

December 19, 2024

DENTSU SOKEN INC.

Doshisha University, The Doshisha

DENTSU SOKEN and Doshisha University Announce the Results of the World Values Survey Wave 8 in Japan

DENTSU SOKEN INC. (Head Office: Minato-ku, Tokyo; President, CEO & COO: Hirohisa Iwamoto; hereinafter “DENTSU SOKEN”) and the Ikeda Laboratory (Professor: Ken’ichi Ikeda)—a facility engaged in media and social psychology research as part of the Department of Media, Journalism and Communications, Faculty of Social Studies, of Doshisha University, The Doshisha (Location: Kyoto City, Kyoto Prefecture; President: Katsuhiro Kohara; hereinafter “Doshisha University”)—participated in wave 8 of the World Values Survey (hereinafter the “WVS”) from Japan (conducted in July–August 2024) and performed time series analysis of changes in people’s values, beliefs, and attitudes.

Launched in 1981, the WVS is a worldwide survey that currently involves research institutions in approximately 120 countries and regions. As the survey and analysis of the WVS wave 8 in Japan have been completed earlier than in other countries and regions, the results are published today, December 19, 2024.

The results of the WVS wave 8 in Japan are as outlined below.

Outline of the WVS Wave 8 in Japan

Survey period:	July 19 to August 2, 2024
Survey respondents:	1,272 men and women aged 18 to 79 from all over the country (number of valid responses)
Survey topics:	Approximately 70 questions covering 228 topics, including politics, economy, labor, education, and family (The identical questionnaire is used globally)
Survey research company:	Nippon Research Center

DENTSU SOKEN has participated in the WVS from wave 2 (1990) and has conducted survey and analysis in Japan to this day. From wave 6 (2010) onward, the survey and analysis have been conducted in collaboration with Professor Ken’ichi Ikeda of the Department of Media, Journalism and Communications, Faculty of Social Studies, Doshisha University.

	Survey Period	Survey Respondents	Sampling Method	Survey Method	No. of Valid Responses
Wave 1	Mar. 1981	Male and female individuals aged 18 or older	Stratified multistage random sampling	In-person interviews	1,204
Wave 2	Sept. 1990	Male and female individuals aged 18 or older	Stratified multistage random sampling	In-person interviews	1,011
Wave 3	Nov. 1995	Male and female individuals aged 18 or older	Stratified multistage random sampling	In-person interviews	1,054
Wave 4	July 2000	Male and female individuals aged 18 or older	Sampling by age and gender based on the national census results obtained from consumer panels	Postal survey	1,362
Wave 5	July 2005	Male and female individuals aged 18 to 79	Sampling by age and gender based on the national census results obtained from consumer panels	Postal survey	1,096
Wave 6	Nov. to Dec. 2010	Male and female individuals aged 18 to 79	Stratified multistage random sampling (18–19 years old: quota sampling)	Combination of in-person interviews and questionnaires	2,443
Wave 7	Sept. 2019	Male and female individuals aged 18 or older	Sampling by region, age, and gender based on the national census results obtained from consumer panels	Postal survey	1,353
Wave 8	July to Aug. 2024	Male and female individuals aged 18 to 79	Sampling by region, age, and gender based on the national census results obtained from consumer panels	Postal survey	1,272

■ Executive Summary of the WVS Wave 8 in Japan

- 1. An increasing number of people feel that they have free choice and control over their lives.**
- 2. The importance people place on work is decreasing, while greater emphasis is placed on leisure time.**
- 3. An increasing number of people think economic growth and creating jobs should be given priority, almost on par with those who think protecting the environment should be given priority.**
- 4. Japan’s culture and arts are perceived to be heading in a positive direction, but Japan’s economic competitiveness and international political influence are perceived to be declining.**
- 5. As expectations grow for a society in which individuals can lead engaged and fulfilling lives, there are also calls for transformation of the society.**
- 6. As regards the relationship with other countries, many people consider enhancing the relationship with Asia and Europe to be important.**
- 7. While the majority of people consider that the world is better off because of science and technology, people are increasingly concerned about the negative impact of science and technology.**

