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# **VALUES, BELIEFS AND SOCIAL BEHAVIOR: DYNAMICS AND SPECIFICS IN MODERN ARMENIAN SOCIETY**

Final Report (2011-2013)

Compiled by:

Narine Khachatryan (team leader), Sona Manusyan (senior researcher),  
Nvard Grigoryan (junior researcher), Astghik Serobyan (junior researcher),  
Anna Hakobjanyan (junior researcher)

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## CONTENT

1. BACKGROUND ANALYSIS: LINKING CULTURAL VALUES AND POLITICAL-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS IN ARMENIA.....	4
2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND PRESENT STUDY.....	6
3. OBJECTIVES AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS.....	8
4. METHODS.....	8
5. RESULTS AND MAIN FINDINGS .....	12
5.1 Value preferences in Armenia: comparatative analysis by region, gender and age.....	12
5.2 The factor structure of social axioms: cultural aspect .....	14
5.3 Predictive relationship between values, beliefs and attitudes of political and economic behavior: results from regression analysis.....	15
5.4 Guiding lines of economic and political behavior in Armenia: qualitative analysis.....	17
6. CONCLUSION .....	22
REFERENCES .....	23
Appendix 1	
Appendix 2	

## 1. BACKGROUND ANALYSIS. LINKING CULTURAL VALUES AND POLITICAL-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS IN ARMENIA

Since its independence, Armenia has started to face major economic challenges along with the need to shape a new state-political system and relations. These challenges are still to overcome. By joining the global political and economic associations and programs, Armenia simultaneously assented to various international obligations which implied certain institutional and life standard changes towards democratization. While regulation of many areas of social life are formally governed by democratic principles, the reality often suggests a different picture.

A comprehensive picture about the social-economic and social-political context of these transformation processes requires reviewing both macro- and micro- indicators by combining both external assessment from comparative international perspective and local evaluations of internal developments.

According to the Freedom House Nations in Transit study<sup>1</sup> on democracy development in the former socialist block, Armenia is classified as a semi-consolidated authoritarian regime. According to the Transformation Index BTI (2012), Armenia still has limited opportunities for democracy and market development. According to the democracy index of Armenia, the country's political system is evaluated as moderate autocracy, and the market economy is described as a system with functional flaws. Within the same study Armenia is ranked as a country with average level of management performance<sup>2</sup>. According to the discussed indicators, democratization of political-economic processes has shown decline since 2008<sup>3</sup>.

The Index of Economic freedom by Heritage Foundation evaluates the economic system of Armenia as moderately free<sup>4</sup> where, in particular, those sub-indicators of the rule of law such as protection of the right to property and freedom from corruption<sup>5</sup> are especially low.

These studies suggest that the political and economic systems are largely interwoven and not transparent, the judiciary system is not independent, and anti- monopolistic policies fails to ensure equal starting opportunities for market competition. Political and economic processes have thus failed to foster civil society development and have even been an impediment to that, first of all due to the lack of sustainability of democratic institutions and the rule of law.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.freedomhouse.org/report/nations-transit/2013/armenia>

<sup>2</sup> See Transformation Index BTI: Armenia holds 66<sup>th</sup> rank among 128 countries. <http://www.bti-project.de/laendergutachten/pse/arm/2012/>

<sup>3</sup> In 2008 Armenia held 41<sup>th</sup> rank

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.heritage.org/index/ranking>

<sup>5</sup> The score for this component in the study of economic freedom is derived primarily from Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI)

Juxtaposition of external and local internal evaluations allows to draw several groups of intertwined factors, which partake in the formation of values and beliefs in Armenia.

- *Deficit of the rule of law and law enforcement.* This factor goes across all areas of social life, and a number of other problems and perceptions derive from this deficit in both economic and political domains. It is reflected in the social consciousness of individuals as value-normative ambiguity and belief in social injustice.
- *Context of international relations.* The choice of the political line is nowadays associated not only with political and economic opportunities, but also with alternatives of cultural value orientations, a vivid example being the recent hot debates around the theme of 'Europe or Russia'.
- *Cultural resilience factor.* The discourses on social changes include diametrically different perceptions and speculations of what is 'Armenian', 'national', 'civil' etc. Manifests of cultural resistance go in parallel with social changes and westernization trends. Native culture is thus simultaneously the object of changes (an element being reconsidered, criticized) and a factor restricting these changes.
- *Civil unrests and new media.* Especially from 2008, acts of social protests and civic initiatives can be witnessed, while at the same time they are still at the level of desecret groups, 'subcultures' and not all. The activity of various groups predominately runs within on-line space.

The interplay between society's economic-political fabric and its value orientations can be better understood through worldwide comparative value studies. Hence, Armenia took part in World Value Survey (WVS) 3rd (1994-1999) and 6th waves (2010-2014)<sup>6</sup> and in European Values Study (EVS) 4th wave (2008)<sup>7</sup>. The comparison of WVS 1997 and EVS 2008 allows arriving at the conclusion that values of traditionalism and survival have preserved their positions in many areas and have even increased in certain domains. Particularly striking are the changes of such indicators as children's upbringing and traditional family values, along with increased feeling of national pride and increased role of religion. Meantime, interpersonal trust and tolerance toward sexual and religious minorities have been declined, while valuation of physical and economic security scores high as opposed to the quality of life and freedom of self-expression.

The studies by R. Inglehart and W. E. Baker affirm that many post-communist countries, and especially those from post-soviet area, have had a makeover towards values of survival in response to the economic collapse and transformation of social order (Inglehart and Baker 2000). Such values hamper the development of systems grounded on democracy. The result of a comparative study of values indicates that economically developed countries thus have better prerequisites to become democratic than less developed do. At the same time, the

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<sup>6</sup> <http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org>

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.europeanvaluesstudy.eu>

study shows that economic progress of a country becomes insufficient at a certain point for achieving democracy and civil society, since development of the latter depends on values of a different order, namely of self-expression (Inglehart 1997; Inglehart & Welzer 2009).

The role of culture has been reconsidered in political science, economics, and social studies starting from 1980s. Large-scale public and scientific debates around the role of culture have arrived at the following major questions: to what extent does culture account for current economy-political processes, and to what extent are the countries' political, economic and cultural systems interdependent? (Huntington 2000).

Despite the wide range of studies explaining the mechanisms of social changes in post-communistic countries, there is still a need to study culture-related particularities of changes typical for each country. Moreover, the indicators of political and economic macro-processes cannot provide an in-depth understanding of processes within societies, since they lose their power of causality before these processes would 'become behaviors'. Thus, the current study aims at exploration of how social and cultural transformation processes in Armenia are reflected at micro-level of individual value orientations, social beliefs and behavioral attitudes with consideration of interrelatedness between socio-cultural and social and psychological factors.

## **2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND PRESENT STUDY**

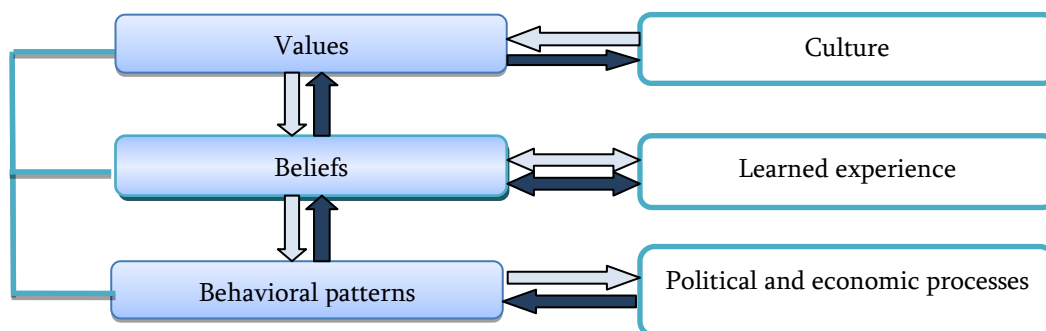
An impressive number of cross-cultural studies on the role of the cultural variable have been conducted. Although these studies are very empowering in terms of comparative knowledge across cultures, they often fall short in methodological clarity in terms of alternatives they have to choose: should cultural differences be viewed as variations of the universal (e.g. Baumeister 2005) or as realities with their own local regularities of formation (more so in works within the tradition of cultural relativism). This discussion is essential since it determines the methodological choices as well as practical solutions based on research results. Particularly, the analysis by Heine illustrates how results of cultural research may depend on the methodology selected. 'Evidence for universality is particularly informative for guiding evolutionary theories regarding the adaptiveness of certain facets of personality, whereas evidence for variability provides important information regarding boundary conditions, mechanisms, and the role of contextual variables in influencing aspects of personality' (Heine 2009: 387).

A special area of cultural research is the comparative analysis of cultural values, syndromes, beliefs across nations with the main purpose of capturing the specific impact of social transformations on culture and development of informed policies (Inglehart 1997; Inglehart and Baker 2000; Triandis 1995; Hofstede 1980; Schwartz 2007, Bond and Leung 2004). These studies, however, by virtue of being dimensional in their research design, have certain limitations. To mention one of them, an averaged, very generic characteristic of the society is

drawn whereby nuances of the social context of the given society are left out of attention. (Markuz and Hamedani 2007).

