	55	16
\$30-39.9K	28	60	12
\$40K+	26	58	17
Own	23	54	22
Rent	25	45	30
White	25	52	23
Nonwhite	16	49	36
Employed	27	53	20
Employed Female	30	49	21
Not Employed	20	50	30
Not Employed Female	18	52	30
Prof, Manager, Owner	29	53	18
White Collar, Sales, Clerical	28	52	20
Blue Collar	20	55	25
Retired	27	44	30
Married	25	54	22
Not Married	23	48	29
Household			
1-2 People	25	50	26
3-4 People	25	53	22
5+ People	21	54	26
Children in Household			
Children under 18	22	54	24
No Children	25	50	25
Northeast	31	40	29
North-Central	21	58	21
South	21	55	24
West	24	52	25
Nonmetro	21	57	22
Metro—50,000 and Over			
Fringe	27	50	23
Central City	25	46	30

TABLE 4
1983
If the Federal Income Tax Collections Must Be Increased,
Which Way Is the Best?

(in percent)

1. Raise individual income tax rates
2. Cut back on current tax exemptions such as social security, pensions, interest on municipal bonds, etc.
3. Cut back on all itemized deductions, such as those for state and local taxes, interest paid on mortgages and consumer loans, and charitable contributions
4. Don't know

	1.	2.	3.	4.
Total Public	21	14	39	26
Male	23	14	40	23
Female	19	14	38	29
Head of Household	22	14	38	26
Male Head	25	14	39	22
Female Head	20	13	38	30
Under 35 Years of Age	20	19	40	22
18-24	16	19	47	18
25-34	23	18	35	25
35-44	24	13	41	22
45-65	24	10	41	26
Over 65	16	12	32	40
High School Incomplete	16	11	37	36
High School Graduate	23	13	40	25
College Incomplete	19	20	46	15
College Graduate	30	17	35	18
Household Income				
Under \$15K	19	10	38	33
\$15-24.9K	22	18	40	21
\$25K+	23	17	42	18
\$25-29.9K	25	18	43	14
\$30-39.9K	23	21	39	18
\$40K+	21	13	45	21
Own	22	15	40	24
Rent	20	13	38	29
White	22	14	40	24
Nonwhite	15	13	33	38
Employed	24	16	40	20
Employed Female	22	15	41	22
Not Employed	18	12	38	31
Not Employed Female	17	14	36	33
Prof, Manager, Owner	24	23	36	17
White Collar, Sales, Clerical	21	16	47	16
Blue Collar	22	10	43	25
Retired	24	10	31	36
Married	23	14	40	23
Not Married	17	15	37	31
Household				
1-2 People	23	12	37	28
3-4 People	20	16	39	25
5+ People	18	15	44	23
Children in Household				
Children under 18	19	15	40	25
No children	22	13	38	27
Northeast	27	9	35	29
North-Central	20	16	40	24
South	19	16	39	26
West	18	15	44	23
Nonmetro	18	15	39	27
Metro—50,000 and Over				
Fringe	29	11	41	18
Central City	18	14	37	30

TABLE 5
1983

Suppose Your State Government Must Raise Taxes Substantially,
Which Would Be a Better Way To Do It?

(in percent)

	State Individual Income Tax	State Sales Tax	Don't Know
Total Public	23	57	20
Male	24	59	17
Female	22	56	23
Head of Household	22	58	20
Male Head	24	60	16
Female Head	21	56	24
Under 35 Years of Age	25	59	17
18-24	25	59	16
25-34	24	59	17
35-44	22	58	20
45-65	23	58	19
Over 65	19	52	30
High School Incomplete	20	47	33
High School Graduate	21	60	19
College Incomplete	25	66	10
College Graduate	30	63	7
Household Income			
Under \$15K	23	50	28
\$15-24.9 K	23	61	16
\$25K+	23	67	10
\$25-29.9K	23	65	12
\$30-39.9K	22	67	11
\$40 K+	23	69	8
Own	22	62	16
Rent	24	47	29
White	23	59	18
Nonwhite	20	48	32
Employed	25	61	14
Employed Female	30	57	14
Not Employed	20	54	26
Not Employed Female	15	56	29
Prof. Manager, Owner	31	61	8
White Collar, Sales, Clerical	27	61	13
Blue Collar	23	57	20
Retired	20	54	26
Married	21	62	17
Not Married	26	50	25
Household			
1-2 People	27	53	20
3-4 People	20	62	19
5+ People	18	59	23
Children in Household			
Children under 18	18	62	21
No children	27	54	20
Northeast	30	48	22
North-Central	23	60	17
South	17	61	22
West	22	60	18
Nonmetro	19	62	19
Metro—50,000 and Over			
Fringe	29	56	15
Central City	22	53	25