■ Results of the WVS Wave 8 in Japan¹

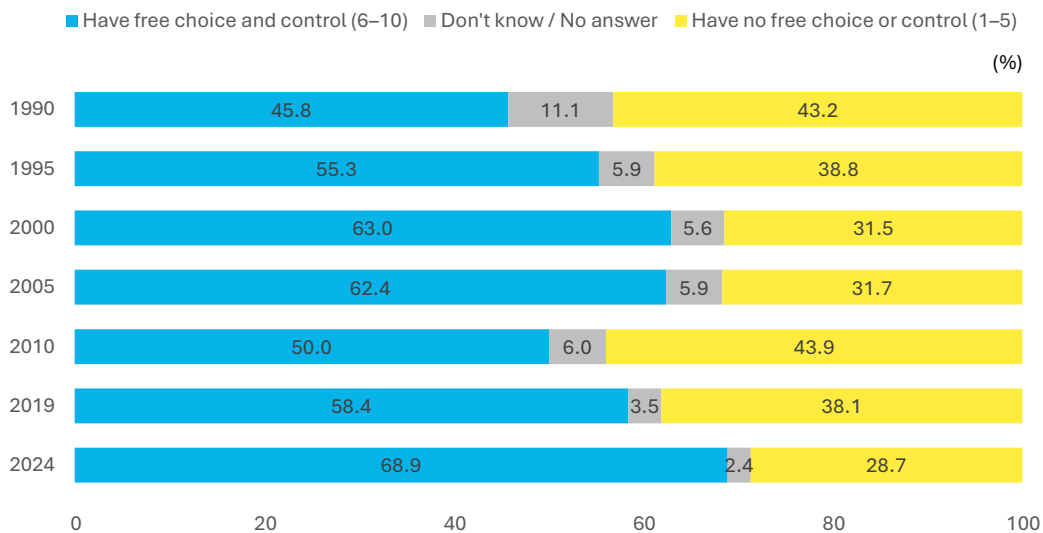
- 1. An increasing number of people feel that they have free choice and control over their lives.**

In response to the question that asked the respondents to select, on a scale of 1 to 10, the extent to which they feel that they have free choice and control over their lives, 68.9% (up 10.5 points compared to the previous wave) indicated that they “have free choice and control” (6–10), whereas 28.7% (down 9.4 points compared to the previous wave) indicated that they “have

¹ Time series changes in Japan

no free choice or control” (1–5). In the trends since 1990, “have free choice and control” has reached the highest percentage, while “have no free choice or control” has showed the lowest percentage.

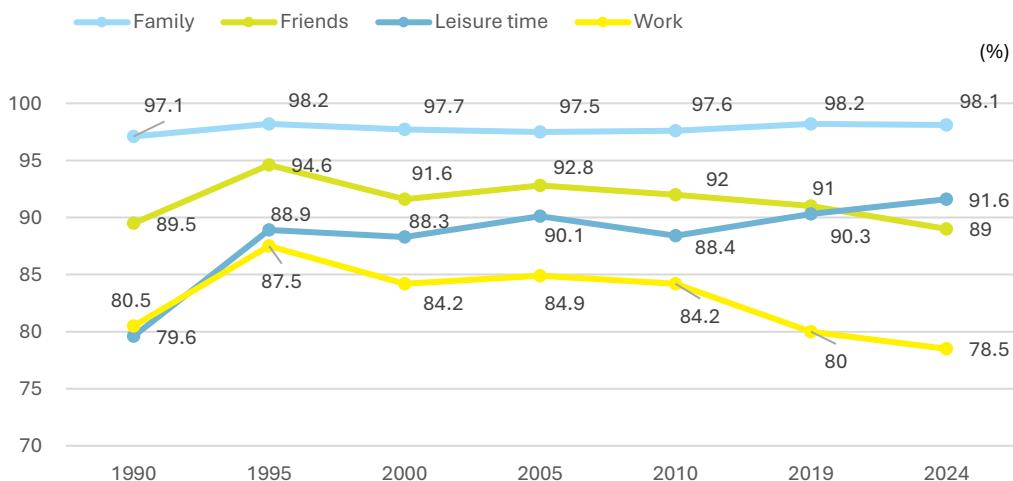
Extent to which people feel that they have free choice and control over their lives



2. The importance people place on work is decreasing, while greater emphasis is placed on leisure time.

Respondents were asked to indicate the importance of “family,” “friends,” “leisure time,” and “work” in their lives. When looking at a change in the total percentage of respondents who answered “very important” and “rather important,” the importance of “work,” which had been on a downward trend, was 78.5% (down 1.5 points compared to the previous wave), the lowest since 1990. On the other hand, the importance of “leisure time” was 91.6% (up 1.3 points compared to the previous wave), the highest since 1990.

