

THE EDINBURGH QUESTIONNAIRES  
SECTION 4

NUMBER 4

UNDERSTANDINGS OF DEMOCRACY

12/01/88

Many people have argued that, in modern society, there is a need to find ways for more people to participate in the management of the workplace and for new forms of democracy in general. Unfortunately, people understand the word 'democracy' in different ways. We would therefore like to find out what you think it involves.

In today's world, what an organisation can do is very much influenced by what happens around it. It is therefore very important to consider organisations in this wider context. Yet again, Information Technology makes it possible to extend democracy into peoples' homes. For example, the new technology enables people to communicate with each other using interlinked computers and through television programmes linked to the Prestel system. In this way people can answer questions and vote on issues from their own homes.

Part A

HOW IMPORTANT DO YOU THINK EACH OF THE DEVELOPMENTS LISTED BELOW WOULD BE?

	Very Important					Unimportant				
	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1. Making it easier to influence decisions taken by politicians between elections.	1	2	3	4	5					
2. More frequent public referenda on topics of importance.	1	2	3	4	5					
3. More public discussion through TV, newspapers and study groups of issues of national importance	1	2	3	4	5					
4. The establishment of more organisations to identify and publicise issues of national importance which have previously been overlooked.	1	2	3	4	5					
5. A constitutional requirement that any law should be acceptable to all significant minorities.	1	2	3	4	5					
6. Means of ensuring that politicians and public servants are held responsible for the social consequences of their decisions.	1	2	3	4	5					
7. More opportunities to influence decisions taken by civil servants.	1	2	3	4	5					
8. More opportunities to influence the way local government officials interpret regulations and what they decide to do in particular cases.	1	2	3	4	5					
9. An obligation on civil servants, local government officials, teachers and doctors to satisfy as many as possible of the particular needs of their clients.	1	2	3	4	5					
10. Checking that public servants show initiative, invent new ways of acting in the public interest, and use the goodwill and competence of others.	1	2	3	4	5					
11. Ways of making sure that public servants take other people's views into account.	1	2	3	4	5					
12. A requirement that politicians and public servants justify all important decisions.	1	2	3	4	5					

Part B

Some people think that M.P.s should spend their time in different ways.

HOW IMPORTANT DO YOU THINK IT IS FOR M.P.s TO. . . ?

Circle the number of your choice.

	Very Important to do this					Very Important not to do this				
	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1. spend more of their time trying to find ways of influencing social, economic and political forces on an international level.										
2. spend more time examining the links between different areas of policy such as the connections between agricultural practices and health.										
3. make it easier for the press and the public to monitor the workings of the public service.										
4. establish more research and development units to find better ways of administering society.										
5. find alternative ways of making sure that the bureaucracy gives citizens their rights - so that politicians do not need to devote so much time to this.										
6. appoint more people to make sure that the public service behaves reasonably.										
7. spend more time looking at and trying to improve, economic arrangements with other countries										

Part C

HOW IMPORTANT DO YOU THINK IT IS TO INTRODUCE LEGISLATION WHICH WOULD REQUIRE EMPLOYERS TO RELEASE PEOPLE FROM THEIR JOBS - WITH THE STATE PAYING THEIR SALARIES - SO THAT THEY CAN. . . ?

	Important					Unimportant				
	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1. Sit on local councils.										
2. Sit on the committees of regulatory bodies.										
3. Sit on the boards and committees of private companies.										
4. Join groups which monitor the work of both individual public servants and their Departments.										
5. Initiate research and development projects which they can see a need for, and ensure that these are carried out from their own point of view.										
6. Participate in research designed to find better ways of running society.										

Part D

*People define citizenship in different ways.*

HOW IMPORTANT IS IT TO . . . ?

Very important	1
Important	2
Completely irrelevant	3
Important not to	4
Very important not to	5

- 1. Vote in elections. -----
- 2. Stand up for the National Anthem. -----
- 3. Contact politicians about injustices. -----
- 4. Contact politicians to get things done better. -----
- 5. Try to influence public servants. -----
- 6. Sit on local government councils or other governing bodies. -----
- 7. Join pressure groups. -----
- 8. Join citizens' action campaigns. -----
- 9. Monitor the work of individual civil servants. -----
- 10. Monitor the work of local government officials. -----
- 11. Monitor the work of such people as teachers, doctors and nurses. -----
- 12. Join a trade union. -----
- 13. Publish his/her views in the press. -----
- 14. Monitor the workings of local government departments and Quangos, and try to stimulate public debate about them. -----
- 15. Try to get politicians to focus on issues which will not make political capital. -----

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Part E

HOW APPROPRIATE DO YOU THINK IT IS FOR THE FOLLOWING ORGANISATIONS TO BE OPEN TO SURVEILLANCE BY GROUPS WHICH WOULD INCLUDE SOME MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC?

*Insert the number of your choice in column A.*

Appropriate	1	
Neither	2	
Inappropriate	3	
A	B	C

Public service departments which deal with tax, legislation, health and education.	---	---	---
Private pension funds.	---	---	---
The police.	---	---	---
Schools.	---	---	---
Hospitals.	---	---	---
Medium and large private companies.	---	---	---

COLUMN B

HOW APPROPRIATE DO YOU THINK IT IS FOR THESE ORGANISATIONS TO BE ENTIRELY GOVERNED BY PUBLICLY ELECTED BODIES?

*Now go back and insert the number of your choice in column B.*

COLUMN C

HOW APPROPRIATE IS IT FOR THE CIVIL SERVICE TO NOMINATE THE GOVERNING BODIES OF THESE ORGANISATIONS?

*Now go back and insert the number of your choice in column C.*

## Part F

HOW IMPORTANT DO YOU THINK EACH OF THE FOLLOWING ARE TO THE FUTURE OF THE COUNTRY?

	Very important			Not important	
	1	2	3	4	5
1. What the public does.	1	2	3	4	5
2. What the government does.	1	2	3	4	5
3. What local government officials do.	1	2	3	4	5
4. What big businessmen do.	1	2	3	4	5
5. What politicians do.	1	2	3	4	5
6. What small businessmen do.	1	2	3	4	5
7. What trade union officials do.	1	2	3	4	5
8. What the public does to monitor what politicians do.	1	2	3	4	5
9. What public servants do.	1	2	3	4	5
10. What the managers of pension and insurance companies do.	1	2	3	4	5
11. What trans-national corporations do.	1	2	3	4	5
12. What nurses do.	1	2	3	4	5
13. What doctors do.	1	2	3	4	5
14. What machine operatives do.	1	2	3	4	5
15. What gardeners do.	1	2	3	4	5
16. What research workers do.	1	2	3	4	5
17. What soldiers do.	1	2	3	4	5

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OVERALL, HOW OFTEN DO THESE SITUATIONS OCCUR IN INDUSTRY?

*Circle the number of your choice.*

	In most cases		In very few cases		
	1	2	3	4	5
1. Company directors have too much influence on what should be done.					
2. Those who work in organisations should at present have too much influence on what should be done.					
3. Trade Unions do whatever seems appropriate to promote the short term interests of their members.					
4. Trade Unions recognise the large area of overlap with employers' interests and that of their members.					
5. Trade Unions recognise that there is a large overlap of interest between the public and private sectors.					
6. Trade Unions try to get the organisation to function as effectively as possible so as to promote the long term best interests of their members.					

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