Socio-cultural psychology can thus be seen as a framework for overcoming the discussed methodological challenges whereby it conceptualizes culture as a *shared meaning system* (e.g., Markus and Kitayama 1998). The core idea across all cultural-psychological frameworks is that people and their social worlds are inseparable and mutually constitutive (Shweder 1990, Markuz and Kitayama 1991; Heine 2008). In particular, this theory grounds on a view that people and their social worlds require each other and should be analyzed in oneness. The signature of this approach is not a particular method, set of methods, but rather an emphasis on interdependences among the person and the sociocultural system (Markuz and Hamedani 2007). As another formulation, the aim of cultural psychology 'is to imaginatively conceive the subject dependent object (intentional world) and the object-dependent subject (intentional person) interpenetrating each other's identities' (Shweder 1990:25). The cultural psychology frame, as clear by now, does not distinguish between dependent and independent variables in the person-culture interrelation. It follows from such view that the present value and belief systems shape institutes and everyday practices, which then create preconditions or *cultural affordance* (Kitayama 2002) for the manifest and reinforcement of these values.

Based on the framework of social-cultural psychology, a theoretical model describing the regulation of social behavior has been developed. The proposed model has served as a base for research methodology development and interpretation of results. First, it allows to examine individuals as object and subject of interaction in their socio-cultural reality and, then, to explore the existing nexus between social-psychological and social-cultural factors involved in the (self)regulation of an individual's behavior in reponse to changing social reality.



Picture 1. Model of interrelation between social-psychological and social-cultural factors of social behavior regulation

According to the model, social-psychological predictors of social behavior are presented at three levels. Values are on the first level as normative principles that guide behavior. Values predict behavior in compliance with prevalent cultural norms in the society. Values, then, are relatively stable and hard to transform since they shape starting from primary socialization. The study of values has relied on the theory of basic values of Sh. Schwartz.

This theory distinguishes 10 motivationally distinct basic values and these values relate to a person's desirable goals. Although universal needs underlie these values, yet the prevalence of values for various groups depends on the culture (Schwartz & Bilsky 1990; Schwartz 2006).

Beliefs are on the second level as guiding representations about various life aspects and phenomena. Beliefs are also characterized by certain stability, since they are built on top of values. However, beliefs have more flexibility as compared to values, since they shape as a result of reinforcement of personal and witnessed experience and are subject to revision during secondary socialization. Study of beliefs has relied on the concept of *social axioms* suggested by Bond and Leung. 'Social axioms are generalized beliefs about people, social groups, social institutions, the physical environment, or the spiritual world as well as about events and phenomena in the social world.' These generalized beliefs are encoded in the form of an assertion about the relationship between two entities or concepts (Leung et al., 2002: 289).

Behavioral patterns are on the third level. These patterns represent sets and intentions to act in a certain way. Formation of behavioral patterns is influenced by values and beliefs, but they are also the immediate responses to social-economic and social-political occurrences in the society. Thus, behavioral patterns are the surface-level reactions to the changing socio-cultural reality. Within current study, behavioral patterns are specified as intentions to act in economic and political settings, and in each of these two domains, they have been measured through a number of indicators.

### **3. OBJECTIVES AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

The research aims to investigate basic value orientations and beliefs and their role in political and economic behavior in Armenia under current social-cultural changes in the country. In particular, the study aimed to address the following research questions:

- What are the specifics of prevailing value orientations for different segments of society?
- What are the contextual characteristics of social beliefs in Armenian society?
- How do value and belief orientations influence the economic and political attitudes and behaviors among Armenian citizens?

### **4. METHODS**

The study was based on both quantitative (survey) and qualitative (focus-groups, interviews) methods as two separate research components.

#### **4.1 Survey**

The survey battery included the following instruments (see Appendix 1):



I. Patterns of Political and Economic Behavior Questionnaire. The questionnaire includes 18 questions and sub-questions. Respondents had to express their opinion or indicate whether or not they agree with the statements about attitudes and ways of acting in political and economic settings.

The questions of political behavior are grouped in the following blocks:

1. Concernment with political issues (items 1, 2 and 3 with sub-questions)
2. Participation in elections, motives and willingness (items 4 with sub-questions, 5, 6, 7 and 8)
3. Political/civic activity (item 9 with sub-questions)
4. Subjective prognosis of the political situation (item 10)

The questions concerning to economic behavior are grouped in following blocks:

1. Concernment with economic issues (items 11, 12 and 13 with sub-questions)
2. Economic risk and taking loans (items 14 with sub-questions and 15)
3. Economic well-being (external or internal reference) (item 16 with sub-questions)
4. Subjective prognosis of economic state (items 17 and 18)

II. Social axioms survey. The questionnaire of social axioms used in the study consists of two blocks (76 items). The first block represents the original version of 'social axioms' (Bond and Leung 2004), while the second block represents a questionnaire which was developed during this study with the purpose of revealing 'culture-sensitive' variability of axioms (37 items) and was designed in fidelity with methodological approach of social axioms. Respondents assess each statement on a 5-point scale (5 points - 'strongly believe', 1 - 'strongly disbelieve').

Below are the 5 factors of Social Axioms<sup>8</sup>:

1. *Social cynicism* represents a negative view of human nature, especially as it is easily corrupted by power; a biased view against some groups of people; a mistrust of social institutions; and a disregard of ethical means for achieving an end.
2. *Social complexity* suggests that there are no rigid rules, but rather multiple ways of achieving a given outcomes, and that apparent inconsistency in human behavior is common.
3. *Reward for application* represents a general belief that effort, knowledge, careful planning and the investment of other resources will lead to positive results and help avoid negative outcomes.
4. *Religiosity* asserts the existence of supernatural forces and the beneficial functions of religious belief.
5. *Fate control* represents a belief that life events are pre-determined and that there are some ways for people to influence these outcomes.

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<sup>8</sup> Socail Axioms Project/<http://personal.cityu.edu.hk/~mgkleung/sa.htm>

A confirmatory factor analysis was conducted with the purpose of validation of these factors for the Armenian sample.

*The development of 'culture-specific' social axioms questionnaire*

The development of the questionnaire in Armenian was multi-stage. In the first stage, Armenian proverbs were collected and subjected to semantic analysis. As a result, six categories were identified according to the following thematic areas (life domains): cognition, human nature, work, relationships, human-society relationship and super-natural forces. In the second stage, based on these domains, unfinished sentences were constructed (28 items) to be continued by respondents in a way expressing their beliefs. Data of the content analysis of results from 120 questionnaires were grouped into belief groups according to the abovementioned domains of activity and thematic orientation (for example, the following themes were revealed in the domain of *work*: means of survival, a way of achieving well-being, condition for self-expression and self-development, social duty, input in social development).

In the third stage, 80 statements were phrased relevant to the identified domains and themes. The number of statements was reduced to 37 after the pilot study<sup>9</sup>.

III. Schwartz Values Survey (SVS, Schwartz)<sup>10</sup>. The questionnaire includes 57 values that measure 10 basic values. The values are presented in two lists. The first list includes 30 values which are formulated as nouns (concepts) showing an individual's desirable goals. Values in the second list (27 items) are phrased as adjectives (qualities) that show desirable ways of acting. Respondents rate the importance of each of the values from both lists on a 9-point scale (7 points as 'a guiding principle in my life,' 0 as 'not important,' and point -1 as 'opposed to my values'). The mean is calculated for each of the 10 values, which then are ranked accordingly.

1. *Self-Direction*. Defining goal: independent thought and action--choosing, creating, exploring.
2. *Stimulation*. Defining goal: excitement, novelty, and challenge in life.
3. *Hedonism*. Defining goal: pleasure or sensuous gratification for oneself. Hedonism includes elements from values of openness to change and self-enhancement.
4. *Achievement*. Defining goal: personal success through demonstrating competence according to social standards.
5. *Power*. Defining goal: social status and prestige, control or dominance over people and resources.
6. *Security*. Defining goal: safety, harmony, and stability of society, of relationships, and of self.

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<sup>9</sup> The questionnaire was reduced according to following principles: the statements that repeated each other and the ones that didn't have normal distribution were left out from the final questionnaire.

<sup>10</sup> Back in 2010, the surveys of SVS and PVQ were translated and adapted in collaboration with and under the supervision of Sh. Schwartz in compliance with the requirements of the cross-cultural study of values.

7. *Conformity*. Defining goal: restraint of actions, inclinations, and impulses likely to upset or harm others and violate social expectations or norms.
8. *Tradition*. Defining goal: respect, commitment, and acceptance of the customs and ideas that one's culture or religion provides.
9. *Benevolence*. Defining goal: preserving and enhancing the welfare of those with whom one is in frequent personal contact (the 'in-group').
10. *Universalism*. Defining goal: understanding, appreciation, tolerance, and protection for the welfare of all people and for nature.

