

A Quarterly Review of Social Reports and Research on Social Indicators, Social Trends, and the Quality-of-Life.  
*News Included of Research Committee 55 on Social Indicators and Social Reporting of the International Sociological Association.*

## THE SOCIAL PROGRESS OF NATIONS REVISITED

Richard J. Estes, University of Pennsylvania, School of Social Practice & Policy

Nations are geographically-defined territories in which large numbers of people live and which share a common history, language, culture and a similar set of socio-political-economic aspirations. Nations also share a national flag, a unified postal system, a national anthem, as well as police and military systems designed to promote the nation's security. Recognition as a nation is bestowed on a society by other nations who, frequently, engage in shared economic, political, and military agreements with one another but, in every case, recognize the nation's unique territorial boundaries. Most nations are members of regional associations as well including, at the global level, the United Nations which imposes a strict set of criteria for membership and participation in the activities of the world body.

Though most nations have very long histories as autonomous bodies, the political stability of some tend to be recent and highly precarious (Estes 2012c), especially in situations in which the nations are engaged in internal or regional wars and recurrent diversity-related social conflict (Estes 2018c). Today, 2018, the United Nations recognizes 193 discrete territories as independent "nation-states" that possess the authority to cast individual votes and engage in collaborative activities on initiative promulgated by the world assembly (United Nations 2018). Most of the United Nations membership consists of countries in developing Africa (1,288 million people), Asia (5,545 million people), and Latin America and the Caribbean (652 million people). The organization's membership also consists of "economically advanced" societies located in Europe (743 million people), North America (364 million people), and selected subregions of East Asia and the Pacific, including the "small dragon" states of Hong Kong SAR, Japan, Korea, and Singapore. A comparatively small number

of "member states" of the United Nations consist of land-locked countries and the small island developing nations of the Caribbean (Anguilla, Antigua & Barbuda, Aruba, etc.) and Micronesia (American Samoa, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, etc.).

In all, the world's population currently numbers approximately 7,600 million people in mid-2018 and is expected to increase to 11,800 million people by 2100 after which it is expected to decline steadily (Population Reference Bureau 2018). In 2008, the division of the world's population between urban and rural dwellers was evenly split for the first time, albeit the urban population of economically advanced countries then as now exceeded 74% and is continuing to increase toward increased levels of urban dwellers in rich and poor countries alike (United Nations 2014). Every indication exists for believing that the world's nations will become predominately urban in composition by 2050.

The progress of meeting the basic needs of their residents, as measured by overall level of social development and quality of life, varies considerably by nations and geopolitical regions. Most of the world's nations continue to be classified as "developing" whereas only a minority are classified as countries with advanced economies and political systems. The number of nations that fall into the two categories shifted from one-time period to the next, albeit the percentage of the world's populations that fall within the two categories remain more or less the same, i.e., 15%-20% in developed countries and appropriately 80% to 85% in developing countries (World Bank Group 2015).

**Estes' Index of Social Progress (ISP) and Weighted Index of Social Progress (WISP)**

The Index of Social Progress (ISP) was

developed in 1973 by Richard J. Estes of the University of Pennsylvania School of Social Policy & Practice (Estes & Morgan, 1976). The index has been continuously refined by Estes, and today, the ISP, and its statistically weighted version, the Weighted Index of Social Progress (WISP), is used to assess the changing capacity of nations to provide for at least the basic social and material needs of their growing populations (Estes 1988a, 1990c, 2014d). While not a direct measure of quality of life, the purpose of the index is to assess the extent to which societies are succeeding in reducing the barriers to social, political, and economic development that impede the ability of people to improve their life quality and well-being. Today, the Index  
*(Continued on next page.)*

### In this Issue...

#### REVIEW ESSAY:

The Social Progress of Nations Revisited .. 1-7

#### REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS:

ISQOLS President's Message .....7

ISQOLS 2018 Conference Announcement .....8

Call For Papers *Applied Research in Quality of Life*, The Official Journal of the International Society for Quality-of-Life Studies .....7

THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR QUALITY-OF-LIFE STUDIES .....7

*Editor's Note:* This issue leads off with a review essay by Richard J. Estes. The essay describes his research on the Index of Social Progress and the Weighted Index of Social Progress. The purpose of these indices is to assess the extent to which societies are succeeding in reducing the barriers to social, political, and economic development that impede the ability of people to improve their life quality and well-being. This is followed by a message from ISQOLS President Mariano Rojas, an announcement of the ISQOLS 2018 Conference in Hong Kong, and regular announcements.

