



Source Information

The sources used in this database were so numerous and diverse (often a different one for each number in a table) that it has proved impossible to insert them or document them in either the text or the tables. The current total of books on Christianity exceeds 5 million distinct and separate titles. In most cases, the most authoritative sources, published or unpublished, were available to this book and so were used. Most of the materials collected for this survey, however, relate to original and previously unpublished enquiries. A large majority of the data came from field work, unpublished reports, and private communications from the collaborators listed after our title page. The major physical collections of data built up may be summarized here under 12 heads:

1. around 5,000 statistical questionnaires returned by churches and national collaborators over the period 1982-2006;
2. field surveys and interviews on the spot in over 200 countries conducted by the authors, who over the years 1965–2006 visited virtually every country in the world;
3. extensive correspondence over the last 20 years;
4. a mass of unpublished documentation for all countries, collected on the field, including reports, memoranda, facsimiles, photocopies, photographs, maps, statistical summaries and historical documents;
5. a large collection of primary published documents of limited circulation;
6. the collection just described of 600 directories of denominations, Christian councils, confessions and topics;
7. a collection of 4,500 printed contemporary descriptions of the churches, describing denominations, movements, countries and confessions;
8. officially-published reports of 500 government-organized national censuses of population each including the question on religion, in over 120 countries, covering most decades over the period 1900–2005;
9. unpublished reports and data concerning 50 government censuses of population by religion which were unprocessed or had remained incomplete, and which the authors then completed;
10. unpublished computer searches and computerized surveys of 12,000 university doctoral dissertations or master's theses on Christianity and religion, using 40 keywords ('Christian', 'Catholic', 'Protestant', etc):
11. bibliographical listings from searches (including computerized enquiries on key-words) in a number of major libraries including those of the British Library (London), Library of Congress (Washington), Propaganda (Rome), Missionary Research Library (New York), and a score of universities; and
12. a series of in-depth focused interviews with bishops, church leaders, theologians and others (of Catholic, Protestant, Orthodox, Anglican, Independent, and all other traditions), focusing specifically on the meaning, understanding, quantification and interpretation of (a) keywords in use in the propagation of Christianity (evangelization, mission, development, conversion, etc) and (b) the various neologisms evolved here in the course of our survey's statistical analyses (affiliated Christians, crypto-Christians, radio believers, evangelized non-Christians, neocharismatics, postcharismatics, etc).

Excerpt from *World Christian Trends*, Barrett and Johnson (William Carey Library 2001), updated February 2007.