TABLE 6
1983

Suppose Your Local Government Must Raise More Revenue,
The Better Way To Do This Would Be—

(in percent)

	Local Income Tax	Local Sales Tax	Local Property Tax	Don't Know
Total Public	12	45	19	24
Male	12	46	22	20
Female	12	44	17	28
Head of Household	12	45	20	23
Male Head	12	47	23	19
Female Head	12	44	17	27
Under 35 Years of Age	12	41	25	22
18-24	13	43	22	22
25-34	11	40	27	22
35-44	14	44	21	21
45-65	11	52	14	23
Over 65	12	38	15	35
High School Incomplete	14	38	13	35
High School Graduate	10	45	20	25
College Incomplete	9	50	28	13
College Graduate	15	54	22	10
Household Income				
Under \$15K	11	38	18	33
\$15-24.9K	13	46	22	19
\$25K+	11	55	20	14
\$25-29.9K	14	43	25	18
\$30-39.9K	11	56	18	15
\$40K+	9	64	18	9
Own	12	51	16	22
Rent	11	32	28	29
White	13	46	20	22
Nonwhite	8	41	16	35
Employed	12	46	23	19
Employed Female	14	44	21	21
Not Employed	12	43	16	29
Not Employed Female	11	43	15	32
Prof, Manager, Owner	14	48	27	12
White Collar, Sales, Clerical	13	45	22	21
Blue Collar	11	43	22	24
Retired	13	44	14	29
Married	12	48	18	22
Not Married	12	39	22	28
Household				
1-2 People	12	44	20	24
3-4 People	11	46	20	23
5+ People	12	45	17	26
Children in Household				
Children under 18	11	46	20	23
No children	12	44	19	25
Northeast	17	33	21	29
North-Central	12	48	20	20
South	9	49	18	23
West	10	48	17	25
Nonmetro	10	48	20	23
Metro—50,000 and Over				
Fringe	13	43	23	21
Central City	13	42	16	28

TABLE 7
1983

Which One of the Changes Would Be the Single Most Important Change That Would Make the Nation's Tax System More Fair?

(in percent)

- | | |
|--|----------------------|
| 1. Make the upper income taxpayers pay more | 5. None of the above |
| 2. Reduce taxes on lower income taxpayers | 6. Don't know |
| 3. Make business firms pay more even if it reduces the number of jobs | |
| 4. Leave the tax system alone—it is about as fair as you are ever going to get | |

	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.
Total Public	49	13	6	16	7	9
Male	50	14	7	15	7	7
Female	48	12	6	17	6	11
Head of Household	49	13	6	16	7	9
Male Head	51	14	6	15	8	6
Female Head	48	12	6	17	7	11
Under 35 Years of Age	46	15	8	16	6	10
18-24	38	17	11	18	5	11
25-34	53	13	5	14	7	8
35-44	54	12	6	13	6	9
45-65	52	12	6	15	8	6
Over 65	41	14	4	22	5	14
High School Incomplete	42	14	6	20	3	16
High School Graduate	52	14	6	15	6	7
College Incomplete	47	14	10	16	10	4
College Graduate	57	8	5	13	12	5
Household Income						
Under \$15K	45	15	6	16	5	13
\$15-24.9K	52	14	6	16	5	6
\$25K +	52	11	7	15	10	4
\$25-29.9K	57	12	6	11	8	5
\$30-39.9K	58	11	7	16	6	3
\$40K +	43	11	7	17	17	5
Own	52	12	7	15	7	7
Rent	43	15	6	17	5	14
White	49	13	6	17	7	8
Nonwhite	46	17	6	12	3	16
Employed	50	15	6	15	8	6
Employed Female	51	14	7	16	7	5
Not Employed	47	12	7	17	5	11
Not Employed Female	46	11	6	17	6	14
Prof, Manager, Owner	54	11	5	15	11	4
White Collar, Sales, Clerical	52	11	7	13	6	10
Blue Collar	49	16	8	16	5	6
Retired	48	15	3	20	6	8
Married	51	12	6	17	7	7
Not Married	45	15	8	14	6	13
Household						
1-2 People	48	13	6	18	6	10
3-4 People	50	15	6	16	8	6
5+ People	49	9	9	13	7	14
Children in Household						
Children under 18	48	13	8	16	6	9
No children	49	13	5	16	7	9
Northeast	47	14	6	13	5	15
North-Central	56	14	5	15	5	5
South	46	12	8	18	5	12
West	45	13	6	18	15	4
Nonmetro	49	14	6	18	6	7
Metro—50,00 and Over						
Fringe	53	11	7	15	7	7
Central City	45	13	7	14	8	13

