



SUMMARY: THE ECONOMY AND JOBS 2013 OREGON VALUES & BELIEFS STUDY

Project Background: This memo presents summary points related to the economy and jobs 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. In an open response question format, **unemployment/jobs** was the most commonly mentioned priority that Oregonians would like to see both local and state government do something about (mentioned by 11%). Five percent (5%) of Oregonians volunteered **economy/economic growth** as a priority for both local and state government officials (S1.4-5).
2. From a list of 20 different public services, only 43% of Oregonians say that **economic development like subsidies and tax breaks for business development or expansion** is very or somewhat important, with only 15% who believe it is very important, making this form of economic development the lowest-ranked priority for public services in Oregon (S1.14).
3. Eighteen percent (18%) of Oregon residents volunteer that **stronger economics** is why **Oregon will be a better place to live in 10 years** in an open response question format. This trails 24% who mention **environmental awareness** (S2.2). In contrast, 10% mention **the economy** in saying why **Oregon will be a worse place to live in 10 years** (S2.3).



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4. Twenty one percent (21%) of respondents volunteer **business growth and a stronger economy** as why their **community will be a better place to live in 10 years**, alongside **making progress/moving forward** (21%) and closely followed by **a caring/involved community** (20%) (S3.2).
5. Fifty-seven percent (57%) of Oregonians feel that **our country would be stronger if we consumed less**, compared to thirty-five percent (35%) who feel that **we need to buy things to support a strong economy** (S1.31).
6. Over half of Oregonians (55%) identify with the statement that the government should **reduce deficit spending**, with 38% in strong agreement (S1.33). Meanwhile, four in ten (39%) feel the government should **stimulate the economy through spending on jobs and infrastructure**, with fewer than 18% in strong agreement.
7. Four in ten (42%) Oregonians believe that **reducing personal income taxes and capital gains taxes will spark economic growth**, while nearly the same percentage (41%) believe that **reducing personal income taxes and capital gains taxes will strangle essential public services** and support for those in need (S2.14).
8. Fifty-nine percent (59%) of Oregonians believe that **economic growth will be more important than addressing climate change** in 10 years. Just over a third of respondents (37%) believe this trend is desirable (S2.17).
9. Presented with a list of possible economic development actions, Oregonians regard **build and communicate a pro-business attitude in local and state government** (56%) as slightly less desirable than **build and communicate a pro-environment attitude in local and state government** (60%) (S3.22-26).
10. In a second set of possible actions that could mean a tax increase or funding shifts to areas within economic development, nearly seven in ten (69%) Oregonians find **increasing workforce training** strongly or somewhat desirable. **Provide public subsidies and tax breaks to attract new jobs & industries** followed distantly (46%) (S3. 27-31).
11. Sixty-five percent (65%) of Oregonians feel that both **maintaining and improving traditional industries** and **attracting new and emerging industries** are the best choices for economic development in Oregon. Only 9% find that Oregon should de-emphasize industrial development as an economic goal (S3.32).
12. Of the traditional industries that should be maintained and improved, **logging/timber** ranks highest (36%), followed by **agriculture** (20%) and **fishing** (11%) (S3.33). Within new and emerging industries, **technology** (27%) ranks far above industries such as **solar energy** (6%) and all other

responses (5% or less) (S3.34).

13. Presented with a list of workplace priorities, 46% of citizens most commonly indicate **doing a job I can be proud of** as most important, followed by **enjoying work, having fun** (39%), **obtaining health insurance coverage** (33%), and **earning a good salary** (31%) (S2.54-65).

Observations and Conclusions

In a notable result, fewer than 20% of Oregonians say that economic growth and unemployment are issues they want their state and local government officials to do something about. Together these may be the top-mentioned priority, but residents have other things on their minds as well.

Oregonians are lukewarm about actions the government can take to help the economy. They rated economic development like subsidies and tax breaks for business attraction or expansion the lowest of 20 different services, while a minority of Oregonians support reducing government regulations and revamping land use laws to help the economy.

Reducing business taxes and providing publicly funded venture capital for start-up companies also lack positive majority support. On the other hand, we do find statewide support for increasing timber harvests in dense, over-crowded forest stands and a willingness to pay something more to increase workforce training.

Given 12 values that people often feel are important in what they do for a living, among all Oregonians the top four are: doing a job I can be proud of; enjoying work, having fun; obtaining health insurance coverage; and earning a good salary. The lowest-ranked are having people admire my accomplishments and being in a leadership position. Contributing to society's benefit is also in the bottom half.