

# VALUES CHANGE THE WORLD

WORLD VALUES SURVEY



# Foreword

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### Academically driven

Network of researchers in a non-profit association.

### Time series

5 waves since 1981.

### Data available free of charge

All datasets are downloadable via the Internet.

### Truly Global

97 societies containing almost 90 percent of the world's population.

The World Values Survey (WVS) is a worldwide network of social scientists studying changing values and their impact on social and political life. The WVS has carried out representative national surveys in 97 societies containing almost 90 percent of the world's population. These surveys show pervasive changes in what people want out of life and what they believe. In order to monitor these changes, the WVS has executed five waves of surveys, from 1981 to 2007. Representative national samples of each society's public are interviewed, using a standardized questionnaire that measures changing values concerning religion, gender roles, work motivations, democracy, good governance, social capital, political participation, tolerance of other groups, environmental protection and subjective well-being. The countries included in these surveys cover the full range from very poor countries to very rich ones, from authoritarian systems to liberal democracies and covering all major cultural zones. These surveys provide valuable information about a crucial component of social change: the values, beliefs and motivations of ordinary citizens. This new source of evidence has demonstrated that people's beliefs play a key role in economic development, the emergence and flourishing of democratic institutions, the rise of gender equality, and the extent to which societies have effective government. The WVS network is analyzing the impact of global cultural change on economic development, creativity, quality of life and democracy.



A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ronald Inglehart".

Ronald Inglehart  
President, World Values Survey

# Mission Statement

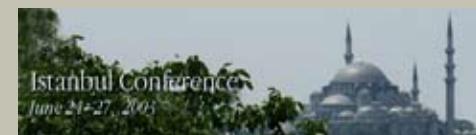
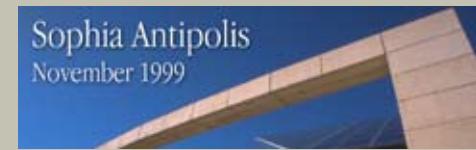
The World Values Survey Association (WVSA) is a non-profit association seated in Stockholm, Sweden.

This association has been founded in order to help social scientists and policy-makers better understand worldviews and changes that are taking place in the beliefs, values and motivations of people throughout the world. In order to do so, the members of this association carry out representative national surveys of people's values and beliefs on a global scale.

Ideally, it would be desirable to include every country in the world in these surveys, and WVSA strives to include the widest possible range of societies among those surveyed. Each participating country has a Principle Investigator – a WVSA member in charge of the survey in his or her country. These members will analyze and interpret the data resulting from these surveys, disseminating the results to social scientists, policy makers and the general public in order to inform them of the changes likely to impact on social, economic and political life.

The task of interpreting the results and disseminating the findings can only be effectively accomplished if it is carried out by social scientists throughout the world representing a wide range of cultures and perspectives.

Consequently, another important goal of this association is to develop a worldwide network of social scientists who are interested in matters of social change. We organize meetings and communication systems through which the participants in this project can work together in analyzing the evidence that we jointly collect, pool their interpretations of the findings and discuss, criticize each other's interpretations, while encouraging collaborative publications that draw on the combined insights of social scientists in all the countries taking part. A subsidiary goal of this network is to disseminate state-of-the-art methodology for design and analysis of social surveys, striving to ensure that the surveys carried out by this network will utilize the best available survey research techniques. The surveys carried out by this group are designed with input gathered throughout the world, and the surveys in each country are directed by participants from the given society, in order to ensure that the design and fieldwork are carried out with an inside understanding of the society being investigated.



# Research Design



## Building a global network of social scientists

The World Values Survey group works with leading social scientists, recruited from each society studied. This makes it possible to draw on the insights of well-informed insiders in interpreting the findings. It also helps disseminate social science techniques to new countries. The data from all societies are made available to all participants, who work together in analyzing and interpreting the results and in disseminating the findings through international conferences and joint publications.

