

# ROLE OF GOVERNMENT 2009

(selected results v.2009-1)

Belgium  
Czech Republic  
Hungary  
Ireland  
Netherlands  
Slovak Republic



# **INTERNATIONAL LEGISLATOR SURVEY PROJECT**

The International Legislator Survey Project (ILSP) is an academically driven endeavor. The purpose of ILSP is to track, study and understand the changing nature of legislators' attitudes on issues with policy implications. The goal is to provide reliable quantitative measures reflective of legislator's attitudes. The summary results presented here characterize the opinions of legislators in 6 European countries (Belgium, Czech Republic, Hungary, Ireland, Netherlands and Slovakia) on the role of government. The snapshot of results made available here along with full reporting of responses can be used to compare legislator attitudes among countries, frame policy making, and inform advocacy initiatives. The intention of the International Legislator Survey project is to periodically contact legislators in a number of countries and gather their opinions on a topic of interest, report back the results of the study, analyze the data and make it widely available to community.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

The author would like to acknowledge all the 1,482 legislators who were contacted during the data collection and especially those 335 who decided to respond.

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by: Tibor Tóth, Ph.D.

## METHODOLOGY

The data presented here was collected using a self administered e-mail based census conducted in the spring of 2009. A total of 1,482 legislators in 6 countries were contacted between March 9th and May 15th. The contact addresses of legislators along with demographic information such as gender and year of birth were gathered from publicly available sources or from administrative offices of particular legislatures. Legislators were contacted by e-mail up to 5 times. First a pre-notification e-mail was sent, then a questionnaire in a Word format was e-mailed, this was followed up by another e-mail with the questionnaire. A reminder e-mail message was sent without the questionnaire and the last contact was another e-mail message with the questionnaire. The contact e-mails asked legislators to complete the word questionnaire and e-mail it back. Respondents were assured of the confidentiality of their responses in line with the University of Delaware's Human Subject and Review Board's stipulations for this study.

Most of the questions in the questionnaire were a replicate of the Role of Government study conducted by the International Social Survey Programme (ISSP) – a population based study. Prior to contacting legislators, permission was obtained from ISSP to use their questions. Additional questions related to the current economic crisis were incorporated in the survey instrument. In addition to the English language instrument, several language versions were created. Legislators in Belgium, Ireland and the Netherlands received the English versions of the instrument, legislators from Hungary received a Hungarian instrument and legislators from the Czech Republic and Slovakia received a Slovak version of the instrument.

Responses were recorded as they arrived - legislators who responded were excluded from consequent mailings. At the conclusion of the field work, 84 e-mails to legislators were returned as undeliverable, and 41 legislators requested to be removed from the mailing list. A total of 335 complete responses were received, with an effective response rate of 25%.

Once the responses were processed, tests were performed to find out if there are any differences between those who responded and the entire legislator populations. Tests indicated that in 5 out of the 6 countries respondents did not significantly differ from the original legislator population in terms of their age group and gender distribution. The only country where significant differences were observed was the Netherlands – very likely an outcome of the lower response rate. To adjust for these differences, all the responses were weighted using a variable that adjusted the ratios of age group/gender distribution of the responses to be reflective of the original legislator list.

## LIMITATIONS

While the data collection method, response rates and consequent response weighting assures that the collected data is representative of the legislators in individual countries, our tabulations presented here do not make inferences about all the legislators in individual countries but only present the responses of those who participated. This is the reason why confidence intervals are not calculated and presented here.

We are cognizant of the fact that opinions expressed in self-administered surveys might sometimes differ from individual actions.

Most of the response rates achieved during this study are satisfactory but all could be improved to minimize non-response bias.

The wording of some questions might introduce some ambiguity – especially in a context of different political cultures – however, we maintained the wording of the ISSP replicate questions to allow for comparison with population studies on the same topic.

Every attempt was made to produce accurate language versions of the questionnaire when appropriate – however we recognize the fact that cultural differences and policy practices differ significantly among countries, thus cross country comparison should only proceed with local knowledge of the countries studied.

# BELGIUM

Number of legislators	218
Undeliverable	3
Refused response	2
Completed questionnaires	52
Effective response rate	24%



## ECONOMY

Diverging opinions on the role of government in the economy are common. Belgium's legislators were asked to indicate their preference for government involvement in the economy (Figure 1). Clearly, legislators who responded from Belgium do not shy away from government help to industries to develop new products and technology. Also, they see a role for the government in financing projects to create new jobs. However, they tend to be more cautious in decreasing government regulation of business or providing government support to ailing industries.

The issue of government responsibility to provide services is addressed next. Legislators were offered 10 different areas of influence. Looking at the responses, four tasks clearly stand out (Figure 2). Legislators strongly support the idea of government responsibility to provide health care for the sick, provision of decent standard of living for the old and the financial support to university students from lower income families. Governments often have to balance increasing taxes to pay for services and decreasing taxes to encourage domestic consumption. A plurality of legislator respondents from Belgium indicates that taxes for middle and low income groups are too high, while almost half of respondents indicate that taxes for high income groups are too low (Figure 3).

## ECONOMIC SLOWDOWN

The current global economic slowdown frames much of current government action. More than 70% of legislator respondents from Belgium are in favor of engaging the government in large scale investment projects (Figure 4). About half of respondents are in favor of the government providing mortgage guarantees and cutting government spending. About a third of respondents indicated support for the creation of a bank that would purchase toxic assets, decrease corporate taxes or decrease personal taxes. No legislators indicated being strongly in favor or in favor

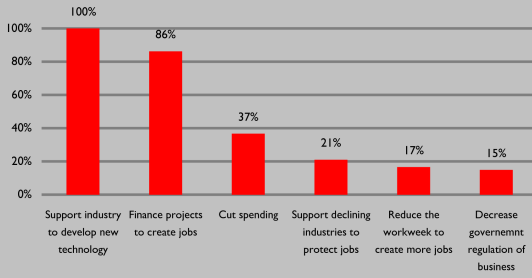
of increasing corporate or personal taxes or cutting social benefits. The impact of the current economic crisis in individual countries is exacerbated by the interconnected nature of economic activity. Legislators were asked to indicate their own estimate of the impact of this slowdown on cooperation among countries (Figure 5). About 70% of legislator respondents from Belgium indicated that they expect that the current economic slowdown will cause more protectionism among countries. About 30% of respondents indicated that the economic crisis of today will cause more cooperation. No respondent indicated unchanged levels of cooperation among countries due to the economic crisis.