# SINET

Social Indicators Network News

## EDITOR EMERITUS:

Abbott L. Ferriss,  
*Atlanta, GA*

## COORDINATING EDITOR/PUBLISHER:

Kenneth C. Land,  
*Duke University, Durham, NC*

## MANAGING EDITOR:

Rob Marks,  
*Duke University, Durham, NC*

## CORRESPONDING EDITORS:

### **Children, Youth and Education:**

Donald J. Hernandez  
*Bureau of the Census,  
Washington, DC*

### **Health and Aging:**

Linda K. George and  
Deborah T. Gold,  
*Duke University, Durham, NC*

### **General Social and Cultural Trends:**

James A. Davis,  
*National Opinion Research Center,  
Chicago, IL*

John P. Robinson,  
*University of Maryland,  
College Park, MD*

### **Marketing/Quality of Life**

**Research:**  
M. Joseph Sirgy,  
*Virginia Polytechnic Institute  
& State University*

### **Social Forecasting/Futurology**

Joseph Coates,  
*Coates and Jarratt, Inc.  
Washington, DC*

### **Subjective Well-Being and the Quality of Life:**

Ed Diener,  
*University of Illinois  
at Urbana-Champaign*

### **International Correspondents:**

**Asia and the Pacific:**  
Mahar Mangahas, Philippines,  
*Social Weather Stations,  
Quezon City, The Philippines*

Dudley L. Poston  
*Texas A&M University,  
College Station, TX*

### **Europe:**

Maria Ciechocinska,  
*University of Agriculture & Education,  
Zytni, Poland*

Lief Gouiedo  
*Stockholm, Sweden*

Wolfgang Glatzer  
*Frankfurt, Germany*

Zsolt Speder

of Social Progress and the Weighted Index of Social Progress measures the changing social capacity of 162 countries and territories throughout the world and, in all, reflect the social challenges and accomplishments of approximately 95% of the world's total population. The index's current 41 indicators are entirely objective in nature, albeit many of its items suggest national assessments of subjective well-being also (Estes 2014b).

## Historical Background

Initially referred to as the "Index of National Social Vulnerability" (NSV, 1984), work on the Index of Social Progress was initiated at the invitation of the then Secretary-General of the International Council of Social Welfare, Mrs. Kate Katzki (1910-2002) of the International Council on Social Welfare (ICSW), and Dr. Katherine Kendall (1910-2010), Executive Director of the International Association of Schools of Social Work (IASSW).

Working adjacent to the administrative offices of the United Nations in New York they, like so many other nongovernmental leaders in the international community, recognized that the United Nations First Development Decade (1961-1970) failed to achieve its overly ambitious set of economic goals, especially those associated with promoting the elimination of poverty by contributing to increases in per capita income and household income levels (Legun 1970). Both organizations represented by these highly influential social advocates, among dozens of others, recognized that a more socially focused agenda on poverty reduction, reducing ill-health and in advancing the education of women and children would be needed to enhance the success of subsequent development decades. Fortunately, the efforts of these and other governmental and nongovernmental organizations were reinforced by the rapidly emerging social indicators, social reporting, and social national social assessment movements centered in Europe and the United States (Noll, 1996; Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development [OECD], 1999; Bell, 1969; U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare [USDHEW], 1969). The emerging system of national reports also added to the sense of enthusiasm experienced by many development specialists in advancing well-being worldwide.

## Stages and Phases

The intellectual agenda having been set, the creation of the ISP and the WISP took place over more than a decade (1973-1987) and through a series of complex and labor-intensive phases. Each phase required the use of statistical methods and extensive in-person consultations with well-being and development specialists working in various world regions. Each phase also drew heavily on the rapidly expanding literatures on the social aspects of development, quality of life and well-being as well as reviews of empirical reports of development outcomes and happiness outcomes prepared by specialized agencies of the United Nations, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development and a wide range of internationally focused nongovernmental organizations that had a major impact on developing empirical approaches to well-being assessment, e.g., Amnesty International, Doctors Without Borders, Freedom House, Save the Children, the Stockholm International Peace and Research Institute, the United Nations Development Programme and the World Resources Institute, among others.

### **Phase 1-- Development of the ISP's Conceptual Model (1973-1975)**

Each phase required the use of both statistical tools and extensive in-person consultations with development specialists working in various world regions. Each phase also drew heavily on the rapidly expanding literatures on the social aspects of development as well as reviews of empirical reports of development and well-being outcomes prepared by specialized agencies of the United Nations, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and a wide range of internationally focused nongovernmental organizations (e.g., Amnesty International, Freedom House, Save the Children, World Resources Institute). Phase 1 essentially reflects the major conceptual tasks that were carried out by the instrument development and well-being assessment of 107 of the world's most populous countries.

### **Phase 2--Expansion of the Original Index of National Social Vulnerability (INSV) from Six to Ten Sectors and the Renaming of the Index (1976-1978)**

In response to the preliminary findings obtained from the country, regional, and global analyses undertaken during Phase 1, the decision was made to expand the number of subindexes used to form the general model from six to ten and, in turn, to rename the INSV the "Index of Social Progress" (ISP, WISP). The revised model

was both more comprehensive in conceptualization and, through its renaming, emphasized the positive, rather than negative, components of development.