## Providing a global resource

The WVS is the only source of empirical data on people's beliefs and values covering a majority of the world's population. This data have been used in thousands of scholarly publications and the findings have been reported in leading media such as *Time*, *Newsweek*, *The New York Times*, *The Economist*, the *World Development Report* and the UN *Human Development Report*. The WVS data have been made available free of charge on the WVS website (<http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org>), they have been downloaded by thousands of researchers, journalists, policy-makers and others interested in global cultural change. The data and insights produced by the WVS help one to understand the role of human values and beliefs in societal change. These insights are valuable for social scientists seeking to understand social change, and they are essential for policy-makers seeking to build civil society and democratic institutions in developing countries.

## Field Work

All interviews are conducted face to face by a local field organization and are supervised by academic researchers. Random probability samples are aimed for where possible. In each country the PI (Principal Investigator) is responsible for conducting the survey in accordance with fixed rules and procedures. Use of the core questionnaire translated into the local language, is mandatory. The sampling and documentation procedures must be accepted by the WVS Executive Committee (EC) before data collection starts. During the fieldwork the agency has to report in writing according to a specific checklist. Internal consistency checks are made between the sampling design and the outcome and rigorous data-cleaning procedures are followed at the WVS data archive. No country is included in a wave before full documentation has been delivered.

# Countries Covered

The World Values Survey is a worldwide investigation of sociocultural and political change. It builds on the European Values Surveys first carried out in 1981. Together these amount to representative national surveys of basic values and beliefs in 97 societies on all six continents, containing 88 percent of the world's population. The four-wave aggregate data file includes the first four waves.

Wave	Years	Countries	Population	Respondents
1	1981-1984	20	4,700,000,000	25,000
2	1989-1993	42	5,300,000,000	61,000
3	1994-1998	52	5,700,000,000	75,000
4	1999-2004	67	6,100,000,000	96,000
5	2005-2008	54	6,700,000,000	77,000
Four-wave aggregate data file		80		257,000



■ 97 countries, covering 88% of the world's population have been surveyed as of 2007.



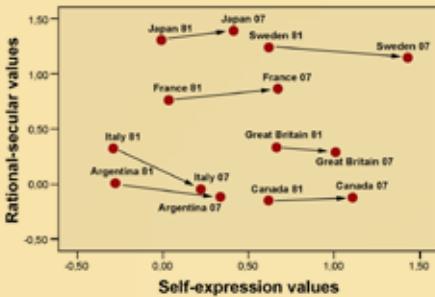
*It takes an effort to reach some of the respondents, like here in western Zambia. All samples are representative (age, sex, occupation and regional distribution) within a country.*



*All interviews are made face to face in the respondents own environment. Here at home in Karlstad, Sweden.*

