

[Working Papers](#)

# What Does the Public Know about Economic Policy, and How Does It Know It?

Alan S. Blinder & Alan B. Krueger

SHARE   

WORKING PAPER 10787

DOI 10.3386/w10787

ISSUE DATE September 2004

Public opinion influences politicians, and therefore influences public policy decisions. What are the roles of self-interest, knowledge, and ideology in public opinion formation? And how do people learn about economic issues? Using a new, specially-designed survey, we find that most respondents express a strong desire to be well informed on economic policy issues, and that television is their dominant source of information. On a variety of major policy issues (e.g., taxes, social security, health insurance), ideology is the most important determinant of public opinion, while measures of self-interest are the least important. Knowledge about the economy ranks somewhere in between.

Download a PDF

[Information on access](#)

## Acknowledgements and Disclosures



## Download Citation



# Published Versions

Author-Name: Alan S. Blinder & Alan B. Krueger, 2004. "[What Does the Public Know about Economic Policy, and How Does It Know It?](#)," Brookings Papers on Economic Activity, Economic Studies Program, The Brookings Institution, vol. 35(2004-1), pages 327-397.  
citation courtesy of [RePEc](#)

# Related

## TOPICS

[Microeconomics](#)  
[Welfare and Collective Choice](#)  
[Macroeconomics](#)  
[Fiscal Policy](#)

## PROGRAMS

[Economic Fluctuations and Growth](#)  
[Public Economics](#)

## More from NBER

In addition to [working papers](#), the NBER disseminates affiliates' latest findings through a range of free periodicals — the [NBER Reporter](#), the [NBER Digest](#), the [Bulletin on Retirement and Disability](#), the [Bulletin on](#)

Health, and the [Bulletin on Entrepreneurship](#) — as well as online conference reports, video lectures, and interviews.



15<sup>th</sup> Annual Martin Feldstein Lecture:

**The Next Flight of the Bumblebee:  
The Path to Common Fiscal Policy  
in the Eurozone**

Mario Draghi, former President, European  
Central Bank and former Prime Minister, Italy  
Summer Institute, 2023

**2023, 15th Annual Feldstein Lecture, Mario Draghi, "The Next Flight of the Bumblebee: The Path to Common Fiscal Policy in the Eurozone"**

LECTURE

Dr. Mario Draghi, who served as President of the European Central Bank and Prime Minister of Italy, presented the 2023...



Methods Lecture:

## **Linear Panel Event Studies**

Jesse M. Shapiro, Harvard University and NBER

Liyang Sun, CEMFI

July 28, 2023

### **2023 Methods Lectures, Jesse Shapiro and Liyang (Sophie) Sun, "Linear Panel Event Studies"**

#### LECTURE

Overview: Linear panel event studies are increasingly used to estimate and plot causal effects of changes in policies...



Panel Discussion:

## **Long-Term Dynamics of the Employment-to-Population Ratio**

Karen Glenn, Social Security Administration

Stephen Goss, Social Security Administration

Nicole Maestas, Harvard University and NBER

Julie Topoleski, Congressional Budget Office

July 26, 2023



### **2023, SI Economics of Social Security, Panel Discussion, "Long-Term Dynamics of the Employment-to-Population Ratio"**

Supported by the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, the National Science Foundation, and the Lynde and Harry Bradley...

## **National Bureau of Economic Research**

### Contact Us

1050 Massachusetts Avenue  
Cambridge, MA 02138  
617-868-3900  
info@nber.org  
webaccessibility@nber.org

### HOME PAGE

### Accessibility Policy

### Diversity Policy

### Privacy Policy

### FOLLOW