### **Phase 3-- Identification and Collection of a Data Bank of Social Indicators for Use in Operationalizing the ISP (1978–1981)**

A number of sub-phases also were associated with the operationalization of the ISP during its third phase of development: (a) the identification- of a large pool available social indicators from which a more discrete set of indicators would be selected; (b) obtaining access to these indicators, the majority of which existed only in nonelectronic format; (c) determining a methodology for resolving issues of missing, inaccurate, heavily biased, or incomplete data; and (d) the identification of a provisional methodology for combining the separate indicators into subindexes and, in turn, into a composite ISP.

### **Phase 4-- Establishment and Refinement of a System of Indicator, Subindex, and Composite Index Statistical Weights (1981)**

Completion of Phase 4 of the ISP's development occurred in two steps: (a) the application of traditional index construction tools (mostly factor analysis and linear regression techniques) to the now computerized data bank of approximately 200 social indicators and (b) in consultation with development specialists, finalization of a system of statistical weights that would be assigned to each indicator, subindex, and to the aggregate ISP. A complete listing of the individual indicators used in the operationalization of the preliminary ISP is reported elsewhere (Estes 2015c) but the system of statistical used is reported below

### **Phase 5-- Application of the Preliminary ISP Model to Development Assessment to 107 Countries (1981–1983)**

The first set of findings from the fully operationalized ISP and WISP were reported in Estes (1984). This volume reports detailed analysis of development trends for 107 countries for the 10-year period 1970–1980.

### **Phase 6-- Application of the Refined ISP Model to a Representative Sample of 124 Countries (1983–1987)**

Between 1983 and 1987, testing of slightly modified versions of the earlier ISP and WISP occurred in an analysis of the social development and well-being trends that occurred in 124 countries during the 14-year period 1970–1983 (Estes, 1988). At this stage, the ISP was fully stabilized and was judged to be a valid and reliable measure of national and international trends in social development over time.

### **Phase 7-- Application of the ISP and WISP to 162 Countries Representing 95 % of the World's Population (1988–present)**

The final, and now ongoing, phase in the ISP's development involves the application of the ISP to 162 countries representing approximately 95% of the world's population (Estes, 2015c). Except for the substitutions of a few selected indicators, since 1988, the structure of the ISP has remained virtually unchanged.

## **Indicators and Subindexes of the Index of Social Progress**

In their present construction, the ISP and WISP consist of 41 social indicators divided across ten development sectors: Educational Status (N= 4); Health Status (N=7); Women Status (N=5); Defense Effort (N=1); Economic Status (N= 5); Demographic Trends (N=3); Environmental Status (N=3); Social Chaos (N=5), Cultural Diversity (N=3); and Social Welfare Effort (N=5). All 41 of the ISP indicators have been established to be valid indicators of social development, and indeed, most are used regularly by other scholars in their analyses of national, regional, and world- wide development (Estes 2015c).

## **Statistical Weights**

A series of statistical weights were developed to assign relative importance to the various items and subindexes used in forming the Weighted Index of Social Progress (WISP). Factor analysis and linear regression were the primary methods used in formulating these weights as was on-going substantive consultations from international comparative specialists provided to the project's research team working on data collection and the formulation of the ISP and WISP. The following statistical weights were used for all 40 years of data included in the effort to insure comparability of method and statistical procedures used throughout the project.

### **Statistical Weights Used in Constructing the Weighted Index of Social Progress\***

$$WISP_{10} = \{[(\text{Factor 1}) * .697]\} + [(\text{Factor 2}) * .163] + [(\text{Factor 3}) * .140]\}$$

where:

$$\text{Factor 1} = [(\text{Health} * .92) + (\text{Education} * .91) + (\text{Welfare} * .72) + (\text{Woman} * .91) + (\text{Social Chaos} * .84) + (\text{Economic} * .71) + (\text{Diversity} * .64) + (\text{Demographic} * .93)]$$

$$\text{Factor 2} = [(\text{Defense Effort} * .93)]$$

$$\text{Factor 3} = [(\text{Environmental} * .98)]$$

*(Continued on next page.)*

(Continued from previous page.)

### Country Selection

Countries selected for analysis using the ISP and WISP satisfy at least three of the following four criteria: (1) a population size of at least or approaching one million persons; and (2) a reasonable degree of political stability such that timely and reliable data collection is possible, (3) the availability of reliable and valid data for at least the indicators included in the WISP, and (4) for purposes of comparative analysis, prior inclusion in the author's earlier studies of national, regional, and global social development trends. Countries with missing, inadequate, incomplete, or seriously distorted data on three or more of the ISP's indicators are excluded from analyses unless reasonable estimates of the missing data could be made.

The WISP currently monitors the social development performances of 162 countries located in all six of the world's major continental groupings (Africa [N=50], Asia [N=45], Europe [N=36], Latin America [N=26], North America [N=2], and Oceania [N=3]). The index also reports development trends for all four of the United Nations-designated socioeconomic development groupings, i.e., Developed Market Economies (DMEs, N=34), Commonwealth of Independent States (CISs, N=21), Developing Countries (DCs, N=66), and Least Developing Countries (LDCs, N=41).