# Mapping values

Changes in two value dimensions for 7 countries



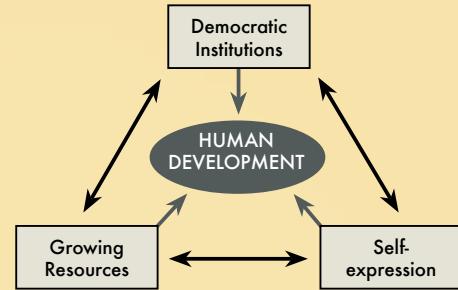
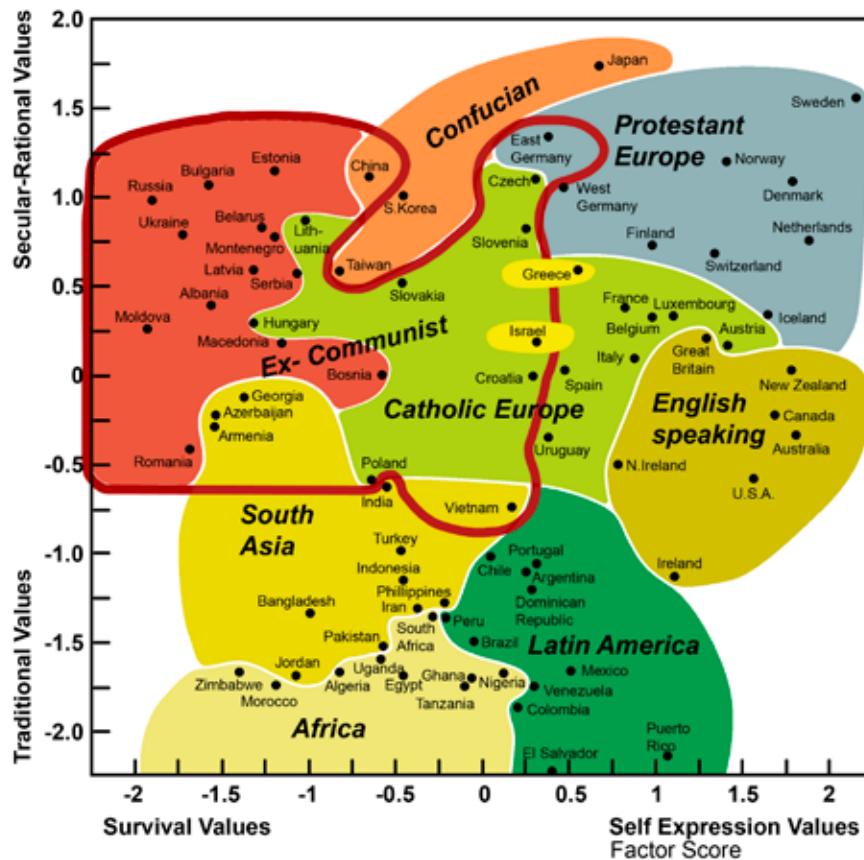
The World Values Surveys provide a comprehensive measurement of all major areas of human concern, from religion to politics to economic and social life. Analysis of the data reveals that many basic values are closely correlated and can be depicted in two major dimensions of cross-cultural variation:

(1) Traditional/Secular-rational and (2) Survival/Self-expression values. These two dimensions explain more than 70 percent of the cross-national variance on key variables, and each dimension is strongly correlated with scores of other important attitudes. The global cultural map shows how scores of societies are located on these two dimensions: moving from south to north reflects the shift from Traditional to Secular-rational values; moving from west to east reflects the shift from Survival values to Self-expression values.

The Traditional/Secular-rational values dimension reflects the contrast between societies in which religion is very important and those where it is not. Societies near the traditional pole emphasize the importance of parent-child ties, deference to authority and traditional family values, while rejecting divorce, abortion, euthanasia and suicide. These societies have high levels of national pride, and a nationalistic outlook. Societies with secular-rational values have the opposite preferences. In nearly all industrial societies, worldviews have shifted from Traditional toward Secular-rational values. But with the rise of the knowledge society, cultural change moves in a new direction. The transition from industrial society to knowledge society is linked with a shift from Survival values toward Self-expression values. In knowledge societies, an increasing share of the population has grown up taking survival for granted. Their priorities have shifted from an overwhelming emphasis on economic and physical security toward increasing emphasis on subjective well-being, self-expression and quality of life. Self-expression values give high priority to environmental protection, tolerance of foreigners, gays and lesbians and gender equality, and rising demands for participation in decision-making in economic and political life. The shift from Survival values to Self-expression values also includes a shift in child-rearing values, from emphasis on hard

# The global cultural map

work toward emphasis on imagination and tolerance as important values to inculcate in a child. And it is connected to a rising sense of subjective well-being that is conducive to an atmosphere of tolerance, trust and political moderation. This produces a culture in which people place relatively high value on individual freedom and self-expression, and have activist political orientations. These are precisely the same attributes that the literature on political culture defines as crucial for democracy.