## CITIZEN AND THE STATE

Legislative actions often frame the relationship between the government and the citizen. To this extent, legislators were asked to assess the treatment of people by public officials (Figure 6). Almost 60% of responding legislators from Belgium believe that the treatment of people by public officials probably does not depend on whom they know. However, 27% of respondents indicated that the treatment the public receives from officials probably depends on whom they know. The relationship between the citizen and the state is often best qualified in acute situations. Legislators were presented with government actions in case of a suspected terrorist threat (Figure 7). Almost 60% of legislators supported tapping people's telephone conversations, 30% supported the authorities' right to stop and search people on the street and none of the respondents indicated that authorities should probably or definitely have the right to detain people for as long as they want without putting them on trial. Legislative work takes place in a framework of beliefs and values. Just over 60% of legislators indicate that people should follow their conscience on occasion. About 17% indicated that people should obey the law without exception (Figure 8).

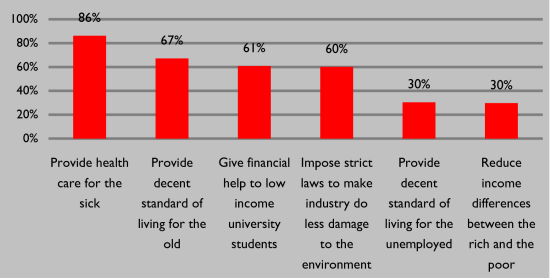
### 1. What should the Government do for the economy?

Percent indicating **Strong Support** or **Support for.....**



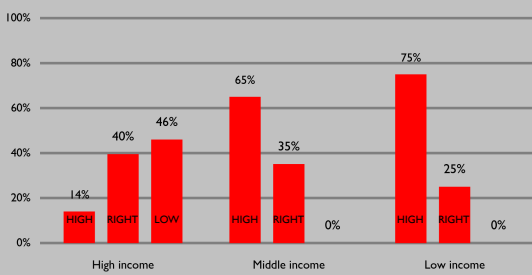
### 2. Should it be the Government's responsibility to....?

Percent indicating **Definitely should be** (top 6 out of 10 options)



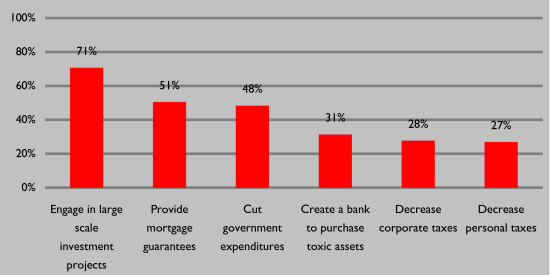
### 3. Describe taxes in your country for different income groups.

Percent indicating **High, About Right, Low** (can't choose excluded)



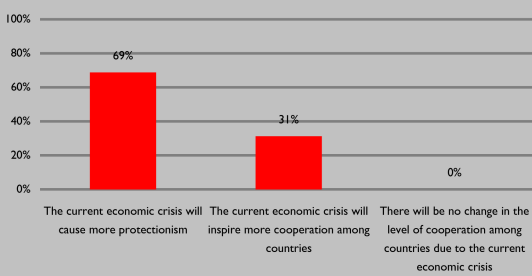
### 4. Support for Government response to the economic crisis.

Percent indicating **Strongly in Favor** or **In Favor** (6 highest ranked)



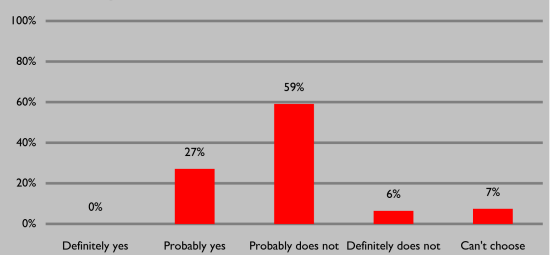
### 5. Impact of economic crisis on cooperation among countries.

Percent indicating impact of current crisis (can't choose excluded)



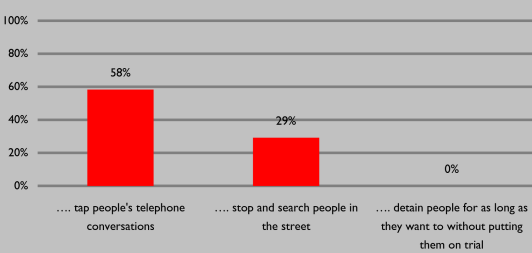
### 6. Does the treatment of people by public officials depend on who they know?

Percent indicating choice



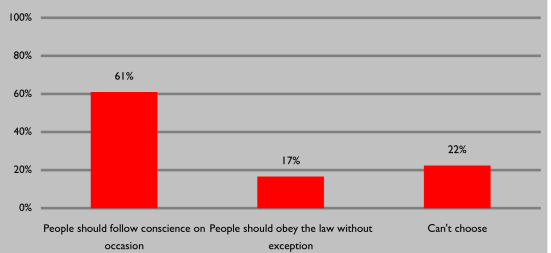
### 7. If the Government suspects a terrorist act was about to happen, should the authorities have the right to.....?

Percent indicating **Definitely yes** or **Probably yes** (can't choose excluded)



### 8. Should people obey the law without exception or follow conscience on occasion?

Percent indicating choice.



# CZECH REPUBLIC



Number of legislators	281
Undeliverable	10
Refused response	4
Completed questionnaires	76
Effective response rate	28%

## ECONOMY

Over the last 20 years the Czech Republic has successfully transitioned from a centrally planned to a market economy. However, the extent of government involvement in the economy is still contentious. Czech legislators were asked to indicate their preference (Figure 1). Respondents show strong support for government help to industries to develop new products and technology. Financing of projects to create new jobs and cutting government spending is also supported. However, they tend to be more cautious in decreasing government regulation of business or providing government support to ailing industries. The issue of government responsibility to provide services is addressed next. Legislators were offered 10 different areas of influence. Looking at the responses, two tasks with support over 50% stand out (Figure 2). Legislators support the idea of government responsibility to provide health care for the sick, and the provision of decent standard of living for the old. Governments often have to balance increasing taxes to pay for services and decreasing taxes to encourage domestic consumption. A plurality of legislator respondents from the Czech Republic indicates that taxes for middle and low income groups are just right, while half of respondents indicate that taxes for high income groups are too low (Figure 3).