### Data Sources

Most of the data used to operationalize the WISP are obtained from annual reports supplied by individual countries to specialized agencies of the United Nations, the United Nations Development Programme, the World Bank, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the International Social Security Association (ISSA), and other major international data collection and reporting organizations. Data for the Environmental Subindex are obtained from the World Resources Institute (WRI), the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development (UNCSD), and the World Bank. Data for the Social Chaos Subindex were obtained from Amnesty International (AI), Freedom House (FH), the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRCRC), the Stockholm International Peace and Research Institute (SIPRI), and Transparency International (TI). Data for the Cultural Diversity Subindex were gathered from the CIA World Factbook, the Encyclopedia Britannica, and from the contributions of independent scholars working in the fields of comparative language, religion, and ethnography. The work of individual scholars and other think tanks were used in the collection of much needed data as well.

### Levels of Analysis

The ISP and the WISP have been used to conduct studies at several levels of analysis: (1) individual nation states; (2) geopolitical subregions; (3) geopolitical regions; (4) continents; and (5) the world-as-a-whole. The indexes also have been used to study the changing capacity of selected groups of nations that share particular characteristics in common with one another: (6) failed and failing states, (7) successor states to the Former Soviet Union; (8) member states of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation; (9) national groups by similar types of geopolitical systems; as well as (10) especially vulnerable population groups including children and youth, the aged, racial and ethnic minorities, and (11) marginalized populations within their own countries.

### Time Frame

The ISP and the WISP represent unique measures of social development and, in turn, quality of life and well-being. The time frame for the data base spans 45 years and, as such, represent a unique time-series data set which make possible the analysis of well-being over an extended period using basically the same set of objective indicators. Both indexes have been used to assess various levels of well-being for 1970, 1980, 1990, 1996, 2000, 2005 and, today, 2015. The references cited below identify the major reports that have resulted from analyses using the ISP and WISP.

### Contemporary Uses of the ISP and WISP

In addition to analyzing a complex array of social forces of work at the global levels, the Index of Social Progress has been used to measure changes in social development, i.e., quality of life and well-being, at the world (Estes 1988c, 1997b, 2007b, 1998b, 2010a, 2015c, 2018) and regional levels, e.g., Africa (Estes 1995a), Asia & the Pacific (Estes 1987, 1990b, 1996b 2002, 2007a, 2017h; Inoguchi & Estes 2017h), Europe (Estes 1997c, 2004), Latin America (Estes 1996c), post-socialist Central Asia (1998a, 2007b, 2012a, 2012c), and the Middle Eastern countries of North Africa and Western Asia (Estes 1999, 2000; 2016a-e; Tiliouine & Estes 2016c, 2017). A wide range of studies using the Index also have been conducted on failed and failing states and other countries characterized by highly vulnerable political and economic systems, e.g., Estes 2012c, 2015a, 2015b, 2017b, 2018c, 2018g, 2019). Other applications of the ISP and WISP have focused on specific sector of development e.g., health, contrasting socio-political systems (1990b, 2018a), and selected Asian countries (2002, 2005f, 2018f).

The index also has been applied to various highly vulnerable population groups for which macroscopic data has been judged appropriate especially sexually exploited children and youth (Estes 2005e, 2012b, 2014a, 2017g; Cooper et al. 2005c-d). In recent years, along with other colleagues, I have turned my attention to Islam (Estes 2014c, 2014e, 2016a-b, 2016g-j, 2018h-i), including to the underlying causes and drivers of contemporary Islamic violence and terrorism, e.g., Estes 2014e, 2016c-h, 2016j, 2018a-b, 2018e. Elements of the model also has been used to conceptualize and advance the contributions made by social workers and social work educators in accelerating the pace of socio-economic development in the world's poorer countries, e.g., Estes 2008, 2009, 2010b.

