



BIRLING
CAPITAL ADVISORS, LLC

Think Strategically

Government Progress Index Measures President Biden's Term In Office and Set the Stage for President Trump

January 27, 2024

Francisco Rodriguez-Castro, President & CEO

President Trump 2.0: Bold, Prepared, and Poised to Reshape the Nation

Less than a week since President Trump resumed office, his presence is already leaving an indelible mark. While opinions on his policies may differ, there is widespread acknowledgment in both national and global media that President Trump returned to power with a clear agenda and a renewed sense of purpose. His approach is bold, focused, and unapologetically disruptive, aimed at driving transformative changes. The Trump administration, backed by a team of pre-selected, like-minded strategists, exudes a sense of readiness and determination. From the outset, they have prioritized consistency and effectiveness in both governance and communication. His mastery of the narrative and fearless approach to challenging the media reflects a leader intent on shaping the conversation rather than being shaped by it. Supported by a loyal legislative base, Trump has positioned himself as an advocate for the everyday citizen, demonstrating a firm commitment to "breaking the mold" of conventional politics.

President Trump 2.0 embodies the hallmarks of strong leadership: preparedness, conviction, and an unwavering focus on delivering results. Whether one agrees with his policies or not, his clear vision and relentless drive to "turn the house upside down" are qualities that cannot be overlooked—and over time, the public may have no choice but to recognize them.

Understanding the Government Progress Index

The **Government Progress Index**, developed by **Birling Capital**, using a proprietary algorithm, is a comprehensive tool designed to assess the performance of the U.S. government. By analyzing 15 critical variables, the Index provides insight into the overall health of the economy, market performance, GDP trends, and employment dynamics, among other vital factors that directly impact the lives of Americans. This 40-point scale evaluates progress or regression in key areas, clearly showing governmental achievements. When **President Biden** assumed office on **January 20, 2021**, he inherited a baseline score of **12.4**, out of a maximum score of 40 points, that score has climbed throughout his administration to **29.7**, reflecting a remarkable **139.52% improvement**—a testament to the administration's efforts in navigating economic challenges and fostering growth.

As of **January 20, 2025**, this milestone provides an opportune moment to assess the government's progress as the nation witnessed the Peaceful power transfer following President Trump's inauguration. Let's explore the 15 key areas measured by the Government Progress Index and evaluate their performance as of President Biden's four years in office.

Government Progress Index Measures President Biden's Term In Office and Set the Stage for President Trump

President Biden

U.S. Benchmarks	1/20/25	1/20/21	Change
Price Per Gallon Regular Gasoline	\$3.23	\$3.40	-5.14%
Dow Jones Industrial Average	43,487.83	34,715.39	25.27%
Nasdaq	19,630.20	14,154.02	38.69%
S & P 500	5,996.66	4,482.73	33.77%
Unemployment	4.10%	6.70%	-38.81%
Average GDP Growth Rate	3.32%	3.90%	-14.87%
Labor-force participation rate	62.50%	62.00%	0.81%
Consumer Price Index	2.89%	1.36%	112.50%
Producer Price Index	3.31%	1.60%	106.88%
Inflation Rate	2.89%	1.36%	112.50%
Home ownership rate	65.60%	65.50%	0.15%
Median Family income	\$102,812	\$91,119	12.83%
US Job Openings	8,098,000	11,511,000	-29.65%
National debt	\$35,460,000	\$29,620,000	19.72%
Credit Ratings	AAA & AA+	AAA & AA+	Unchanged
Access to markets	Full Access	Full Access	Unchanged
Approval Rating	37	29	27.59%
Government Progress Index	29.7	12.4	139.52%