## ECONOMIC SLOWDOWN

The current global economic slowdown frames much of current government action. Almost 80% of responding Czech legislators is in favor of engaging the government in large scale investment projects (Figure 4). Almost 70% support cutting government expenditures and 64% favor the curtailment of employment of foreign workers as a response to the economic downturn. Interestingly 38% of respondents indicated being in favor of decreasing corporate taxes while 24% indicated being in favor of increasing corporate taxes. About 11% of legislators indicate

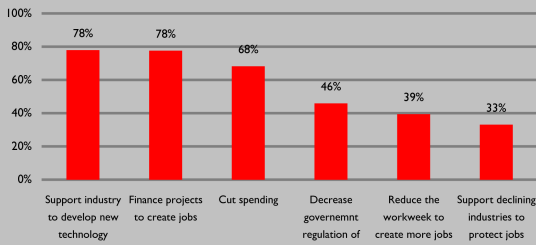
being in favor of cutting social benefits. The impact of the current economic crisis in individual countries is exacerbated by the interconnected nature of economic activity. Legislators were asked to indicate their own estimate of the impact of this slowdown on cooperation among countries. About 72% of Czech legislators indicated that they expect the current economic slowdown to cause more protectionism among countries. 22% of respondents indicated unchanged levels of cooperation among countries due to the economic crisis. About 6% of respondents indicated that the economic crisis of today will cause more cooperation.

## CITIZEN AND THE STATE

Legislative actions often frame the relationship between the government and the citizen. To this extent, legislators were asked to assess the treatment of people by public officials (Figure 6). More than half (55%) of legislators responding from the Czech Republic believe that the treatment of people by public officials probably does depend on whom they know, 17% believe that the treatment definitely depends on whom people know. Only 5% indicated that the treatment of people by officials definitely does not depend on connections. The relationship between the citizen and the state is often best qualified in acute situations. Legislators were presented with government actions in case of a suspected terrorist threat (Figure 7). Almost 94% supported tapping people's telephone conversations, 66% supported the authorities' right to stop and search people on the street, and about 22% of respondents indicated that authorities should probably or definitely have the right to detain people for as long as they want without putting them on trial. Legislative work (often technical in nature) takes place in a framework of beliefs and values. Just over 34% of legislators indicate that people should follow conscience on occasion. Almost twice as many (66%) indicated that people should obey the law without exception (Figure 8).

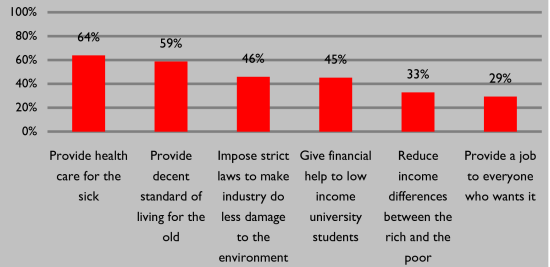
### 1. What should the Government do for the economy?

Percent indicating Strong Support or Support for.....



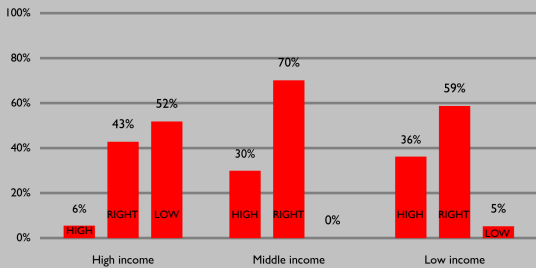
### 2. Should it be the Government's responsibility to....?

Percent indicating Definitely should be (top 6 out of 10 options)



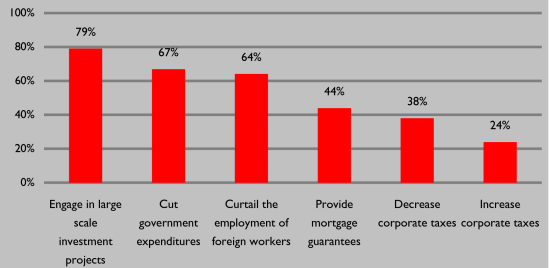
### 3. Describe taxes in your country for different income groups.

Percent indicating High, About Right, Low (can't choose excluded)



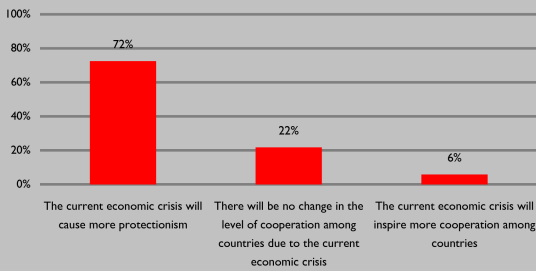
### 4. Support for Government response to the economic crisis.

Percent indicating Strongly in Favor or In Favor (6 highest ranked)



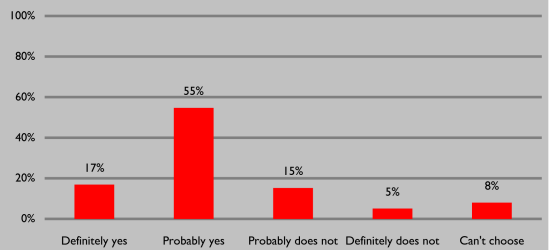
### 5. Impact of economic crisis on cooperation among countries.

Percent indicating impact of current crisis (can't choose excluded)



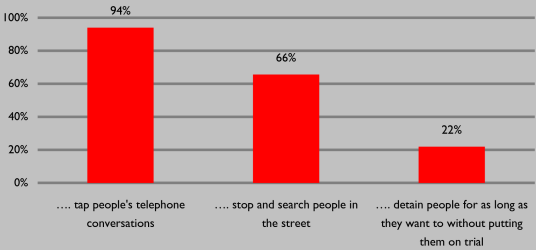
### 6. Does the treatment of people by public officials depend on who they know?

Percent indicating choice



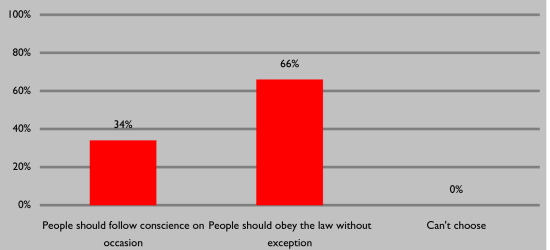
### 7. If the Government suspects a terrorist act was about to happen, should the authorities have the right to.....?