## Sample

The size of the quota sample was 803 participants. The sample was calculated on the basis of the proportions of population distribution by age, gender, and place of residence (urban/rural residence in case of regions). The sample represented the Armenian population within the age group 18-65 from Yerevan and 4 regions (marzes). Participants in each region were recruited from one urban and 2 to 3 rural settlements. The sampling error is 4.55% with 99% confidence interval. Shirak, Syunik, Armavir and Vayots Dzor marzes were selected on the basis of the following criteria:

- Population: regions with higher and lower level of population
- Economic status with consideration of unemployment and production rates
- Geography: regions with northern, central and southern location.

The sample size is presented in tables 1 and 2.

Table 1. The sample composition in the capital and regions by gender

Sex	Yerevan	Regions	Total
Male	152 (40.8%)	221 (59.2%)	373 (46.5%)
Female	173 (40.2%)	257 (59.8%)	430 (53.5%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>325</b>	<b>478</b>	<b>803</b>

Table 2. The sample composition in the capital and regions by age

Age	Mean age	Yerevan	Regions	Total
18-29	22.7	98 (40.6%)	146 (59.4%)	244 (30.2%)
30-41	35.4	87 (38.6%)	141 (61.4%)	228 (26.8%)
42-53	47.8	82 (43%)	111 (57%)	193 (25.2%)
54-65	59.1	58 (42.4%)	80 (57.6%)	138 (17.8%)
<b>Total</b>		<b>325</b>	<b>478</b>	<b>803</b>

## 4.2 Focus groups

The focus groups were conducted with 20-29 years old young adults in groups of 10-12 participants with equal number of males and females. 6 focus groups in the capital and 8 in the regions (2 in each) were conducted. The discussions were structured around the following topics:

Political block: general interest in political/civic issues; motives and beliefs for (non)participation in elections; motives of political/civic activity (participation in petitions, demonstrations, expressing opinion by media and social networks); experience in dealing with statesmen/politicians; motives of political membership.

Economic block: general interest in economic issues of country/regions; assumptions about well-being; beliefs related to economic paternalism and independence; desire for economic achievements and behavioral means of earning money; readiness for financial-economic risks and experience.

## 4.3 Interviews

The semi-structured interviews were conducted with both political experts and actors and with experts in economics and entrepreneurs acting in small and medium business sectors<sup>11</sup>.

The expert interviews were conducted with 3 political and 3 economic analysts. 5 Interviews were conducted with representatives of the following parties/coalitions: Republican Party of Armenia (RPA), 'Prosperous Armenia' party (BAP), Armenian Revolutionary Federation (ARF), Armenian National Congress (ANC) and 'Heritage' party. Four interviews were conducted with entrepreneurs acting in Yerevan and other four with farmers working in regions.

The interviews with experts and actors in both domains were constructed around the following topics: the picture of economic and political development of the country; predominant values, beliefs and motives underlying economic and political decisions and behavior (of both actors and citizens), as well as factors making for the formation of such values, beliefs and behavioral patterns. A separate block was envisaged for politicians and businessmen to inquire about their own experience in their respective fields of activity.

## 5. RESULTS AND MAIN FINDINGS

### 5.1 Value preferences in Armenia. Comparatative analysis by region, gender and age

To draw the intracultural picture of value preferences in Armenia, findings for the whole sample will be presented, followed by data compared by residence, gender and age.

For Armenian sample values with social focus such as *benevolence*, *conformism* and *security* are prevalent that provide solidarity, adaptation and decreases the level of uncertainty. Less preference was given to values that emphasize openness to change and

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<sup>11</sup> The names of interviewees, including the experts are not mentioned in the texts in order to provide secrecy and impartiality.

self-enhancement, particularly the desire of taking challenges and satisfaction (*hedonism, stimulation* and *power*) as well as *tradition*. The other values (*self-direction, achievements* and *universalism*) were given medium level of preference that can mean that such values may have tendency to increase in changing social environment that requires competitiveness from one side and development of civic positions from the other (Appendix 2, table 1).

There are no significant differences in value preferences between Yerevan and regions (marzes). The only essential difference is in case of achievements: it is becoming more important in Yerevan. These results show that urban lifestyle provides possibilities for taking challenges and thus makes competence possible (Appendix 2, table 2).

The values of conformity, benevolence and safety continue to be dominant for women and men living in regions. There are some differences between females from the capital and regions and between males and females living in the capital: for women from Yerevan the value of achievement is becoming the most important (Appendix 2, table 3).

Benevolence and conformity continue to be important values for all age groups in both capital and the regions. This picture shows that in order to maintain close relations people prefer normative behavior above the other possible ones. Alongside with these values the younger groups of people (age from 18 to 29) from Yerevan and the regions and the people from Yerevan crossing threshold of middle age also prefer values of personal achievement and self-enhancement. It is interesting to note that the value of self-direction as a tendency of being open to new experiences is beginning to develop among young people living in the capital (Appendix 3, table 4).

The comparative analysis of value orientations in Yerevan and regions by different age groups and gender allows us to indicate the following picture of value dynamics:

- The value preferences of young people that are different from the other age groups illustrate age-specific need for self-enhancement but also indicate the influence of value-normative changes that take place in Armenian society. Meanwhile the challenges of self-enhancement and self-direction are stronger in the capital due to social processes that are taking place, that's why based on the comparative results of value preferences in capital and regions 'one generation delay' is visible in regions in case of achievement and self-direction values.
- Women in the capital are more directed towards self-enhancement and personal achievements whereas women from regions and men mainly demonstrate conformity behavior. These differences can be interpreted by the fact that the modern discourse of equality between women and men is more active in Yerevan than in regions and women from capital are more challenged to combine traditional family roles with work roles in their everyday life.
- Motivational conflict in value orientations can be observed among young people as well as among men and women living in the capital. There are fields of tension between self-transcendence (benevolence value) and self-enhancement (achievement

value) motivations. Such interpersonal conflict is more salient especially among women living in the capital.

- In case of young people of Yerevan, motivational conflict between conservative behavior (conformity value) and openness to new experience (self-direction value) can be observed as well.

## 5.2 The factor structure of social axioms: cultural aspect

In order to understand the picture of social beliefs in Armenia the research was done in two directions by combining emic and etic approaches.

The English version of Social Axioms questionnaire was translated into Armenian and back. Confirmatory factor analysis (using Varimax Rotation) yielded the five-component structure of the original questionnaire. Only 36 items out of 39 produced into a five-factor structure, which accounted for 37% of the variance (see the factor loads in Appendix 2, table 5).

The results of factor analysis indicate that the universal five factor structure of social axioms is revealed for Armenian sample. Nevertheless there are some specifics in case of *Social cynicism* and *Social complexity* factors. *Social cynicism* factor is divided into two factors: one is pure *Social cynicism* factor and the second overlaps with *Social complexity* factor. Semantic analysis indicate that the first factor of *Social cynicism* expresses mostly pessimistic point of view to any positive changes in life, and the second factor, including questions from both *Social complexity* and *Social cynicism*, expresses mostly skepticism towards human and institutional actions. This result indicates that the belief in multiple ways of achieving outcomes and inconsistency in human behavior generates the feelings of mistrust and injustice.

Exploratory factor analysis was performed to yield the structure of ‘cultural-specific’ social axioms. Only 28 out of 37 items produced into a five-factor structure (see the factor loads in Appendix 2, table 6). This factor structure explains 38% of the data variance.

The factors of ‘cultural-sensitive’ social axioms are:

1. *Agency* indicates faith in the human abilities in case of a desire to change and to make a positive contribution to one’s own and others’ lives (item example, *‘If a man wishes, he can change many things in his life’*).
2. *Fortune* indicates that there are fortuities in human life, which predetermine the person’s future. (*‘In order to succeed one has to be lucky’*).
3. *Individual- society tension* indicates that society limits the person, and the person opts less for collaboration, rather acting more in his own interests (*‘Society represses ones individuality’*).
4. *Pessimism* statements that deny the possibility of positive changes and look at some situations from negative perspective (*‘There is more bad than good in life’*).

5. *Social harmony and humanism* statements that express harmony between individuals and their environment, feeling of unity with the world and humanism, also belief that life events are interconnected holistically in continuity and reciprocity (*'Anything a person does has its impact on the whole humanity'*).

In order to understand culture-specific beliefs the correlation analysis with universal five factors of social axioms was conducted. The most significant correlations are introduced below:

- The factors of *Agency* and *Social harmony and humanism* are connected with the factor of *Reward for application* ( $r=.493$ ,  $r=363$ ;  $p<.001$ , accordingly).
- The factor of *Fortune* is connected with the factors of *Fate control* and *Social cynicism* ( $r=.394$ ,  $r=.404$ ;  $p<.001$  accordingly)
- The factor of *Individual-society tension* is connected with the factor of *Social cynicism* ( $r=.536$ ;  $p<.001$ )
- The factor *Pessimism* is connected with *Social cynicism* and *Social complexity/Social cynicism* ( $r=.384$ ,  $r=421$ ;  $p<.001$  accordingly).

Thus, the result of correlation analysis of the factors indicate that 'culture-specific' axioms have similarities with the social axioms revealed through cross-cultural studies with exception of some contextual peculiarities. The social beliefs identified by elaborated 'culture-specific' social axioms tool provide new research opportunities, particularly to study them in connection with other social-cultural and social-psychological variables in order to understand social processes.

