

Chapter 4

Measuring trust

This chapter provides concrete advice on best practice in measuring trust in household surveys. The chapter discusses how to plan for the measurement of trust and provides concrete advice on the survey and sample design, including the target population, sample size, frequency and the duration of enumeration. Following this, the chapter sets out specific advice on questionnaire design, identifying a set of core measures of trust that should be the highest priority for measurement and which represent a minimum viable set of measures. Finally, the chapter examines the issues involved when implementing surveys to measure trust, including data coding, as well as issues relevant to interview training.

4.1. Introduction

This chapter presents best practice in measuring trust. While it describes both interpersonal and institutional trust, much of the focus is on the former, as better evidence is available on its validity. Measurement of institutional trust is also discussed, but in the context of experimental measures that will assist in building a better understanding of how such measures perform. The chapter covers both the range of concepts to be measured and the best approaches for measuring them. This includes issues of sampling, survey design, data processing and coding, and questionnaire design. In particular, the chapter presents a single primary measure of generalised interpersonal trust intended to be collected consistently across countries, as well as a small group of core measures that data producers should collect where possible (Box 4.1). This core set includes measures of institutional trust as well as additional items related to interpersonal trust. Although the measures of institutional trust are more experimental than those for interpersonal trust, their high policy relevance warrants their inclusion in the core. Beyond this core suite of measures, the chapter provides more general advice to support data producers interested in identifying and measuring aspects of trust that will meet their particular research or policy needs, as well as a range of additional question modules covering different approaches to measuring trust.

Box 4.1. Core measures of trust

Core measures of trust are those for which international comparability is the highest priority. These are measures for which there is the most evidence of validity and relevance, for which the results are best understood, and for which the policy uses are most developed. Although the Guidelines are intended to support producers of measures of trust rather than being overly prescriptive, the core measures proposed here are quite specific in terms of content and collection method.

The core measures outlined in this chapter consist of five questions.

- The first is a primary measure intended to be collected consistently across countries. This measure should be regarded as the highest priority for national statistical agencies and focuses on generalised interpersonal trust. It should be the first question included in surveys where the measurement of trust is considered.
- The additional four questions in the core set aim to collect more information on limited interpersonal trust, and also include a three-item set of experimental questions on aspects of institutional trust. All these questions are important and should be collected where possible. However, it is recognised that not all national statistical offices will be able to collect these measures in their core surveys.

Beyond articulating a suite of core measures, the main goal of this chapter is to provide general advice to data providers. In particular, the chapter is intended to support national statistical agencies and other data providers in the process of deciding what to measure and how to implement the measurement process most effectively. While models are provided for specific questions, the chapter aims to provide options and advice rather than directions.

The chapter has four substantive sections. Section 4.2 focuses on issues associated with planning the measurement of trust, including the relationship between the intended policy or research use of the data and the appropriate measurement objectives; the range of covariates to be collected alongside trust to support analysis and interpretation is also discussed. Section 4.3 addresses survey and sample design issues; these include the choice of the survey vehicle, sample design, target population, collection period and survey frequency. Section 4.4 looks at questionnaire design, which includes question order, questionnaire structure and question wording: a key element of this section is the inclusion of model questions on interpersonal and institutional trust. Finally, section 4.5 focuses on survey implementation, which includes brief guidelines on interviewer training as well as data processing. Issues relating to the use and analysis of trust data are addressed in Chapter 5 (on the output and analysis of measures of trust).

4.2. What to measure? Planning the measurement of trust

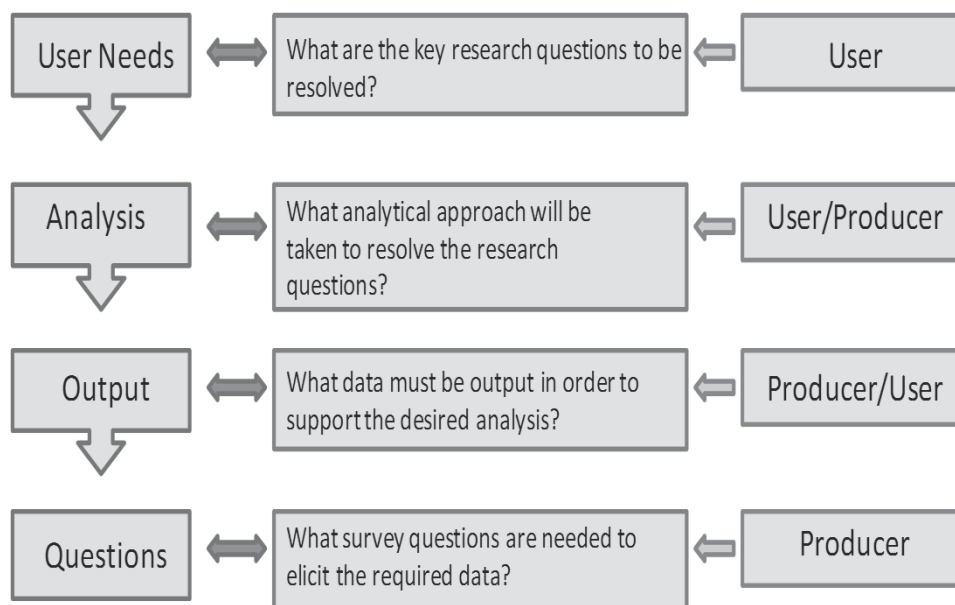
This section looks at the planning stage of a measurement project. It is concerned with what concepts to measure and how these concepts affect decisions about the final output and analysis. Some of the issues touched on in this section are discussed in greater depth in Chapter 5 (on the output and analysis of trust measures). However, where Chapter 5 focuses on how to analyse, interpret and present trust data, the discussion here is limited to how users' needs determine what information to collect.

The initial planning stage of a project to measure trust – or indeed of any statistical programme – is critically important. All subsequent decisions are heavily influenced by choices made early on about the objectives of the project. Clarity about objectives is thus crucial.

Decisions about what to measure should always be grounded in a clear understanding of users' needs. Only if the needs of data users are clearly understood is it possible to make informed decisions about the information that should be collected to meet these needs. Understanding user needs is not, however, straightforward. A relatively simple research question can be approached in a range of different ways, using different methodologies. For example, one can understand what motivates behaviour both by asking people directly what they would do in a given set of circumstances or by collecting information on the course of action people take when facing a given set of circumstances. Each methodological approach has its own strengths and weaknesses and will have different implications for measurement. An analytical model can assist in thinking in a structured way about how user needs relate to specific decisions about what data to collect.

Figure 4.1 presents a simple model relating user needs to the specific survey questions used to collect information. The model is drawn from the *OECD Guidelines on Measuring Subjective Well-being* (2013), but is equally relevant to any survey design project; it provides a framework for thinking about the various stages involved in moving from a user's needs to specific questions to be included in a survey.

The first column of Figure 4.1 identifies the four stages involved in going from users' needs to specific survey content. Conceptually, these stages involve working back through the process of collecting the data and using them in decision making, in reverse order. Column 2 articulates the key issues to be addressed in each stage of the project in order to make well-informed decisions about the most appropriate measures. Finally, Column 3 indicates which party has the lead role in making decisions. Although the process of going

Figure 4.1. **The planning process: From user needs to survey questions**

Source: OECD (2013), *OECD Guidelines on Measuring Subjective Well-being*, OECD Publishing, Paris, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264191655-en>.

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from users' needs to survey content is fundamentally collaborative in nature, there are stages in the process when users can be expected to play a more important role than data providers, as well as stages where the reverse is true.

In practice, the process of working through these four stages is likely to be less clearly defined than Figure 4.1 suggests. In some cases, where the level of analysis required is relatively simple, the analysis and output stages of the process can merge into each other. Users will sometimes have clear views about the best measures to support the analysis that they would like to undertake, and it would be foolish to ignore these views in instances where a sophisticated user has a better understanding than a data provider of the issue at hand. Similarly, data producers may suggest possibilities that will result in changes in user needs or in the analytical approach taken to address them.

User needs

Understanding users' needs involves understanding the key policy and research questions that users are trying to address. While it is not possible in this chapter to give a full discussion of all possible users' needs for trust data, some general questions can be articulated:

- Are users' needs related to one of the general policy uses for trust data described in Chapter 2?
- What are the policy questions?
- Is the trust content being proposed appropriate to respond to these policy questions? Does the measure proposed allow monitoring changes over time or comparing population groups?

- What population groups are of greatest interest to the user? For example, is the focus on international comparisons (making countries the key unit of analysis), the same population at different points in time (time-series analysis), or different sub-groups of the same population (based on criteria such as age, gender, location or ethnicity)? These questions will have implications both for sampling and for the types of measure that are most appropriate. In the case of cross-country comparisons, measures with good cross-cultural reliability will be most important, while for analysis of groups within a country, low respondent burden may be a more important consideration in order to allow a larger sample size.
- Does the user's interest lie in comparing outcomes of different groups or in understanding the relationship between different aspects of trust? In the first case, a narrow range of trust measures may suffice, while in the latter case more detail on a range of covariates is likely to be necessary.
- Is the user's primary interest in generalised trust, in limited trust or in institutional trust? If the focus is on institutional trust, which institutions are of primary interest?
- What are the frequency requirements, i.e. the time periods over which the users need to monitor changes in trust?
- What within-country comparisons are required, such as geographic level?

A thorough understanding of users' needs should allow the identification of one or more clear research questions that the project should address.

Analysis

Understanding the overall research question is not sufficient to make meaningful decisions about the type of output or the most appropriate measures to use. A given research question may be addressed in more than one way. It is therefore essential to understand how the specific research question can be answered.

- Will the analytical approach be primarily descriptive, or will it require more sophisticated statistical techniques (e.g. regression, factor analysis, etc.)?
- What contextual and other variables are required to answer the research question? If the research question simply involves identifying differences between population groups in terms of a small set of key outcomes, the range of relevant covariates may be limited. However, if the research question is focused on understanding the drivers of group differences in levels of trust, or on examining the joint distribution of trust and other outcomes, the range of covariates is likely to be significantly broader.
- What level of accuracy is required to produce meaningful results from the proposed analysis? This will have implications for sample size and sampling strategy. For example, if obtaining precise estimates for small population sub-groups is a priority, then oversampling of these groups may be necessary.

After considering the proposed analytical strategy, it should be possible to articulate how the research questions can be answered in quite specific terms. This will form the basis for evaluating what data need to be produced to support the desired analysis.

Output

Output refers to the statistical measures released by a national statistical agency or by another data producer. These can take the form of tables of aggregate data (e.g. average

results by group), microdata files, interactive data cubes or other forms. The key distinction between output and analysis is that output does not, in itself, answer a research question. Rather, it provides the information base that is analysed in order to produce the answer. In some cases, the answer may be directly evident from the output, requiring only limited interpretation, comment and caveats, while in other cases extensive analysis may be required.

Because output forms the basis for all subsequent analysis, it provides the key link between specific survey questions and the use of data in the analysis. The required output must therefore be clearly specified before appropriate questions can be designed. Some key issues to consider when specifying the desired output for information on trust include:

- Will the analysis require tabular output of averages or proportions, or is microdata needed? Simple comparisons of how different population groups compare with each other can be accomplished via tabular output, but understanding the drivers of such differences will require a much finer level of detail.
- Will the analytic techniques used treat the data as ordinal or cardinal? This makes little difference if microdata is required (since users can decide for themselves), but it will influence how summary measures of central tendency and distribution are presented in tabular form. Information on a cardinal variable¹ can be presented via techniques that add and average scores (e.g. mean, standard deviation), while ordinal data will need to be reported by category.
- How important is it to present measures of the central tendency of the data (e.g. mean, median, mode) as opposed to the dispersion (e.g. standard deviation) or to the full distribution of the data (e.g. proportion responding by category)?