Percent indicating Definitely yes or Probably yes (can't choose excluded)



### 8. Should people obey the law without exception or follow conscience on occasion?

Percent indicating choice.



# HUNGARY

Number of legislators	385
Undeliverable	55
Refused response	9
Completed questionnaires	70
Effective response rate	22%



## ECONOMY

In recent history, Hungary questioned the role of the government in the economy before other countries in Central and Eastern Europe. Hungarian legislators were asked to indicate their preference for government involvement in the economy today (Figure 1).

Respondents show strong support to cut government spending (93%), followed by government financing of projects to create jobs (82%). Respondents are also in favor of government support to develop new products and technologies (62%) and at the same time supporting ailing industries to protect jobs (55%).

5 The issue of government responsibility is addressed next. Legislators were offered 10 different areas of influence. One area of responsibility clearly stands out – imposing strict laws to make industry do less damage to the environment (63% indicating strong support). Interestingly, all the other actions received significantly less support. Governments often have to balance increasing taxes to pay for services and decreasing taxes to encourage domestic consumption. An overwhelming majority (81%) of legislators from Hungary indicate that taxes for middle income groups are too high, (74%) indicate that taxes are too high for the low income group and 41% indicate the taxes are too high for the high income group (Figure 3).

## ECONOMIC SLOWDOWN

The current global economic slowdown frames much of current government action. This is especially the case in Hungary that was significantly impacted by the downturn. All of responding Hungarian legislators are in favor of cutting government expenditures in light of the economic crisis (Figure 4). Over 90% support decreasing personal taxes, and 76% support decreasing corporate taxes. The same proportion of Hungarian legislators supports cutting social benefits. Over 70% favor government engagement in large scale investment projects.

The impact of the current economic crisis in individual

countries is exacerbated by the interconnected nature of economic activity. Legislators were asked to indicate their own estimate of the impact of this slowdown on cooperation among countries (Figure 5). About 48% of Hungarian legislators indicated that they expect that the current economic slowdown will cause more protectionism among countries. Just over a quarter of respondents (26%) indicated unchanged levels of cooperation among countries due to the economic crisis. The same proportion estimates that the economic crisis of today will cause more cooperation among countries.

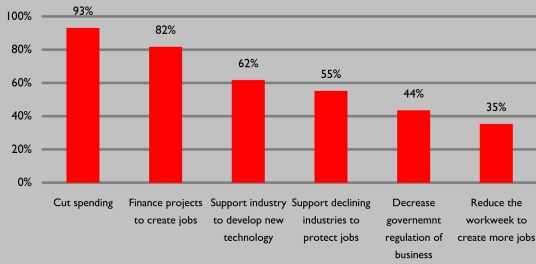
## CITIZEN AND THE STATE

Legislative actions often frame the relationship between the government and the citizen. To this extent, legislators were asked to assess the treatment of people by public officials (Figure 6). About 74% of legislators responding from Hungary believe that the treatment of people by public officials definitely does or probably does depend on whom they know. Only about 26% believe that the treatment people receive from public officials probably does not depend on connections. The relationship between the citizen and the state is often best qualified in acute situations. Legislators were presented with government actions in case of a suspected terrorist threat (Figure 7). Almost 65% of legislators supported tapping people's telephone conversations, 63% supported the authorities' right to stop and search people on the street, and about 15% of respondents indicated that authorities should probably or definitely have the right to detain people for as long as they want without putting them on trial. Legislative work takes place in a framework of beliefs and values. Just over 36% of legislators indicate that people should follow their conscience on occasion. About 56% indicated that people should obey the law without exception (Figure 8).



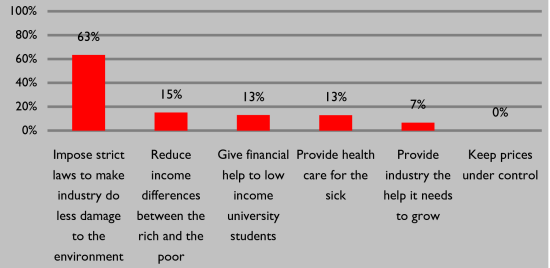
### 1. What should the Government do for the economy?

Percent indicating **Strong Support** or **Support for.....**



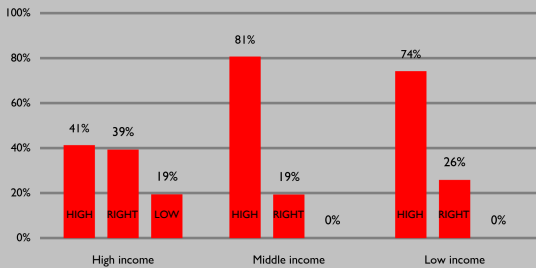
### 2. Should it be the Government's responsibility to....?

Percent indicating **Definitely should be** (top 6 out of 10 options)



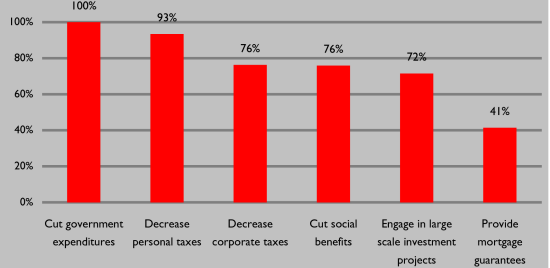
### 3. Describe taxes in your country for different income groups.

Percent indicating **High, About Right, Low** (can't choose excluded)



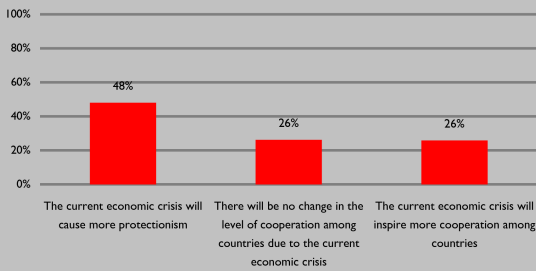
### 4. Support for Government response to the economic crisis.

Percent indicating **Strongly in Favor** or **In Favor** (6 highest ranked)



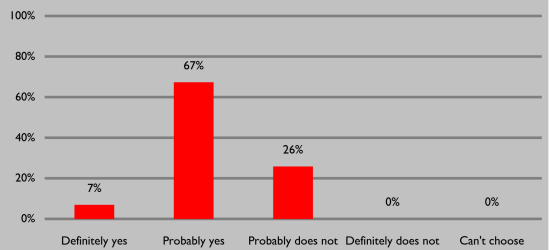
### 5. Impact of economic crisis on cooperation among countries.