TABLE 8
1983

With the Cutbacks in Federal Financial Aid to Local Governments, There Is a Debate As To What the States Should Do. Which Statement Comes Closest To Your View?

(in percent)

1. State governments should not try to make up for any of the federal cutbacks in financial aid to local governments
2. State governments should try to make up for only some of the federal cutbacks in financial aid to local governments
3. State governments should try to make up for almost all of the federal cutbacks in financial aid to local governments
4. Don't know

	1.	2.	3.	4.
Total Public	18	46	16	20
Male	21	47	16	16
Female	16	45	16	23
Head of Household	20	45	15	21
Male Head	23	47	14	16
Female Head	17	44	15	24
Under 35 Years of Age	15	51	18	16
18-24	16	49	21	14
25-34	15	52	15	18
35-44	22	49	12	17
45-65	21	45	15	19
Over 65	16	32	16	35
High School Incomplete	17	30	19	34
High School Graduate	21	47	15	18
College Incomplete	16	59	17	8
College Graduate	17	62	13	8
Household Income				
Under \$15K	17	36	20	28
\$15-24.9K	17	51	16	17
\$25K+	22	59	11	9
\$25-29.9K	27	53	10	11
\$30-39.9K	15	61	14	10
\$40K+	24	61	10	6
Own	20	48	14	18
Rent	16	40	21	24
White	20	48	15	17
Nonwhite	10	36	21	33
Employed	22	50	15	14
Employed Female	19	50	15	16
Not Employed	15	42	17	25
Not Employed Female	14	42	16	28
Prof, Manager, Owner	23	57	14	7
White Collar, Sales, Clerical	16	54	12	18
Blue Collar	21	45	17	18
Retired	18	39	16	28
Married	21	49	14	17
Not Married	14	41	20	25
Household				
1-2 People	18	43	17	22
3-4 People	22	48	14	17
5+ People	14	48	17	22
Children in Household				
Children under 18	18	47	15	20
No children	19	45	17	20
Northeast	13	48	17	21
North-Central	23	45	13	18
South	16	42	19	23
West	22	51	12	15
Nonmetro	20	46	13	21
Metro—50,000 and Over				
Fringe	18	51	17	15
Central City	17	42	19	22

TABLE 9
1983

**In General, Which One of the Kinds of Organizations Listed Below
Do You Feel Best Represents the Political Interests of People Like You?**

(in percent)

1. Organized groups concerned with specific issues such as business, labor, environmental and civil rights groups
2. The two major political parties—the Democrats and the Republicans
3. Other political parties
4. Don't know

	1.	2.	3.	4.
Total Public	45	34	3	17
Male	45	38	3	14
Female	45	32	3	20
Head of Household	45	36	3	17
Male Head	45	39	3	13
Female Head	44	33	2	21
Under 35 Years of Age	56	25	5	15
18-24	56	21	5	17
25-34	56	27	4	13
35-44	44	41	3	12
45-65	41	40	2	17
Over 65	27	42	2	29
High School Incomplete	34	34	4	29
High School Graduate	47	34	3	16
College Incomplete	54	39	2	6
College Graduate	57	32	2	9
Household Income				
Under \$15K	40	29	4	27
\$15-24.9K	47	40	2	11
\$25K+	52	38	2	9
\$25-29.9K	54	36	2	8
\$30-39.9K	57	33	2	8
\$40K+	45	44	2	10
Own	43	39	2	16
Rent	51	23	4	22
White	45	36	3	16
Nonwhite	45	27	3	25
Employed	51	34	4	12
Employed Female	55	29	4	12
Not Employed	41	35	3	21
Not Employed Female	40	34	2	24
Prof, Manager, Owner	51	39	3	7
White Collar, Sales, Clerical	53	33	2	12
Blue Collar	51	29	3	16
Retired	34	39	2	24
Married	46	38	3	14
Not Married	45	29	4	23
Household				
1-2 People	43	35	3	19
3-4 People	47	37	2	14
5+ People	46	29	5	21
Children in Household				
Children under 18	48	32	4	16
No Children	43	36	3	18
Northeast	52	26	2	21
North-Central	43	38	3	15
South	41	37	4	19
West	48	35	3	14
Nonmetro	40	38	3	19
Metro—50,000 and Over				
Fringe	51	36	3	10
Central City	48	29	3	21