In planning a measurement exercise, the aim should be to clearly specify the desired output, and the data items required to produce this, before considering question design. This will involve, at a minimum, defining the measures to be used and the breakdowns and cross-classifications required. In many cases, particularly if multivariate analysis is proposed, more detailed information may be required.

Questionnaire design

Once a clear set of outputs has been identified, based on the analysis required to meet users' needs, it will be possible to make specific decisions about survey design, including the most appropriate survey vehicle, collection period, units of measurement and questionnaire design. These decisions should flow logically from the process of working down from users' needs through analysis and output. The remainder of this chapter sets out a strategy for making these decisions. This includes both specific proposals for how a national statistical agency might approach the measurement of trust and more general information that can be used in a wider range of circumstances.

What other information should be collected: Covariates and analytical variables

All potential uses of trust data require some understanding of how trust varies with respect to other variables. This applies whether the goal is understanding the drivers of trust – which requires understanding the causes of change – or monitoring trust over time and across countries – which requires factoring in changes in demographics, in order to understand whether a given change in the average trust of a community is due to changes in levels of trust reported by different demographic groups or in the shares of these groups

in society. It is therefore imperative to consider not only how best to measure trust *per se*, but also what other measures should be collected alongside measures of trust for analytical purposes.

A need for additional information to aid in interpreting and analysing results is not unique to trust. Most statistical measures are collected alongside, at the least, basic demographic data. Demography matters to trust measures just as much as it does to labour-market statistics. There are pronounced differences in average levels of trust across a range of different demographic groups. Better educated and higher income groups typically have a higher level of generalised trust, while women generally have slightly lower levels (Alesina and La Ferrara, 2001; Soroka, Helliwell and Johnston, 2003; Helliwell and Wang, 2010). Generalised trust increases with age, but at a declining rate, while being a member of an ethnic group with a history of discrimination is associated with lower levels of generalised trust (Alesina and La Ferrara, 2001).

The precise range of covariates to collect alongside measures of trust will depend on whether the focus is on interpersonal trust or institutional trust, and on the research question being examined. Despite this, it is possible to provide some general guidelines on the most important information that should be collected alongside measures of trust. Most of the covariates described below are regularly collected by national statistical agencies, and international standards for their collection do exist. No attempt is made here to detail how these variables should be collected, and it is assumed that existing standards apply.

Demographics

Demographic variables cover the basic concepts used to describe the population being measured and to allow the analysis of how outcomes vary by population group. Including a range of demographic measures in any attempt to measure trust is of utmost importance, in particular for the following breakdowns:

- **Age** of the respondent: This should be provided in single years, if possible: age bands, while allowing for some cross-classification, are less useful both because they allow less flexibility with respect to the groups examined, and because they do not facilitate analysis of age as a continuous variable.
- **Gender** of the respondent.
- **Marital status:** This could be either the legal marital status of the respondent, including whether the respondent is widowed, divorced or separated, or the *de facto* status, including whether the respondent is living as married even if not legally married.
- **Household type:** This refers to a classification of the respondent's household unit, including whether the respondent is single or living with a partner, and whether children are present.
- **Children:** The number and age of children in the respondent's household, along with the relationship to the respondent.
- **Household size:** The number of people living in the respondent's household. Household size is a distinct concept from family size, as more than one family unit can live in a dwelling. It is important particularly with respect to income, in order to calculate the equivalised income available to household members for consumption purposes.²
- **Geographic information:** While privacy concerns may prevent the release of detailed geographical information relating to the respondent, estimates should be disaggregated

by some broad level geographic regions such as urban and rural, capital city, states/provinces, etc. Geo-coding allows for merging with other datasets also containing geo-codes, such as environmental data or other characteristics of the areas where people live. This is particularly important for the analysis of institutional trust, as variation between different local authorities provides a way to link governmental performance with trust in institutions without requiring comparable cross-country data.

- **Migration status/Country of birth/Year of arrival:** Migration status, such as permanent residence, citizenship, etc., and/or country of birth of the respondent. This information is especially important for generalised trust, both because migration status may have implications for generalised trust within a country and because the country of origin affects trust on an ongoing basis (Algan and Cahuc, 2010). Where space permits, the country of birth of parents is also of high interest, as it allows the analysis of trust for second-generation migrants.
- **Ethnic identification:** The ethnic identity or identities of the respondent may be of high policy importance in diverse societies. Ethnic identification is known to affect levels of interpersonal trust (Alesina and La Ferrara, 2001) and is also of interest from the perspective of institutional trust (Statistics New Zealand, 2015).

In addition to the demographic measures identified above, which can be considered essential, a number of additional demographic variables may also be useful. The precise relevance of these may, however, vary depending on national circumstances and the research priorities being considered.

- **Language:** Beyond the primary language of the respondent, it may be desirable, in some cases, to collect information on other languages spoken at home. Proficiency in the main language of the country where the survey is taking place may also be important for some purposes.
- **Urbanisation:** The classification of the area where the respondent lives in terms of the degree of urbanisation.³

Social and economic outcomes

In addition to basic demographic information, which allows for the identification of *who* trusts within society, there is also a need for a range of variables relating to wider social and economic outcomes that can be used to address the questions *what drives trust?* and *how does trust affect other valued outcomes?* While the variables listed below do not represent an exhaustive list of potential covariates, they identify those that are of the greatest interest and which are likely to be the most intensively used.

- **Income:** Income is of high interest since trust (both interpersonal and institutional) is known to vary with income (Alesina and La Ferrara, 2001). While both personal and household income are of interest, household income is of the highest priority, as it drives consumption possibilities and living standards, and therefore likely plays a major role in shaping trust. Ideally both pre- and post-tax income should be collected, as this would allow for the analysis of the impact of the tax and transfer system in shaping the trust of individuals.
- **Savings and wealth:** The relationship between savings behaviour, wealth accumulation and trust is of high interest, as trust in financial institutions, in the regulation of the financial sector and in other individuals can be expected to play a major part in peoples' savings decisions. Savings, in turn, is an important policy issue from the perspective of

both macroeconomic decisions and retirement income policy. Because savings and wealth data impose a significant respondent burden if collected in detail, the specific choice of variables used will depend on the context. In a general household survey, priority should be given to relatively simple questions such as the forms of wealth held (e.g. bank account, shares, private pension, land) or wealth brackets rather than detailed estimates of total wealth.

- **Employment status:** Employment status is a standard control variable for the analysis of social and economic outcomes. Although often omitted from the analysis of trust outcomes – because employment adds little explanatory power to other socio-economic control variables (e.g. Algan and Cahuc, 2013; Soroka, Helliwell and Johnston, 2003; Helliwell and Wang, 2010) – employment status is nonetheless important in order to allow assessing the independent effect of trust on other outcomes that are also affected by employment (e.g. income). The measurement of employment status is covered by existing (ILO) guidelines related to labour-market statistics, which provide the relevant standards for questions in surveys related to trust.⁴
- **Educational attainment:** Educational attainment is a major driver of trust at the individual level (Helliwell and Wang, 2010; Algan and Cahuc, 2013), and it is an essential control variable to include when trust data are collected. Existing standards covering the collection of data on educational attainment provide a clear basis for measurement in this area.
- **Health status:** While there is relatively little research on the effect of the respondent's health conditions on trust, information on health status is of interest from the perspective of investigating the impact of trust on health (e.g. Ginn and Arber, 2004; Stafford et al., 2005). While much of this analysis has been conducted looking across countries, including health status measures in surveys containing trust data would allow analysing the link between health and trust at the individual level. Although it is difficult to measure health status accurately in a household survey, there are a number of widely used survey instruments available, ranging from the health status descriptions included in the World Health Organisation's survey (WHO, 2012) through to more specialised question modules such as the GHQ-22 for mental health (Goldberg et al., 1978). More recently, a joint activity between the UNECE, WHO and Eurostat (the Budapest Initiative) has led to a *Survey Module for Measuring Health State* (UNECE, 2013), which provides a standard set of survey questions for measuring health status.
- **Social contact and networks:** Social contact and the social networks that exist between people have an obvious connection to trust. The existence of this link is well supported by the literature, which identifies many links between social behaviour and levels of trust at both the individual and cross-country level (Helliwell and Wang, 2010). Although there are currently no international standards on the collection of measures of social contact, measures relating to how much time people spend in social interaction, the frequency of social interaction, the number of people that respondents interact with and the nature of their relationships are all of high interest for analysis of the drivers of trust.
- **Civic engagement and governance:** Following Putnam (1993) and Fukuyama (1995), the links between trust, civic engagement and governance are of high policy interest. However, although institutional trust is often regarded as one of the key measures of civic engagement and governance in its own right, the relationship between trust and other measures of civic engagement and governance remains unclear. Levels of

volunteering, including the time spent volunteering and the form of volunteering, are all relevant, as is participation in other forms of civic activity such as voting. Beyond this, information on the perceived quality of governance and on satisfaction with the basic services provided by public institutions is of particular relevance when collected alongside measures of institutional trust. Including information on the local government institutions that the respondent is associated with is also of high importance, in that it allows variation in local government performance to be used to examine the relationship between the quality of governance and trust.

- **Personal security and victimisation:** Experiences of victimisation have an intuitive link to levels of interpersonal trust, and trust in the judicial system is correlated with levels of crime (see Chapter 2) at the country level. At the individual level, the relationship is less clear, partly due to lack of data. Measures of both experienced victimisation and perceived safety should be collected, as is already done in victimisation surveys, given that the two approaches to measuring personal security often produce different results.
- **Subjective well-being:** Subjective well-being and interpersonal trust are strongly correlated, both at the individual level (Helliwell and Wang, 2010) and across countries (Boarini et al., 2013). Both Boarini et al. (2013) and Helliwell et al. (2014) find evidence of a strong relationship between aspects of institutional trust and measures of subjective well-being. Incorporating measures of subjective well-being into surveys containing trust measures allows for analysis of the impact of trust on subjective well-being and is important in attempts to measure well-being more broadly.⁵
- **Religion** is commonly used as a control variable in studies looking at trust (e.g. Soroka et al., 2003; Algan and Cahuc, 2013; Nannestad, 2008), both because of the potential impact of religious differences on levels of generalised trust in society and because of the potential role of religious participation in establishing social cohesion within groups.

4.3. Survey and sample design

One important distinction between measures of trust and many of the measures typically included in official statistics is that trust measures will almost invariably need to be collected through sample surveys. In contrast to many economic or population statistics, no administrative database could produce information of this sort without, in effect, incorporating survey questions in the administrative process.⁶ Thus, survey and sample design are fundamental to producing valid and reliable measures of trust.

It is not the role of this chapter to provide detailed guidelines on sample frames and sample design. These are specialist areas in their own right, and excellent guides exist for data producers who are seeking advice on these technical aspects of data collection (United Nations Statistical Division, 1986). However, in survey design, as in other aspects of design, form should follow function. When trust is the specific goal of measurement, this has implications for survey design. This section discusses some of the most significant considerations for the measurement of trust with respect to the target population, when and how frequently data should be collected, what collection mode should be used, and what the most appropriate survey vehicle is.

