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Data Review

Data Citation

Stas Gorelik (2026): Review of World Public Opinion polls (WorldPublicOpinion.org, 2008-2009) (published on Digital Repository at the University of Maryland,), v. 1.0, Discuss Data, <https://doi.org/10.48320/514B9E81-4BBB-4C48-AE8E-FA94896543A0>

Abstract

This collection of datasets (31 in total), archived through the Digital Repository at the University of Maryland, comprises international public opinion surveys administered by WorldPublicOpinion.org (Program on International Policy Attitudes), primarily around 2008–2009. At a glance, these data offer a snapshot of how ordinary citizens across the world, including Azerbaijan, Russia, and Ukraine, thought about power, legitimacy, conflict, and cooperation at that time. Substantively, though, the datasets focus on core questions of international politics rather than domestic policy issues. Each dataset includes readable documentation and questionnaires, short summaries of the main findings.

To locate the dataset, proceed to <https://drum.lib.umd.edu/home> and search for 'W-PON.' The links to the datasets are also provided in the review itself (see the pdf file).

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Review of World Public Opinion polls (WorldPublicOpinion.org, 2008-2009)

by Stas Gorelik

This collection of datasets (31 in total), archived through the Digital Repository at the University of Maryland, comprises international public opinion surveys administered by WorldPublicOpinion.org (Program on International Policy Attitudes), primarily around 2008–2009. At a glance, these data offer a snapshot of how ordinary citizens across the world thought about power, legitimacy, conflict, and cooperation at that time. Each dataset includes readable documentation and questionnaires, short summaries of the main findings.

Substantively, the datasets focus on core questions of international politics rather than domestic policy issues. Across these survey waves, respondents are asked how they evaluate major global actors, how much they trust international institutions, and whether they believe international law should constrain state behavior. Several surveys probe attitudes toward democracy and human rights. Others address religious tolerance and the perceived legitimacy of international norms.

Conflict and security are further major themes. Several surveys concern issues like nuclear weapons and high-profile geopolitical disputes, most notably the Israeli–Palestinian conflict.

From a regional perspective, post-Soviet states appear regularly but selectively. Only Russia, Ukraine, and Azerbaijan are presented in the datasets, which typically include samples from Western Europe, North America, Asia, and the Middle East. No other post-Soviet states are included, while several surveys were not conducted in Azerbaijan (see below).

Overall, this collection is best understood as a substantive resource for studying global political attitudes at the mass level, especially norms surrounding power, legitimacy, and international cooperation.

Two limitations are worth noting, though. First, while the surveys are cross-nationally ambitious, sampling strategies and survey modes vary substantially across countries—for details, see the links provided below (typically, the sampling details are provided in the files with ‘_quaire’ suffixes). This unevenness complicates strict cross-country comparisons and calls for caution when interpreting cross-country differences.

Second, the data are time-bound to the late 2000s, capturing attitudes in a pre-2014 (and, of course, pre-2022) geopolitical environment. As a result, findings should be understood as historically specific rather than indicative of current public opinion in the post-Soviet region.

Data access:

<https://drum.lib.umd.edu/items/267a5305-cba6-4ff2-bed4-0472a1f8e2f8>
<https://drum.lib.umd.edu/items/448716e4-a399-4574-8580-2585e1117a11>
<https://drum.lib.umd.edu/items/b50bb365-40db-4bfb-b94b-5afceb3f0709>
<https://drum.lib.umd.edu/items/514f3cd0-6b10-4d6a-a72b-add691f3cf07>
<https://drum.lib.umd.edu/items/8732580a-4a41-495b-8fc5-7eb8448bd591>

<https://drum.lib.umd.edu/items/4e4ac041-bef8-47ff-b291-a273ffa910a3>
<https://drum.lib.umd.edu/items/b1586f80-757e-4919-bd07-da6f9c063a5a>
<https://drum.lib.umd.edu/items/65ae86c9-092f-41cb-bf91-fe4ae80727c3>
<https://drum.lib.umd.edu/items/14d68510-b23f-4394-8e7b-5e2a171d433e>
<https://drum.lib.umd.edu/items/abb4ea33-8884-4c3c-8b0f-c71785c8fcad>
<https://drum.lib.umd.edu/items/aad6eebb-afe6-4737-8911-e9b2faa84d07>
<https://drum.lib.umd.edu/items/9c446b87-f9f1-4eaf-87df-0703d0ac2f7b>
<https://drum.lib.umd.edu/items/dafc63ab-4a1c-4b22-b9fa-0bac19977a6e>
<https://drum.lib.umd.edu/items/0e7e69e5-52cf-4bff-91d0-52806e4cadce> (no Azerbaijan)
<https://drum.lib.umd.edu/items/0a0c17ae-b79e-49af-b970-375b2a8f4757>
<https://drum.lib.umd.edu/items/ac5de7c6-dda6-42ec-994c-764974bf6a6e>
<https://drum.lib.umd.edu/items/e895e608-b4f1-4d93-9f49-70ea74a7a98c> (no Azerbaijan)
<https://drum.lib.umd.edu/items/0541e26e-f64a-43bc-a6eb-50dd5743c2ea>
<https://drum.lib.umd.edu/items/a7e6c3d7-83cc-41e1-a852-209781b79128>
<https://drum.lib.umd.edu/items/20d9263d-f41a-481a-bd43-dc6aea567866>
<https://drum.lib.umd.edu/items/6de6655f-87b9-4c6e-9512-780f0330be3c>
<https://drum.lib.umd.edu/items/f8d27d3d-d323-4e67-b2db-72bee79513fb> (no Azerbaijan)
<https://drum.lib.umd.edu/items/aff621bb-3618-49ba-a6ce-36773ab6d547>
<https://drum.lib.umd.edu/items/b9eff252-f751-4daf-b877-844a8b60eb3e>
<https://drum.lib.umd.edu/items/814b28e9-18a5-444f-9296-fe8db251be3c>
<https://drum.lib.umd.edu/items/b82fd999-2396-4b4b-84c0-c562217e867e>
<https://drum.lib.umd.edu/items/80ceb4fc-fa04-471b-9577-db110c4656f9>
<https://drum.lib.umd.edu/items/3eee0818-ba15-48a6-a01b-e28f25751a07>
<https://drum.lib.umd.edu/items/abf7b9c3-34a5-4627-9e57-28f38527dd67>
<https://drum.lib.umd.edu/items/56391233-d4b6-4642-bba7-6a78c40554dd> (no Azerbaijan)
<https://drum.lib.umd.edu/items/81b69d13-debd-4471-b529-a0f77e5676f0> (no Azerbaijan)