TABLE 10
1982

**Which of These Statements Comes Closest to Your View
About Government Power Today?**

(in percent)

1. Federal government has too much power.
2. Federal government is using about the right amount of power for meeting today's needs.
3. Federal government should use its powers more vigorously to promote the well being of all segments of the people.

4. No Opinion.	1.	2.	3.	4.
Total Public*	38	18	30	14
Male	38	20	32	10
Female	39	16	29	16
Head of Household	39	17	30	14
Male Head	39	21	30	10
Female Head	39	14	29	18
Under 35 Years of Age	38	17	33	12
18-24	32	19	35	14
25-34	43	15	31	11
35-44	42	17	28	13
45-65	41	18	30	11
Over 65	29	20	29	22
High School Incomplete	28	16	35	21
High School Graduate	41	18	28	13
College Incomplete	42	17	30	11
College Graduate	47	22	27	4
Household Income				
Under \$15K	30	16	36	18
15-24.9K	36	21	30	13
25K+	49	18	24	9
25-34.9K	47	18	26	9
35K+	51	18	22	9
Own	41	18	29	12
Rent	32	16	35	17
White	41	18	28	13
Nonwhite	21	15	45	19
Employed	39	19	31	11
Employed Female	40	16	29	15
Not Employed	39	16	31	14
Not Employed Female	39	15	32	14
Prof, Manager, Owner	51	17	26	6
White Collar, Sales, Clerical	37	26	28	9
Blue Collar	34	16	34	16
Retired	33	17	30	20
Married	42	17	28	13
Not Married	31	19	34	16
Household				
1-2 People	37	19	30	14
3-4 People	37	17	30	16
5+ People	44	13	34	9
No Children in Household	35	20	31	14
Children Under 12	42	15	28	15
Children 12-17	41	14	35	10
Northeast	42	18	30	10
North-Central	36	21	32	11
South	35	16	30	19
West	41	16	29	14
Nonmetro	37	16	31	16
Metro - 50,000-999,999	41	16	29	14
1,000,000 and Over	37	20	32	11

*1978 data appear in Appendix Table L.

TABLE 11
1982

Considering All Government Services on the One Hand and Taxes on the Other,
Which of the Following Statements Comes Closest to Your View?

(in percent)

	1. Decrease services and taxes.	2. Keep taxes and services about where they are.	3. Increase services and raise taxes.	4. No Opinion
Total Public*	36	42	8	14
Male	37	40	8	15
Female	34	43	9	14
Head of Household	37	41	8	14
Male Head	40	40	7	13
Female Head	34	43	9	14
Under 35 Years of Age	33	43	10	14
18-24	31	42	9	18
25-34	34	43	11	12
35-44	37	46	8	9
45-65	37	42	8	13
Over 65	39	34	5	22
High School Incomplete	34	41	7	18
High School Graduate	35	43	8	14
College Incomplete	34	41	9	16
College Graduate	44	41	10	5
Household Income				
Under \$15K	33	42	8	17
15-24.9K	36	44	10	10
25K+	39	41	7	13
25-34.9K	34	43	8	15
35K+	44	39	6	11
Own	38	43	6	13
Rent	32	39	13	16
White	37	41	8	14
Nonwhite	28	45	11	16
Employed	38	41	9	12
Employed Female	34	45	8	13
Not Employed	31	44	9	16
Not Employed Female	32	43	11	14
Prof, Manager, Owner	43	41	11	5
White Collar, Sales, Clerical	36	39	8	17
Blue Collar	36	43	7	14
Retired	38	38	5	19
Married	38	43	7	12
Not Married	31	39	10	20
Household				
1-2 People	37	40	7	16
3-4 People	35	42	9	14
5+ People	36	44	9	11
No Children in Household	36	41	8	15
Children Under 12	34	43	8	15
Children 12-17	37	42	10	11
Northeast	36	42	7	15
North-Central	34	42	7	17
South	36	43	8	13
West	37	38	11	14
Nonmetro	37	43	7	13
Metro—50,000-999,999	35	39	9	17
1,000,000 and Over	35	42	9	14

*1975-1980 data appears in Appendix Table B.