Target population

The target population of a survey describes the complete set of units to be studied. A sample survey will generally attempt to achieve a representative sample of the target

population. However, in some circumstances the target population may be focused on one or more specific sub-groups of the total population from which the sample is drawn. It may also specify sub-populations that the survey should include in a broader sample representative of the total population. For example, the total population might be *all persons aged 15 and over living in private dwellings in a specified area*. However, the target population might also specify men and women as sub-populations of interest, requiring the sampling frame to accommodate distinct analysis of these two groups. More generally, sub-groups are often defined by characteristics such as age, gender, ethnicity, employment status or migrant status.

Some surveys using households as the measurement unit rely on a single respondent (such as the head of household) to provide responses for the household as a whole. This approach cannot be used for measures of trust, since the cognitive process of evaluating and responding to questions on whether a person or institution is trusted is very different to that of providing an estimate of another householder's educational attainment or labour-market status. Responses to questions on trust are intrinsically personal, and consequently the unit of measure must be the individual. This implies that the sampling frame must produce a representative sample of individuals as if all individuals are personally interviewed. While this will typically not be an issue for surveys where the individual is the primary unit of analysis, some household surveys may require an additional set of individual weights to derive individual estimates. Surveys where the response is on the basis of *any responsible adult*, or which allow *proxy respondents* when the selected person is not present at the time of the interview, will be problematic in this regard.

The target age group for measures of trust will also vary with respect to the goals of the research programme. For example, in the context of research on retirement income policies, it may be appropriate to limit the target population to persons aged 65 or older. In general, however, measures of trust would usually be collected for all the adult population (aged 15 and older). There is little research, and currently relatively little policy demand, for data on trust by children. For this reason, issues relating to children's levels of trust are not covered here.

People not living in private households

One population group that may be of high policy interest, but which is not typically covered in household surveys, is people not living in private households. This group includes people living in institutions, including prisons, hospitals or residential care facilities, as well as people with no fixed residence, such as the homeless. These groups raise two issues with respect to the measurement of trust. The first problem is common to all attempts to collect statistical information on such groups – i.e. that such people tend to be excluded from standard sample frames used for household surveys. This means that, at a minimum, specific data collection efforts will be required based on a sample frame designed to cover the relevant institutions. In some cases, such as the homeless, it may be difficult to develop any statistically representative sampling approach at all.

A more significant challenge facing the measurement of trust is that many of the people in the relevant groups may not be able to respond. This is particularly the case for people institutionalised for health-related reasons that affect mental functioning (including people with some mental illnesses or with physical illnesses limiting the ability to communicate, and the very old). In these cases, it is not possible to collect information on trust from the respondent. Proxy responses, which might be appropriate for some types of data (income, marital status, age), are not valid in the case of measuring trust.

Frequency and duration of enumeration

The frequency with which data are collected, the enumeration period, typically involves a trade-off between survey goals and available resources. All other things being equal, more frequent collection of data will improve the timeliness of estimates available to analysts and policy makers, and will make it easier to discern trends in the data over time. More frequent enumeration, however, is more costly, both in terms of the resources involved in conducting the data collection and in terms of the burden placed upon respondents. It is therefore important that decisions about the frequency of data collection are made with a clear view to the relationship between the timeliness and frequency of the data produced and the goals of the data collection.

It is not possible to provide specific guidelines for how frequently measures of trust should be collected that cover every contingency, since the range of possible data uses is large and the frequency at which data are needed will vary depending on the intended use and on the type of measure in question. However, some general advice can be provided. Aggregate measures of trust generally change only slowly over time (Nannestad, 2008). This reflects the relatively slow movements in most of the drivers that affect trust and the fact that trust – particularly interpersonal trust – is associated with long-standing cultural values (Putnam, 1993; Uslaner, 2002, 2008).

Small changes in measures of trust might appear to suggest that such measures do not need to be collected frequently. However, small absolute changes also mean that standard errors tend to be large relative to observed changes. A number of observations are therefore needed to distinguish between a trend over time and noise in the data. Box 4.2 illustrates this point. For this reason, despite (or indeed, because of) the relatively slow rate of change in trust data, it is desirable that measures are collected on a regular and timely basis. In particular, for the purposes of monitoring well-being and for measuring trends in levels of social capital, an annual time series should be regarded as the essential minimum in terms of frequency of enumeration. (It should also be noted that frequent or rolling sample-surveys increase the possibilities for identifying the causal impacts of other factors, because it will be possible to analyse how changes in trust follow changes in other factors.)

Box 4.2. Identifying appropriate trust measurement frequency

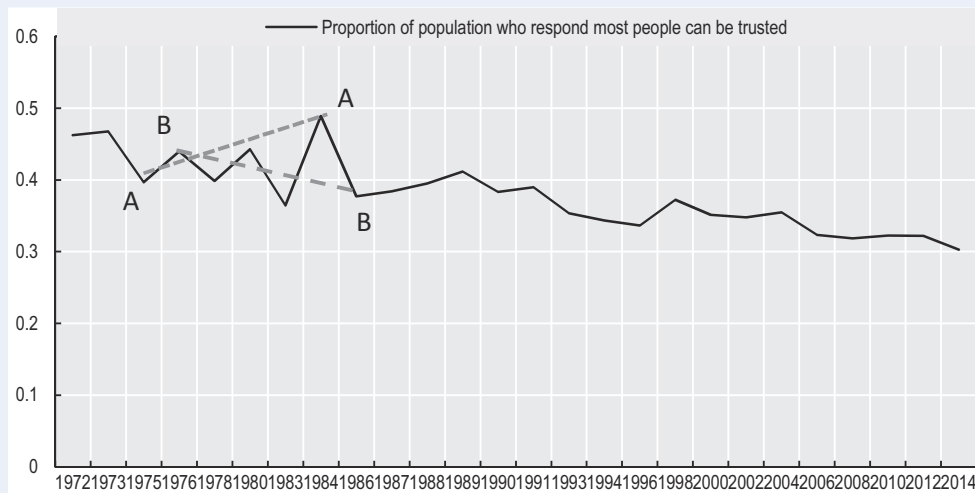
If measures of trust change only slowly over time (Nannestad, 2008), then it might seem logical to conclude that data need only be collected infrequently. After all, why go to the trouble and expense of collecting many observations that are close together and show little change? This, however, ignores the impact of measurement error associated with collecting data from sample surveys. Figure 4.2 shows changes over time in levels of generalised trust in the United States from the American General Social Survey (GSS). Over the period covered by the figure, data collection took place at least every two years, and for many periods data were collected annually. The initial sample size was approximately 1 000, rising to about 2 000 during the 1980s and to over 4 000 from 1994.

Across the whole time period covered by the GSS, generalised trust has trended downwards, from about 45% of the sample to just over 30%. There is little evidence of any periods during this time frame when the trend has been significantly different. However, there are periods – particularly during the 1970s and early 1980s – when the GSS sample size was smaller, implying that the volatility of the series around the trend was relatively high.


Box 4.2. Identifying appropriate trust measurement frequency (cont.)

Over this period, despite the fact that the trend in levels of trust is for a steady but relatively gentle decline, the picture of trust that emerges is very sensitive to the available data.

Figure 4.2. Generalised trust in the United States, 1972-2014



Source: NORC (2014), General Social Survey (database), <https://gssdataexplorer.norc.org/>.

StatLink  <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933583842>

If only two data points were available – 1975 and 1984 – then the GSS would have shown a substantial increase in trust over time (line A_A). On the other hand, if the two data points used for comparison were 1975 and 1986, then the GSS would have shown a rapid decrease in trust (line B_B). It is only because the GSS data were collected on an annual or biennial basis that it is possible to observe that the actual development over the course of the 1970s is neither a smooth increase nor a sharp fall, but instead a gradual decline associated with higher volatility in the measure. The significance of these measurement issues is smaller in the second half of the period covered by the GSS, where the data are not as volatile. This reflects the fact that, with larger sample sizes, the frequency of measurement is less important to identifying trends over time. However, even allowing for this, there is still a strong case for using additional resources to collect data more frequently rather than focusing on infrequent larger samples: frequent surveys increase the timeliness of data, reducing the gap between a policy issue being identified and the availability of new data.

Duration of enumeration

The duration of the enumeration period is likely to be important for measures of trust. Unlike measures of educational attainment or marital status, for which it does not usually matter at what point during the year the data are collected, the precise timing of the collection period might have an impact on measured trust. Although there is little hard evidence on the magnitude of these timing effects, comparisons with other self-reported measures (e.g. Deaton, 2011) suggest that this can be substantial.

The fact of being sensitive to the point in time at which the data are collected is not unique to measures of trust. Many core labour-market statistics, for example, have a pronounced seasonality, and published statistics usually adjust for this. However, in order to

produce the information required for seasonal adjustments, data need to be acquired over the course of a whole year. Ideally, enumeration of trust data would take place over a full year, and would include all days of the week, including holidays. This would ensure that measures of trust provide an accurate picture across the whole year. Where a year-long enumeration period is not possible, enumeration should, as far as is possible, be spread proportionately over all the days of the week.

Holidays (and to some degree, periods of annual leave) are problematic in that they tend to be distributed unevenly over the course of the year, and they affect how people feel. This has been found to have an impact on how respondents report some other subjective measures such as life evaluation (Deaton, 2011); similar effects might also affect measures of trust. Thus, if enumeration cannot be spread over a whole year, there is a risk that an incidence of holidays during the enumeration period that is greater or lesser than normal might bias the survey results. For this reason, in surveys collected with relatively short enumeration periods it is essential to check the impact of including data collected during any holidays. While it may not be necessary to omit data collected during holidays from output if the impact is negligible or weak, the available evidence on the magnitude of some holidays suggests that it is important to test for potential bias from this source. What constitutes a holiday will also need to be considered with respect to the context in which the survey is conducted.⁷

Sample size

Large samples are highly desirable in any survey, as they reduce the standard error of estimates and allow both a more precise estimate of trust as well as a greater degree of freedom with respect to producing cross-tabulations and an analysis of results for population sub-groups. With measures of trust, sample size is particularly important because of the relatively small changes in trust associated with many areas of analytical interest. While a very significant shock such as the global financial crisis of 2008 can cause large shifts in some trust measures, this is not always the case, and many changes are quite small. For example, although the Eurobarometer measure of the share of the population in Greece, Ireland and Spain expressing trust in government fell, on average, by 20% between 2008 and 2013, the proportion of the population in the United Kingdom expressing trust in government fell by only 3.5% during the same period.

Although it is impossible to give precise guidelines for what is an appropriate sample size, some general criteria can be noted. Most of the factors that should be taken into account in the planning of any survey also apply when collecting information on trust. Available resources, respondent burden, sample design (e.g. a stratified sample will have a different sample size compared to a random sample with the same objectives, all other things being equal), the anticipated response rate and the required output will all influence the desirable sample size. The need for sub-national estimates, in particular, will play an important role in determining the minimum required sample. However, it is also worth noting that, again, all other things being equal, measuring trust is likely to require a somewhat smaller sample than measuring concepts that affect only a small part of the population, such as unemployment or victimisation.

Survey mode

Surveys can be carried out in a number of different modes. Because the mode of collection influences survey costs and respondent burden, as well as inducing mode effects in responses, the choice of survey mode is an important decision when collecting data. The

two modes most commonly used to collect information on self-reported measures are Computer-Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI), conducted by an interviewer over the telephone, and Computer-Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI), where the interviewer is personally present when recording the data. Computer-Assisted Self-Interview (CASI) surveys can occur in the presence of an interviewer; when the interviewer is on hand but the respondent enters their own data into a computer questionnaire; or without an interviewer present, as in the case of an internet survey. For some purposes, traditional self-completed surveys are still likely to be relevant.