### **5.3 Predictive relationship between values, beliefs and attitudes of political and economic behavior: results from regression analysis**

Stepwise multiple regression (for interval scales) and binomial logistic regression (for nominal scales) have been applied to identify how value orientations and beliefs influence political and economic behavior intentions. All indicators of political and economic behavior have been taken as dependent variables. As predictor variables, demographic data (age, gender, residence) have been taken in the first step, basic values in the second and social axioms - in the third step.

The results of regression analysis for each aggregate indicator of political and economic behavior are presented in Appendix 2 (tables 7,8,9,10,11).

The results of regression analysis allow us to understand the role of different value orientations and beliefs in political and economic behavior of Armenians:

- Self-direction value as freedom of speech and actions predict concernment with political issues of Armenia and political/civic activity. Benevolence value as attachment with group members and importance to take care of them is a negative predictor for concernment with political issues and political/civic activity. This result can indicate

that engagement in politics and civic activity are viewed as negative factors for maintaining good and harmonic relations with in-group members. Similar results were also revealed in other studies (Alesina et al., 2009: 9).

- Faiths in human abilities, the belief that efforts will be rewarded predict concernment in political issues and participation in elections. Skeptic attitude towards social processes, mistrust in social institutions and some groups of people are negative predictors of concernment in political issues and political/civic activity.
- The concernment with political issues and participation in elections are more salient among older people and people living in regions, whereas political/civic activity, especially by media – among younger population. People living in regions prefer to use their immediate connections in order to express political/civic activity.
- People living in Yerevan give more negative prognosis for political developments in Armenia than people from regions. Religiosity, fate control and agency beliefs predict optimistic developments of political processes whereas the social cynicism and social complexity beliefs predict pessimistic prognosis.
- Self-direction value, as freedom of speech and actions and openness to new experiences, predicts concernment with economic issues of Armenia whereas benevolence, as attachment with in-group members and taking care of their welfare, are negative predictors. This result indicates that interest in economic issues is viewed as negative factor for maintaining good and harmonic relations with in-group members as well. Interest in economic issues is prevailing among older people, men and people living in regions.
- Readiness for economic risk and loan taking is predicted by values with personal focus such as those of power and stimulation. Belief in human agency and supernatural forces (belief in faith and fate) predict readiness for economic risks whereas the mistrust in social institutions and belief in life complexity are negative predictors for people's behavior aimed to achieve well-being. Such tendency can be seen among younger people, men and people living in regions.
- When the belief in *individual-society tension* is expressed, people rely on the economic condition of the country in achieving well-being. Such behavioral pattern increases with age and is more likely to be observed among females. Nevertheless, when a person is sure that his/her efforts will be rewarded, he confides in his own actions for well-being. This behavioral pattern is marked more among young adults and males.
- Attachment with in-group members and belief in fate and human agency predict optimistic prognosis, while social cynicism and skepticism make people pessimistic about economic developments of the country. Such tendency is more salient among people living in regions. Social cynicism has negative impact in giving prognosis for



developments of economic condition of family whereas the belief in reward for application predicts optimistic prognosis. Such attitudes are also salient among people living in regions and young people.

#### **5.4 Guiding lines of economic and political behavior in armenia: qualitative analysis**

This part of analysis is based on the results of focus-groups and semi-structured interviews. Several thematic blocks have been distinguished and discussed below according to the underlying core beliefs and attitudes. The analysis has drawn beliefs that are relevant to both political and economic spheres, as well as those that are specific to either of them. Common and distinct patterns of beliefs will thus be discussed by turn.

The following prevalent perceptions are salient in both economic and political domains:

*Uncertainty of rules of game, discrepancy between formal laws and actuality.* The most generic perception that was reflected during focus-group and expert discussions of economic and political issues is the ambiguity of *rules of game* in various domains of social life. Formal laws don't operate as guidelines for action, and there is a trend to sidestep and circumvent them, as well as find rationales for such preference. Regardless of how good laws and regulations potentially are, citizens are inclined to judge them as wrong, defective and working against citizens, the probable reason for such perception being the generalized mistrust towards persons and agencies adopting these laws.

Apart from the sharp discrepancy between formal law and action, there is another aspect to the uncertainty of basis for economic and political/civic decisions: the normative laws/regulations themselves change too frequently. They are perceived as unclear and unstable (situative) and psychologically hard to take as a reference point. To solve the ambiguity of the rules of game for themselves, individuals tend to make them predictable through making sense of them as situational.

As a result, the beliefs and judgements comprising this 'syndrom' lead to situational behavior.

Uncertainty in political behavior manifests particularly as uncertainty of ideological basis and tension between political declaration and implementation. This tension is due not as much to time lag, but to attitude 'settings'. The policy lines are not sufficiently clear, since the idea and/or value behind the adopted document is not always internalized by the decision makers and therefore also by the public. This may be the reason why there may be official adoption of a law followed by informal discourse on the values brought by these laws as cultural threats. There is another observation worth further examination. Whereas in economic field the discussed ambiguity is solved in favor of informal rules, political behavior seems to opt for the formal, and political participation of individuals often confines to formal participation.

***Mistrust to various social institutes and groups.*** Deficit of trust is visible not only in relationships with the state structures, but also in judgements on other formal and informal relationships. The predictable milieu is confined to family and closest social circles (relatives, kins, friends) and despite 'good civil intentions', individuals are prone to reproduce clan approaches when it comes to actual behavior. Lack of trust has also an effect in business decisions, whereby entrepreneurs often prefer to organize all the entire chain (from production to realization, including transportation) on their own and mistrust specialized services for any link of the process, which has a limiting influence on business development.

There is a *gap and contraposition* between the state and the people. The two sides seem to be divided and antagonistical, and youngsters' judgements about their aspirations, problems and achievements reflect either perceived distance with or impediment by the state. Thus individual and state ininterests are predominately perceived as mutually exclusive or at least discordant. In the domain of political behavior, this attitude manifests as distrust towards and gap with state/political institutions and officials. Young adults are more likely to mention about the importance of their vote as something that they should have, but not something that they own. It should also be mentioned that although youngsters would at times attempt to make semantic distinction between state and the government, these two are by and large identified at the psychological level of attitudes.

Many problems in social life and their mental reflections seem to be 'derivatives' of the more generic two perceptions discussed above - *uncertainty of guiding rules* and *general distrust*. In a varying degree, all beliefs and perceptions discussed next are influenced by these factors.

***Belief in social injustice.*** An important dimension to ambiguity of rules of game is that they are segmented and do not equally apply on all, and in young adults' judgements this manifested as belief in inequality and social injustice. Both personal and indirect, observed experience are sources forming this belief. Both own circumstances and conditions of people around and the entire society are made sense of through this belief. The perceived sharp inequality that rests on the rule of 'strongs and weaks' brings about a closed and vicious circle, where individuals act according to this inequality principle despite their discontent with that. They dislike, but still reproduce these relationships. Despite the articulated need for justice, in concrete situations individuals try to achieve power position and subdue public interests in favor of private ones.

***Feeling of low predictability of future and vagueness of perspectives.*** The feeling of lack of predictability is not as much about the long-term perspectives, but rather the short-term ones.

In the setting of economic activities, this uncertainty is overcome through finding a reliable acquaintance in the respective agencies regulating the business sector and ensuring their informal net before they will step into entrepreneurship. As often mentioned, '*one shouldn't start anything before they have their man in the system*' and because '*otherwise the tax*

*service will come and load you*’. It should be acknowledged that despite the perceived aggressiveness and lack clarity of legal regulation of the business sector, the willingness to initiate their own business was quite high among youth, both males and females.

In relation to political perceptions, this belief mainly manifests as negative expectation and low predictability of *‘who will come next’*, and *‘whether at all the next ones will be better than these’*. At the same time, however, another marked belief is that *‘it cannot continue as it is now any longer’*, and *‘something should be changed’*. Instead of specific personal action/participation aimed at reducing this uncertainty, self-distancing from political and civic processes was a more typical trend among youth, while the readiness to directly or indirectly partake in political activities towards changing something was mentioned much less frequently. For instance, non-participation was often explained by being indifferent, feeling insecure, mistrustful or all of these together.

***Family as point of departure and reference in political and economic behaviors.*** Family can be seen as a culturally reinforced factor that provides both the normative basis and justification for sidestepping other norms. Individuals resort to family as a guideline and source of stability under uncertainty. Family can also be seen as an ‘extended self’: when young adults articulate beliefs about relying on your own or taking care of one’s own, implicit presence of family care is also present. Family is thus both a point of departure (*why and who for I should or shouldn’t behave this way, e.g. start a business or not take that risk, participate in elections or refrain from being seen at rallies*) and point of reference (*what will be the attitude or support of my family if I take that action*) in social behavior. Thus, instead of collectivism, which is apparently not the case, we can speak of some individualistic and self-enhancement trends that still go in hand with group conformity and family attachments. This reliance on family and kin can be considered as a combination of today’s wild capitalism and cultural traditions, which might be undesirable from the perspective of public interests and societal-level progress, yet it is a psychologically understandable adaptive strategy.