Key Metrics Evaluated by the Index

- Price Per Gallon of Gasoline:** This metric, though largely influenced by global energy markets, directly impacts consumers' purchasing power and sentiment. One of the segments outside the Government's control is the price of energy, gasoline, and its derivatives, but we measure it because it is one of the parameters that most affect the consumer's pocket and with it, their sentiment, the price in January 2021 stood at \$3.40 per gallon, and in January 2025 it had fallen to **\$3.23** per gallon, an decrease of **-5.14%**, something that affects multiple industries and consumers. With the wars in Ukraine and Russia as the Israel-Hamas, the price of crude oil has been volatile and has increased significantly.
- U.S. Equity Markets:** have performed spectacularly since 2021, achieving double-digit returns in all three major indices. As of January 20245, the three-year returns for the major indices have been spectacular; the Dow Jones achieved a 25.27% return, the S&P 500 gained a 38.69% return, and the Nasdaq Composite achieved a 33.77% return. Since the U.S. economy has continued to grow, low unemployment and Inflation have dramatically decreased all factors, allowing the markets to blossom, even with a high-interest rate environment. These strong returns indicate healthy investor confidence despite macroeconomic challenges.

- **Economic Growth:** The U.S. GDP growth rate averaged **3.32%** during President Biden's term, compared to **3.90%** previously, reflecting a **14.87% decrease**. This dip can largely be attributed to a combination of global economic challenges, including the lingering effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, inflationary pressures, and energy market volatility spurred by geopolitical conflicts such as the Russia-Ukraine war and tensions in the Middle East. Despite these challenges, the U.S. economy demonstrated resilience, maintaining steady growth in critical sectors and avoiding a prolonged downturn, even amid high-interest rate environments implemented to curb inflation. This performance highlights a mixed narrative: while the growth rate declined compared to prior administrations, the economy managed to weather significant headwinds and maintain a trajectory of stability and recovery. The latest GDPNow for the fourth quarter of 2024 was updated on January 17, showing a 3.00% GDP growth, which is a welcomed forecast.
- **Employment Growth and Unemployment:** In 2021, the U.S. created more than 8 million jobs; another 4.54 million in 2022, 3.013 million in 2023, and 2024, 2.23 million; in total, the Biden administration created 17,783 million new jobs. The U.S. unemployment rate fell to 4.10% in January 2025, down from 6.70% in January 2021 or -38.81% and well below historical levels. As of January 2025, there were 8.098 million job openings in the U.S. and only 5.516 million job seekers looking for work, a 31.88% deficit.
- **Inflation and Consumer Prices:** Inflation hurts the economy and impacts the Presidency: Inflation benchmarks continue to affect President Biden and, to a greater degree, the entire U.S. economy, as the Consumer Price Index (CPI) was at **2.89%** in January 2025 versus 1.36% in January 2021, an increase of 112.50%. However, we must clarify that the CPI rose as high as 9.06% in June 2022 so in reality inflation has fallen **68.10%** since then. The Producer Price Index (PPI) in January 2021 was at 1.60%, and in January 2025 was at 3.31%, a 106.88% increase, but the PPI rose as high as 9.75% in July 2022. The Fed's stance until March 2022 that Inflation was temporary turned out to be completely wrong, and Inflation rose out of control until the Fed increased the rate from March 2022 and rose 11 times, taking rates from 0.25% to 5.50%. So far, rates have decreased three times on 9/18 at 0.50%, 11/7 at 0.25%, and 12/18 at 0.25%.
- **Home Ownership Rate:** The homeownership rate improved marginally to **65.60%**, a **0.15% increase**, reflecting stability in the housing market.
- **National Debt:** The U.S. national debt increased to **\$35.46 trillion**, a **19.72% rise**, primarily driven by pandemic relief measures, infrastructure investments, and rising interest payments. This figure represents approximately **131.33% of the U.S. GDP**, highlighting a significant level of debt relative to the nation's economic output. Such a high debt-to-GDP ratio indicates that the national debt exceeds the annual economic production of the United States. While borrowing has been essential to support critical programs and stabilize the economy during the pandemic, the increasing debt level poses long-term challenges.
- **Approval Rating:** The approval rating that President Biden's inherited from President Trump stood at **29%** and while President Biden has an approval rating stood at **57%** on January 20, 2025, when he left office his had seen a significant drop to **37%** when he left office.