As outlined in Chapter 3, there is good evidence that the collection mode has a significant impact on responses to trust questions. In general, CAPI has the advantage that the interviewer can build rapport with the respondent. CASI with the interviewer present offers similar advantages. Conversely, CATI interviews do not allow for the same degree of interviewer interaction with the respondent, and the rapport between interviewer and respondent may be lower. CASI has the additional advantage that it may address issues associated with social desirability bias in questions on interpersonal trust and, especially, institutional trust.

As with other features of survey design, the choice of the survey mode is influenced by a variety of factors, including resource constraints. However, the balance of evidence suggests that, where resources permit, CASI with the interviewer present (i.e. a CASI/CAPI mix) is likely to produce the highest data quality. This is due in part to the rapport that interviewers can build in face-to-face situations. However, CAPI also provides the opportunity to use show cards, which CATI lacks. Show cards that include verbal labels for the scale end-points are particularly valuable when collecting information on trust, where the meaning of the scale end-points changes between questions, as this can impose a significant cognitive burden on respondents (ONS, 2012).

In terms of data quality, CASI/CAPI with show cards should be considered best practice for collecting trust data. The presence of an interviewer allows for a strong rapport to be built with the respondent, while show cards help with data quality. The confidentiality provided by CASI, through the self-administration of the survey, should help address respondent reluctance to provide accurate answers to sensitive questions, especially if additional confidentiality assurances are provided (see Chapter 3). Where other modes are used, it is important that data producers collect information to enable estimating the impact of mode effects. National statistical agencies, in particular, should consider experimentally testing the impact of the survey mode on responses to the core measures of trust and publishing the results along with those from CATI or CASI surveys.⁸

Survey vehicles

As discussed earlier in this chapter, analytical interest in measures of trust is commonly focused on the interaction between trust and other social and economic outcomes. Also, in most cases, trust measures are relatively simple and easy to collect. Even a relatively comprehensive approach to measuring trust is likely to be on the scale of a module that could be added to existing surveys rather than requiring a whole survey questionnaire in itself. A key question to consider then is which survey vehicles are most appropriate to the task of measuring trust.

Where trust, governance or social capital is the key focus of interest, it may be appropriate to build a special topic module around this theme. This is especially the case

where the use of trust data focuses on measuring social capital or on evaluating governance. Beyond this, however, trust measures are relevant to a number of different types of survey.

It is currently impossible to provide definitive guidance on this issue, because the range of household surveys conducted – even among national statistical agencies – varies significantly from country to country. Box 4.3 outlines what a system of statistics on well-being might look like and the potential role of trust measures within this framework. The system of well-being statistics proposed by Box 4.3 builds on the recommendations of the Commission on the Measurement of Economic Performance and Social Progress (Sen, Stiglitz and Fitoussi, 2009) to provide a data infrastructure for measuring the different elements of well-being and their main drivers. However, it is possible to identify the roles that different survey vehicles can play in collecting trust data within existing constraints.

General social surveys

Not all national statistical agencies run general social surveys and, among those that do, the content and focus vary considerably. Some agencies, such as the Australian Bureau of Statistics, focus their general social survey primarily on measures of social capital and social inclusion, while others rotate modules on different topics between waves (Statistics Canada) or are explicitly multidimensional (Statistics New Zealand). All three approaches, however, make such surveys ideal for the inclusion of measures of trust. All three of the general social surveys cited above (Australia, Canada and New Zealand) currently include measures of interpersonal and institutional trust. Surveys with rotating content, such as the Canadian General Social Survey, offer the opportunity for a trust module that can collect information in some depth if this is determined to be a priority. Surveys with a wider focus, such as the New Zealand General Social Survey, are particularly valuable in that they allow for the analysis of the joint distribution of trust and of a wide variety of other topics, including material conditions and other aspects of quality of life (joint distribution refer to measures that are “joined up” at the individual unit-record level and hence allow to see how multiple outcomes of interest are spread across individuals). Regardless of whether a specific trust module is conducted as part of a general social survey, it would be very desirable that at least the core module of trust measures be collected in all general social surveys.

Victimisation surveys

Victimisation surveys collect information on the level and distribution of criminal victimisation in a society. They are intended to answer questions such as how much crime takes place, what are its characteristics, whether the level of crime is changing over time, who are the victims or the people at greater risk of becoming one, and how do perceptions of safety relate to the actual risk of victimisation (UNECE, 2010). The interaction between victimisation, perceptions of safety and trust is of high interest, both from the perspective of understanding how victimisation affects trust in others and in order to better understand the relationship between trust in the justice system (police, courts, etc.) and victimisation. The inclusion of a module of trust questions in victimisation surveys should be a high priority.

Special topic surveys

Many national statistical agencies run one-off or periodic surveys on special topics that are intended to explore an issue of interest in greater detail than would be possible

through a question module in a regular survey. Because the content of such a survey can be tailored to the topic in question, such surveys are excellent vehicles for exploring aspects of trust in more depth. In particular, special topic surveys may be useful for examining institutional trust and its drivers in more detail than is possible through a survey with broader coverage, or for examining the relationship between different measures of trust (e.g. *Trustlab*, see Chapter 2). However, because of the “one-off” nature of such surveys (or the long periodicity associated with such surveys when they are repeated), special topic surveys are less appropriate for monitoring trust over time.

Panel surveys

Panel surveys follow the same people over time, re-interviewing them in each wave of the survey. Because of this, panel surveys are able to examine questions of causality in a way that is not possible with cross-sectional surveys. Both the German Socio-Economic Panel (GSOEP) and Britain’s Understanding Society (formerly the Household Panel Survey) have included questions on trust for some time. The GSOEP has been the basis for some important experiments on the validity of trust measures (Naef and Schupp, 2009).

Other surveys

In addition to the surveys listed above, there are a range of other surveys where trust measures may be of some relevance to specific research questions, but for which it is harder to make a case for including trust in the core questionnaire. Health surveys are a core part of most national statistical systems, collecting information on health outcomes, their determinants and health behaviours. Although not a primary source for aggregate data on interpersonal or on institutional trust more generally, there is a clear case for collecting information on trust in the health-care system within these surveys. Beyond this, information on interpersonal trust and on some of the wider aspects of institutional trust may be of relevance to a health survey as potential determinants of health outcomes or as drivers of health behaviours.

A similar rationale may be made for including measures of trust in surveys that relate to education. Questions on trust have been included in both the international PISA and PIAAC surveys, reflecting the potentially important role that education has in shaping social attitudes such as trust (Borgonovi and Burns, 2015) and the fact that aspects of institutional trust may be a significant driver of educational outcomes.

Trust questions also have potential relevance in time-use surveys. These surveys typically involve respondents filling out a diary, collecting detailed information on the respondent’s allocation of time to different activities and with whom those activities were undertaken. Because of the wealth of detailed information that they contain on the nature and extent of interpersonal contact, time-use surveys are ideal instruments for investigating the relationship between interpersonal trust and different forms of social contact, if the relevant trust questions are included. Currently most time-use surveys do not include questions on trust.

Wealth and savings surveys represent another vehicle where trust questions are potentially important. In particular, trust in financial institutions has obvious relevance for understanding savings behaviour. Beliefs about the trustworthiness of financial institutions are a major determinant of savings. Interpersonal trust is also of potential relevance as a determinant of savings behaviour.

4.4. Questionnaire design

Designing a suitable questionnaire is an iterative process involving questionnaire designers, those responsible for determining survey content, and data users. A questionnaire designer must balance the cognitive burden on the respondent, a limited time budget for the survey, and the need to have a questionnaire that is clear and comprehensible and that flows well, with different (and often competing) data needs. It is neither possible nor desirable for this chapter to provide a single questionnaire on trust that users should implement. Instead, the intent of this section is to provide a set of tools to support the development of surveys containing questions on trust, rather than to prescribe a single approach to its measurement.

Box 4.3. Integrating trust into a system of well-being statistics

A statistical framework brings together a conceptual framework relating to the concept of interest, the measurement instruments required to quantify it, and the statistical infrastructure needed to ensure that data are collected in a way consistent with statistical quality standards. The best-known statistical framework is the System of National Accounts (SNA), but population statistics and labour force statistics are equally supported by coherent statistical frameworks that underpin the production of high-quality, timely and internationally comparable data. Conversely, no commonly accepted statistical framework exists for household well-being statistics. While several national statistical offices have made steps in this direction, or signalled their intent to do so in the future (Bycroft, 2011; Dupré and Di Meglio, 2014), these efforts are still in their infancy.

From a measurement perspective, the primary characteristic of well-being statistics is their multidimensionality. Well-being statistics need to cover subjects as diverse as income, employment, health status, social contact, environmental quality, governance and subjective well-being. This breadth of scope places a significant burden on national statistical offices. Beyond this, however, are several additional challenges. Well-being statistics need to provide information on the distribution of outcomes, both in continuous terms and for specific population sub-groups. This implies a relatively large sample size. In addition, many areas of well-being, such as health status or social contact, do not reduce easily to a single measure: hence there is a need for dedicated in-depth measurement for some areas, using a range of different instruments. Finally, well-being measures need to be “joined up” at the individual unit-record level, so as to allow analysis of the joint distribution of outcomes (Sen, Stiglitz and Fitoussi, 1999) and of their drivers.

These issues raise conflicting priorities for well-being statistics. On the one hand, the need for joined-up statistics across multiple outcomes could be met by a single household survey covering all topics briefly. On the other hand, the need for in-depth measures on specific topics points towards drawing data from more detailed surveys focused on a single area, such as health status or the labour market. Both these priorities need to be balanced against the limited financial resources available to national statistical offices and the high demand for data on other topics.

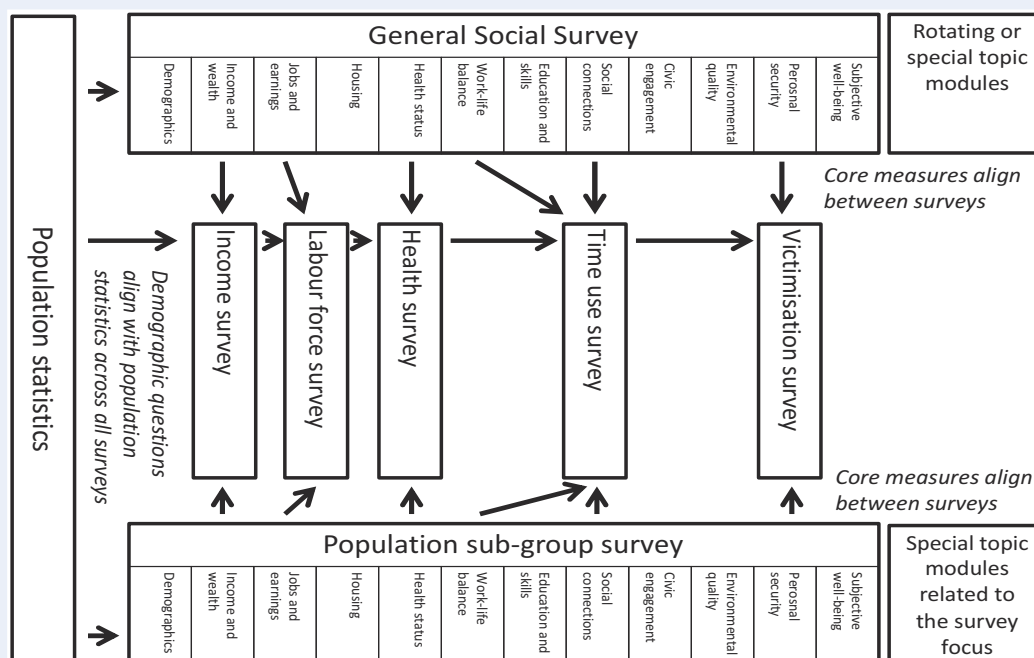
One way to reconcile these conflicting demands is to make the greatest possible use of existing data sources by integrating them to provide a coherent portfolio of well-being statistics that can be joined up via a set of core indicators for each outcome domain. Standardisation of the core social variables would allow for cross-cutting datasets to be linked to more detailed data sources that provide more specialised information on a particular topic. Such a system is outlined in Figure 4.3.