Importance in life (“very important” and “rather important”)

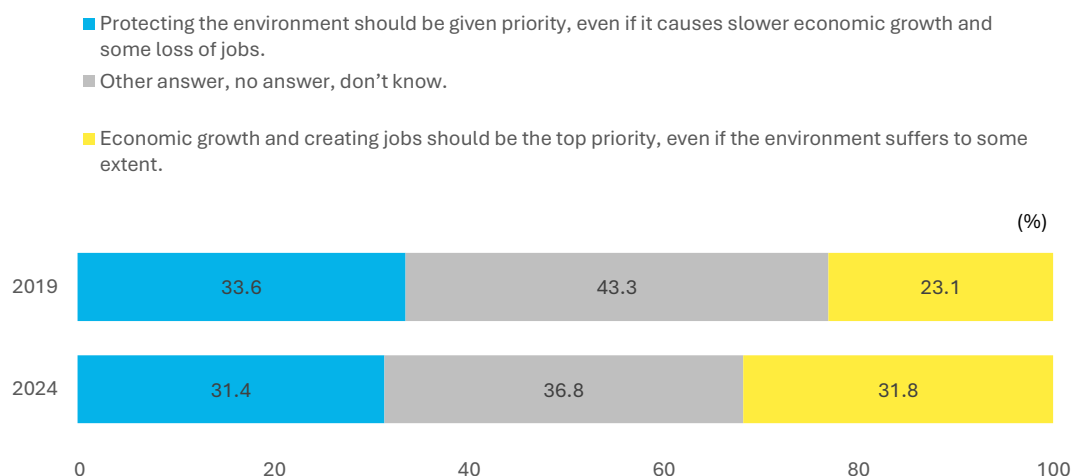


3. An increasing number of people think economic growth and creating jobs should be given priority, almost on par with those who think protecting the environment should be given priority.

In response to the question that asked the respondents to indicate whether they felt that protecting the environment should be given priority, or economic growth and creating jobs should be given priority, 31.4% (down 2.2 points compared to the previous wave) said “protecting the environment should be given priority, even if it causes slower economic growth and some loss of jobs,” whereas 31.8% (up 8.7 points compared to the previous wave) said “economic growth and creating jobs should be the top priority, even if the environment suffers to some extent.”

Most respondents in the previous wave either felt that protecting the environment should be given priority, or didn’t know, or failed to answer the question; but in this wave, the proportion of respondents who were of the view that protecting the environment should be given priority, and the proportion of respondents who were of the view that economic growth and creating jobs should be given priority, were roughly the same. Furthermore, while this question has been asked since 1995, the response “economic growth and creating jobs should be the top priority, even if the environment suffers to some extent” recorded the highest score ever.