In conclusion, the Government Progress Index reflects a total score of **29.7** for January 2025, which, compared to the **12.4** Government Progress Index inherited from his predecessor, represents an improvement of **139.52%**, underscoring the progress achieved and indicates that President Biden has a lot of work to further improve the economy. Birling Capital's Government Progress Index helps you see What Success looks like and How to Understand it.

The Final Word: President Biden's Successes and Failures

Most experts agree that President Biden's Three Biggest Successes were:

1. **Advancements in Infrastructure and Pandemic Relief:**

- The passage of the \$1.9 trillion COVID relief package provided critical financial aid to individuals, businesses, and state governments during the pandemic.
- The bipartisan \$1 trillion infrastructure bill is one of the largest infrastructure investments in decades, funding roads, bridges, broadband expansion, and clean energy projects.

2. **Lowering Healthcare Costs for Seniors:**

- The Inflation Reduction Act allowed Medicare to negotiate the prices of certain high-cost drugs for the first time.
- It also capped insulin prices for seniors at \$35 per month and limited annual out-of-pocket expenses at pharmacies to \$2,000, offering significant financial relief to millions.

3. **Job Growth and Economic Recovery:**

- Under Biden's administration, the U.S. experienced strong job growth as the economy rebounded from the pandemic. Unemployment dropped to historically low levels, and the labor market remained resilient despite global economic uncertainties.

President Biden's Three Biggest Failures:

1. **Afghanistan Withdrawal:**

- The chaotic withdrawal of U.S. forces from Afghanistan in 2021 drew widespread criticism for its poor execution. The tragic loss of 13 U.S. service members and the rapid takeover by the Taliban were viewed as major operational failures.

2. **Border Challenges and Immigration Policy:**

- A significant surge in illegal immigration at the southern border created logistical and humanitarian challenges. Critics argue that Biden's policies have lacked a clear strategy to address the complexities of border security and immigration reform.

3. **Persistent Inflation and Economic Pressures:**

- While the administration implemented policies to address economic concerns, Inflation remained high for a prolonged period, impacting household budgets and eroding purchasing power. Rising costs for essentials like food and housing became a focal point of criticism.

4. **The Age Factor: A Double-Edged Sword:** President Biden's age was and still is a significant focal point of critique and discussion. At 82 years old as of 2025, he is the oldest sitting president in U.S. history, and this has raised concerns about his physical stamina and mental acuity to manage the demands of the presidency. This issue came into public view during the June 27, 2024, Presidential debate, and the world saw a diminished President Biden. The discussion became his undoing. The Democratic leadership clamored that he step down, and Vice President Kamala Harris was nominated and ran against President Trump, which he won with a landslide victory.

As we stated, President Trump 2.0 is already leaving an indelible mark, returning to power with a clear agenda and a renewed sense of purpose. His approach is bold, focused, and unapologetically disruptive, aimed at driving transformative changes. Following the first 100 days, we shall use the Government Progress Index to examine his initial results in office.



Francisco Rodriguez-Castro, President & CEO • frc@birlingcapital.com
PO Box 10817 San Juan, PR 00922 • 787.247.2500 • 787.645.8430

Think Strategically © is a publication prepared by Birling Capital LLC and is a summary of certain recent geopolitical, economic, market and other developments that may be of interest to clients of Birling Capital LLC. This report is intended for general information purposes only, is not a complete summary of the matters referred to, and does not represent investment, legal, regulatory or tax advice. Recipients of this report are cautioned to seek appropriate professional advice regarding any of the matters discussed in this report considering the recipients' own situation. Birling Capital does not undertake to keep the recipients of this report advised of future developments or of changes in any of the matters discussed in this report. Birling Capital. The man and log symbol and Birling Capital are among the registered trademarks of Birling Capital. All rights reserved.

Government Progress Index Measures President Biden's Term In Office and Set the Stage for President Trump