**The Triangular Nexus of Human Development**  
(Welzel, Inglehart 2008)

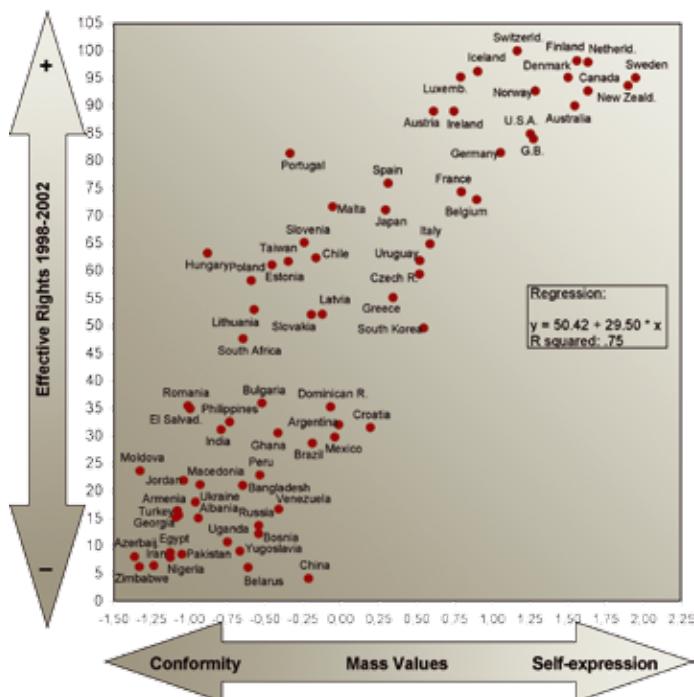


# Understandings of Democracy



Desire for freedom and democracy is a universal human aspiration, but it is not top priority when people grow up feeling that survival is uncertain. When basic physiological and safety needs are fulfilled, growing emphasis on self-expression values makes the emergence of democracy increasingly likely.

Findings from the WVS demonstrate that the correlation between mass self-expression values and democratic institutions in a society is remarkably strong and consistent. The graph below illustrates this correlation. In the long run, the process of intergenerational population replacement tends to make the self-expression values more widespread. Countries with authoritarian regimes are therefore likely to become more liberalized in the next 15 to 20 years as a consequence of this value shift. Countries which show a lower level of democracy than their citizens' values would predict, are likely to become genuine democracies.



# Empowerment

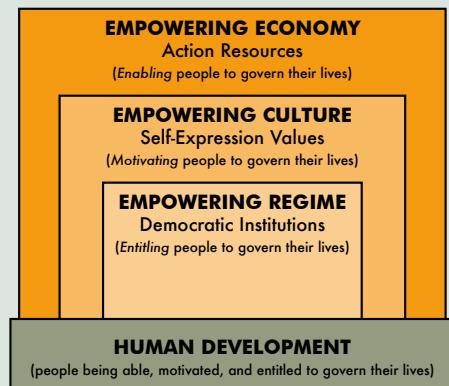
The essence of democracy is the empowerment of ordinary citizens. But holding elections alone will not accomplish this, if it does not transfer power from the elites to the people. WVS researchers have identified a human development sequence consisting of three elements: action resources, self-expression values and democratic institutions. Each of these components empowers people on a different level (see fig.).

Action resources include both material resources and cognitive resources, such as education and skills which help people govern their lives. Modernization not only increases people's economic resources, it also brings rising educational levels and moves people into occupations that require independent thinking, making them more articulate and better equipped to participate in politics.

The human development sequence is based on two causal linkages. First, economic development increases ordinary people's resources, leading to the emergence of self-expression values. Second, effective democratic institutions emerge in societies that emphasize self-expression values. Economic development tends to make self-expression values increasingly widespread, regardless of whether people live in democracies or authoritarian societies.

Today WVS covers almost 90 percent of the world's population, making it possible to measure whether some countries are actually more democratic than others. To understand how democracy emerges, it is not enough to focus solely on elites – increasingly, one must also study mass-level developments. Thus, it is crucial to distinguish between effective democracies on one hand, and ineffective or pseudo democracies on the other. One can establish electoral democracy almost anywhere, but it may not be deep-rooted or long-lasting if the decisive influence on government is not transferred to the people.