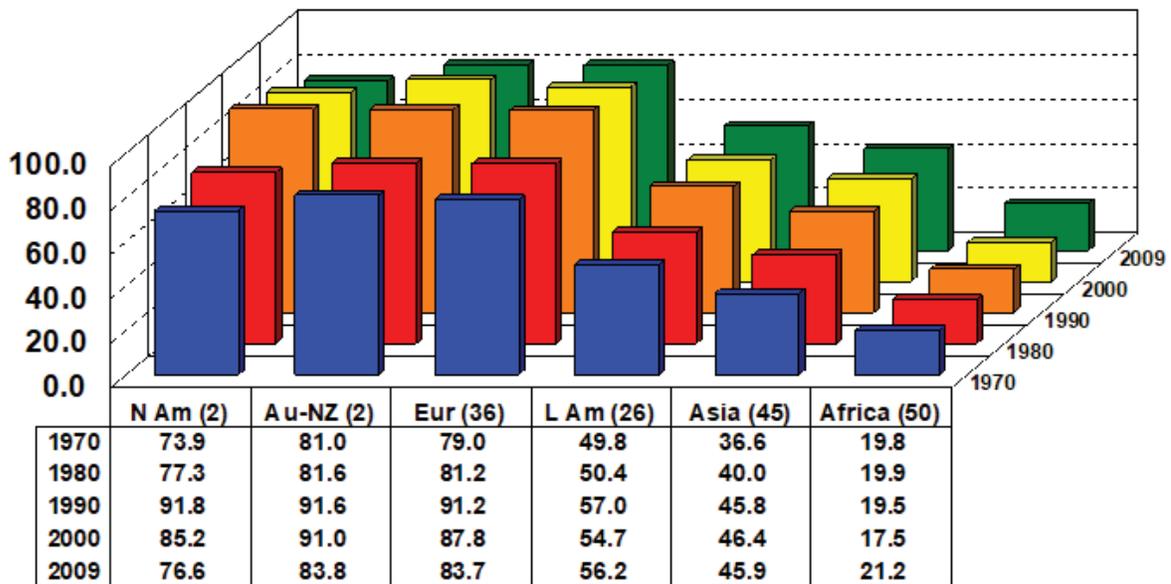
### Graphic Presentations of ISP and WISP Findings. 1970-2009

The charts and other graphical presentations reprinted below cover the 40-year period 1970-2009. These charts have been selected to illustrate the varied uses to which the ISP and WISP have been put in recent studies.

#### 1. Average WISP Scores by Continent

The following two charts report WISP scores by major continent for the period 1970-2009. The charts report both relative WISP scores for each continent as well as the percent changes that have taken place in these scores by each continent and for each 10-year period. The chart tables report the actual numerical changes for each of the time periods. Thus, the two charts, and those that follow, report time-series data for the entire 40-year period summarized in the charts.

### Average WISP Scores by Continent (N=162) 1970-2009

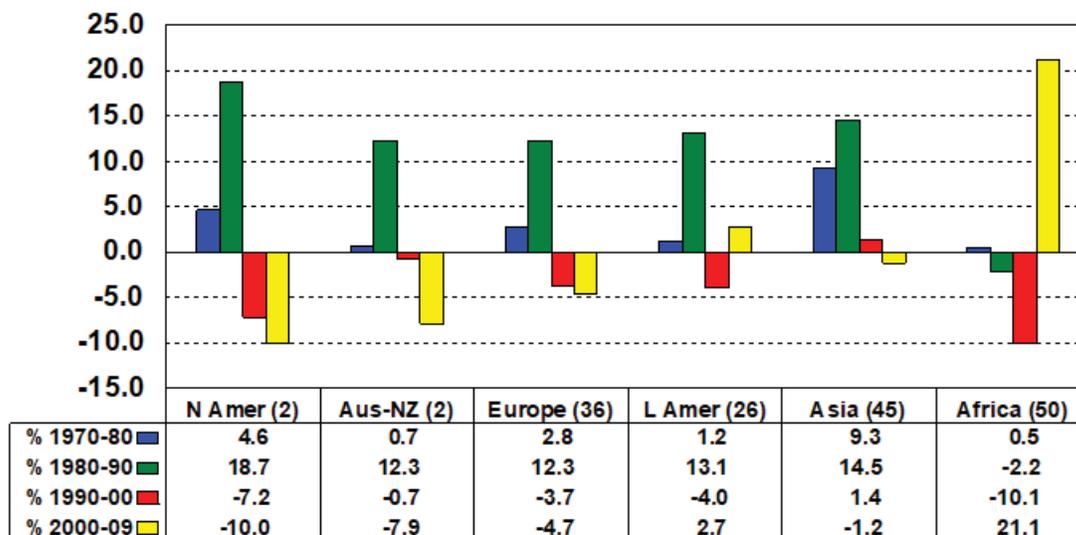


#### 2. The Subregional Level for Special Population Groups, 2000-2011

The following two charts are among a series of charts prepared at the subregional level. In this case, the data reported are for the 54 nations worldwide with majority Muslim populations (Estes & Tiliouine 2014c; Tiliouine & Estes 2016c). The charts group the countries by subregions, rank orders them, and report both average WISP scores for each region and the percentage change in these scores between 2000 and 2011. The resulting data provide a unique insight into the changing development and well-being profiles for Islam nations over an extended, but contemporary, period.

Further, the analyses using the ISP and WISP were undertaken in collaboration with several scholars with a shared focus on describing the state of well-being of the more than 1,600 million people worldwide that make up the Islamic Ummah (Tiliouine & Estes 2014b). Studies using the ISP and WISP also have been undertaken of that small, but lethal, minority of Muslims engaged in acts of terrorism within both their own countries and other countries located within their neighboring geopolitical region (Sirgy et al., 2018a-b, e). Studies also have been recently completed of Islamic terrorism directed at the capital cities of former Western colonizers of Islamic lands as well as terrorism directly at other countries, including the United States, that are perceived to conflict with Islamic states, their values, and forms of governance.