In Figure 4.3, a General Social Survey collects information on each domain of well-being along with core demographic information and some analytical variables. To lower respondent burden and cost, a GSS cannot collect in-depth information on each well-being domain, so data collection focuses on two or three core indicators for each domain. Beyond collecting information on a limited set of core indicators for each domain, one central role of a GSS is to allow cross-classifying respondents based on alternative outcomes, so as to allow links to surveys on specific subject matters that allow more in-depth analysis. These subject matter surveys

Box 4.3. Integrating trust into a system of well-being statistics (cont.)

mostly already exist in national statistical systems (e.g. labour force surveys, household income surveys, health interview surveys, time-use surveys, victimisation surveys) and can be linked to a GSS by a set of common core variables collected in both surveys.

Figure 4.3. **A system of well-being statistics: Conceptual overview**



Source: Fleischer, L., C. Smith and C. Viac (2016), "A Review of General Social Surveys", OECD Statistics Working Papers, No. 2016/09, OECD Publishing, Paris, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/bb54d16f-en>.

StatLink  <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933583861>

Such an approach also allows for cross-cutting surveys focused on specific population groups of interest such as older people or specific ethnic groups. Specific surveys focused on sub-populations may be needed either because the policy issues relevant to the group require additional information that is not relevant to society more widely, or because the sub-population in question is sufficiently small that it is not well-reflected in a population survey. Using a common set of core indicators allows both comparing the position of the population sub-group of interest to that of the population as a whole and making linkages with more detailed subject matter surveys.

In the context of a system of social statistics, trust plays a key role among the core social indicators. In particular, institutional trust measures represent one of the strongest candidates for a core measure of civic engagement that can be collected in a general social survey. Similarly, generalised trust is the strongest candidate for a core measure of social capital and is highly relevant to measuring social connections more widely. The core measures included in the question module recommended by these Guidelines (Annex 2) include the key questions that would ideally form the basis for trust-related core indicators in a system of well-being statistics.

Some general guidance on issues affecting the inclusion of measures of trust in a survey is provided below. In particular, the issues of question placement and translation are discussed in detail. This is accompanied by a set of prototype question modules that

questionnaire designers should adapt to the specific conditions in which they are working. This section also describes the rationale behind the question modules and provides an explanation of the template used to describe them. The question modules are attached to these Guidelines as Annex 2 (A to E).

Question placement

Question order and the context in which a question is asked can have a significant impact on responses to subjective questions such as those on trust (see Chapter 3). Although measures of trust are not uniquely susceptible to such effects – question order and context will impact upon all survey responses to some extent – the effect is likely to be relatively large in the case of trust.

In general, question order effects occur not because the question appears early or late in the questionnaire *per se*, but because of the contextual impact of the immediately preceding questions. Thus, the key issue is to identify the most effective way to isolate questions on trust from the contextual impact of preceding questions. The most direct way of managing contextual effects of this sort is to put trust questions as early in the survey as possible. Ideally, such questions should come immediately after the screening questions and household demographics that establish respondent eligibility to participate in the survey. This practice almost eliminates the impact of contextual effects and ensures that those that cannot be eliminated in this way are consistent from survey to survey.

However, there are two reasons why this cannot be a general response to the issue of dealing with contextual effects. First, there will be instances when questions on trust are added to well-established surveys. In these conditions, changing the flow of the questionnaire would impose significant costs in terms of both resources and data quality. Introducing questions on trust early in such a survey might ensure that contextual effects do not impact the trust questions, but this would come at the expense of creating significant contextual effects for the following questions. Second, in cases where there are several types of subjective question in the survey (such as questions on trust and on subjective well-being), they obviously cannot all be first.

With these factors in mind, four key recommendations can be provided with regard to the placement of trust questions in surveys:

- *Place important questions on trust in the core section of the survey.* Although it is not possible to place trust questions at the start of every survey,⁹ the effect of bias due to context effects on analysis can still be limited if trust questions are included in a fixed portion of the survey questionnaire. While this does not eliminate bias, it will not affect analysis of differences in levels across population groups or over time.
- *Avoid placing the trust questions immediately after questions that are likely to prime respondents with regard to trust or that respondents might use as a heuristic for determining their response to the trust question.* This would include questions on social contact, victimisation or political beliefs or any questions suggesting risk or insecurity. The best questions to precede subjective questions are relatively neutral factual demographic questions.
- *Make use of transition questions to refocus respondent attention.* One technique that has been used with respect to subjective well-being, and which may also be useful with questions on trust, is to use a transition question designed to focus the respondent's attention away from issues that might unduly influence their response. Deaton (2011), in an analysis of subjective well-being data, reports that the introduction of such a question in the Gallup

Healthways Well-being survey in 2009 eliminated over 80% of the impact of a preceding question on politics on the subsequent life evaluation measure.¹⁰ A similar approach might also be applied with respect to trust questions. However, it is important to consider the risk that transition questions might introduce their own context effects. For example, drawing attention to a respondent's personal life may lead them to focus on personal relationships or family rather than on strangers when answering subsequent questions about interpersonal trust. Development of effective transition questions should be a priority for future work.

- *Use of introductory text to distinguish between question topics.* Well-worded text that precedes each question or topic can serve as a buffer between measures of trust and sensitive questions. However, there is little hard evidence on the degree of effectiveness or optimal phrasing of such introductory text. A standard introductory text has been included in each of the prototype question modules included as Annex 2 to this chapter. This text is based on what is believed to be best practice. Consistent use of it should help reduce context effects (and will eliminate bias caused by inconsistent introductory text). Further cognitive testing or experimental analysis of the impact of different types of introductory text would, however, be of high value.

Question order within and between trust questions

Questions on trust can potentially be affected just as easily by previous trust questions as by questions on other topics. This has implications for the structure of question modules on trust (particularly where more than one aspect of trust is addressed) as well as for the presentation of questions within modules and for whether it is advisable to include several questions that address very similar topics (see Chapter 3).

In terms of ordering question modules themselves, overall the evidence suggests that moving from the general to the specific is the best approach. This has different implications for interpersonal and institutional trust. For interpersonal trust, it suggests that a question on generalised trust should be placed ahead of more specific questions relating to who is trusted. It also suggests that questions on interpersonal trust should be asked ahead of questions on institutional trust, which tend to be more specific and are also likely to have a significant priming effect, because they direct the respondent's attention to political issues that are known to have a powerful priming effect in other contexts (Deaton, 2011).

For institutional trust, the issue of question order is less clear-cut, in that there is no overarching concept of institutional trust that could be collected before the more detailed questions relating to trust in specific institutions. However, it is possible that priming effects may follow from the questions on trust in different institutions. This has two main implications. First, institutional trust questions should proceed from the easier to the more difficult for respondents to answer; for example, questions on trust in parliament or in the judicial system should precede questions on institutions such as the United Nations or the European Commission. Second, where comparisons between levels of trust in different institutions are important, the order in which questions are presented should be randomised for each respondent; when this is not possible for the whole sample, pilot testing should involve randomisation of question order so that the size of any bias in measured trust in different institutions is known.

Finally, asking two questions about a very similar construct can be confusing for respondents, leading them to provide different answers because they think that different answers are required of them. This means that including several very similar questions

about interpersonal trust, for example, could elicit respondents to answer these questions differently than when each question is presented in isolation. This implies that it is important to have consistency both in the number of measures used to assess a given construct and in the order in which those measures are asked in the survey.

Translation

The exact question wording used when collecting information on trust can matter a lot for responses. As discussed in Chapter 3, a standardised approach to question wording is important for comparisons over time or between groups. This is relatively straightforward where all surveys are in the same language. However, international comparisons or studies in multilingual countries raise the issue of translation. This is a non-trivial matter in the case of trust. For example, a number of English language surveys distinguish between *trust* in a person and *confidence* in an institution (e.g. Gallup World Poll, World Values Survey). However, this distinction does not exist in other languages. In French, for example, both *trust* and *confidence* would be translated as *confiance*, suggesting that the implicit conceptual distinction in the GWP survey questionnaires does not translate well in other languages.

Potential issues arising from translation cannot be eliminated entirely, but they can be managed through an effective translation process. An example of good practice in the translation of survey questionnaires is provided by the *Guidelines for the Development and Criteria for the Adoption of Health Survey Instruments* (Eurostat, 2005). Although focused on health survey instruments, the framework for translation presented in that report has broader applicability, and is highly relevant to the measurement of trust. The Eurostat health survey guidelines identify four main steps in the translation procedure:

- *initial or forward translation* of the questionnaire from the source document to the target language
- *independent review* of the translated survey instrument
- *adjudication* of the translated survey instrument by a committee to produce a final version of the translated survey instrument
- *back translation* of the final version of the translated survey instrument into the source language.

Most of the best-practice recommendations identified by Eurostat for health surveys also apply with respect to the measurement of trust. It is desirable that the initial translation be carried out by at least two independent translators who have the destination language as their mother tongue and who are fluent in the source language. Translators should be informed about the goal of the study and be familiar with the background, origin and technical details of the source questionnaire as well as with the nature of the target population. The reviewer at stage 2 should be independent from the translators but will ideally have a very similar set of skills. Both the reviewer and the translators should be on the adjudication panel, along with an adjudicator whose main area of expertise is the study content and objective. As with any survey design, cognitive interviewing and field testing should be undertaken, with the results reviewed before the full survey goes into the field.

Back translation is somewhat controversial in the literature on survey translation, with some experts recommending it and others not (Eurostat, 2005). The effect of back translation is generally to shift the focus onto literal translation issues rather than the conceptual equivalent of the original instrument. In the case of the measurement of trust, back translation is strongly advised, due to the sensitivity to question wording of trust measures (see Chapter 3).

Choice of questions

The choice of which questions to use is of critical importance for measuring trust. Different questions capture different types of trust and, as discussed in Chapter 3, the precise question wording can have a non-trivial impact on results. In selecting questions to incorporate into existing survey vehicles, statistical agencies face trade-offs between the time taken to ask any new questions, the potential impact of new questions on responses to existing questions, and the added information gained from the new questions. These trade-offs will come under severe scrutiny when the survey in question refers to an important and well-established concept (e.g. household income or unemployment).

When selecting trust questions themselves, there is also a trade-off to manage between using existing questions from the literature that will enable reasonable comparability with previous work, and modifying questions or response formats already used in existing surveys in light of what has been learned about good practice – including the evidence described in Chapter 3. The approach adopted in this chapter is to recommend tried-and-tested questions from the existing research first and foremost. Where a variety of approaches have been used in the past, the rationale for selecting between these is explained. Finally, where there is a case for making small alterations to the question wording based on the evidence in Chapter 3, modifications are proposed.