*"The major effect of modernization is not that it makes democracy more acceptable to elites, but that it increases ordinary people's capabilities and willingness to struggle for democratic institutions"*



**The Human Development Model**  
(Welzel, Inglehart 2008)



# Globalization, Gender and Converging Values?



Since the first round of values surveys in 1981, the world has witnessed profound changes in political, economic and social spheres and ever-accelerating technological advances. Globalization is often defined as an unparalleled increase in the flow of capital, goods, services and information. Today capital markets are integrated around the globe, movies and books circle the world in seconds, and hundreds of millions of people visit the same websites, watch the same news channels and even laugh at the same jokes.

Therefore, it has been frequently asserted that this ongoing development should result in a convergence of values. If national borders are less important, the cultural consequence according to the assertion, should be a decrease in nationalism and nationalistic sentiments. Ongoing individualization decreases the importance of religion and traditional family values.

Are these developments indeed taking place? Or are the winds of globalization countered by strong and successful resistance from local forces?

It seems as if both modernization theorists and culturalists are right to some extent, but data from some 20 countries show that from 1981 to 2007 there is almost no evidence of a convergence of values. Marriage, family and gender relations show changes, but this is a parallel movement with given societies remaining as distinct in 2007 as they were in 1981.

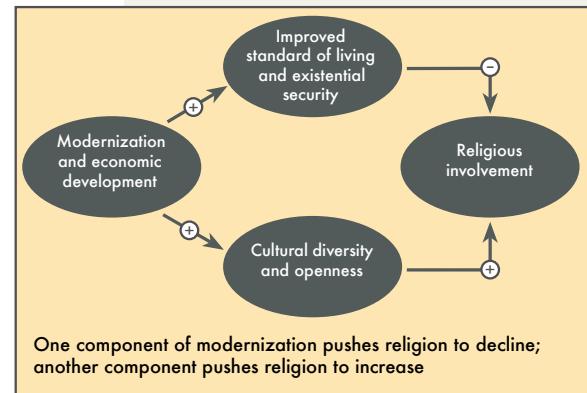
Findings from the WVS point to the conclusion that support for gender equality is not just a *consequence* of democratization. It is part of a broader cultural change that is transforming industrialized societies and fuelling mass demands for increasingly democratic institutions. Although a majority of the world's population still believes that men make better political leaders than women, this view is fading in advanced industrialized societies, and also among young people in less prosperous countries.

# Culture, Diversity and Religion

The data from the World Values Survey cover many different dimensions of people's religious orientations. From a secularization point of view, two of these dimensions are especially important. One of them tracks how involved people are in religious services and how much importance they attach to their religious beliefs. The other dimension concerns people's attitudes towards the relation between religion and politics and whether they approve of religious spokesmen who try to influence government decisions and people's voting preferences. According to most versions of secularization theory, modernization and rising levels of human security are said to cause declining levels of religious involvement together with a more skeptical view of religion impacting on politics. However, recent research into religious change has also suggested that modernization brings growing levels of cultural diversity, and that cultural diversity in turn yields increasing levels of religious involvement and more positive views of religion impacting on politics. In this way, two different dimensions of modernization have been assumed to affect religion in opposite ways, with one component of modernization would causing religious decline, and another generating religious growth.

The data from the World Values Survey have supported both these hypotheses in a very interesting way. Analyzing the levels of human security, the data reveal a positive relation between cultural diversity and the two core dimensions of religion. In a similar fashion, controlling for the levels of cultural diversity, the data demonstrate a negative relation between human security and the two dimensions. In this way, detailed analysis of WVS data show that two different dimensions of modernization have opposite effects on religion. One dimension of modernization brings a religious decline, while another brings religious growth. Accordingly, two different dimensions of modernization apparently give rise to two opposite kinds of religious change. Simple and one-sided models of future patterns of religious change should be avoided. Making a case for "the return of religion" is as hard as making one for the future "decline of the religious factor".