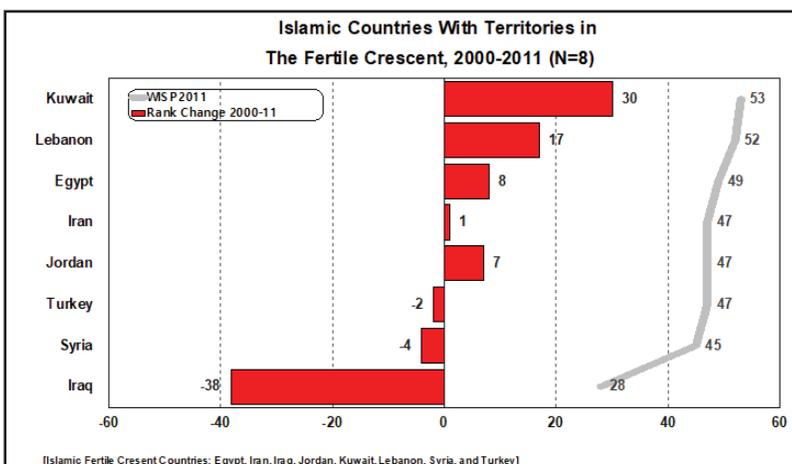
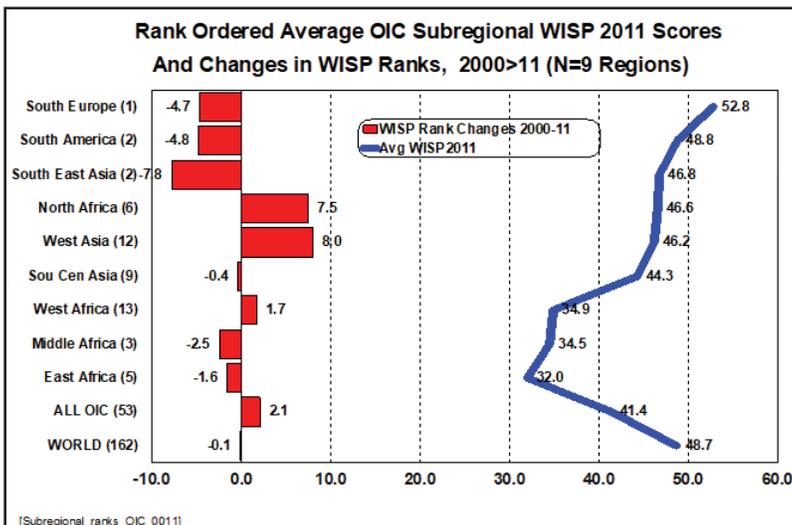
### Percent Change in Average WISP Scores by Continent (N=162), 1970-2009



(Continued on next page.)

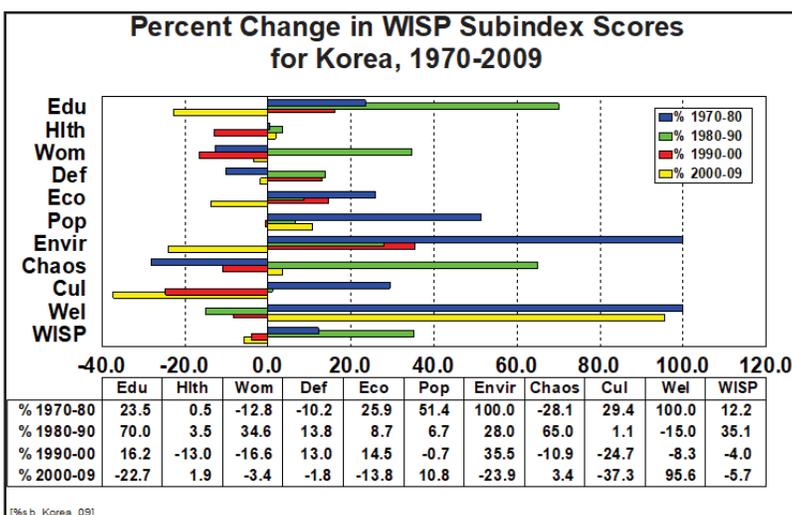
### 3. Index of Social Progress Applied at the National Level

One of the most frequent applications of the ISP and WISP are at the national level. National WISP data can easily be plotted using the structure of the graphs already presented and are of considerable value in monitoring national WISP changes over time. The chart for Korea below reports 40-year trend patterns for South Korea and summarizes trend patterns by the WISP's ten subindexes for each 10-year period since 1970. The trend patterns reported in this chart by WISP subindex reflect the highly uneven nature of national development over an extended period. In the main, they reflect changes in rates of population increases, growth in overall level of economic development, and changes in the structure and function of newly urbanized South Korean families. The countries changing pattern of cultural diversity also is reflected in the chart as are data related to the health, education, and environmental sectors. The table at the bottom of the chart reflects decennial percentage changes in each of the 10 sectors that form the WISP.



