

SOURCES FOR POLICY VARIABLES

The major sources of information contained in the World Population Policies Database 1976-2015 are of four broad types:

The first type comprised of official government responses to the [United Nations Inquiry among Governments on Population and Development](#), of which there have been 13 separate rounds starting in 1963. Each round of the Inquiry had consisted of a detailed request for information sent to all Member States and non-member States of the United Nations. The First and Second rounds of the Inquiry were conducted prior to the 1974 World Population Conference. The Eighth Inquiry, the first directed towards the ICPD Programme of Action, was initiated in 1997, and the latest Thirteenth Inquiry was conducted during 2020-2021. The 1976-2015 Database included selected information from the first 11 rounds of the Inquiry.

The second type consisted of publications, documents, statements and other materials issued by governments, including development plans, sectorial programmes, laws, regulations and proclamations. These materials were a particularly important source of data because they reflected the official positions taken by governments at the time of respective revisions of the Database.

The third type consisted of materials obtained from international organizations, such as regional commissions, funds, programmes and agencies of the United Nations system, as well as other regional intergovernmental organizations. Because countries collectively were the source of these materials, an official status is attached to them.

The fourth type consisted of non-governmental materials, including clippings from the press, articles in academic journals, proceedings of conferences and seminars, reports and studies prepared by research centres and non-governmental organizations, as well as correspondence and personal communications with experts.

Additional information about the Inquiry, data availability and variable definitions for the 1976-2015 period can be found here:

[United Nations Inquiry among Governments on Population and Development](#)

[Data Availability for Policy Variables by Revision Year](#)

[Definitions of Policy Variables](#)