

World Values Survey

The entity that has organized the survey and is responsible for data collection – as well as key data on the entity's membership, governance arrangements, source of funding etc.

The name of the association running the WVS is the World Values Survey Association (WVSA). According to their constitution, the WVSA is organized as a network of social scientists which are led by a central body seated in Stockholm, Sweden. A country can become a member by invitation. National groups may recruit as many members as they want, but each country will only have one vote in the WVSA. The WVSA is a non-profit organization.

The WVSA elects an [Executive committee](#) consisting of no more than six persons: A President, a Vice-President, a Secretary-General, a Treasurer and at most two more members. It includes a Permanent Advisor: professor Juan Díez-Nicolás. There is also an archive led by Jaime Díez-Medrano, a Secretariat consisting of three members and a Scientific Advisory Committee where scholars from all over the world are represented – this body is also elected by the WVSA.

The funding is local – each country funds its own national survey, in return its scientists get access to the data from all the other participating countries. However, central funding has been obtained in cases where it was not possible to obtain local funding. The Executive Committee is responsible for obtaining funding for the central functions and to assist the national groups in their fund-raising.

For more information, please refer to the [Constitution of the WVSA](#).

A historical sketch of the initiation and origin of the survey

The World Values Surveys grew out of a study launched by the European Values Survey group (EVS) under the leadership of Jan Kerkhofs and Ruud de Moor in 1981. The EVS carried out surveys in ten West European societies but was later replicated in another 14 countries. See the report on the EVS for more information.

These surveys showed that cultures were changing and that these changes were predictable. To monitor these changes, a new wave of surveys was launched, this time designed to be carried out globally, with Ronald Inglehart coordinating the surveys outside Western Europe. Coherent patterns of change were observed from 1981 to 1990, with a wide range of key values. To monitor these changes and probe more deeply into their causes and consequences, the group agreed to carry out additional waves of research in 1995 and 2000; and began designing the 1995 wave. This wave was designed to give special attention to obtaining better coverage of non-Western

societies and analyzing the development of a democratic political culture in the emerging Third Wave democracies.

Internet links to the website of the responsible organization

<http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/>

[The data/survey results](#)

The frequency or repetitions of the survey. Possible explanation of this.

The waves of the WVS were as follows, according to the official WVS-document «[Values Change the World](#)» from 2008.

Wave 1: 1981-84

Wave 2: 1989-93

Wave 3: 1994-98

Wave 4: 1999-2004

Wave 5: 2005-08

Wave 6: 2010-12

A description of the survey's content, i.e. both focused rotational and/or core modules of the survey.

The WVS has executed six waves of surveys from 1981 to 2012. A standardized questionnaire has been used to measure 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. It does not appear to have any rotational modules, however Kittilson (2007: 877) warns us that despite the fact that most items are replicated over subsequent waves, «some questions and coding categories change substantially over the course of the waves of the survey.» She urges us to read the code book closely when analyzing data cross-temporally to ensure that the question or coding has not been changed.

An outline of the type of sample and the main data collection methods used.

Random probability samples are aimed for where possible. The WVS employs a rather rigorous approach towards sampling: «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 translate 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.»

Kittilson (2007: 871) expands on the organization's own view: «Each national team in the project aims for representative national samples. In most countries, survey teams employ a form of stratified multi-stage random probability sampling. However, in remote areas where this proves difficult, survey teams may employ cluster or quota sampling.» The number of people interviewed in each country varies greatly, but a minimum of 1,000 is required.

For details regarding sampling procedure, size etc. for each individual country in each wave, see the [Technical Specifications of the Values Surveys](#).

All interviews are conducted face to face in the respondents' own environment. For detailed information for each country in each round, please refer to [the technical specifications](#).

An account of the availability of the data to researchers, restrictions on access, etc.

All data may be downloaded for free from their website in the SPSS, SAS and STATA formats. The WVS demands acknowledgement for their work by a bibliographic citation. No application is needed, however the WVS demands registration of a certain amount of information, including but not limited to name, organization, email address and intended use of data.

Questionnaires, English version

http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/index_surveys

The countries included in the different rounds

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

For detailed information on what countries participated, see [Documentation of the Values Surveys](#).

Cumulative file of the various rounds

[WVS five wave aggregated file 1981-2005](#).

Publications based on data

They list a [collection of publications](#) based on data from the WVS on their website.

Analytical summary...

Sources

Unless otherwise noted, all information is extracted from the web site of the World Values Survey.

Kittilson, Maki Caul (2007): "Research Resources in Comparative Political Behaviour", ch. 47 in Russel J. Dalton & Hans-Dieter Klingemann (ed.): *The Oxford Handbook of Political Behaviour*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.