For statistical agencies already using trust measures in their surveys, a crucial question will be whether the potential benefit of using improved measures, and/or more internationally comparable ones, outweighs the cost of disrupting an established time series. This is a choice for individual statistical agencies to make, and it will depend on a number of factors including what the current and future intended use of the dataset is, how drastic the change may be, and how long the time series has been established for. It is recommended that any changes to existing questions are phased-in using parallel samples, so that the impact of the change can be fully documented and examined. This will enable insights into the systematic impact of changes in methodology and provide agencies with a potential method for adjusting previous datasets (e.g. Deaton, 2011).

In recognition of the different users' needs and resources available to statistics producers, this chapter does not present a single approach to gathering information on trust. Instead, five question modules are attached to the Guidelines as Annex 2 (A to E). Each question module focuses on a distinct approach to measuring trust. Question Module A, the "core module", contains the core measures for which international comparability is the highest priority. These are the measures for which the evidence for their validity and relevance is greatest, the results are best understood, and the policy uses are the most developed. Of the five question modules included in Annex 2, Module A is unique in that national statistical agencies are encouraged to implement it in its entirety. When this is not possible, the single primary measure outlined in the module should be used at a minimum. Modules B to E are focused on different approaches to measuring trust. These modules are not intended to be used in their entirety or unaltered, but provide a resource for national statistical agencies that are developing their own questionnaires and would like to know what has already been tested in household surveys.

The five modules are listed in the following; those which it is highly recommended that national statistical offices implement as they are highlighted as *recommended*, in order to distinguish them from the modules intended as a *resource* for data producers of all types who are developing more detailed questionnaires.

Recommended

● A. Core Measures

Resource

- B. Evaluation
- C. Expectations
- D. Experiences
- E. Experiments

A. Core Measures

The core measures module contains those questions for which there is the strongest evidence of validity and for which the policy relevance is the strongest, and which therefore are most apt to achieve some degree of international harmonisation. Within the core measures, a distinction is made between the **primary measure**, which is the single question that is intended to form the baseline for international comparisons and which should be regarded as the highest priority for inclusion in any attempt to measure trust, and the **supplementary questions**. Unlike all of the other question modules included in these Guidelines, the core module is intended to be used without significant amendment. Beyond this, it is also recommended that national statistical offices try to implement the core module (or at least the primary measure) in at least one regular household survey. If a general social survey is conducted on a regular basis by a national statistical office, then this forms the ideal vehicle for the inclusion of the core measures. However, the core measures are also intended to be used to connect different surveys. For example, in the situation where a country has both a general social survey module that includes a wide range of trust measures and a survey of migrants where trust is of interest but is not the main focus, both surveys should include the primary measure at a minimum. This would allow analysis of the migrant survey using the primary trust measure to be informed by the more detailed picture of trust available from the general social survey.

The core measures of trust proposed in Annex 2 consist of five questions organised into three groups. The first question (A1) is the **primary measure** of generalised trust in others and is intended to be the baseline measure used for international comparisons. This is supplemented by an additional question on limited interpersonal trust (A2) and by three questions on institutional trust (A3, A4 and A5). Taken together the core module questions provide a minimal coverage of the main dimensions of trust.

The primary measure of trust is the essential minimum that should be included in all surveys containing trust measures. It is focused on generalised trust, both because the evidence for the validity of generalised trust measures is greater than is the case for measures of institutional trust (see Chapter 2) and because generalised trust has wide policy relevance in that it is the best available candidate for a measure of the stock of social capital driving a wide range of outcomes. Generalised trust hence is of crucial importance for the measurement of a society's well-being, and it is also closely related to levels of institutional trust (Rothstein and Uslaner, 2005).

In selecting the primary measure of trust, important issues needed to be addressed. First, should the measurement approach be based on evaluations or on expectations? On the evaluative side, the Rosenberg question on generalised trust¹¹ and its variants have been used widely and are well-understood. The evidence for the validity and reliability of the

Rosenberg question is strong, and the question has been applied in a wide range of different countries and cultural contexts (see Chapter 2). The main alternative to the Rosenberg question is the “lost wallet” question¹² used in the Gallup World Poll and some other contexts (Helliwell and Wang, 2010). This is an expectations question that focuses on how the respondent expects other people to behave. Although with a much narrower history of use, it has been used in a number of different countries and there is relatively good evidence on its validity. Its main interest compared to the Rosenberg question is that the anecdotal nature of the question may be intuitively appealing to respondents.

However, when compared to the Rosenberg question, the lost wallet question has three main drawbacks. First, although the evidence for its validity is relatively good, it is still much less thoroughly understood than the Rosenberg question and does not have nearly such a long history of use. Second, there is little evidence linking answers to the lost wallet question and laboratory experiments. In contrast, the Rosenberg question has been the subject of a large experimental literature, and the relationship between it and experimental behaviour is much better understood. Finally, the Rosenberg question is much more adaptable to different forms of scale labelling. In particular, it is relatively easy to adapt it to a numerical scale, while the lost wallet question loses much of its intuitive appeal if asked in conjunction with a numerical scale. For this reason, an evaluative question based on the Rosenberg question is recommended by these Guidelines as the primary measure of generalised trust.

The precise choice of scale and wording to be used is the second major issue associated with the choice of primary measure. In its original form, the Rosenberg question is dichotomous, and the scale labels relate to slightly different concepts. One response (*people can generally be trusted*) focuses unambiguously on trust, while the other response (*you can't be too careful*) combines notions of trust and caution (Naef and Schupp, 2009). Following Chapter 3, a 0 to 10 end-labelled scale is preferred to a dichotomous scale, mainly because the greater range of response options allows the question to capture more variation in responses between individuals. A scale from 0 to 10 is thought to represent the upper end of the viable range of response options in terms of the ability of respondents to make meaningful use of the full range of scale values. In addition, based on the evidence reviewed in Chapter 3 on the impact of including a reference to caution on response distributions, the primary question recommended here focuses exclusively on trust, dropping the implied reference to caution in the original Rosenberg question (*you can't be too careful*).

The primary measure recommended by these Guidelines is similar to questions on generalised trust included in a number of official surveys (e.g. the Australian General Social Survey, the Canadian General Social Survey's limited trust questions, the New Zealand General Social Survey) in terms of focusing exclusively on trust, rather than on caution. It is most similar to the question used in the New Zealand General Social Survey, which also uses a 0 to 10 end-labelled scale (see Annex 1 for questions from these surveys).

The second question in the core module is a measure of limited trust. This measure is included as a complement to the primary measure rather than an alternative. The measure is taken from the World Values Survey module on the extent of trust, but has been modified to adopt a similar format to the other questions in module A. While limited trust is of less policy interest than is the case for generalised trust or institutional trust, information on limited trust can provide a useful context for interpreting the analysis of other trust measures.

Three questions on institutional trust form the final part of the core measures. As discussed in Chapter 2, the evidence for the validity and reliability of measures of

institutional trust is less strong than is the case for measures of interpersonal trust. For this reason, these measures should be considered to have a more experimental nature than the other core measures, particularly when compared to the primary measure. However, these questions do represent best practice for collecting information on institutional trust, and variants of them have been used in official surveys in a number of countries. As with the questions on interpersonal trust, the questions use a 0 to 10 end-labelled numerical scale. The scale labels are conceptual absolutes (*not at all/completely*).

The core module questions cover three institutions. This is based on the outcome of factor analysis of a much wider range of institutions reported in Chapter 2 (Box 2.1), which indicates that responses to questions on institutional trust reflect three underlying dimensions: politics, law and order, and non-governmental institutions. In the case of the first two questions (A3 and A4), the specific institutions selected are those that have the highest factor loading for each of the first two dimensions (politics, law and order), reflecting the strongest individual correlation with the underlying dimension. These questions relate to the country's parliament and the police. The third question on institutional trust (A5) does not refer to the third dimension identified in the factor analysis (non-governmental institutions), but instead provides additional information on the country's public institutions that are not explicitly political in the appointment of their staff and mandate, focusing on the civil service. (The civil service loads, albeit less strongly, in the same factor as political institutions.)

B. Evaluation

Evaluative questions collect information on how a respondent judges a situation. They have a cognitive and reflective component and represent the respondent's view of how things are now. They do not seek information on past experiences, nor are they forward-looking in the manner of expectations questions (see sub-section C below). The questions included in the evaluation module of Annex 2 fall into three groups, each of which expands on the measures in the core module by providing more detail on an aspect of trust. They are not intended to be all used together, but rather form a resource for developing survey questions focused in more detail on specific aspects of trust. Questions B1 to B4 have been extensively validated in their current format, and should be used unaltered, while the other questions have a greater degree of flexibility.

The first block of four questions (B1 to B4) is taken from Naef and Schupp (2009) and provides a measure of generalised trust that is believed to be more precise and reliable than the traditional Rosenberg question. In particular, the Naef and Schupp module is designed to distinguish between trust and caution and also asks separately about *strangers* and *people* more generally. Questions B1 and B3 focus on trust, while questions B2 and B4 focus on caution. Similarly, questions B1 and B2 ask about people generally, while questions B3 and B4 ask about strangers specifically. Thus, the scope of the Naef and Schupp module is similar to the original Rosenberg question but allows for the different aspects of the original question to be examined separately. Because the Naef and Schupp module consists of four questions, the measure also has greater discriminatory power than the dichotomous scale originally proposed by Rosenberg. The Naef and Schupp scale has the additional advantage that it has been tested in the German Socio-Economic Panel survey and has been validated directly against experimental behaviour through the trust experiment (see Chapter 2). It is for this reason that the original four-point scale is left unaltered here rather than adopting a 0 to 10 scale as used elsewhere.

Questions B5 to B8 focus on who is trusted (i.e. limited trust). They are intended to complement the primary measure of trust by providing more detail on trust in different groups in society. This will be of particular interest where different social groups may exhibit systematic differences as to what types of people they have in mind when responding to the primary measure. The questions themselves are based loosely on a question module from the World Values Survey (Delhey, Newton and Welzel, 2011) but have been adapted to bring them in line with the methodological guidelines set out in Chapter 3. Although Delhey, Newton and Welzel propose an adjusted measure of generalised trust based on this set of questions, it is not clear that their composite measure outperforms the core measure proposed here in capturing the most significant outcomes thought to be associated with generalised trust (Algan and Cahuc, 2013). For this reason, the questions are mainly recommended for use in situations where the details of trust in specific groups are of high importance.

The final block of questions in the evaluative module (B9 to B18) focuses on institutional trust. This set of questions is an extension of the three questions included in the core module to cover a wider range of institutions; they are drawn from the World Values Survey and from wave 6 of the European Social Survey. Based on evidence from analysis of the OECD Trust Database and other similar analyses (Uslaner, 2002; Naef and Schupp, 2009; Schneider, 2016), it appears that respondents often fail to fully distinguish between similar institutions. As previously noted, much of the variation in responses to institutional trust questions derives from three underlying dimensions relating, respectively, to politics, law and order, and non-governmental institutions. Nonetheless, this set of questions is intended to provide a framework for investigating attitudes to specific institutions. The three questions on institutional trust from the core module (A3, A4 and A5) are repeated here as questions B9 to B18 and are designed to stand on their own. If they are implemented alongside the full core module, then questions B9, B13 and B16 can be omitted.