Environmental protection and economic growth

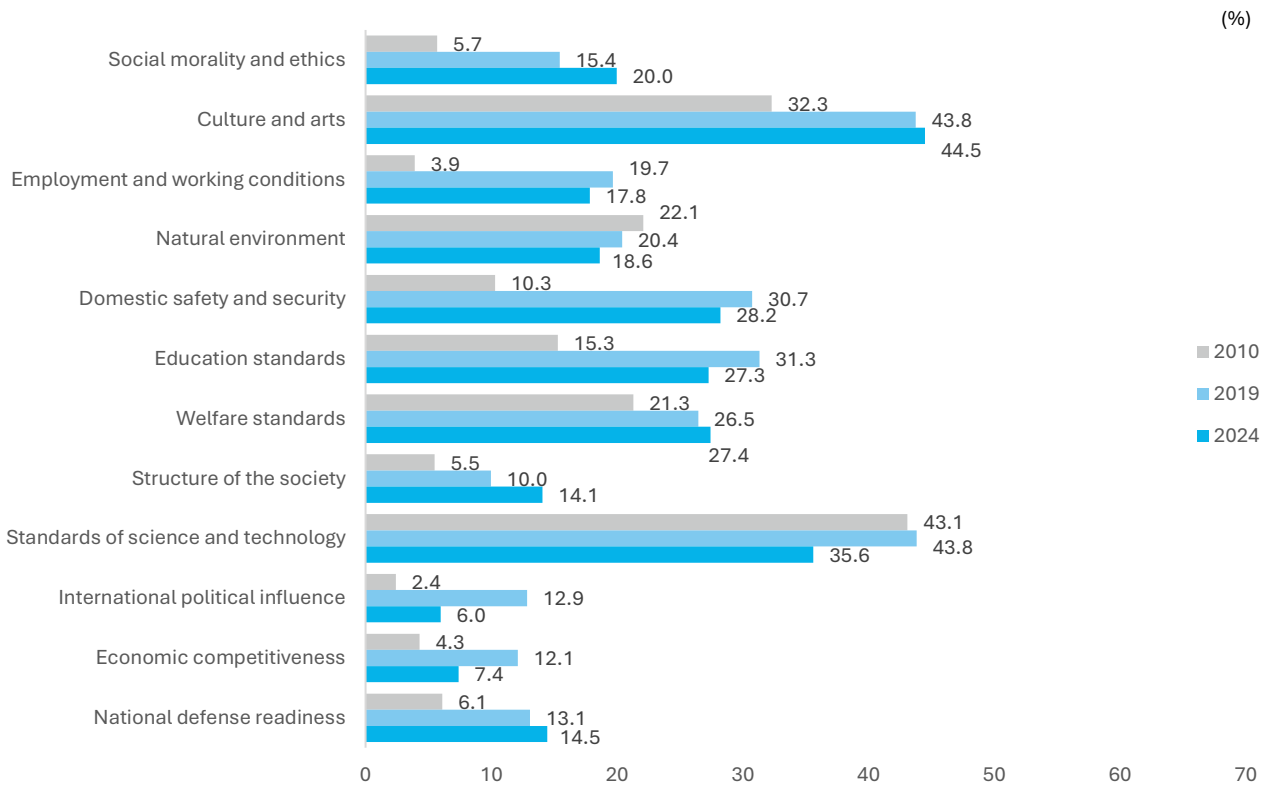


4. Japan’s culture and arts are perceived to be heading in a positive direction, but Japan’s economic competitiveness and international political influence are perceived to be declining.

“Culture and arts” was cited most frequently by the respondents as the area in which Japan is heading in a *positive* direction, with 44.5% (up 0.7 points compared to the previous wave) of the respondents citing this, followed by “standards of science and technology,” which was cited by 35.6% (down 8.2 points compared to the previous wave) of the respondents.

These two were the joint top choices in the previous wave (2019); but in this wave, while “culture and arts” maintained a similar score to the previous wave, “standards of science and technology” notably saw a decline from the 40% level it used to maintain in the previous wave (2019) and wave 6 (2010). Additionally, “education standards” and “domestic safety and security,” which both had scores exceeding 30% in the previous wave, declined slightly and scored less than 30%.

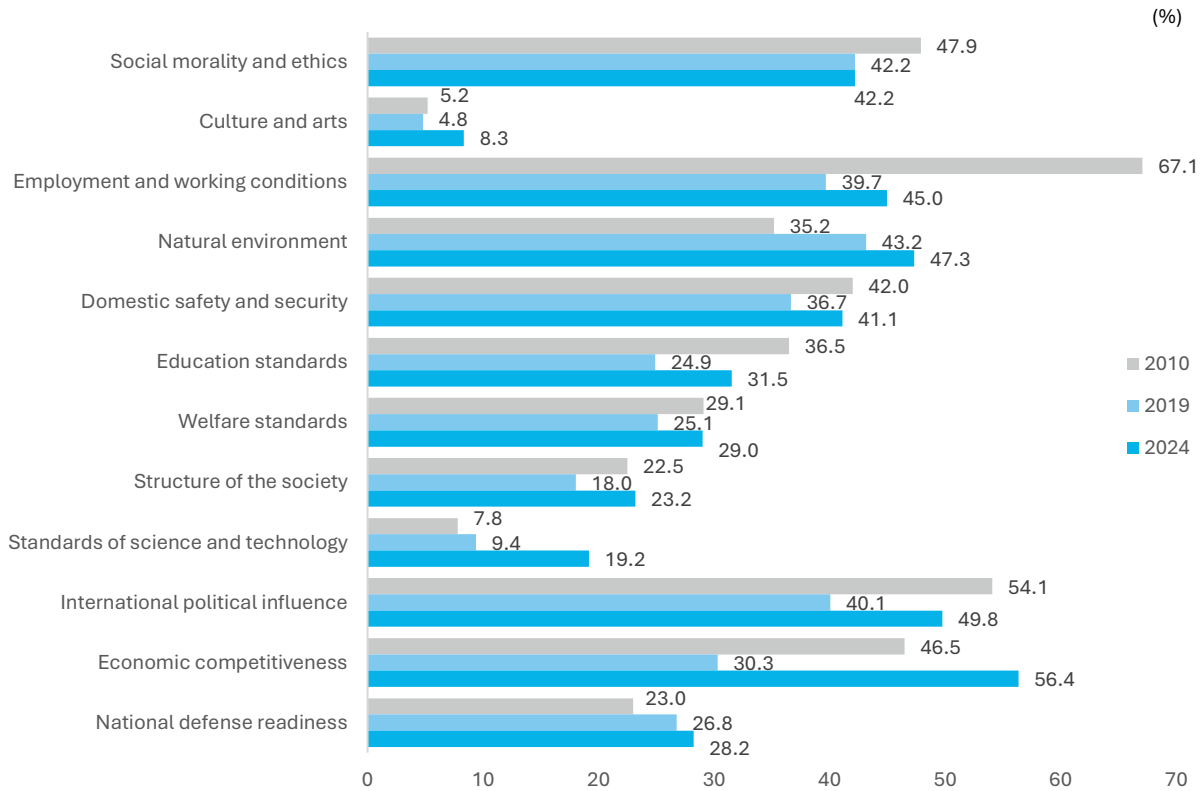
Areas in which Japan is heading in a positive direction