The WVS covers a rising number of countries with Muslim populations. In the most recent wave, about 25 percent of the respondents identified themselves as Muslims. The WVS will therefore provide a unique opportunity for a deepened understanding of the value profiles of ordinary Muslim men and women from different parts of the Islamic world.



# Rising Insecurity and Values



Attempts impose democracy on nations suffering from high levels of violence and insecurity are unlikely to succeed. As long as physical survival remains uncertain, democracy is not likely to flourish. The present situation in Iraq is a case in point. On the other hand, when economic development brings a growing sense of security, it tends to give rise to publics who want political liberalization, and who become increasingly articulate in demanding it.

Although organizing elections is relatively easy, establishing stable democracies under conditions of severe existential insecurity is extremely difficult. Stable and effective democracy generally emerges through a process of human development that starts with economic development and leads to a culture of tolerance, trust and emphasis on human autonomy. This promotes emancipation on many fronts, from individual autonomy to gender equality and democracy.

Our data show how relief from immediate threats of hunger and physical danger allows people to shift from materialistic, survival values to post-materialist values, giving top priority to self-expression, freedom of choice and quality of life rather than economic and physical security. They also show how socioeconomic development brings a shift from the xenophobic and authoritarian outlook linked with survival values toward the increasingly tolerant and democratic outlook linked with self-expression values.

The WVS survey carried out in Iraq 2004 showed that more than 80 percent of the Iraqi public rejected foreigners as neighbors — this is more than twice the level of rejection found in any other society. Although xenophobia tends to be more widespread among poorer countries, Iraq shows a much higher level than other countries with comparable income, and a far higher rejection of foreigners than other Islamic societies.

Because xenophobia is so intense in Iraq, any government seen as dependent on foreign military support will have little legitimacy. But an elected government that is not dependent on foreign powers has a good chance of attaining legitimacy if it maintains order. Despite antagonism toward Western democracies, fully 85 percent of the Iraqi public surveyed said that democracy was the best form of government, with no significant difference between Iraqi Kurds and Arabs.

# The benefits of our knowledge

In 1985 some of the world's best-known music artists gathered in a recording studio in California with the intention of raising funds to help famine relief efforts in Ethiopia. The song that netted around 70 million dollars was dismissed by some critics as a pathetic gesture from the affluent part of the world towards the less fortunate people of Africa. Some critics even claimed that "loud and short-term-oriented answers" do not support but, on the contrary, actually impair Africa's development. Instead of food and medicine, the help should be about building up a workable society and economy through democratic development.



Similar criticism has also been expressed concerning the economic support given to developing countries by many industrialized countries through the years, a criticism that can be summarized like this: compassion based on emotion can have grave shortcomings.

The artists behind "We are the world", were trying to make the world a better place. They found a way of drawing people's attention to the problem and making them join a movement. But it is up to others to try to solve the problem. The chorus line: "We are the world, we are the children – we are the ones who make a brighter day – so let's start giving", should perhaps be rephrased "so let's start understanding". This – the knowledge and understanding of how people believe, think, dream, act and react throughout our globalized world – is exactly one of the great contributions by World Values Survey.

Maybe the most important product of this ongoing project is the insight it produces concerning the changes at the individual level that are transforming social, economic and political life. These changes are invisible until they are measured and analyzed through survey research, which has only recently begun to address them. They are still inadequately understood. The World Values Survey is monitoring these changes and helps charting their trajectory in societies around the world, providing information that will help national and international decision-makers to better understand and cope with these changes.



# Steps for the Future

## ● Capacity Building

Workshops and training on a regional level.

## ● Increased academic quality

Training in survey methodology and analysis.

## ● Deepening cooperation and usability inside the countries

Enhancing local work at all levels, supporting locally developed reports.