#### Afterword

The fields of quality of life and well-being research are extraordinarily rich in the variety of approaches that are available to measure the changing capacity of nations to provide for at least the basic social, political, economic, and other material needs of their populations. So, too, are the great variety of social indicators and different metrics used in the creation of contemporary quality of life and well-being research, including comparative social development. These achievements have been remarkable especially given their statistical sophistication and transnational application. One can only imagine the even more rigorous and sensitive measures of life quality and well-being that will emerge in the decades just ahead. Those of us of the “older” generation look forward to these ground-breaking contributions in more varied and positive approaches to assessing advances in the well-being of people.



In concluding this essay, I want to express appreciation to just a handful of the many remarkable men and women with whom I have worked in achieving my own body of empirical research: M. Joseph “Joe” Sirgy of Virginia Tech University who has been much like an intellectual brother to me; Habib Tiliouine of the University of Oran2 in Algeria who helped open my eyes to the wonders and wondrous history of Islam; Alex Michalos of the University of North British Colombia who always has been supportive and gentle in his remarks for needed areas of improvement; Filomena Maggino of the University of Rome who facilitated the publication of many works that other journals might judge to fall outside their span of interest; and, of course, the more than half a dozen of the pioneers in all aspects of social work, social development, quality of life, and well-being on whose shoulders I firmly stand in carving out my own unique body of theoretical and empirical works. Thanks, too, goes to Ken Land, a colleague of many decades, who provided me with the opportunity to pull together this essay. Thank you, Ken.

(Continued on next page.)

(Continued from previous page.)

### Selected References

Estes, R. J., Sirgy, M. J. (2018). *Advances in well-being: Toward a better world for all*. London: Rowman and Littlefield.

Estes, R. J., Tiliouine, H. (2016g). Social progress in North Africa. In Tiliouine, H., Estes, R.J. (Editors). *Social progress in Islamic societies: Social, political, economic, and ideological challenges*. Chapter 6. Dordrecht NL: Springer.

Estes, R. J., Sirgy, M. J. (2017f). *The pursuit of well-being: The untold global history*. Dordrecht NL & Berlin: Springer.

Estes, R. J., Tiliouine, H. (2016h). Social development trends in the countries of the Fertile Crescent. In Tiliouine, H., Estes, R.J. (Editors). *Social Progress in Islamic Societies: Social, Political, Economic, and Ideological Challenges*. Chapter 9. Dordrecht NL: Springer.

Estes, R.J., Chua Hoi Wai, Fung, J. & Wong, A. (2002). Toward a social development index for Hong Kong: The process of community engagement. *Social Indicators Research* 58(1-3), 313-347

Inoguchi, T., Estes, R. J. (2017h). The history of human well-being in East Asia. In Estes, R. J. and M. J. Sirgy (Editors). *The pursuit of well-being: The untold global history*. Dordrecht NL: Springer.

Legun, C. (1970). *The first United Nations decades and lessons for 1970*. New York: Praeger Publishers in cooperation with the Vienna Institute for Development.

Noll, H.-H. (1996). *Social indicators and social reporting: International experiences*. Mannheim: ZUMA.

Sirgy, M.J., Estes, R. J. & Rahtz, D. R. (2018a). Combatting jihadist terrorism: A quality-of-life perspective. *Journal of Applied Research in Quality of Life*. (on line). <https://doi.org/10.1007/>

Tiliouine, H., Estes, R. J. (2016a). *Social Progress in Islamic Societies: Social, Political, Economic, and Ideological Challenges*. Dordrecht NL: Springer. s11482-017-9574-z

## THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR QUALITY-OF-LIFE STUDIES:

### CENTRAL OFFICE AND WWW HOMEPAGE

The International Society for Quality-of-Life Studies (ISQOLS) was formed in the mid-1990s. The objectives of ISQOLS are: 1) to stimulate interdisciplinary research in quality-of-life (QOL) studies within the managerial (policy), behavioral, social, medical, and environmental sciences; 2) to provide an organization which all academic, business, nonprofit, and government researchers who are interested in QOL studies can coordinate their efforts to advance the knowledge base and to create positive social change; and 3) to encourage closer cooperation among scholars engaged in QOL research to develop better theory, methods, measures, and intervention programs. For more information, see the ISQOLS webpage: [www.isqols.org](http://www.isqols.org)

Jill Johnson is the ISQOLS Manager at the ISQOLS Central Office. Contact information: Jill Johnson, ISQOLS Office Manager, P.O. Box 118, Gilbert, AZ 85299 USA (Gilbert, AZ is a suburb of Phoenix, AZ). Email: [office@isqols.org](mailto:office@isqols.org) Membership dues can be paid directly on the updated website. Anyone interested in knowing more about ISQOLS should contact Jill Johnson at [office@isqols.org](mailto:office@isqols.org)

## ISQOLS PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear ISQOLS members,

We are starting the year 2018 with many plans and high expectations. I do believe that 2017 was a very good year for ISQOLS.