TABLE 12-1
1982

Federal grant programs to state and local governments can serve a number of different national goals. But, when the federal budget is tight, it is necessary to make choices among them. Please rate each of these Federal aid programs. If you believe the program is totally unnecessary, you would give it a minus 5; if you believe the program is totally necessary, you would give it a plus 5. You may pick ratings in between the minus 5 and the plus 5. If you have no opinion, or don't know, use the "zero."

1. Federal grant programs that provide special assistance to poor states—that is, states which are below average in ability to raise revenues.

(in percent)

	Totally Unnecessary			No Opinion					Totally Necessary		
	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5
Total Public*	8	1	4	4	3	13	10	16	17	5	19
Male	9	1	4	5	3	9	11	17	18	5	18
Female	7	2	4	3	3	15	9	15	17	5	20
Head of Household	8	1	5	4	3	13	10	15	17	5	19
Male Head	10	1	5	5	3	9	11	14	18	5	19
Female Head	7	1	5	3	3	16	9	15	17	5	19
Under 35 Years of Age	5	2	3	2	3	8	10	21	21	6	19
18-24	1	1	3	1	5	6	8	24	24	7	20
25-34	8	2	3	3	2	10	12	19	18	5	18
35-44	9	2	7	5	5	11	11	14	13	7	16
45-65	9	2	5	5	2	14	13	12	16	4	18
Over 65	11	1	4	3	2	21	5	13	14	3	23
High School Incomplete	9	*	2	2	3	20	8	15	15	2	24
High School Graduate	7	1	5	3	2	11	11	16	18	7	19
College Incomplete	8	3	4	5	4	9	9	14	21	6	17
College Graduate	7	3	6	7	4	5	15	21	16	5	11
Household Income											
Under \$15K	8	1	3	2	3	16	7	15	16	4	25
15-24.9K	6	1	5	4	3	13	13	12	16	6	21
25K+	8	3	5	4	3	8	12	21	20	4	12
25-34.9K	7	2	4	4	3	6	12	23	19	6	14
35K+	9	3	6	4	3	9	11	20	21	3	11

Own	9	2	5	4	3	14	11	16	15	4	17
Rent	6	*	3	2	3	9	8	16	22	7	24
White	8	2	5	4	3	12	11	16	18	5	16
Nonwhite	4	0	3	1	0	13	6	14	15	7	37
Employed	7	1	5	4	3	10	12	16	19	5	18
Employed Female	5	1	5	2	4	14	10	14	19	7	19
Not Employed	8	2	4	3	3	12	8	18	16	6	20
Not Employed Female	8	2	4	4	3	14	9	17	16	4	19
Prof, Manager, Owner	9	2	4	9	3	5	11	15	23	4	15
White Collar, Sales, Clerical	5	2	7	2	6	9	10	19	20	5	15
Blue Collar	6	1	4	3	2	13	12	17	16	5	21
Retired	11	1	3	3	2	21	8	12	16	2	21
Married	9	2	5	5	3	12	10	16	17	5	16
Not Married	5	1	3	2	3	14	10	15	18	5	24
Household											
1-2 People	9	1	3	4	4	16	8	14	17	5	19
3-4 People	7	2	5	3	3	9	12	16	19	5	19
5+ People	8	1	4	5	1	11	11	23	14	3	19
No Children in Household	8	1	3	4	3	14	9	14	19	5	20
Children Under 12	7	1	5	4	3	11	11	18	16	4	20
Children 12-17	8	2	7	4	3	9	11	19	13	6	18
Northeast	3	*	3	3	5	11	11	20	22	6	16
North-Central	6	2	5	4	3	14	11	16	16	4	19
South	10	1	3	4	3	16	9	14	14	6	20
West	12	2	6	5	0	6	10	15	19	4	21
Nonmetro	11	1	2	4	2	17	10	14	15	4	20
Metro — 50,000-999,999	7	2	5	3	2	11	9	17	17	5	22
1,000,000 and Over	6	2	5	5	4	9	12	16	20	5	16
* Less than one-half percent.											