## ● Supporting competence development in local institutions

Results from WVS surveys will be fed back into local institutions such as statistical bureaus, authorities, universities and schools.

## ● Supporting competence development in donor institutions

Results from WVS surveys will be fed back to embassies and global institutions such as the UN and The World Bank.

The focus within WVS has for many years been on reports and material related to questions concerning differences in values and beliefs; democracy, gender and secularization, views on the UN millennium development goals and differences and similarities between regions and nations.

A new phase in our work has begun in which the emphasis is on effectuated measures promoting dialogue in these matters – not only between different groups within a nation, but also between nations and on a global level, with respect for both cultural and ethnic backgrounds.

Our aim is to support the development work taking place in civil society in those areas where the UN and other international peace and development organizations are active. The purpose is also to counteract processes that can lead to an undesired development of the common values within a region or nation. There are many examples in recent years of limited social and economic possibilities resulting in a destructive radicalization among marginalized citizens – both in the suburbs of big cities like Paris in 2005 or in nations with mixed ethnicity such as Rwanda or the former Yugoslavia.

Our work with values requires a very thorough analysis of the complex different values within a society or region. These data can be used for setting goals for development that can be measured and monitored over time. With this kind of approach our efforts become more precise and, as a consequence, more efficient.

The questionnaire used by the WVS has evolved over the years and now contains many items regarding human development and the UN millennium development goals, as well as their respective relationship towards different security and environmental aspects.



## Executive Committee

Ronald Inglehart, President  
Christian Welzel, Vice President  
Bi Puranen, Secretary General  
Catalina Romero, Treasurer  
Yilmaz Esmer  
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*Permanent Advisors:*  
Juan Díez-Nicolás, research archive  
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## Archive

Jaime Diez-Medrano, jdiezmed@jdsurvey.net

## Survey Waves

1. 1981-1984 – 20 countries, 25,000 respondents
2. 1989-1993 – 42 countries, 61,000 respondents
3. 1994-1998 – 52 countries, 75,000 respondents
4. 1999-2004 – 67 countries, 96,000 respondents
5. 2005-2008 – 54 countries, 77,000 respondents

Four-wave aggregate data file – 80 countries,  
257,000 respondents

## Scientific Advisory Committee

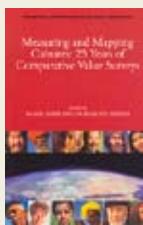
Fares al Braizat, Jordan  
Thawilwadee Bureekul, Thailand  
Marita Carballo, Argentina  
Christian W. Haerpfer, Scotland, UK  
Marta Lagos, Chile

Ola Listhaug, Norway  
Hennie Kotzé, South Africa  
Neil Nevitte, Canada  
Paul Perry, New Zealand  
Renata Sieminska, Poland

***More information...***

[www.worldvaluessurvey.org](http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org)

## Some recent books



Measuring and Mapping Cultures: 25 Years of Comparative Values Surveys  
*Yilmaz Esmer and Thorleif Pettersson, eds.*



Values and Perceptions of the Islamic and and Middle Eastern Publics,  
*Mansoor Moaddel, ed.*



Citizens, Democracy and Markets Around the Pacific Rim  
*Russell Dalton and Doh Chull Shin, eds.*



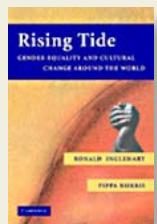
Democracy and Political Culture in Eastern Europe  
*H-D Klingemann, D Fuchs and J Zielonka, eds.*



Modernization, Cultural Change and Democracy: The Human Development Sequence  
*Ronald Inglehart and Christian Welzel*



Changing Values, Persisting Cultures  
*Yilmaz Esmer and Thorleif Pettersson, eds.*



Rising Tide  
*Ronald Inglehart and Pippa Norris*



Sourcebook on Values in 23 Countries  
*Various Editors*

More publications and books can be found on:  
[www.worldvaluessurvey.org](http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org)