Valuation of family has been drawn from discussions of youth perceptions of well-being, goals of employment, earning and increasing incomes and a number of other topics. Family is often presented as a motivating force for economic activity (*‘I should do this for my relatives’*), as well as an indicator of individual financial success (*‘I could do this for my family’*). Family is a similar guideline in political (non)participation, including in elections. No wonder the plausibility to *‘enter politics’*, a rare willingness, has most often been interpreted by the desire and legitimacy of solving issues of the family or friends rather than of vouching for civic commitment.

### **Beliefs and attitudes specific to economic behavior**

***Double determination of well-being.*** When making sense of what own well-being depends on and choosing between the primacy of either own efforts or country conditions, the respondents have mainly mentioned combination of both. While system or country factors

have been phrased more as conditions or preconditions, own agency, activity and abilities are mentioned as a determining cause. Thus, in '*lay theories of economic well-being*', the reliance on own efforts is more salient, whereas paternalism in its strict sense has not been marked.

This block is very much tied to another belief, which can be called *economic self-efficacy*. Despite the apprehensions about perspectives discussed above, and the insufficiently regulated and thus unfavorable conditions for business activity, as well as despite the cultural limitation imposed to openness to novelty and experimentation, most respondents have expressed quite a bit of readiness for taking risks and entrepreneurship to achieve more autonomy and control over life, especially in the marzes, and have explained this by the acting force of human motivation and abilities in the spirit of '*if one really wants, they can achieve everything*'. Thus we can talk about optimism of individual life as opposed to pessimism regarding public life. These two attitudes, combined, seem to be strongly tied to migration decisions. This finding echoes with a result from quantitative analysis showing that people tend to be more positive in their forecasts of own economic condition as opposed to negative forecasts of the country's economic condition.

***Importance of Fortune.*** Optimism and confidence in own abilities is a psychologically important and relevant belief given the age group of young adults. Yet, it is often confronted and threatened by the social reality and the economic-political system in general, which offers limited opportunities, if not limits to self-fulfillment. A peculiar solution to this tension is the reference to fortune as an ultimate determinant: doing justice simultaneously to internal qualities and merits (such as *intellect, steadiness, goal-orientedness*) and favorable external premises (such as *laws, social structure*), many young respondents introduce fortune as a decisive factor, and thus solve the dilemma of feeling powerful and powerless at the same time. Of course, it would be premature to conclude that respondents try to rely on fortune to subsequently justify their passiveness, because this belief in fortune is more like balancing and acknowledging the limits of both country-level and individual factors.

### **Beliefs and attitudes specific to political behavior**

***Lack of clear ideological basis and personalization of political reality.*** Both experts and focus-group participants, and occasionally also political actors discuss the deficit of ideology underlying political decisions and relations. Experts and focus-group respondents problematize the ideological immaturity of political actors and processes as such, and point to the low level of political culture. Political actors, instead, tend to talk about the ideological crisis in terms of immaturity of citizens' political consciousness. Focus-group respondents articulate need to adhere to a political force on a clear ideological basis and have convincing ideological guidelines for their participation (especially voting), yet, as things stand now, they see scarce opportunities for this. Young voters are predominately guided by situative motives or de-motivators, opinions of the family and the 'street' friends, informal authorities.

Following the judgments of the young adults, we notice that political realities are very much personalized in their perceptions, and this has its rationale in repeated experience. A strongly marked belief is that the political field is based on private interests, and that the political processes and ideas of democracy are imitative. But they talk about impossibility to do so, because no such convincing ideology is present.

***Conservatism and avoiding the novel; doubt in change.*** Unlike the economic domain where youth has shown greater openness to change and action, political behavior is marked first of all by avoidance, by conservatism and scepticism about positive outcomes. This trend is salient, expectedly, in marzes (regions), especially in rural areas. In interpreting own civic or political (non)participation, many young adults make mention of their doubtful attitude towards the present changes, i.e. the latter are usually perceived not only as imitative as opposed to real, but also insufficiently clear from the point of view of benefits they will bring about. The core element of such doubtfulness is the mistrust towards the very actors/agents of change, both political actors and civic activists. The latter, for instance, is associated with revolutionary behavior, which is something youth tends to avoid. They seem to avoid shocks, although they generally feel the need of radical changes. Probably, such changes are associated with another, bigger uncertainty than the uncertainty of today, which is more 'familiar' to them, and to which they have adapted. Thus in their choice between extents of uncertainty, many citizens choose the proximal one, and try to preserve the status-quo between the extents of uncertainty. The tendency to avoid discomfort as well as established relationships, '*falling into troubles*', '*hurting someone close who asks (to vote)*', is another logic to reinforce the conservative and inert sets in political behavior. The feeling of mistrust towards changes is probably backed-up by the general cultural value-belief system, whereby the conservatism and non-univocal attitude towards the novel and the different is present. It should be acknowledged, for a balanced picture, that this conservatism is to some extent overcome by the youth due to the psycho-social specificity of the age period, yet, it is translated into the level of behavioral patterns only among few of them.

***Reflexive thoughts and germinating civil consciousness.*** Among the respondents, there was also a segment, although not a majority, that was quite self-reflective and self-critical in terms of values, attitudes, or, as phrased by themselves, 'Armenian mentality' that guide people's social behavior in the country. Criticism and acknowledgement of own insufficient activity or faulty mentalities cut across discussion of all topics, but especially of political issues. Need for revising and clarifying the values, beliefs and social relationships is articulated.

## 6. CONCLUSION

This study on guiding values and beliefs in Armenia has enabled capturing zones and extent of both openness and resistance of the society towards current social changes.

The research results indicate that value orientations guiding the behavior towards achieving desired goals are those related to acting in compliance with expectations of the in-groups and increasing attachment with them. Some shift in value priorities are observable among the young segment of the population and among females residing in the capital, and the dynamics is the trend towards increasing self-enhancement values. However, values that would predict active civic position and mindsets are not yet strongly marked.

Individuals tend to rely either on very individual or, at the other end, on super-natural sources when interpreting and solving everyday life problems. The immediate social milieu, instead, is characterized by unreliability. Mistrust, skepticism towards social institutions and law enforcement, as well as low tolerance toward uncertainty with pessimistic forecasts of future are observable in beliefs related to interpretation and evaluation of social processes and phenomena. Beliefs underlying political/civic participation and non-participation are strongly associated with the feeling of insecurity and mistrust in social processes and real changes. In beliefs underlying economic behavior towards increasing well-being and income, individuals tend to rely on the factor of chance, fortune or own agency and abilities. A plausible consequence of the described belief patterns is that individuals fail to see themselves as parts of social life or at least the latter isn't perceived as a source of achieving either well-being or security. Some trend towards civic engagement among youth population in the capital should be acknowledged, however, it has not yet become 'normative' behavior.

Thus, in the economic-political context of Armenia, the following patterns of social behavior seem to be notable.

- Under imperfect social institutions and unstable social reality, individuals, who are 'soft-wired' with skeptical attitude towards social changes, are inclined to reproduce compliance and secure relationships with their in-groups especially kin, since such behavior ensures from risks, uncertainty, and serves as a resource for their own well-being. Thus, conservative and conformity values get secondary reinforcement. This can at least partly explain low social capital in the country, as well as the fact, that discreet manifests of civic participation don't yet reach a synergetic effect in the country.
- Another plausible solution to uncertainty in rules of game and mistrust to social institutions manifests in migration trends that is an alternative search for predictable social milieu. The latter are reinforced and justified through a number of judgments, including those reflecting feelings of obstacles and lack of perspectives in fulfilling own potentials, self-enhancement, providing the well-being of the family (especially children) etc.

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## Appendix 1

Region \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

*Dear participant,*

*The “Personality and Social Context” laboratory at YSU is conducting a scientific research on preferences of values, beliefs and social behavior in Armenia. This questionnaire consists of three parts. Please answer the questions below by choosing the option that best suits your opinion.*

*Thank you for your support.*

Part I.