As areas in which Japan was heading in a *negative* direction, meanwhile, more than 40% of the respondents cited “economic competitiveness” (56.4%, up 26.1 points compared to the previous wave), “international political influence” (49.8%, up 9.7 points compared to the previous wave), “natural environment” (47.3%, up 4.1 points compared to the previous wave), “employment and working conditions” (45.0%, up 5.3 points compared to the previous wave), “social morality and ethics” (42.2%, no change compared to the previous wave), and “domestic safety and security” (41.1%, up 4.4 points compared to the previous wave).

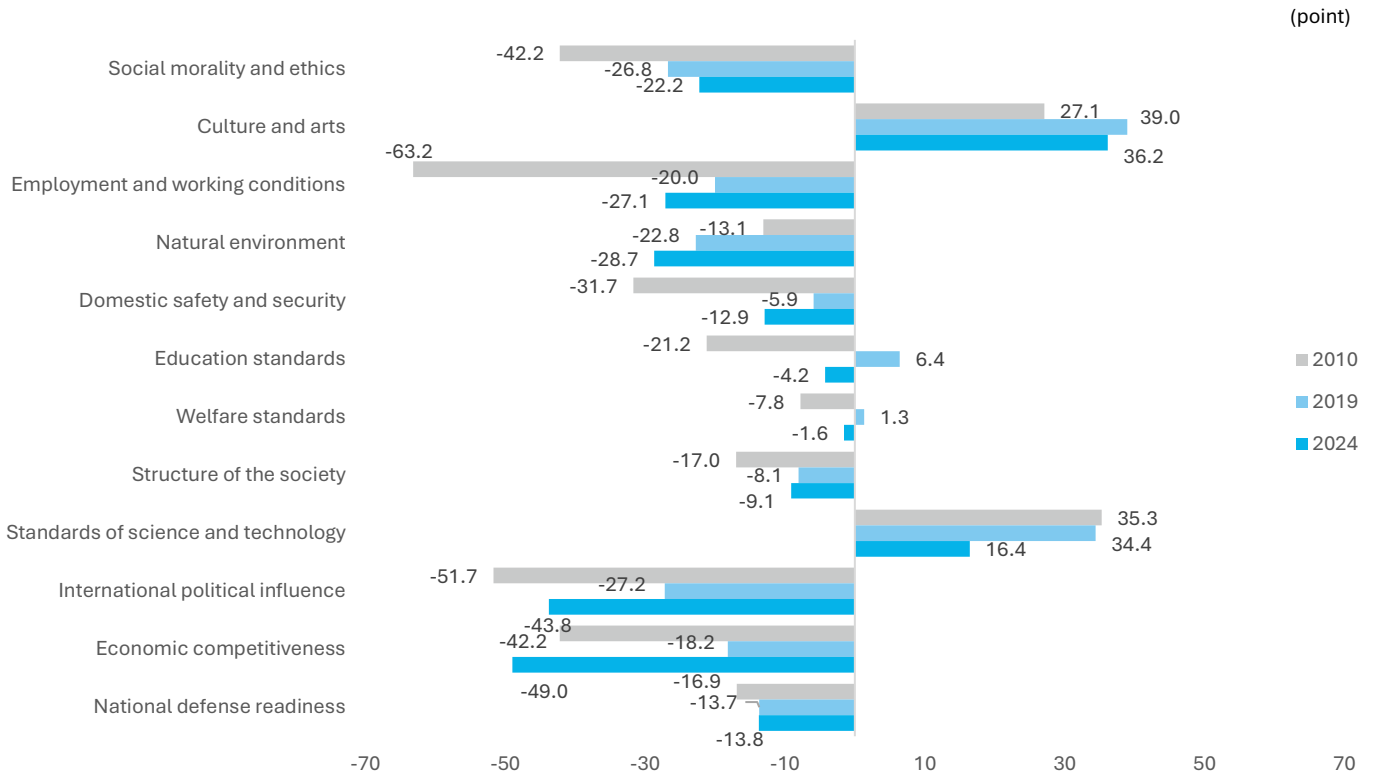
In wave 6, the number of respondents who cited “employment and working conditions” was exceptionally high. In this wave, whereas no areas reached that level, the number of respondents who said things were heading in a negative direction increased in many areas compared to wave 7.

