

Great Britain

ISSP 1996 - Role of Government III

REPLACES COPY OF 20TH JUNE 1995.

**1996 ISSP MODULE ON
"ROLE OF GOVERNMENT"**

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FINAL VERSION

20th September, 1995

Notes to members:

- 1) All notes which are not part of the questionnaire and intended only for members are enclosed in pointed, angle brackets.
- 2) All the elements in questions which require local adaptation (i.e. country) are enclosed in square brackets.
- 3) All the elements in questions which are optional are enclosed in double round brackets.

<ISSP 1985 Q2, 1990 Q1>

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

((PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ONLY))

OR	Obey the law without exception	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Follow conscience on occasions	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Can't choose	<input type="checkbox"/>

<ISSP 1985 Q3a.c.f., 1990 Q2a.c.f>

2. There are many ways people or organisations can protest against a government action they strongly oppose. Please show which you think should be allowed and which should not be allowed ((by ticking a box on each line)).

((PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ON EACH LINE))

	Should it be allowed?				
	Definitely	Probably	Probably not	Definitely not	Can't choose
a. Organising public meetings to protest against the government	<input type="checkbox"/>				
b. Organising protest marches and demonstrations	<input type="checkbox"/>				
c. Organising a nationwide strike of all workers against the government	<input type="checkbox"/>				

<Precode: The word-"allowed" has the same meaning as "permitted". The main issue is whether people should be free or have the right to show to varying degrees their discontent with a government.

2a) a "public meeting" refers to an assembly or gathering which anyone is allowed to attend. In the context of this particular question, the purpose of the meeting should be clear.>

<WILLINGNESS TO PROTEST AGAINST A GOVERNMENT ACTION: 2 new ISSP items>

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

((PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ON EACH LINE))

	Definitely would	Probably would	Probably would not	Definitely would not	Can't choose
a. Attend a public meeting organised to protest against the government	<input type="checkbox"/>				
b. Go on a protest march or demonstration	<input type="checkbox"/>				

<ACTUAL PROTEST AGAINST A GOVERNMENT ACTION: 2 new ISSP items>

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

((PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ON EACH LINE))

- | | Never | Once | More
than once |
|--|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| a. Attended a public meeting organised to protest against the government | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 |
| b. Gone on a protest march or demonstration | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 |

<ISSP 1985 Q4(i & iii), 1990 Q3>

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

((PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ON EACH LINE))

- | | Definitely | Probably | Probably
not | Definitely
not | Can't
choose |
|---|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| a. ... hold public meetings to express their views? | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 8 |
| b. ... publish books expressing their views? | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 8 |

<5b. Translation note: "publish books" can be translated as "have their books published".>

<ISSP 1985, Q6, 1990 Q6>

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

((PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ONLY))

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| | (✓) |
| ... to convict an innocent person, | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 |
| OR | |
| ... to let a guilty person go free? | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 |
| Can't choose | <input type="checkbox"/> 8 |

<ISSP 1985 Q7 (Not asked in 1990)>

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

((PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ONLY))

- | | |
|--|----------------------------|
| | (✓) |
| ... a very serious threat to individual privacy, | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 |
| a fairly serious threat, | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 |
| not a serious threat, | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 |
| or, not a threat at all to individual privacy? | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 |
| Can't choose | <input type="checkbox"/> 8 |

<7e) Here "government" refers to the regime (i.e. any government that has been elected into power). In some countries the meaning of the question can be improved by adding "of any party" after "government" to stress that it does not necessarily have to be the current government.>

<ISSP 1985 Q9, 1990 Q9>

8. What is your opinion of the following statement:

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

((PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ONLY))

- (✓)
- Agree strongly 1
- Agree 2
- Neither agree nor disagree 3
- Disagree 4
- Disagree strongly 5
- Can't choose 8

<The "Can't choose" option has been added this year for the first time.>

<ISSP 1985 Q21, 1990 Q10>

9. Here are some things the government might do for the economy. Please show which actions you are in favour of and which you are against.

((PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ON EACH LINE))	Strongly in favour of	In favour of	Neither in favour of nor against	Against	Strongly against
a. Control of wages by law	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
b. Control of prices by law	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
c. Cuts in government spending	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
d. Government financing of projects to create new jobs	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
e. Less government regulation of business	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
f. Support for industry to develop new products and technology	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
g. Support for declining industries to protect jobs	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
h. Reducing the working week to create more jobs	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5

<9f) Clarification note: This question refers to funding (financial aid) from government.

9g) Clarification note: This question refers not only to direct financial aid from government, (government subsidies), but could also include, for example, import restrictions imposed by government.