Percent indicating impact of current crisis (can't choose excluded)



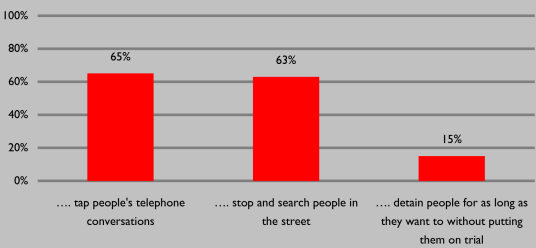
### 6. Does the treatment of people by public officials depend on who they know?

Percent indicating choice



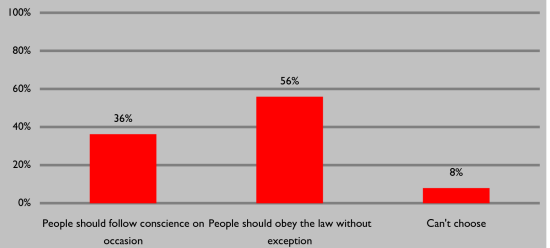
### 7. If the Government suspects a terrorist act was about to happen, should the authorities have the right to.....?

Percent indicating **Definitely yes** or **Probably yes** (can't choose excluded)



### 8. Should people obey the law without exception or follow conscience on occasion?

Percent indicating choice



# IRELAND

Number of legislators	225
Undeliverable	2
Refused response	6
Completed questionnaires	50
Effective response rate	23%



## ECONOMY

Ireland's economic success in the last 15 years and the economic downturn in the last 9 months have provoked renewed discussion on the role of the government in the economy. Irish legislators were asked to indicate their preference for government involvement in the economy today (Figure 1). Respondents show strong support for industry to develop new technology (100%), followed by government financing of projects to create jobs (91%) and cutting government spending (66%). Interestingly only about 19% of respondents support decreasing government regulation of business. The issue of government responsibility is addressed next. Legislators were offered 10 different areas of influence. There are three responsibilities with over 80% support among legislators – providing decent standard of living for the old, providing health care for the sick and providing decent housing for those who can't afford it. Governments often have to balance increasing taxes to pay for services and decreasing taxes to encourage domestic consumption. In Ireland a plurality of respondents indicates that taxes are just right for all three income groups (Figure 3). Over 80% of respondents indicate that taxes are just right for the high income group.

## ECONOMIC SLOWDOWN

The current global economic slowdown frames much of current government action; this is especially the case in Ireland that has felt the economic downturn more because of its relative size and openness. About 90% of responding Irish legislators are in favor of engaging in large scale investment projects and increasing personal taxes (Figure 4). This seems to contradict the data from the previous chart where more than half of the respondents indicate that taxes are just right. This contradiction is on the surface only - the taxes are just right for the groups however, because of the economic crisis the state is experiencing higher demand for

services and those need to be financed.

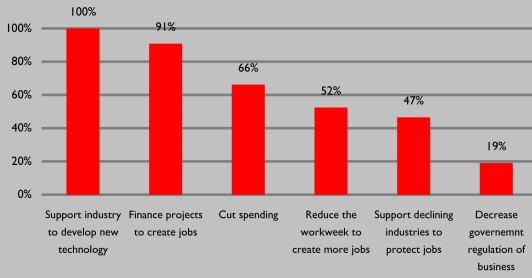
The impact of the current economic crisis in individual countries is exacerbated by the interconnected nature of economic activity. Legislators in Ireland are evenly split (38% and 38%) between more cooperation and more protectionism due to the current economic crisis (Figure 5). About 24% also indicate that the current economic slowdown will not have any impact on the level of cooperation among countries.

## CITIZEN AND THE STATE

Legislative actions often frame the relationship between the government and the citizen. To this extent, legislators were asked to assess the treatment of people by public officials (Figure 6). About 57% of legislators responding from Ireland believe that the treatment of people by public officials probably does depend on whom they know. None of the legislators reported thinking that the treatment people get from officials definitely depends on whom they know. Only about 26% believe that the treatment people receive from public officials probably does not depend on whom people know. About 18% of legislators are convinced that having contacts has no influence on the treatment people get from public officials. The relationship between the citizen and the state is often best qualified in acute situations. Legislators were presented with government actions in case of a suspected terrorist threat (Figure 7). Almost 43% of legislators supported tapping people's telephone conversations, 18% supported the authorities' right to stop and search people on the street and about 16% of respondents indicated that authorities should probably or definitely have the right to detain people for as long as they want without putting them on trial. Legislative work takes place in a framework of beliefs and values. About 73% of legislators indicated that people should follow their conscience on occasion. About 27% indicated that people should obey the law without exception (Figure 8).

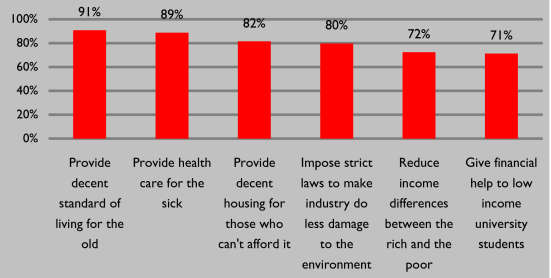
### 1. What should the Government do for the economy?

Percent indicating **Strong Support** or **Support** for.....



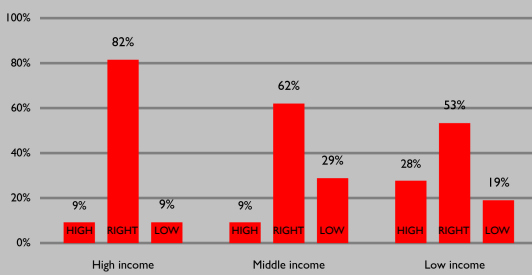
### 2. Should it be the Government's responsibility to....?

Percent indicating **Definitely should be** (top 6 out of 10 options)



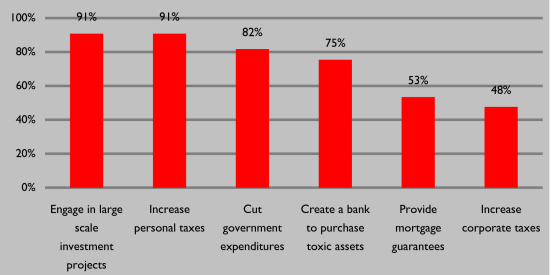
### 3. Describe taxes in your country for different income groups.