Areas in which Japan is heading in a negative direction



In the graph below (which shows the figures calculated by subtracting the percentage of respondents who felt that Japan is heading in a negative direction in a given area, from the percentage of respondents who felt that Japan is heading in a positive direction in the same area), positive figures reflect a predominance of respondents who feel Japan is heading in a positive direction in that area, while negative figures reflect a predominance of respondents who feel Japan is heading in a negative direction in the area. “Culture and arts” and “standards of science and technology” are now the only two areas where the respondents overall feel that Japan is heading in a positive direction, but “standards of science and technology” still saw a notable decline in the net positive sentiment compared to the previous wave. While respondents answered that Japan was heading in a negative direction in many areas, this sentiment was particularly prominent in the areas of “economic competitiveness” and “international political influence,” both of which saw a marked decline compared to the previous wave.

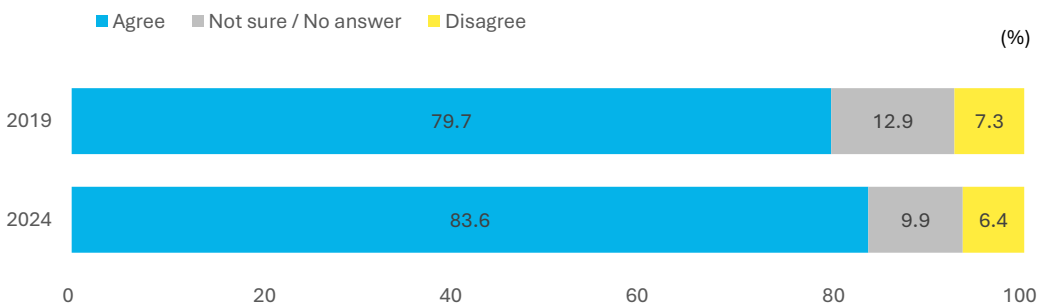
Where Japan is heading (“positive direction” minus “negative direction”)



5. As expectations grow for a society in which individuals can lead engaged and fulfilling lives, there are also calls for transformation of the society.

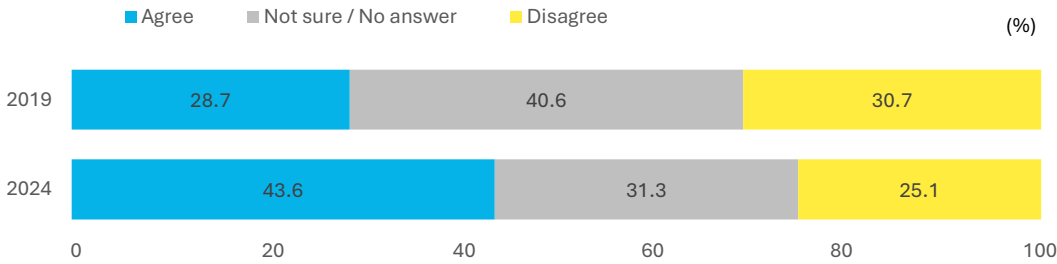
As regards the expectation for Japanese society, in response to the statement “in Japan, there is a need to build a society in which individuals can lead engaged and fulfilling lives,” 83.6% (up 3.9 points compared to the previous wave) of the respondents answered “agree,” showing a slight increase from the previous wave.