The 2017 Conference in Innsbruck was highly rewarding. There were about 400 participants—among them, many young scholars, a long range of topics were covered, and participants came from 68 countries of the world. We are truly international and I believe this is a valuable characteristic of ISQOLS.

A highly demanding process of reviewing the by-laws took place during 2017. I would like to thank the members of the By-laws Revision Committee (Richard Estes, Valerie Möller, Joe Sirgy, Stephan Höfer, and Kai Ludwigs) for their effort in providing the Society with updated by-laws. It was a long process where many ISQOLS members were consulted. The process culminated with the approval of the new by-laws by the Board of Directors at the beginning of 2018.

The Development Committee, with the approval of the Board of Directors, implemented a track-endowment campaign which has been very successful in honoring some ISQOLS scholars. The campaign has also increased our financial endowment. I would like to thank Richard Estes, Joe Sirgy and Kai Ludwigs for developing and implementing this initiative. The Society's endowments are invested with a long-term perspective and with a socially-responsible criterion. Ken Land and Rhonda Phillips have accepted to participate in the Investment Committee so that we take a close look at our financial portfolio. I would like to add that a financial surplus was also generated in 2017. I believe it is good news that ISQOLS is financially sound at the moment. In the future, some decisions will need to be made regarding using returns from our financial investments in order to fulfil our mission of promoting quality of life research by providing the conditions for holding fruitful academic exchanges and discussions so that we contribute to the well-being in societies.

We are now looking forward to our XVI conference which will take place in June 2018 in Hong Kong. The conference has raised a lot of interest, with about 400 submissions. A pre-conference event will take place in Manila, Philippines. Hence, there will be an opportunity for ISQOLS members to physically meet in order to address quality of life, well-being and happiness issues this year. On the horizon, we have our 2019 conference in Granada, Spain and our 2020 conference in Rotterdam, The Netherlands. In addition, we have already launched calls to host our 2021 and 2022 conferences.

There are important challenges ahead. We need to attract more young scholars who are interested in pursuing an academic career in well-being related issues; we must provide an appropriate environment for their academic growth. It may also be useful to look beyond the academic sector in order to better contribute to the well-being in societies. It seems necessary to develop ways of strengthening our interaction with policy makers, business people, third-sector organizations, and others.

In the end, the success of ISQOLS depends on the active participation of all members. I would like to encourage our members to get fully involved in the many activities of the Society and even to propose and promote new initiatives.

~Mariano Rojas

**ISQOLS 2018 CONFERENCE**  
**Promotion of Quality of Life in the**  
**Changing World**  
**Hong Kong SAR, China**  
**June 14-16, 2018**

The International Society for Quality-of-life Studies (ISQOLS) is holding its 16th Conference at The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Hung Hom, Kowloon, Hong Kong, China from June 14-16, 2018. The 16th ISQOLS Annual Conference will be co-organized by ISQOLS and the Faculty of Health and Social Sciences, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University from June 14th to June 16th 2018 (Thursday to Saturday) in Hong Kong, China.

The theme of the conference is “Promotion of Quality of Life in the Changing World”. With emerging global challenges such as mental health issues, aging population, global warming, pollution and inequalities, this conference constitutes a platform for researchers and practitioners in different fields to make presentations on academic and practical research findings on quality of life, well-being, and happiness, with particular reference to how such work can promote quality of life in the changing world. Guest speakers and lecturers include Alex C. Michalos, Kenneth C. Land, Takashi Inoguchi, and Felicia Huppert.

Information about the Conference will be posted on the conference website: <https://www.polyu.edu.hk>

Mariano Rojas

Daniel Shek

ISQOLS President 2017-18    Chair Local Organizing Committee

# SINET

## Subscription Information

As a service to the world-wide social indicators community, SINET is issued quarterly (February, May, August, November). Subscribers and network participants are invited to report news of their social indicator activity, research, policy development, etc., to the Editor for publication. Deadlines are the 20th of the month prior to each issue.

Address:

SINET, Kenneth C. Land, Editor,  
 Department of Sociology, Box 90088,  
 Duke University, Durham, NC 27708-0088, USA  
 E-mail: [kland@soc.duke.edu](mailto:kland@soc.duke.edu)  
 Telephone: 919-660-5615  
 Fax: 919-660-5623

Subscriptions are on a calendar year basis; annual rates:

Libraries/Institutions ..... US\$26.00

Individual:

US & Canada ..... US\$18.00

All Others ..... US\$20.00

Sorry; credit cards are not accepted. Check must be in US dollars. Payment may be made through a wired money order; check with your financial institution for further information. Advance payments are always welcomed. Call or write for a multiple-year invoice.

Archived issues are available for purchase. Please call or write for prices and details.

# SINET

Kenneth C. Land, Editor  
 Department of Sociology  
 Box 90088, Duke University  
 Durham, NC 27708-0088 USA  
 151-1057-6936-22940