**1. How interested are you in political issues of Armenia?**

- |                          |                        |
|--------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Not interested at all | 3. Somewhat interested |
| 2. Not interested        | 4. Very interested     |

**2. When you meet your relatives, friends and colleagues, how often do you discuss issues related to politics in Armenia?**

- |                            |                 |
|----------------------------|-----------------|
| 1. never >go to question 3 | 3. occasionally |
| 2. rarely                  | 4. often        |

**2.1 When you meet your relatives, friends and colleagues, you discuss issues related to politics in Armenia, because**

1. As a citizen, I am concerned about the issues in the country.
2. I like talking about different topics with my relatives, friends and colleagues.
3. Other \_\_\_\_\_

**2.2 Usually, what’s your involvement in such discussions?**

1. I initiate the discussions > go to question 2.3
2. I don't initiate myself, but participate in discussions > go to question 2.3
3. I am not active but I listen to other's opinions > go to question 3
4. I am neutral and do not participate > go to question 3

**2.3 If you have your opinion about these issues how often do you try persuading your relatives, friends and colleagues?**

- |           |                 |
|-----------|-----------------|
| 1. never  | 3. occasionally |
| 2. rarely | 4. often        |

**3. In general how often do you**

	never	not every week	once or twice a week	3-4 days in a week	every day
3.1 read political articles in newspapers	1	2	3	4	5
3.2 watch/listen to political news on TV/radio	1	2	3	4	5
3.3 use internet to find political news	1	2	3	4	5

**4. Do you usually participate in elections? (Answer for each question separately):**

	YES	NO
Presidential	1	0
Parliamentary	1	0
Local self-government	1	0





**11. How interested are you in economic issues of the country or region (marz)?**

- |                          |                        |
|--------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Not interested at all | 3. Somewhat interested |
| 2. Not interested        | 4. Very interested     |

**12. When you meet your relatives, friends and colleagues, how often do you discuss issues related to economics in Armenia?**

- |                             |                 |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|
| 1. never >go to question 13 | 3. occasionally |
| 2. rarely                   | 4. often        |

**12.1. You discuss social-economic issues in order to (please, choose one answer)**

1. Just share my financial problems, concerns
2. Figure out how to best save and/or increase my income
3. Figure out how to make use of loan opportunities
4. Figure out how to manage my expenses

**13. In general how often do you**

	never	not every week	once or twice a week	3-4 days in a week	every day
13.1 read economic articles in newspapers?	1	2	3	4	5
13.2 watch/listen to economic news on TV/radio?	1	2	3	4	5
13.3 use internet in search of economic news?	1	2	3	4	5

**14. To improve your living conditions, which loans indicated below are you ready to go for?**

	will never do it	maybe will not do it	possible	maybe will do it	surely do it
14.1 Loans for improving the living/housing conditions (apartment purchase or renovation, obtaining equipment and car)	1	2	3	4	5
14.2 Loans for starting a business	1	2	3	4	5

**15. Are you ready to take economic risks in the next five years (e.g. to start a business) in order to increase your income?**

- |             |                |
|-------------|----------------|
| 1. No       | 3. Maybe yes   |
| 2. Maybe no | 4. Yes, surely |

**16. Which statement indicated below do you agree with?**

16.1. I think well-being depends on economic state of the country.

16.2 I think well-being depends from my efforts

**17. In your opinion, how will the economic condition of the country change in the next five years?**

- |                   |                       |                 |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|
| 4. will get worse | 5. will stay the same | 1. will improve |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|

**18. In your opinion which way will the economic condition of your family change in five years?**

- |                   |                       |                 |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|
| 1. will get worse | 2. will stay the same | 3. will improve |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|

Part II.

		Strongly disbelieve	Disbelieve	No opinion	Believe	Strongly believe
1	One will not find his/her place in life if he/she is uneducated.	1	2	3	4	5
2	People deserve to be respected regardless of circumstances.	1	2	3	4	5
3	If somebody does not have a job, he can't feel accomplished.	1	2	3	4	5
4	Regardless the kind of relationships, one should accept imperfections of others.	1	2	3	4	5
5	One shouldn't fully trust another person.	1	2	3	4	5
6	If you say what you think, you will be misunderstood.	1	2	3	4	5
7	One can only rely on him/herself in times of trouble.	1	2	3	4	5
8	One should have luck in order to succeed.	1	2	3	4	5
9	Life circumstances change humans.	1	2	3	4	5
10	Even real friendship is forgotten with time.	1	2	3	4	5
11	A person is like his/her environment.	1	2	3	4	5
12	Anything a person does has its impact on the whole humanity.	1	2	3	4	5
13	Living in this world means suffering.	1	2	3	4	5
14	Society gives a person the opportunity to be happy.	1	2	3	4	5
15	Bad is more in life than good is.	1	2	3	4	5
16	Important events are the result of chance.	1	2	3	4	5
17	In any type of relationship, one should count their own desires first.	1	2	3	4	5
18	Success depends on life circumstances.	1	2	3	4	5
19	Society always restricts people.	1	2	3	4	5
20	Success will find a person itself.	1	2	3	4	5
21	People are appreciated by their deeds.	1	2	3	4	5
22	All people are similar regardless of their nationalities.	1	2	3	4	5
23	Power decides someone's place in the society.	1	2	3	4	5
24	If they wish, people can make the world better.	1	2	3	4	5
25	People always act according to their personal interests.	1	2	3	4	5
26	Society suppresses individuality.	1	2	3	4	5
27	One cannot live in welfare without having a job.	1	2	3	4	5
28	Everyone is the master of their own fate.	1	2	3	4	5
29	A kind hearted person is always appreciated in society.	1	2	3	4	5
30	A person who is good at figuring out the character of people around, will act effectively.	1	2	3	4	5
31	One can become a better person if society helps him/her.	1	2	3	4	5
32	The rules of universe are unchanging regardless of the development of humankind.	1	2	3	4	5
33	In order to have good relationships sometimes you shouldn't openly express your opinion.	1	2	3	4	5
34	In life everything happens for some reasons.	1	2	3	4	5
35	One can change many things in his/her life, if there is the wish to do so.	1	2	3	4	5
36	The future is predetermined from above.	1	2	3	4	5
37	If you don't enjoy life then you live in vain.	1	2	3	4	5

		Strongly disbelieve	Disbelieve	No opinion	Believe	Strongly believe
1	Good luck follows if one survives a disaster.	1	2	3	4	5
2	Fate determines one's successes and failures.	1	2	3	4	5
3	Individual characteristics, such as appearance and birthday, affect one's fate.	1	2	3	4	5
4	Good luck follows if one survives a disaster.	1	2	3	4	5
5	Fate determines one's successes and failures.	1	2	3	4	5
6	Individual characteristics, such as appearance and birthday, affect one's fate.	1	2	3	4	5
7	Good luck follows if one survives a disaster.	1	2	3	4	5
8	Fate determines one's successes and failures.	1	2	3	4	5
9	Individual characteristics, such as appearance and birthday, affect one's fate.	1	2	3	4	5
10	Good luck follows if one survives a disaster.	1	2	3	4	5
11	Fate determines one's successes and failures.	1	2	3	4	5
12	Individual characteristics, such as appearance and birthday, affect one's fate.	1	2	3	4	5
13	Good luck follows if one survives a disaster.	1	2	3	4	5
14	Fate determines one's successes and failures.	1	2	3	4	5
15	Individual characteristics, such as appearance and birthday, affect one's fate.	1	2	3	4	5
16	Good luck follows if one survives a disaster.	1	2	3	4	5
17	Fate determines one's successes and failures.	1	2	3	4	5
18	Individual characteristics, such as appearance and birthday, affect one's fate.	1	2	3	4	5
19	Competition brings about progress.	1	2	3	4	5
20	One will succeed if he/she really tries.	1	2	3	4	5
21	Failure is the beginning of success.	1	2	3	4	5
22	Hard working people will achieve more in the end.	1	2	3	4	5
23	Human behavior changes with the social context.	1	2	3	4	5
24	People may have opposite behavior on different occasions.	1	2	3	4	5
25	One has to deal with matters according to the specific circumstances.	1	2	3	4	5
26	There is usually only one way to solve a problem.	1	2	3	4	5
27	One's behaviors may be contrary to his or her true feelings.	1	2	3	4	5
28	Current losses are not necessarily bad for one's long-term future.	1	2	3	4	5
29	Young people are impulsive and unreliable.	1	2	3	4	5
30	It is rare to see a happy ending in real life.	1	2	3	4	5
31	Power and status makes people arrogant.	1	2	3	4	5
32	Powerful people tend to exploit others.	1	2	3	4	5
33	People will stop working hard after they secure a comfortable life.	1	2	3	4	5
34	The various social institutions in society are biased towards the rich.	1	2	3	4	5
35	Kind-hearted people are easily bullied.	1	2	3	4	5
36	Old people are a heavy burden on society.	1	2	3	4	5
37	People deeply in love are usually blind.	1	2	3	4	5
38	Kind-hearted people usually suffer losses.	2	3	4	5	5
39	To care about societal affairs only brings trouble for yourself.	2	3	4	5	5

Part III.

In this questionnaire you are to ask yourself: "What values are important to ME as guiding principles in MY life, and what values are less important to me?" There are two lists of values on the following pages. These values come from different cultures. In the parentheses following each value is an explanation that may help you to understand its meaning.

Your task is to rate how important each value is for you as a guiding principle in your life. Use the rating scale below:

0--means the value is not at all important, it is not relevant as a guiding principle for you.

3--means the value is important.

6--means the value is very important.

The higher the number (0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6), the more important the value is as a guiding principle in YOUR life.

-1 is for rating any values opposed to the principles that guide you.

7 is for rating a value of supreme importance as a guiding principle in your life; **ordinarily there are no more than two such values.**

In the space before each value, write the number (-1,0,1,2,3,4,5,6,7) that indicates the importance of that value for you, personally. Try to distinguish as much as possible between the values by using all the numbers. You will, of course, need to use numbers more than once.

AS A GUIDING PRINCIPLE IN MY LIFE, this value is:

Opposed to my values	<i>not important</i>			important			very important	of supreme importance
-1	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Before you begin, read the values in List I, choose the one that is most important to you and rate its importance. Next, choose the value that is most opposed to your values and rate it -1. If there is no such value, choose the value least important to you and rate it 0 or 1, according to its importance. Then rate the rest of the values in List I.