**How Japan and Japanese people should act in the 21st century:
There is a need to build a society in which individuals can lead engaged and fulfilling lives**



Furthermore, 43.6% (up 14.9 points compared to the previous wave) of the respondents answered that they “agree” with the notion that “now is the time for fundamental social transformation.” This is less than half of the respondents, but we can nevertheless glean a sign of calls for transformation of the society.

**How Japan and Japanese people should act in the 21st century:
Now is the time for fundamental social transformation**

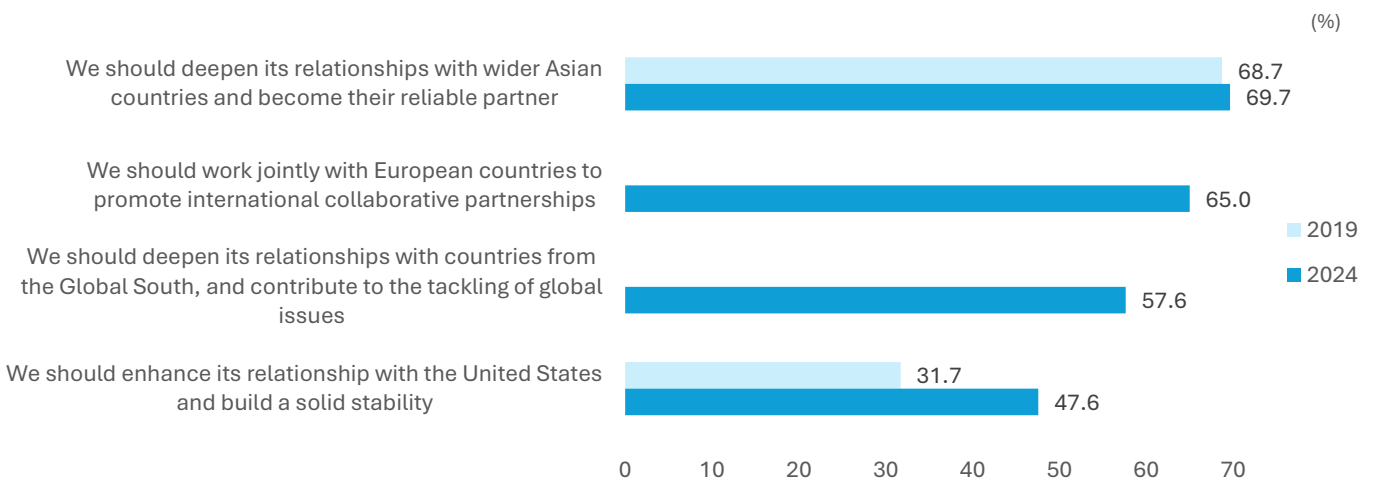


6. As regards the relationship with other countries, many people consider enhancing the relationship with Asia and Europe to be important.

In terms of how Japan should build relationships with other countries and regions of the world, we presented respondents with four points of view that indicate the direction Japan should take, and compared the percentage of respondents who agreed with each of these points of view.

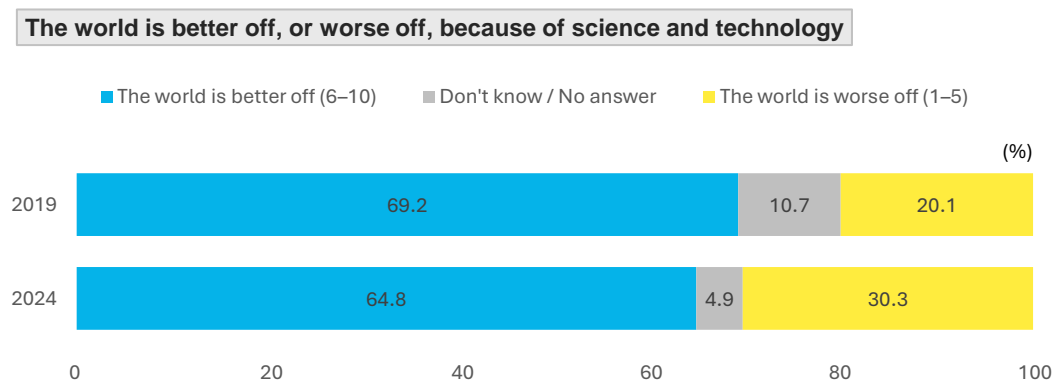
The results in descending order were: “Japan should deepen its relationships with wider Asian countries and become their reliable partner” (69.7%, up 1.0 points compared to the previous wave); “Japan should work jointly with European countries to promote international collaborative partnerships” (65.0%, nothing to compare in the previous wave); “Japan should deepen its relationships with countries from the Global South, and contribute to the tackling of global issues” (57.6%, nothing to compare in the previous wave); and “Japan should enhance its relationship with the United States and build a solid stability” (47.6%, up 15.9 points compared to the previous wave).