C. Expectations

The main alternative to obtaining people's evaluations with respect to trust is to ask them about their expectations of the behaviour of other people and institutions. This is the approach taken by the questions included in this module. Unlike evaluations, expectations questions are forward-looking and hypothetical. In one sense, this represents a weakness, as respondents may be less able to provide accurate answers about hypothetical situations than they are about their current beliefs and evaluations. However, this is partly offset by the fact that the anecdotal nature of expectations questions may make them more concrete and easier for respondents to answer.

Questions C1 and C2 relate to interpersonal trust. These are drawn from a series of questions used in the Gallup World Poll and have also been applied in other contexts, including the Canadian General Social Survey. Question C1 focuses on trust in neighbours (limited trust), while C2 refers to trust in strangers (generalised trust). Although there is no evidence that expectations questions perform better than evaluations, there is evidence that expectations questions of this sort have a reasonable level of validity and have broadly similar correlates (Helliwell and Wang, 2010). These questions have been included as a potential complement to the primary measure, to be considered only in circumstances where there may be value in using an additional methodological approach to measurement.

The bulk of the expectations questions (C3 to C10) relate to aspects of institutional trust. These questions are not direct substitutes for the questions contained in the core module or in the evaluation module, because they do not focus on specific institutions but instead on

the main factors that are believed to influence how respondents form their views on institutional trust. Specifically, the questions are intended to collect information on each of the five dimensions of the OECD Trust Framework developed in the context of the OECD Trust Strategy to assess ways of restoring trust in institutions (Box 4.3). The questions are organised into groups of three, with each group relating to behaviours associated with a specific set of drivers of institutional trust from the OECD Trust Framework: question C3 relates to responsiveness; C4 to reliability; C5 to openness; C6 and 7 to fairness; and C8 to C10 to integrity of public institutions.

Box 4.4. The OECD Trust Framework

The public management literature has acknowledged the importance of trust as a key source of the legitimacy of public institutions and its importance to lowering transactions costs in interactions between people, businesses and institutions (Fukuyama, 1995). However, the evidence about what drives trust in institutions is scattered. Some analyses have described trust in institutions as depending on the congruence between people's (and businesses') preferences (i.e. their interpretation of what is right and fair and what is not) and the perceived functioning of government (Bouckaert and Van de Walle, 2003). Other authors have drawn a distinction between “trust in competence”, i.e. whether the functioning of institutions matches people's expectations about the competencies of those steering them, and “trust in intentions”, which captures whether institutions act in a way that is perceived by people as ethical and fair (Nooteboom, 2007). These distinctions are furthered by Bouckaert (2012), who distinguishes between the “logic of consequences”, where trust is derived causally from outcomes, and the “logic of appropriateness”, where trust is based on the values of integrity and transparency.

Based on the distinction between the outcomes of an action and the intentions that guided it, the OECD Public Governance Committee endorsed a framework for assessing people's trust in public institutions. The framework deconstructs trust in institutions into two key components: *Competence* and *Values*. Within each component, relevant dimensions that are amenable to policy change are identified based on the common threads in the literature (McKnight, Choudhury and Kacmar, 2002) and on the OECD update of this evidence (OECD, 2017). The five dimensions identified are: *Responsiveness*, *Reliability*, *Integrity*, *Openness* and *Fairness*. Table 4.1 describes the framework and the aspects considered within each policy dimension.

Table 4.1. The OECD Trust Framework

Trust component	Government mandate	Concern affecting trust	Policy dimension
Competence: Ability of governments to deliver citizens the services they need at the quality level they expect	Provide public services	- Access to public services, regardless of social/economic condition - Quality and timeliness of public services - Respect in public service provision, including response to citizen's feedback	Responsiveness
	Anticipate change, protect citizens	- Anticipation and adequate assessment of evolving citizens' needs and challenges - Consistent and predictable behaviour - Effective management of social, economic and political uncertainty	Reliability
Values: The drivers and principles that inform and guide government action	Use power and public resources ethically	- High standards of behavior - Commitment against corruption - Accountability	Integrity
	Inform, consult and listen to citizens	- Ability to know and understand what government is up to - Engagement opportunities that lead to tangible results	Openness
	Improve socio-economic conditions for all	- Pursuit of socio-economic progress for society at large - Consistent treatment of citizens and businesses (vs. fear of capture)	Fairness

Source: OECD (2017), *Trust and Public Policy: How Better Governance Can Help Rebuild Public Trust*, OECD Publishing, Paris, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264268920-en>.

StatLink  <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933584222>

Box 4.4. The OECD Trust Framework (cont.)

Finally, attempts have been made to operationalise the framework by developing questions similar to those widely used to measure interpersonal trust. The questions used to operationalise the OECD framework refer to a stereotypical situation and inquire about its expected outcome. The following is an example of a situational question for the integrity dimension: *If a high-level politician was offered a well-paid job in the private sector in exchange for political influence, do you think that he/she will reject the job?*

The potential advantage of using expectations-based questions to collect information on the drivers of trust in institutions is that such information may be less affected by attitudes to the government of the day, and are less likely to be dominated by information on the three main dimensions of trust in institutions (politics, the justice system and non-governmental organisations) outlined in Chapter 2 (Box 2.1). Despite this, questions C3 to C17 should be regarded as highly experimental. While they have been trialled by the OECD as part of *Trustlab*, and are based on a review of the available literature (OECD, 2017), they have only a limited record of use. In including these questions in these Guidelines, the intent has been to provide a framework that other producers of trust data could use for developing more detailed questions. The hope is that these questions will encourage the development of better measures of institutional trust that can fill the current gap with respect to evidence on the convergent validity of institutional trust measures.

D. Experiences

Although not used as widely as evaluative or expectations measures, several questions on trust exist that relate to the respondent's experience of trusting or trustworthy behaviour. In contrast to many other areas of statistics, where asking about people's actual experiences is the norm, it is difficult to identify unambiguous examples of specifically trusting behaviour, which makes it difficult to develop reliable questions. Nonetheless, a small number of questions of this sort have been used, either to validate other types of trust measure or simply because the behaviour in question was of interest in its own right. The experience module (module D) in Annex 2 contains five questions: the first three of these relate to interpersonal trust, while the last two relate to institutional trust.

Questions D1, D2 and D3 are taken from Naef and Schupp (2009) and are intended to capture the respondent's prior history of trusting behaviour. They focus on examples of behaviour where the respondent has demonstrated a willingness to accept a risk based on a positive expectation of others' behaviour. D1 and D2 are focused on limited trust, while D3 is more relevant to generalised trust. The Naef and Schupp questions used here are, in turn, derived from questions developed by Glaeser et al. (2000), but with a number of minor changes. The most significant change is to remove wording from the Glaeser questions that related specifically to the university students who were the target of the original questionnaire.¹³ In both Naef and Schupp and in Glaeser et al., the three questions were used together to build an index of past trusting behaviour. Using the questions in this way is one of the possible applications of the question module, but such questions can also be used individually as measures of trust. While questions D1 to D3 have been used before, they have not received the same degree of scrutiny or testing that has been applied to the main evaluative or expectations-based questions included in these Guidelines. This is because the main use for experience questions has been to validate other approaches to measuring trust.

However, this does not preclude more sophisticated experiential questions on trust from being developed; providing a starting point for developments of this sort is the second main reason for including these questions in Module D.

In the case of institutional trust, there are no questions designed specifically for the purpose of collecting information on respondents' experiences of trusting behaviour with respect to institutions. However, this remains an interesting and potentially fruitful area for development. Two questions are included in Annex 2 (D4 and D5). Both are taken from the Gallup World Poll and relate to examples of behaviour that demonstrate trust in the integrity of public institutions (voicing an opinion to an official and signing a petition). Compared to experiential questions about interpersonal trust, this represents a very limited range of experiences, and it clearly represents a large gap in trust measurement. Additional question development in this area has the potential to bring real benefit.

One point worth further exploration relates to the potential for measuring trust in institutions by analysing the gap between people's reported experiences and institutions' records of actual behaviour. An example of this would be to look at the gap between instances of victimisation reported to police and the victimisation rate measured through victimisation surveys. A high level of trust in the police would presumably be correlated with a high rate of victimisation instances actually reported to them, while a lack of trust would be correlated with a lower rate. Questions of this type are not included in these Guidelines, since measuring trust in this way would require analysing existing data for other outcomes.

E. Experiments

The final question module included in Annex 2 of these Guidelines differs from the previous four in that it focuses on experimental protocols for measuring trust rather than on traditional survey questions. The reasons for including an experimental module in the Guidelines are twofold. First, experimental measures of trust have been implemented in the context of large-scale household surveys: for example, Naef and Schupp (2009) describe how a Trust Game has been implemented in the German Socio-Economic Panel survey, while the OECD's *Trustlab* aims to develop a cross-country measurement tool based on nationally representative samples including both traditional survey questions and a range of experimental games. The ability of experimental games to be incorporated into household surveys means that, even if this measurement approach is still unusual for national statistical offices, it falls within the scope of the Guidelines and may be of relevance to some data producers – particularly those outside the official statistical system. The second reason for including experimental protocols in these Guidelines is the importance of generating experimental data that could be used for validating survey-based measures of trust. Even if experimental measures of trust are not widely used, it is potentially helpful to users of these Guidelines to include details of the main experimental games that have been used to validate the main survey questions.

There are a wide range of experimental protocols designed to shed light on different aspects of human behaviour. Only two are included in the experimental module proposed here: these are, respectively, the Trust Game and the Dictator Game. The Trust Game is the standard laboratory approach to measuring trust and trustworthiness, and provides the main experimental data related to trust. The Dictator Game is included here as a complement to the Trust Game. A number of studies have suggested that information from

the first mover in the Trust Game conflates both altruism and trust (Cox, 2004). The Dictator Game, by way of contrast, collects a relatively pure measure of altruism (Kahneman, Knetsch and Thaler, 1986), which can then be used to control for the impact of altruism in the Trust Game. The version of the Trust Game set out here is more relevant to generalised trust than limited trust, as it is anonymous.

As discussed in Chapter 2, the Trust Game was first developed by Berg, Dickhaut and McCabe (1995) and has been used extensively since then. The protocol for the Trust Game included in module E of Annex 2 is a version of the Berg, Dickhaut and McCabe Trust Game adapted by the OECD for implementation in *Trustlab*, in the context of nationally representative surveys. This approach involved considerable time and energy for designing a version of the Trust Game that could be implemented without substantive changes (beyond translation) in a range of different countries and cultural contexts. Similarly, the implementation of the Trust Game described in module E assumes that the game participants are responding to a CASI questionnaire rather than in a laboratory setting. This is particularly important because in a laboratory game participants can be matched with other players in real time, while in a CASI questionnaire players in the game are likely to be matched post-hoc. This requires a wider range of responses to be captured, particularly for the second-moving player.

The Dictator Game is easier to implement in a CASI setting, since only one player makes a substantive choice. As with the Trust Game, the version of the Dictator Game implemented here is that developed by the OECD for *Trustlab* (see Box 2.4). This has the advantage that the game has already been reviewed and tested in a number of different countries and is suitable for inclusion in a large-scale survey.