VALUES LIST I

- 1 \_\_\_ EQUALITY (equal opportunity for all)
- 2 \_\_\_ INNER HARMONY (at peace with myself)
- 3 \_\_\_ SOCIAL POWER (control over others, dominance)
- 4 \_\_\_ PLEASURE (gratification of desires)
- 5 \_\_\_ FREEDOM (freedom of action and thought)
- 6 \_\_\_ A SPIRITUAL LIFE (emphasis on spiritual not material matters)
- 7 \_\_\_ SENSE OF BELONGING (feeling that others care about me)
- 8 \_\_\_ SOCIAL ORDER (stability of society)
- 9 \_\_\_ AN EXCITING LIFE (stimulating experiences)
- 10 \_\_\_ MEANING IN LIFE (a purpose in life)
- 11 \_\_\_ POLITENESS (courtesy, good manners)
- 12 \_\_\_ WEALTH (material possessions, money)

- 13\_\_\_ NATIONAL SECURITY (protection of my nation from enemies)
- 14\_\_\_ SELF RESPECT (belief in one's own worth)
- 15\_\_\_ RECIPROCATION OF FAVORS (avoidance of indebtedness)
- 16\_\_\_ CREATIVITY (uniqueness, imagination)
- 17\_\_\_ A WORLD AT PEACE (free of war and conflict)
- 18\_\_\_ RESPECT FOR TRADITION (preservation of time-honored customs)
- 19\_\_\_ MATURE LOVE (deep emotional & spiritual intimacy)
- 20\_\_\_ SELF-DISCIPLINE (self-restraint, resistance to temptation)
- 21\_\_\_ PRIVACY (the right to have a private sphere)
- 22\_\_\_ FAMILY SECURITY (safety for loved ones)
- 23\_\_\_ SOCIAL RECOGNITION (respect, approval by others)
- 24\_\_\_ UNITY WITH NATURE (fitting into nature)
- 25\_\_\_ A VARIED LIFE (filled with challenge, novelty and change)
- 26\_\_\_ WISDOM (a mature understanding of life)
- 27\_\_\_ AUTHORITY (the right to lead or command)
- 28\_\_\_ TRUE FRIENDSHIP (close, supportive friends)
- 29\_\_\_ A WORLD OF BEAUTY (beauty of nature and the arts)
- 30\_\_\_ SOCIAL JUSTICE (correcting injustice, care for the weak)

### VALUES LIST II

Now rate how important each of the following values is for you as a guiding principle in YOUR life. These values are phrased as ways of acting that may be more or less important for you. Once again, try to distinguish as much as possible between the values by using all the numbers.

Before you begin, read the values in List II, choose the one that is most important to you and rate its importance. Next, choose the value that is most opposed to your values, or--if there is no such value--choose the value least important to you, and rate it -1, 0, or 1, according to its importance. Then rate the rest of the values.

AS A GUIDING PRINCIPLE IN MY LIFE, this value is:

<b>Opposed to my values</b>	<i>not important</i>				<b>important</b>			<b>very important</b>	<b>of supreme importance</b>
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-1	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
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- 31\_\_\_ INDEPENDENT (self-reliant, self-sufficient)
- 32\_\_\_ MODERATE (avoiding extremes of feeling & action)
- 33\_\_\_ LOYAL (faithful to my friends, group)
- 34\_\_\_ AMBITIOUS (hard-working, aspiring)
- 35\_\_\_ BROADMINDED (tolerant of different ideas and beliefs)







## APPENDIX 2

*Table 1. Value preferences (N=802)*

VALUES	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>R</i>	$\alpha$
Conformity	5.15	0.98	<b>1</b>	0.48
Tradition	3.69	1.20	<b>7</b>	0.56
Benevolence	5.09	0.89	<b>2</b>	0.66
Universalism	4.53	0.97	<b>6</b>	0.72
Self-Direction	4.55	1.01	<b>5</b>	0.56
Stimulation	3.31	1.57	<b>9</b>	0.62
Hedonism	3.22	1.64	<b>10</b>	0.64
Achievement	4.98	0.97	<b>4</b>	0.46
Power	3.58	1.23	<b>8</b>	0.51
Security	5.03	0.87	<b>3</b>	0.45

*Table2. Comparative picture of value preferences in Yerevan and regions (marzes)*

VALUES	Yerevan			Marzes		
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>R</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>R</i>
Conformity	5.05	0.96	<b>2</b>	5.21	0.98	<b>1</b>
Tradition	3.45	1.15	<b>7</b>	3.86	1.21	<b>7</b>
Benevolence	5.08	0.86	<b>1</b>	5.10	0.92	<b>2</b>
Universalism	4.45	0.95	<b>6</b>	4.58	0.98	<b>5</b>
Self-Direction	4.61	0.93	<b>5</b>	4.50	1.06	<b>6</b>
Stimulation	3.11	1.54	<b>10</b>	3.45	1.57	<b>9</b>
Hedonism	3.24	1.56	<b>9</b>	3.21	1.70	<b>10</b>
Achievement	5.04	0.89	<b>3</b>	4.95	1.03	<b>4</b>
Power	3.44	1.26	<b>8</b>	3.66	1.21	<b>8</b>
Security	4.96	0.91	<b>4</b>	5.09	0.84	<b>3</b>

**Table 3.** Comparative picture of value preferences among men and women in Yerevan and marzes

VALUES	Yerevan						Marzes					
	men			women			men			women		
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>R</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>R</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>R</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>R</i>
Conformity	5.14	0.91	<b>1</b>	4.98	1.00	<b>4</b>	5.14	1.03	<b>1</b>	5.28	0.94	<b>1</b>
Tradition	3.34	1.04	<b>8</b>	3.54	1.23	<b>7</b>	3.72	1.19	<b>9</b>	3.98	1.22	<b>7</b>
Benevolence	5.13	0.83	<b>2</b>	5.04	0.89	<b>2</b>	5.01	0.98	<b>3</b>	5.18	0.85	<b>2</b>
Universalism	4.41	0.97	<b>6</b>	4.49	0.92	<b>6</b>	4.49	1.00	<b>6</b>	4.66	0.97	<b>5</b>
Self-Direction	4.66	0.94	<b>5</b>	4.57	0.92	<b>5</b>	4.60	0.99	<b>5</b>	4.41	1.11	<b>6</b>
Stimulation	3.21	1.58	<b>10</b>	3.02	1.50	<b>10</b>	3.74	1.47	<b>8</b>	3.21	1.61	<b>9</b>
Hedonism	3.32	1.52	<b>9</b>	3.17	1.59	<b>9</b>	3.43	1.70	<b>10</b>	3.03	1.68	<b>10</b>
Achievement	5.00	0.83	<b>3</b>	5.07	0.94	<b>1</b>	4.88	0.99	<b>4</b>	5.01	1.05	<b>4</b>
Power	3.64	1.24	<b>7</b>	3.27	1.25	<b>8</b>	3.78	1.26	<b>7</b>	3.57	1.15	<b>8</b>
Security	4.92	0.97	<b>4</b>	4.99	0.85	<b>3</b>	5.13	0.84	<b>2</b>	5.05	0.84	<b>3</b>

**Table 4.** Comparative picture of value preferences among different age groups in Yerevan and marzes

VALUES	Yerevan												marzes											
	I (18-29)			II (30-41)			III (42-53)			IV (54-65)			I (18-29)			II (30-41)			III (42-53)			IV (54-65)		
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>R</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>R</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>R</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>R</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>R</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>R</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>R</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>R</i>
Conformity	4.90	1.04	<b>3</b>	5.05	0.10	<b>1</b>	5.18	0.94	<b>3</b>	5.11	0.80	<b>2</b>	5.10	1.08	<b>1</b>	5.29	0.94	<b>1</b>	5.21	0.91	<b>2</b>	5.31	0.99	<b>1</b>
Tradition	3.19	1.23	<b>10</b>	3.31	1.02	<b>9</b>	3.72	1.09	<b>8</b>	3.69	1.14	<b>7</b>	3.60	1.30	<b>10</b>	4.00	1.12	<b>7</b>	3.73	1.18	<b>7</b>	4.22	1.11	<b>7</b>
Benevolence	5.00	0.88	<b>2</b>	4.93	0.84	<b>2</b>	5.21	0.86	<b>2</b>	5.22	0.82	<b>1</b>	5.00	0.83	<b>3</b>	5.13	0.98	<b>2</b>	5.14	0.97	<b>3</b>	5.21	0.86	<b>3</b>
Universalism	4.25	1.00	<b>6</b>	4.42	0.94	<b>6</b>	4.69	0.89	<b>5</b>	4.48	0.87	<b>5</b>	4.42	1.04	<b>6</b>	4.55	0.95	<b>5</b>	4.73	0.93	<b>5</b>	4.75	0.96	<b>4</b>
Self-Direction	4.89	0.85	<b>4</b>	4.57	0.94	<b>5</b>	4.51	0.88	<b>6</b>	4.37	1.01	<b>6</b>	4.73	0.97	<b>5</b>	4.44	1.03	<b>6</b>	4.35	1.10	<b>6</b>	4.48	1.03	<b>6</b>
Stimulation	3.61	1.46	<b>9</b>	3.32	1.66	<b>8</b>	2.79	1.44	<b>10</b>	2.43	1.29	<b>10</b>	3.93	1.45	<b>7</b>	3.37	1.53	<b>9</b>	3.16	1.61	<b>9</b>	3.18	1.56	<b>9</b>
Hedonism	3.71	1.60	<b>7</b>	3.43	1.49	<b>7</b>	2.88	1.45	<b>9</b>	2.70	1.48	<b>9</b>	3.69	1.58	<b>8</b>	3.22	1.64	<b>10</b>	2.84	1.63	<b>10</b>	2.88	1.82	<b>10</b>
Achievement	5.30	0.80	<b>1</b>	4.91	0.95	<b>3</b>	5.09	0.92	<b>4</b>	4.72	0.78	<b>4</b>	5.00	0.99	<b>2</b>	4.99	1.04	<b>4</b>	4.98	1.01	<b>4</b>	4.74	1.06	<b>5</b>
Power	3.64	1.36	<b>8</b>	3.23	1.28	<b>10</b>	3.72	1.17	<b>7</b>	3.05	1.01	<b>8</b>	3.66	1.36	<b>9</b>	3.69	1.11	<b>8</b>	3.56	1.11	<b>8</b>	3.74	1.21	<b>8</b>
Security	4.67	0.95	<b>5</b>	4.89	0.97	<b>4</b>	5.26	0.75	<b>1</b>	5.10	0.82	<b>3</b>	4.90	0.93	<b>4</b>	5.09	0.80	<b>3</b>	5.25	0.71	<b>1</b>	5.21	0.85	<b>2</b>