**How Japan and Japanese people should act in the 21st century:
relationship with other countries**



7. While the majority of people consider that the world is better off because of science and technology, people are increasingly concerned about the negative impact of science and technology.

When the respondents were asked to select, on a scale of 1 to 10, the extent to which they feel that the world is better off, or worse off, because of science and technology, 64.8% (down 4.4 points compared to the previous wave) selected “the world is better off because of science and technology” (6–10), while 30.3% (up 10.2 points compared to the previous wave) selected “the world is worse off because of science and technology” (1–5).



■ Observations

In the five-year period since the previous wave of WVS was conducted in 2019, many events that significantly altered people’s way of life and values took place. The COVID-19 pandemic resulted in restrictions being imposed on many aspects of one’s daily life, such as movement, in-person communication, dining, work, study, care, and leisure, and also brought to the surface the inequality in the burden borne by different parts of the society. This wave of WVS showed an increase in the number of people who feel that they have free choice and control over their lives. The increase, however, may simply have been a reaction to the pandemic-related restrictions on daily life once they had been lifted. It remains to be seen whether this is indeed a temporary reaction or a sign of things to come, and we would like to keep an eye on the future trend.

While the proportion of people who consider work to be important in their lives kept on declining after reaching a peak in 1995, the proportion of people who consider leisure time to be important in their lives keeps on increasing. The change in priorities given to work and leisure time was very much evident in this wave of WVS. This trend in the perception of work and leisure time among Japanese people is likely to continue going forward, given the enactment of laws relating to work-style reform, changes to working conditions resulting from the promotion of digital transformation, and other developments.

In this wave of WVS, it became clear that many people consider their employment and working conditions to be heading in a negative direction, but still, this represents a much smaller proportion of respondents who felt the same way back in 2010 when the effects of the global financial crisis were still being felt. Going forward, people’s perception of their employment and working conditions is likely to remain subject to change, depending on changes in the state of the society.

This wave of WVS also revealed that there were concerns about the decline in Japan’s standards of science and technology. Many of the technologies that have gained global attention in recent years—such as artificial intelligence and robotics—were developed overseas, and one could speculate that Japan is falling behind in technology. Moreover, Japan is considered to be heading in a negative direction in terms of economic competitiveness and international political influence as well, reflecting the anxiety about the decline in Japan’s international competitiveness and standing on the global stage. Against this backdrop, there are also signs that people are calling for transformation of Japanese society. We will keep on monitoring

the changes in the consciousness and behavior of the Japanese people to see whether this gives birth to a movement that leads to social transformation, or whether this remains a mere velleity.

Reference Materials (available in Japanese only)

[DENTSU SOKEN Quality of Society Center](#)

Press release of October 17, 2024

[Results of the Quality of Society Index 2024 Survey](#)

Press release of June 26, 2024

[Results of DENTSU SOKEN Compass Vol. 13: Survey to Inform the Future of Disaster Prevention](#)

■ **About DENTSU SOKEN** (<https://www.dentsusoken.com/english>)

In keeping with its corporate vision of “HUMANOLOGY for the future: Bringing people and technology together to shape the future,” DENTSU SOKEN aims to support and realize the evolution toward a better society by combining its three core capabilities of system integration, consulting, and think tank. To that end, DENTSU SOKEN creates a cycle wherein it investigates issues, makes recommendations, and implements technology-driven solutions, while engaging in earnest with the society as a whole, including corporations, government agencies, municipalities, and consumers.

DENTSU SOKEN will promote cross-innovation that transcends technological, sectoral, corporate, and geographical boundaries, and pave the path to the future by harnessing the power of people and technology to continuously create new value.

Notes:

- As of January 1, 2024, Information Services International–Dentsu, Ltd. (ISID) changed its company name to DENTSU SOKEN INC.
- Company and product names used in this release are the trademarks or registered trademarks of the respective companies.
- Humanology is a portmanteau of the words “human” and “technology.”

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