Percent indicating **High, About Right, Low** (can't choose excluded)



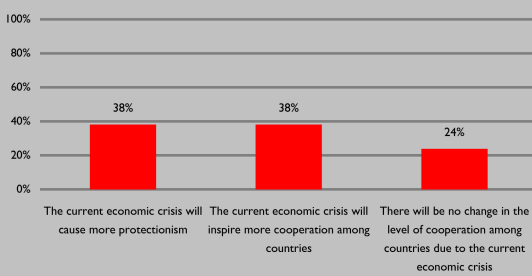
### 4. Support for Government response to the economic crisis.

Percent indicating **Strongly in Favor** or **In Favor** (6 highest ranked)



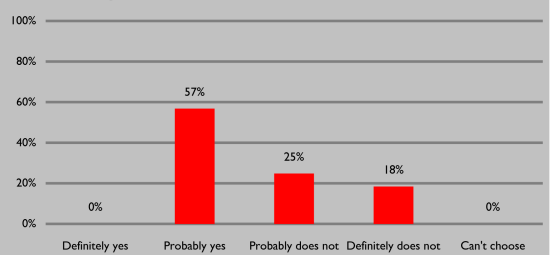
### 5. Impact of economic crisis on cooperation among countries.

Percent indicating impact of current crisis (can't choose excluded)



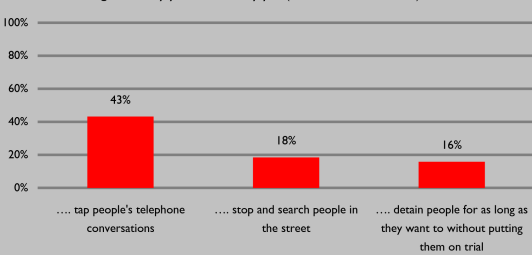
### 6. Does the treatment of people by public officials depend on who they know?

Percent indicating choice



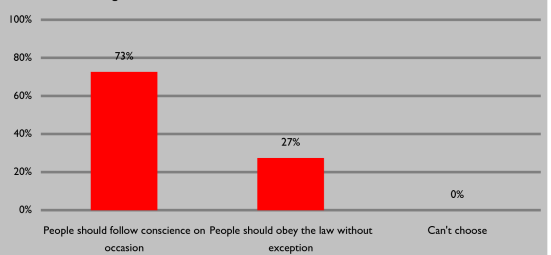
### 7. If the Government suspects a terrorist act was about to happen, should the authorities have the right to.....?

Percent indicating **Definitely yes** or **Probably yes** (can't choose excluded)

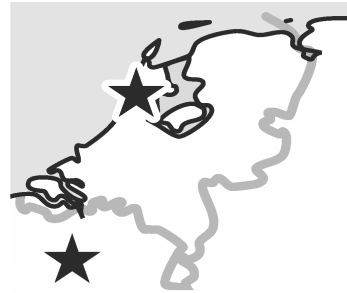


### 8. Should people obey the law without exception or follow conscience on occasion?

Percent indicating choice.



# NETHERLANDS



Number of legislators	223
Undeliverable	11
Refused response	18
Completed questionnaires	35
Effective response rate	18%

## ECONOMY

Diverging opinions on the role of government in the economy are common. Legislators from the Netherlands were asked to indicate their preference on this issue (Figure 1). Responses indicate that 95% of legislators are in favor of government financing of projects to create new jobs, followed by 64% of legislators indicating being in favor of supporting industry to develop new technology. The other government actions are supported by significantly lower proportion of legislators. The issue of government responsibility is addressed next. Legislators were offered 10 different areas of influence (Figure 2).

The respondents are most likely to indicate government responsibility when it comes to imposing strict laws to make industry do less environmental damage (76%), providing health care for the sick, and providing a decent standard of living for the old. Not tabulated here are the 5% support for the provision of jobs to everyone who wants it and 0% support to assign to the government the responsibility to keep prices under control. Governments often have to balance increasing taxes to pay for services and decreasing taxes to encourage domestic consumption. More than half of responding Dutch legislators indicates that taxes for all groups are just about right (Figure 3). About 32% of responding legislators indicate taxes for the middle income group to be too high.

## ECONOMIC SLOWDOWN

The current global economic slowdown frames much of current government action in the Netherlands. As a response to the current economic crisis, about 87% of legislators support the engagement of the government in large scale investment projects and 75% support the creation of a bank to buy up toxic assets (Figure 4). The other government actions intended to combat the current economic crisis receive less than 50% support from Dutch legislators. The impact of the current economic crisis in individual countries is exacerbated

by the interconnected nature of economic activity. Legislators were asked to indicate their own estimate of the impact of this slowdown on cooperation among countries (Figure 5). About 65% of Dutch legislators indicated that they expect that the current economic slowdown will cause more protectionism. About 26% of respondents indicated that the economic crisis of today will cause more cooperation among countries. About 10% of responding legislators from the Netherlands expect unchanged levels of cooperation among countries due to the economic crisis.

## CITIZEN AND THE STATE

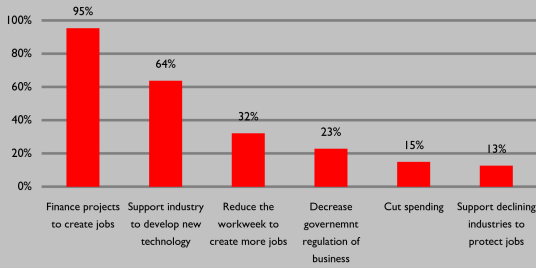
Legislative actions often frame the relationship between the government and the citizen. To this extent, legislators were asked to assess the treatment of people by public officials (Figure 6). About 43% of legislators responding believe that the treatment of people by public officials probably does depend on whom they know. About a quarter of the legislators indicate that the treatment people receive definitely does not depend on whom people know. Still, about 32% of them estimate that the treatment people get from public officials is dependent on their contacts.

The relationship between the citizen and the state is often best qualified in acute situations. Legislators were presented with government actions in case of a suspected terrorist threat (Figure 7). Almost 38% of legislators supported tapping people's telephone conversations, 25% supported the authorities' right to stop and search people on the street and none of the respondents indicated that authorities should probably or definitely have the right to detain people for as long as they want without putting them on trial. Legislative work takes place in a framework of beliefs and values.