*Table 5. Factor structure of social axioms for Armenian sample<sup>12</sup>*

Social axioms	R	SC	RA	SC/ SCyn	FC <sup>13</sup>
Belief in a religion helps one understand the meaning of life.	.765				
Belief in a religion makes people good citizens.	.761				
Religious people are more likely to maintain moral standards.	.699				
Religious faith contributes to good mental health.	.680				
Religion makes people escape from reality.	-.456				
Religious beliefs lead to unscientific thinking.	-.445				
There is a supreme being controlling the universe.	.424				
It is rare to see a happy ending in real life.		.586			
There is usually only one way to solve a problem.		.561			
Young people are impulsive and unreliable.		.534			
To care about societal affairs only brings trouble for yourself.		.513			
Kind-hearted people usually suffer losses.		.481			
Powerful people tend to exploit others.		.468			
People will stop working hard after they secure a comfortable life.		.458			
Old people are a heavy burden on society.		.440			
Knowledge is necessary for success.			.645		
One will succeed if he/she really tries.			.640		
Adversity can be overcome by effort.			.611		
Hard working people will achieve more in the end.			.569		
Every problem has a solution.			.551		
Competition brings about progress.			.488		
Caution helps avoid mistakes.			.469		
One who does not know how to plan his or her future will eventually fail.			.383		
People may have opposite behavior on different occasions.				.574	
Kind-hearted people are easily bullied.				.540	
Human behavior changes with the social context.				.521	
The various social institutions in society are biased towards the rich.				.495	
Power and status makes people arrogant.				.469	
One's behaviors may be contrary to his or her true feelings.				.385	
People deeply in love are usually blind.				.374	
There are many ways for people to predict what will happen in the future.					.563
Failure is the beginning of success.					.531
Good luck follows if one survives a disaster.					.523
Individual characteristics, such as appearance and birthday, affect one's fate.					.413
Fate determines one's successes and failures.					.391
Most disasters can be predicted.					.368

<sup>12</sup> Items that have factor loads above 0.36 are introduced in table

<sup>13</sup> R-Religiosity, SC - Social cynicism, RA - Reward for Application, SC/SCyn-Social complexity/Social cynicism  
FC-Fate Control

*Table 6. Factor structure of 'culture-specific' social axioms*

Social axioms	A	F	I-ST	P	SHH <sup>14</sup>
One can change many things in his/her life, if there is the wish to do so.	,680				
A person who is good at figuring out the character of people around, will act effectively.	,608				
Everyone is the master of their own fate.	,590				
If they wish, people can make the world better.	,584				
A kind hearted person is always appreciated in society.	,506				
People are appreciated by their deeds.	,493				
One can become a better person if society helps him/her.	,462				
One should have luck in order to succeed.		,647			
Success will find a person itself.		,615			
The future is predetermined from above.		,598			
Important events are the result of chance.		,547			
Success depends on life circumstances.		,537			
Society suppresses individuality.			,740		
Society always restricts people.			,592		
People always act according to their personal interests.			,500		
Life circumstances change humans.			,471		
Power decides someone's place in the society.			,389		
One will not find his/her place in life if he/she is uneducated.				,591	
Bad is more in life than good is.				,548	
Even real friendship is forgotten with time.				,540	
Living in this world means suffering.				,465	
One can only rely on him/herself in times of trouble.				,449	
Anything a person does has its impact on the whole humanity.					,575
A person is like his/her environment.					,543
Society gives a person the opportunity to be happy.					,511
All people are similar regardless of their nationalities.					,508
Regardless the kind of relationships, one should accept imperfections of others.					,453
If somebody does not have a job, he can't feel accomplished.					,378

<sup>14</sup> A - Agency, F - Fortune, I-ST - Individual-society tension, P-Pessimism, SHH-Social harmony and humanism

## Regression models for indicators of political and economic behavioral patterns

*Table 7.*

Political/civic activity				
	Participation in petitions, sit-ins and demonstrations	Attempt to connect with a political statesman or a party	Sharing opinion by media	Sharing opinion by social media
Age			-.100**	-.194***
Gender	-.155***	-.111**		-.052*
Place of residence		.103**		
Benevolence				-.091*
Self-Direction	.207***	.159***	.190***	.154***
Social cynicism	-.103**	-.093*		-.097*
Religiosity			.078*	
<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	<i>.094</i>	<i>.061</i>	<i>.054</i>	<i>.124</i>
<i>F change</i>	<i>8.143**</i>	<i>6.393**</i>	<i>4.786*</i>	<i>7.344**</i>

*P*<sup>\*</sup>≤0,05; *P*<sup>\*\*</sup>≤0,01; *P*<sup>\*\*\*</sup>≤0,001

*Table 8.*

	Concernment with political issues	Participation in elections	Prognosis of political state
Age	.175***	.327***	
Gender	-.155***		
Place of residence	.103**	.130***	-.140***
Benevolence	-.086*		
Universalism	.073*		
Self-direction	.095*		
Achievements	.068*		
Social cynicism	-.143***	-.096**	-.139***
Reward for application	.089*		
Social complexity/Social cynicism			-.114**
Fate control			.091*
Religiosity			.078*
Agency		.066*	.086*
<i>Social harmony and humanism</i>		.076*	
<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	<i>.104</i>	<i>.132</i>	<i>.071</i>
<i>F change</i>	<i>6.368**</i>	<i>3.887*</i>	<i>5.255*</i>

*P*<sup>\*</sup>≤0,05; *P*<sup>\*\*</sup>≤0,01; *P*<sup>\*\*\*</sup>≤0,001

*Table 9.*

	Concernment with economic issues	Subjective prognosis of economic state of country	Subjective prognosis of economic state of family
Age	.168***		-.176***
Gender	-.123**		
Place of residence	.165***	.113**	.087*
Benevolence	-.091*	.069*	
Self-direction	.103**		
Social Cynicism	-.140**		-.103**
Reward for Application			.094*
Social Complexity /Social Cynicism		-.150***	
Fate Control		.112**	
Agency	.077*	.109**	
Individual-Society Tension		-.109**	
Social Harmony and Humanity	.077*		
<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	.117	.076	.065
<i>F</i> change	4.038*	5.316*	7.066**

*P*\*<sub>≤0,05</sub>; *P*\*\*<sub>≤0,01</sub>; *P*\*\*\*<sub>≤0,001</sub>

*Table 10.*

Economic risk and taking loans			
	Taking loan to improve living conditions	Taking loan to start a business	Assume economic risks in next five years
Age	-.221***	-.080*	-.168***
Gender		-.084*	-.137**
Place of residence		.155***	.096*
Tradition			-.140**
Stimulation		.095*	
Power	.104**		.096*
Reward for application		.082*	
Social complexity/Social cynicism			-.089*
Fate control		.076*	
Religiosity			.128**
Agency			.121**
<i>Social harmony and humanism</i>	.077*		
<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	.061	.073	.133
<i>F</i> change	4.299*	4.257*	6.369**

*P*\*<sub>≤0,05</sub>; *P*\*\*<sub>≤0,01</sub>; *P*\*\*\*<sub>≤0,001</sub>

*Table 11.*

	Achieving well-being	
	Country condition	Individual efforts
Age	.032***	-.026**
Gender	.436***	-.812***
Tradition	-.176*	
Power	-.286***	
Reward for application	-.405**	.450***
Individual-Society Tension	.430***	-.453***
<i>Cox &amp; Snell pseudo R2</i>	.084	.083

*P*\* $\leq 0,05$ ; *P*\*\* $\leq 0,01$ ; *P*\*\*\* $\leq 0,001$