TABLE 12-2
1982

Federal grant programs to state and local governments can serve a number of different national goals. But, when the federal budget is tight, it is necessary to make choices among them. Please rate each of these Federal aid programs. If you believe the program is totally unnecessary, you would give it a minus 5; if you believe the program is totally necessary, you would give it a plus 5. You may pick ratings in between the minus 5 and the plus 5. If you have no opinion, or don't know, use the "zero."

2. Federal grant programs that provide special assistance to poor cities experiencing economic and financial difficulties.

(in percent)

	Totally Unnecessary		No Opinion						Totally Necessary		
	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5
Total Public*	10	2	5	4	3	11	12	13	15	7	18
Male	12	3	5	4	3	10	12	14	16	5	16
Female	8	2	5	5	3	12	12	12	13	9	19
Head of Household	11	3	4	4	3	11	12	13	14	7	18
Male Head	14	3	5	4	2	9	12	13	16	5	17
Female Head	9	2	4	5	3	13	11	12	13	9	19
Under 35 Years of Age	5	2	3	4	4	10	12	16	16	10	19
18-24	2	1	2	3	5	7	11	19	19	10	21
25-34	8	2	4	5	4	12	12	14	13	10	16
35-44	10	2	8	5	3	10	13	8	17	7	17
45-65	12	3	5	5	1	10	13	12	14	7	18
Over 65	17	4	2	3	4	19	12	9	9	3	18
High School Incomplete	8	2	3	*	2	17	11	11	14	5	27
High School Graduate	11	2	5	5	3	9	12	14	13	10	16
College Incomplete	8	4	7	6	3	12	12	15	14	8	11
College Graduate	14	4	5	8	6	4	13	10	19	5	12
Household Income											
Under \$15K	10	2	2	2	3	14	9	12	12	8	26
15-24.9K	9	1	6	4	3	12	10	9	17	11	18
25K+	10	3	7	6	3	8	17	17	15	4	10
25-34.9K	11	4	6	3	3	9	20	15	14	4	11
35K+	10	3	7	9	3	7	13	19	15	5	9

Own	12	2	5	5	3	13	13	12	14	6	15
Rent	5	2	3	3	3	8	10	15	16	10	25
White	11	3	5	5	3	11	13	13	14	7	15
Nonwhite	3	1	0	0	*	15	5	9	21	8	38
Employed	9	2	6	4	2	10	12	14	17	8	16
Employed Female	7	2	6	4	3	9	14	14	14	10	17
Not Employed	6	2	3	5	4	12	11	12	15	9	21
Not Employed Female	6	2	3	6	4	13	10	11	15	10	20
Prof, Manager, Owner	13	2	7	8	3	6	14	11	20	4	12
White Collar, Sales, Clerical	9	3	7	5	2	6	12	18	13	12	13
Blue Collar	8	2	4	2	2	13	10	15	16	8	20
Retired	18	4	4	2	4	15	14	10	8	3	18
Married	12	2	5	5	3	11	12	13	15	7	15
Not Married	6	3	3	3	3	12	11	13	14	8	24
Household											
1-2 People	12	3	4	3	4	12	12	12	13	7	18
3-4 People	8	2	5	5	3	10	14	13	16	7	17
5+ People	9	1	6	5	2	11	9	14	15	9	19
No Children in Household	10	3	3	3	3	12	12	13	16	7	18
Children Under 12	7	1	5	5	3	10	11	14	15	8	21
Children 12-17	11	2	8	6	2	10	12	11	10	8	20
Northeast	5	2	5	3	4	8	11	20	16	10	16
North-Central	9	2	6	6	3	10	11	12	16	8	17
South	13	2	3	4	3	17	12	10	13	5	18
West	11	4	5	4	2	7	13	12	14	8	20
Nonmetro	10	2	3	4	4	14	12	11	14	7	19
Metro — 50,000-999,999	12	3	6	4	3	11	11	11	14	4	21
1,000,000 and Over	8	2	5	4	3	9	12	16	16	10	15
* Less than one-half percent.											