Just over 86% of legislators indicate that people should follow their conscience on occasion. About 14% indicated that people should obey the law without exception (Figure 8).

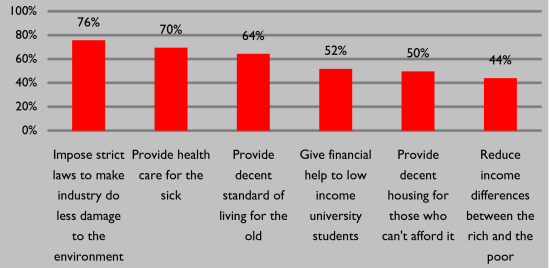
### 1. What should the Government do for the economy?

Percent indicating Strong Support or Support for.....



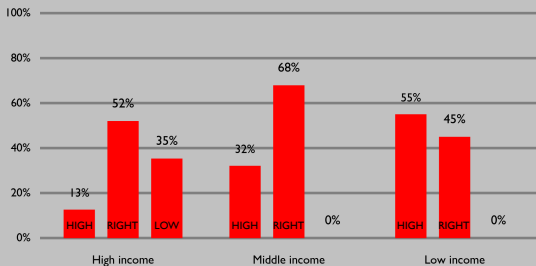
### 2. Should it be the Government's responsibility to....?

Percent indicating Definitely should be (top 6 out of 10 options)



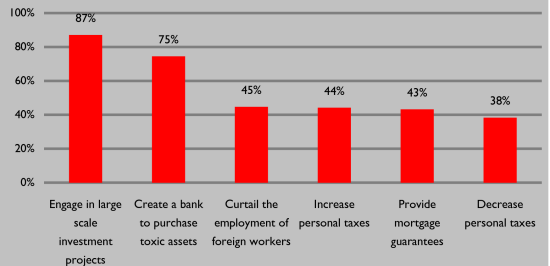
### 3. Describe taxes in your country for different income groups.

Percent indicating High, About Right, Low (can't choose excluded)



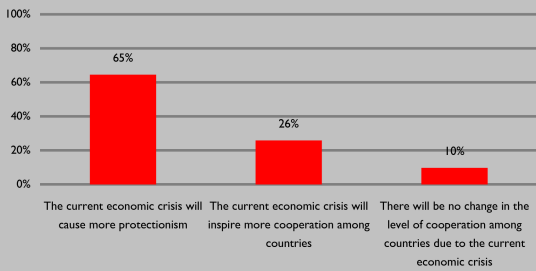
### 4. Support for Government response to the economic crisis.

Percent indicating Strongly in Favor or In Favor (6 highest ranked)



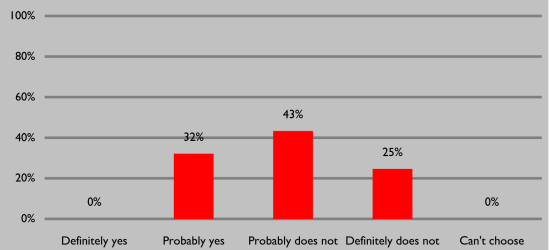
### 5. Impact of economic crisis on cooperation among countries.

Percent indicating impact of current crisis (can't choose excluded)



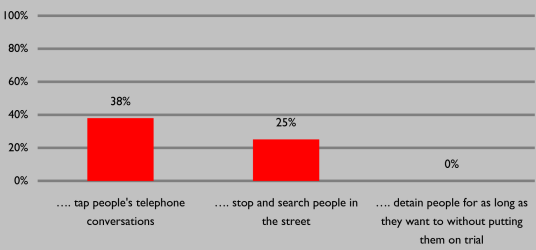
### 6. Does the treatment of people by public officials depend on who they know?

Percent indicating choice



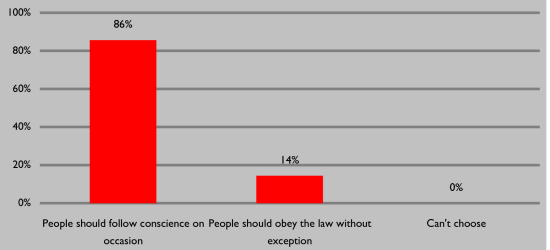
### 7. If the Government suspects a terrorist act was about to happen, should the authorities have the right to.....?

Percent indicating Definitely yes or Probably yes (can't choose excluded)



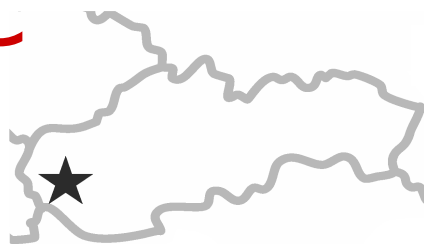
### 8. Should people obey the law without exception or follow conscience on occasion?

Percent indicating choice



# SLOVAK REPUBLIC

Number of legislators	150
Undeliverable	3
Refused response	2
Completed questionnaires	52
Effective response rate	36%



## ECONOMY

Diverging opinions on the role of government in the economy are common. Legislators from the Slovak Republic were asked to indicate their preference (Figure 1). All respondents are in favor of cutting government spending, 94% of legislators are in favor of government financing of projects to create new jobs, followed by 64% of legislators indicating being in favor of supporting industry to develop new technology. The other government actions are supported by significantly lower proportion of legislators. The issue of government responsibility is addressed next. Legislators were offered 10 different areas of influence (Figure 2). Interestingly, in Slovakia, only one area of government influence – imposing strict laws to make industry do less damage to the environment – is considered a government responsibility by more than 50% of respondents. Governments often have to balance increasing taxes to pay for services and decreasing taxes to encourage domestic consumption. Almost 70% of respondents indicate that taxes for the high income group are about right (Figure 3). For the middle income group - respondents are evenly split between considering taxes being too high and taxes being just right. For the low income group, over 50% responding legislators in Slovakia indicate that taxes are too high.

