



SUMMARY: LOW-INCOME SUPPORT 2013 OREGON VALUES & BELIEFS STUDY

Project Background: This memo presents summary points related to low-income support from the 2013 Oregon Values & Beliefs study. The summary draws from three surveys conducted in April and May 2013. Final sample sizes were 3971 respondents for Survey #1, 1958 for Survey #2, and 1865 for Survey #3. The questionnaires and findings are available at www.oregonvaluesproject.org.

DHM Research and PolicyInteractive Research designed and conducted the surveys using telephone and online formats to aid accessibility and help obtain a representative sample. Enough interviews were completed in five geographic regions (Central, Eastern, Portland Metro, Southern, and Willamette) to permit statistically reliable analysis at the regional level. The research design used quotas and statistical weighting based on the U.S. Census to ensure representativeness within regions by age, gender, and income. The regions were then weighted proportionally by population per the U.S. Census to yield statewide results.

This study stands out from others in that, when asking questions about policy priorities with cost implications, we informed respondents that rating an item as "important" or "desirable" meant willingness to support some increase in taxes or reallocation of funds from other public services. The visual surveys used \$ symbols to emphasize the real-world implications of policy preferences.

Another distinctive feature of the study is that focal topics recur across the three surveys in a variety of question forms and contexts. High-quality research uses this "test-retest" or "triangulation" method to improve confidence in response validity.

This summary of key findings, observations and conclusions reflects the judgment of the research partners and not necessarily the views of the sponsoring organizations.

Findings

1. Just over half of Oregonians (52%) say that low-income support services are somewhat important or very important, meaning they would support some increase in taxes or reallocation of tax funds to pay for them (S1.16).
2. Nearly six in 10 (58%) Oregonians say **increased help for individuals and families in need** is strongly desirable or somewhat desirable (S2.43).
3. Just over four in 10 (44%) Oregonians say **government-provided child care and adult care services** are strongly desirable or somewhat desirable (S2.44).
4. More than six in 10 (61%) residents say enhanced **human service programs to prevent hunger and homelessness** are strongly desirable or somewhat desirable (S2.45).
5. Just over a third (35%) of Oregonians say **extended jobless benefits for low-income** people are strongly desirable or somewhat desirable (S2.46).



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6. Seven in 10 (70%) residents say **enhanced job training programs for low income people** are strongly desirable or somewhat desirable (S2.47).
7. Nearly six in 10 (59%) Oregonians agree that **it's not the government's business to try to protect people from themselves** (S3.6).
8. No issues relating to low-income support make the top 10 reasons residents think their community will be a better place to live in 10 years (S3.2). But **cutting essential public services** (6%) is the ninth most frequent response category for why residents think their community will be a worse place to live. Six percent (6%) each also mentioned **homelessness** and **too many people depending on welfare**. (S3.3).
9. No issues relating to low-income support make the top 10 reasons residents think Oregon will be a better place to live in 10 years (S2.2). **Too many people on welfare** is offered by 8% of residents and ranked ninth as a reason why Oregon will be a worse place to live (S2.3).

Observations and Conclusions

While poverty and homelessness do not come up spontaneously as top priorities for Oregonians, residents would still like to see these issues addressed by their local government officials. This view is evident even in questions involving increased taxes or reallocations from other public programs.

By slender majority, Oregonians are generally supportive of low-income support services.

Residents are generally supportive of increased help for people in need, human services programs, and enhanced job training programs, but are less supportive of government-provided childcare and extended jobless benefits for low-income persons.

Among measures to support people in need, Oregonians are most likely to say that enhanced job training programs for low-income people is desirable, with seven in 10 residents in support.