9h) Clarification note: "Reducing the working week" refers to shortening the number of hours employees work in a week.>

<ISSP 1985 Q22, 1990 Q11>

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

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

	((PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ON EACH LINE))					
	Spend much more	Spend more	Spend the same as now	Spend less	Spend much less	Can't choose
a. The environment	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 8
b. Health	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 8
c. The police and law enforcement	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 8
d. Education	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 8
e. The military and defence	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 8
f. Old age pensions	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 8
g. Unemployment benefits	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 8
h. Culture and the arts	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 8

<10g) Note to the Philippines: Since there are no unemployment benefits in the Philippines, the question can not be asked there. Instead you will ask a similar question about people's attitudes to unemployment benefits at the end of the questionnaire.>

<ISSP 1985 QS26-28, 1990 QS13-15>

- 11a. Do you think that trade unions in this country have too much power or too little power?

((PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ONLY))

	(✓)
Far too much power	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
Too much power	<input type="checkbox"/> 2
About the right amount of power	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
Too little power	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
Far too little power	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
Can't choose	<input type="checkbox"/> 8

11b. How about business and industry? Do they have too much power or too little power?

((PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ONLY))

- (✓)
- Far too much power 1
- Too much power 2
- About the right amount of power 3
- Too little power 4
- Far too little power 5
- Can't choose 8

11c. And what about the government, does it have too much power or too little power?

((PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ONLY))

- (✓)
- Far too much power 1
- Too much power 2
- About the right amount of power 3
- Too little power 4
- Far too little power 5
- Can't choose 8

<11b) Translation note - "business and industry" refers to large-scale business, but avoid using the adjective in the translation.>

<ISSP 1985 Q30a.-g., ISSP 1990 Q18a.-i. (j. is new)>

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

((PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ON EACH LINE))

	Definitely should be	Probably should be	Probably should not be	Definitely should not be	Can't choose
a. ... provide a job for everyone who wants one	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 8
b. ... keep prices under control	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 8
c. ... provide health care for the sick	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 8
d. ... provide a decent standard of living for the old	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 8
e. ... provide industry with the help it needs to grow	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 8
f. ... provide a decent standard of living for the unemployed	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 8
g. ... reduce income differences between the rich and the poor	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 8
h. ... give financial help to university students from low-income families	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 8
i. ... provide decent housing for those who can't afford it	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 8
j. ... impose strict laws to make industry do less damage to the environment	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 8

<ISSP 1990, Q 2.19>

((Here are some questions about politics.))

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

((PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ONLY))

- (✓)
- Very interested 1
- Fairly interested 2
- Somewhat interested 3
- Not very interested 4
- Not at all interested 5
- Can't choose 8

<POLITICAL TRUST AND EFFICACY: 8 items new to ISSP>

14. ((Please tick one box on each line to show)) how much ((do)) you agree or disagree with each of the following statements.

((PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ON EACH LINE))

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Can't choose
a. People like me don't have any say about what the government does	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 8
b. The average citizen has considerable influence on politics	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 8
c. Even the best [politician] cannot have much impact because of the way government works	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 8
d. I feel that I have a pretty good understanding of the important political issues facing our country	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 8
e. Elections are a good way of making governments pay attention to what the people think	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 8
f. I think most people are better informed about politics and government than I am	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 8
g. People we elect as [MPs] try to keep the promises they have made during the election	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 8
h. Most [civil servants] can be trusted to do what is best for the country	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 8

<14c) "best" is to be understood as "competent/able"; the word "politician" refers to a person who is elected to public office by popular vote, rather than appointed; "impact" implies "being effective/getting things done"; by "government" we are referring to the system of government, not the current regime.

14d) "pretty good" is to be understood as "rather good", and not the negative reading "quite good".

14e) Here "government" refers to the regime (i.e. any government that has been elected into power). In some countries the meaning of the question can be improved by adding "of any party" after "government" to stress that it does not necessarily have to be the current government. Here, "the people" refers to the nation.

14f) "politics" is to be understood as a general term to cover the political system, political affairs, and political events/procedures.

14g) "MPs" are people elected for national parliament.

14h) "civil servants" are higher level non-elected/non-political government paid officials. They applied for their post and are senior public servants or government administrators.>

<FUNCTIONING OF DEMOCRATIC SYSTEM: new to ISSP>

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

((PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ONLY))

- (✓)
- It works well and needs no changes 1
- It works well but needs some changes 2
- It does not work well and needs a lot of changes 3
- It does not work well and needs to be completely changed 4
- Can't choose 8

<TAXATION: 1 item - new to ISSP>

((And now some questions about taxes))

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

((We mean all taxes together, including [wage deductions], [income tax], [tax on goods and services] and all the rest.))

((PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ONLY))

- (✓)
- Reduce taxes, even if this means spending less on [social services] 1
- OR
- Spend more on [social services], even if this means higher taxes? 2
- Can't choose 8

<"taxes" refers to all forms of state revenue, not only those deducted from people's pay, but also indirect taxes on consumables and social contributions, for example, towards retirement pensions. By "social services" we are referring to government programmes such as health, social security, pensions and education.>

<TAXATION: 3 items from the 1987/1992 Social Inequality modules>

17. Generally, how would you describe taxes in [Country] today ?
(Again, we mean all taxes together, including [wage deductions], [income tax], [tax on goods and services] and all the rest.)

- a. First, for those with high incomes, are taxes ...

((PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ONLY))

- (✓)
- ... much too high, 1
- too high, 2
- about right, 3
- too low, 4
- or, are they much too low? 5
- Can't choose 8

- b. Next, for those with middle incomes, are taxes ...

((PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ONLY))

- (✓)
- ... much too high, 1
- too high, 2
- about right, 3
- too low, 4
- or, are they much too low? 5
- Can't choose 8

17c. Lastly, for those with low incomes, are taxes ...

((PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ONLY))

- (✓)
- ... much too high, 1
- too high, 2
- about right, 3
- too low, 4
- or, are they much too low? 5
- Can't choose 8

<PUBLIC VS PRIVATE CONTROL: 3 items - replaces ISSP 1985 Q29, 1990 Q17>

18. ((Please tick one box on each line to show whether))
 ((Do)) you think each of the following should mainly
 be run by private organisations or companies, or by
 government?

((PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ON EACH LINE))

	Mainly run by private organisations or companies	Mainly run by government	Can't choose
Electricity	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 8
Hospitals	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 8
Banks	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 8

<OPTIONAL QUESTIONS>

<ISSP 1985 Q25, 1990 Q12>

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

((PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ONLY))

- (✓)
- Keeping down inflation 1
- Keeping down unemployment 2
- Can't choose 8

<National deficit: new to ISSP>

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

((PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ONLY))

(✓)

... spend the same amount as now on [social services], even if this means the national deficit or debt stays as it is, 1

OR

... spend less than now on [social services], so that the national deficit or debt can be reduced? 2

Can't choose 8

<Precode: For a definition of "taxation", see Q.16 above.

Answer codes: For a definition of "social services", see also Q.16 above.>

<I.S.E.A. taxation question: new to ISSP>

- 21a. ((Please write in)) How much tax per year, if any, ((do)) you think someone who earns [average annual wage of full-time unskilled worker] should pay ?
(We mean all taxes that are deducted from a person's wages, such as [wage deductions] and [personal income tax].)

((PLEASE WRITE IN AMOUNT OR TICK BOX IF 'NONE' OR 'DON'T KNOW'))

£

NONE 00

DON'T KNOW 999998

- b. And what about someone who earns [twice the amount at a.]? How much tax should they pay per year?

((PLEASE WRITE IN AMOUNT OR TICK BOX IF 'NONE' OR 'DON'T KNOW'))

£

NONE 00

DON'T KNOW 999998

- c. And what about someone who earns [twice the amount at b.]? How much tax should they pay per year?

((PLEASE WRITE IN AMOUNT OR TICK BOX IF 'NONE' OR 'DON'T KNOW'))

£

NONE 00

DON'T KNOW 999998

- d. And what about someone who earns [twice the amount at c.]? How much tax should they pay per year?

((PLEASE WRITE IN AMOUNT OR TICK BOX IF 'NONE' OR 'DON'T KNOW'))

£

NONE 00

DON'T KNOW 999998

<COMPULSORY BACKGROUND VARIABLES>

<In addition to the standard compulsory background variables, each country should provide information about whether the respondent voted in the last [general/federal/presidential] election and which party he/she voted for. The wording of this question is country-specific, but should refer to national elections and preferably mention the date of the last election to aid respondent's memory.>

Furthermore, in countries where voting is not compulsory, reasons for not voting should be asked of those who didn't vote:>

IF DID NOT VOTE

((Please tick one box to show)) Which one of the following reasons comes closest to explaining why you did not ((manage to)) vote at the last [national] election in [date of election].

- (✓)
- I was not eligible or not registered to vote 01
- I wanted to vote but was not able to get to the [use appropriate term for the place where people go to vote] 02
- I didn't understand enough about politics 03
- I was not interested enough in the election 04
- I wanted to vote but forgot to 05
- I never vote for reasons of conscience 06
- I couldn't decide who to vote for 07
- There was no-one I wanted to vote for 08
- Other reason (PLEASE SAY WHAT) 97
-
- Can't choose 98

<OPTIONAL BACKGROUND QUESTION>

<Strength of party affiliation: country-specific.>