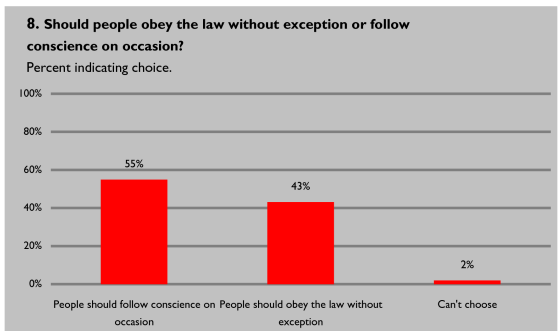
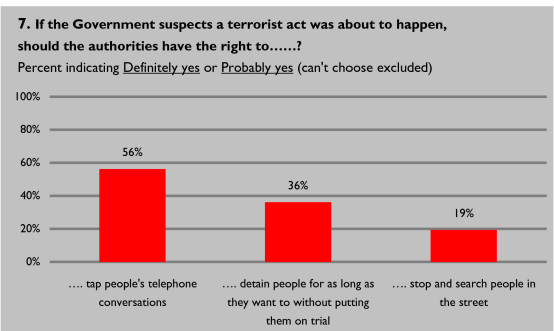
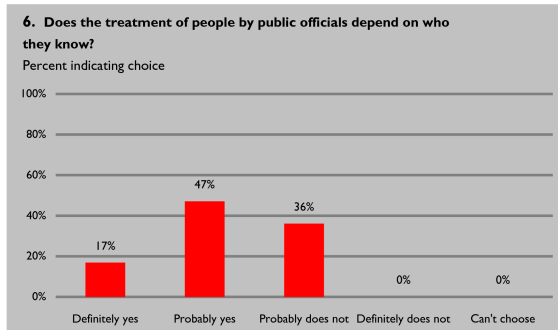
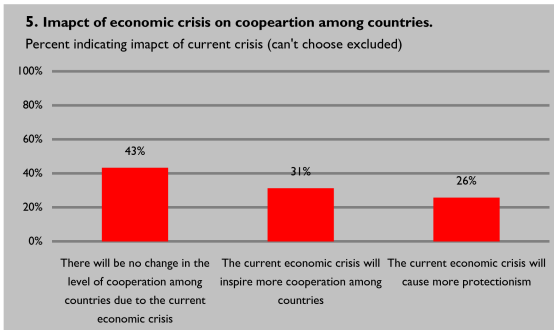
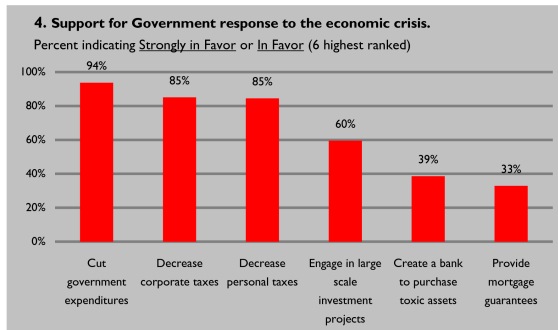
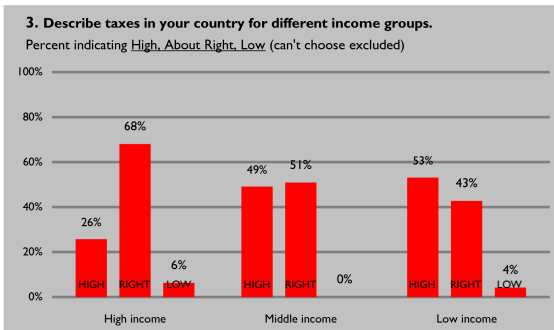
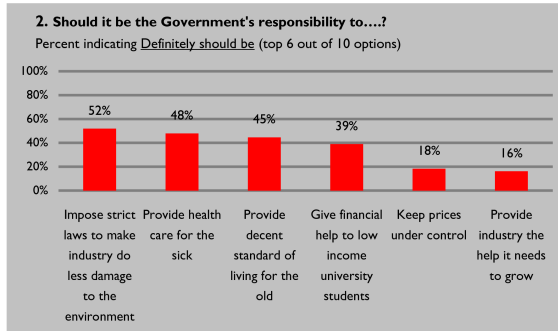
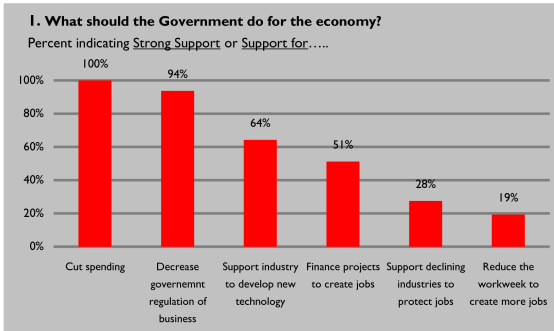
## ECONOMIC SLOWDOWN

The current global economic slowdown frames much of current government action in Slovakia. As a response to the current economic crisis, 94% of legislators support cutting government spending, 85% support decreasing corporate taxes, and also decreasing personal taxes, and 60% support government engagement in large scale investment projects (Figure 4). The impact of the current economic crisis in individual countries is exacerbated by the interconnected nature of economic activity. Legislators were asked to indicate their own estimate of the

impact of this slowdown on cooperation among countries (Figure 5). About 43% of Slovak legislators indicated that they expect that the current economic slowdown will cause no change in the level of cooperation among countries. About 31% of respondents indicated that the economic crisis of today will inspire more cooperation among countries. About 26% of responding legislators from the Slovak Republic expect increased protectionism due to the current economic crisis.

## CITIZEN AND THE STATE

Legislative actions often frame the relationship between the government and the citizen. To this extent, legislators were asked to assess the treatment of people by public officials (Figure 6). About 47% of legislators responding believe that the treatment of people by public officials probably does depend on whom they know. About 17% of the legislators indicate that the treatment people receive definitely does depend on whom people know. A bit over a third of responding legislators estimate that the treatment people get from public officials probably does not depend on their contacts. None of the responding legislators suggested that the treatment people received definitely does not depend on who they know. The relationship between the citizen and the state is often best qualified in acute situations. Legislators were presented with government actions in case of a suspected terrorist threat (Figure 7). Almost 56% of legislators supported tapping people's telephone conversations, and 36% of respondents indicated that authorities should probably or definitely have the right to detain people for as long as they want without putting them on trial. About 19% of legislators indicated that the authorities definitely or probably should have the right to stop and search people on the street. Legislative work takes place in a framework of beliefs and values. About 55% of legislators indicate that people should follow their conscience on occasion. About 43% indicated that people should obey the law without exception (Figure 8).











<http://www.udel.edu/ilsp>

University of Delaware  
Center for Applied Demography & Survey Research  
292 Graham Hall  
Newark, DE 19716  
USA

tel: 1-302-831-3320

fax: 1-302-831-6434

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