Beyond the two games included in module E, there are a range of other experimental approaches to measuring trust or elements of human behaviour relevant to trust that could be trialled. These include other experimental games, such as the Public Good Game, which measures people's willingness to contribute to a public good in a situation where public and private incentives differ; experimental games concerned with measuring risk attitudes; and the use of experimental techniques other than games, such as implicit association testing. Implicit association testing is a technique used by psychologists to collect information in cases where social desirability bias is likely to make it difficult to get an honest answer from respondents (e.g. on racism). The OECD and Sciences Po have trialled the use of implicit association tests to measure aspects of institutional trust in *Trustlab*, and there is considerable interest in these techniques among experimental economists, political scientists and sociologists (see Intawan and Nicholson, 2017). While it is currently too early to include a developed question module in these Guidelines, further developments in these areas are likely to have a significant impact on approaches to measuring trust over the coming decade.

Question Templates

The five question modules are attached to these Guidelines as Annex 2. Each question module is presented in the same format, containing a common set of headings that outline the objectives of the module (i.e. what kind of information it is trying to gather), its content, the origin of the questions, how the data from the module should be presented, background information for interviewers, and the detailed question wording.

Objectives

The objectives provide an overview of the intended role of the module and how it is supposed to be used. They provide a succinct description of the purpose of the module and of the rationale behind its scope and contents.

Description

A description of the contents of each question module outlines the role of each of the questions in the module with respect to the module's objectives. The description is intended to assist users to identify which questions they wish to use in the event that they choose to implement only part of the module.

Origin

Questions included in each module are drawn from existing sources and remain unchanged wherever possible to maximise comparability with previous work. However, some items have been modified to a greater or lesser extent where several forms of the same question have been used in the literature and/or where there are clear grounds for making small changes in item wording or response scales, for example based on the evidence in Chapter 3. This section indicates the source of the questions and notes whether they have been altered.

Completion Time

This gives an estimate of the time required to run the entire module.

Output

The output section contains basic information on the production of standard tables and measures from the question block. This information is not exhaustive, but is intended to provide some basic guidelines for data producers. Such guidelines are important not only to assist producers in presenting the data appropriately but also to provide context for why the questions are framed in the way that they are.

A number of the question blocks are intended to produce multi-item measures of trust derived from the survey questions. This section provides details on the construction of these multi-item measures and how they should be reported.

Guidelines for interviewers

The quality of any survey data is heavily influenced by the attitude of the respondents to the questions that they are being asked. Although the evidence is overwhelming that measures of trust are not regarded by respondents as particularly sensitive or difficult to answer (particularly when compared to questions on some other commonly asked topics, such as income), better-quality information is likely to result if interviewers understand what information is being collected and how it will be used, and they are able to communicate this clearly to respondents. This enables interviewers to answer queries from respondents on why the information is important or on what concept the question is trying to elicit from them.

The guidelines for interviewers contained in this module are not intended as a substitute for the more extensive notes and/or training that would normally be provided to interviewers in the process of preparing to conduct a household survey. However, they do provide a basis from which users of the module can develop their own more substantive guidelines.

4.5. Survey implementation

How a survey is implemented is crucial to its effectiveness. A carelessly implemented survey will result in low-quality and unreliable data regardless of the quality of the underlying questionnaire. In general, the features relevant to the effective implementation of any household survey also hold for those collecting information on trust. These Guidelines make no attempt to provide a detailed discussion of best practice in survey implementation, for which high-quality standards and guidelines already exist (United Nations Statistical Division, 1984). However, there are several points where the specific nature of measures of trust raises survey implementation issues that are worth noting.

Interviewer training

Interviewer training is crucial to the quality of responses in any survey. However, the measurement of trust raises additional issues, because the subject matter may be unfamiliar to interviewers. This is, ironically, particularly so for national statistical agencies with a permanent force of field interviewers. Although a body of trained interviewers will generally contribute to higher response rates and better responses, interviewers may struggle with questions if they cannot explain adequately to respondents why collecting such information is important and how it will be used. Academic literature, anecdotal evidence and feedback from national statistical office staff suggests that some trust questions – particularly those related to trust in political institutions – may be of particular sensitivity, and that respondents may in some situations be concerned about the uses of such data (Schneider, 2016). In some cases, respondents may fail to understand why a public agency might want to collect this type of information.

To manage risks around respondent attitudes to questions on trust, it is imperative that interviewers are well-briefed, not just on what concepts the questions are trying to measure, but also on how the information collected will be used. This is essential in order for interviewers to build a rapport with respondents, which can be expected to improve compliance by respondents and the quality of responses. While the interviewer guidelines contained in the question modules provide some crucial information specific to each set of questions, a more comprehensive approach should draw on information on the validity and use of measures of trust (Chapter 2) and on the analysis of trust data (Chapter 5).

Ethical issues

Evidence suggests that measures of trust are relatively non-problematic for respondents to answer. Item non-response rates are generally low for measures of both interpersonal and institutional trust (see Chapter 2). In general, item-specific non-response rates for interpersonal measures are similar to those for marital status, education and labour market status, and much lower than for measures of income. This suggests that, in general, such questions are not perceived as problematic by respondents. Non-response rates for measures of institutional trust are a little higher than is the case for interpersonal trust, but still remain low in absolute terms.

Best practice suggests that statistical providers should consider how to manage the risks associated with questions that are distressing to respondents. Although it is important not to overstate the risks – there is little in the way of evidence suggesting that trust questions pose a significant risk in this respect – such issues should be dealt with effectively. A complicating factor is that it might not be evident at the time of the interview

whether a respondent has been affected by the questioning. One approach to managing this factor, used by the ONS (2012), is to distribute a leaflet at the time of the interview giving respondents information on the purpose of the survey and reiterating the confidentiality of the data collected. The leaflet would also contain information for distressed respondents about where to seek help.

Coding and data processing

The coding of information on trust is generally straightforward. In general, numerical scales should be coded as numbers, even if the scale bounds have labels. Much analysis of trust data is likely to be quantitative and will involve manipulating the data as if they were cardinal. Even for fully-labelled response scales (such as the *yes/no* responses that apply to many questions), it is good practice to code the data numerically as well as in a labelled format in order to facilitate use of the microdata to produce summary measures. Responses of *don't know* and *refused to answer* should be coded separately from each other, as the differences between them are of methodological interest.

Normal data-cleaning procedures include looking for obvious errors such as the transposition of numbers by data coders, duplicate records, loss of records, incomplete responses, out-of-range responses or failure to follow correct skip patterns. Some issues are of particular relevance to trust data. In particular, where a module comprising several questions with the same scale is used, data cleaning should also involve checking for response sets, which occur when a respondent provides identical ratings to a series of different items. For example, a respondent may answer “0” to all ten domain evaluative questions from module E. This would typically suggest that the respondent is not, in fact, responding meaningfully to the question and is simply moving through the questionnaire as rapidly as possible. Such responses should be treated as a non-response and discarded. In addition, interviewer comments provide an opportunity to identify whether the respondent was responding correctly, and a robust survey process will make provision for allowing such responses to be flagged without wiping the data record.

Finally, it is important to emphasise that much of the value from collecting measures of trust comes from microdata analysis. In particular, analysis of the joint distribution of trust and other outcomes cannot usually be accomplished through the secondary use of tables of aggregate data. Because of this, a clear and comprehensive data dictionary should be regarded as an essential output in any project focusing on trust. This data dictionary should have information on the survey methodology, sampling frame and correct application of survey weights, as well as a description of each variable (covering the variable name, the question used to collect it and how the data are coded). If a variable is collected from only part of the survey sample due to question routing, this should also be clearly noted in the data dictionary.

4.6. Conclusion

Key points made in this chapter are as follows:

Planning for the measurement of trust

- Decisions about what to measure should always be grounded in a clear understanding of user needs. Important questions to consider include: i) What are the policy questions?; ii) Is the trust content being proposed appropriate to respond to the policy questions?; iii) Does the measure proposed allow monitoring changes over time or comparing

population groups?; iv) What population groups are of greatest interest to the user?; v) Does the user's interest lie in comparing outcomes of different groups or in understanding the relationship between different aspects of trust?; vi) Is the user's primary interest in generalised trust, limited trust or institutional trust? If the focus is on the latter, which institutions are of primary interest?; vii) What are the frequency requirements of the users to monitor changes over time?; and viii) What within-country comparisons are required, such as geographic level?

- It is imperative to consider not only how best to measure trust *per se*, but also what other measures should be collected alongside measures of trust for analytical purposes. These should include: i) Age; ii) Gender; iii) Marital status; iv) Household type; v) Presence of children; vi) Household size; vii) Geographic information; and viii) Migration status/Country of birth/Year of arrival.
- In addition to the demographic measures identified above, which can be considered essential, a number of additional variables may also be useful: i) Language; ii) Living in urban/rural areas; iii) Income; iv) Wealth; v) Employment status; vi) Educational attainment; vii) Health status; viii) Social contact and networks; ix) Civic engagement and governance; x) Personal security and victimisation; xi) Subjective well-being; xii) Ethnic identification; and xiii) Religion.

Survey and sample design

Sampling

- Responses to questions on trust are inherently personal, and consequently the unit of measure must be the individual. This implies that the sampling frame must produce a representative sample of individuals or households as if all individuals are personally interviewed.
- In general, measures of trust would be collected for the entire adult population (aged 15 and older).

Frequency of data collection and duration of enumeration

- It is not possible to provide specific guidelines for how frequently measures of trust should be collected that cover every contingency, since the range of possible data uses is large and the frequency at which data are needed will vary depending on the intended use and on the type of measure in question.
- For the purposes of monitoring well-being and for assessing trends in social capital, an annual time series should be regarded as the minimum in terms of frequency of enumeration.

Duration of enumeration

- The duration of the enumeration period (i.e. the period of time over which information is collected) is important for measures of trust. Unlike measures of educational attainment or marital status, for which it does not usually matter at what point during the year the data are collected, the precise timing of the collection period might have an impact on measured trust.
- Ideally, enumeration of trust data would take place over a full year and would include all days of the week, including holidays. This would ensure that measures of trust provide an accurate picture for the whole year. Where a year-long enumeration period is not

possible, enumeration should, as far as is possible, be spread proportionately over all days of the week.

Sample size

- Large samples are highly desirable in any survey: they reduce the standard error of estimates and allow both a more precise estimate of trust as well as a greater degree of freedom when producing cross-tabulations and analysis of results for population sub-groups. With measures of trust, sample size is particularly important because of the relatively small changes in trust associated with many areas of analytical interest.

Survey mode

- In terms of data quality, CASI/CAPI with show cards should be considered best practice for collecting trust data. The presence of an interviewer allows for a strong rapport to be built with the respondent, while show cards help with data quality.
- The confidentiality provided by CASI sections to the interviewing should help address respondent reluctance to provide accurate answers to potentially sensitive questions.
- Where other modes are used, it is important that data producers collect information to enable the impact of mode effects to be estimated. National statistical agencies, in particular, should consider experimentally testing the impact of the survey mode on responses to the core measures of trust and publish the results along with any results from CATI or CASI surveys.

Survey vehicle

- Where trust, governance, or social capital is the key area of interest, it may be appropriate to build a special module focused specifically on trust. This is especially the case where the use of trust data focuses on measuring social capital or on evaluating governance.
- As trust measures are of analytical interest in a broad range of different contexts, a limited range of trust questions can usefully be included in a wide range of different types of survey.

Question placement

- Important trust questions should be included in the core section of the survey. Although it is not possible to place trust questions at the start of every survey, the effect of bias due to context effects can be limited if trust questions are included in a fixed portion of the survey questionnaire. While this does not eliminate bias, it will not affect analysis of differences in levels across population groups or over time.
- Trust questions should not be placed immediately after questions that are likely to prime respondents with regard to trust, or that respondents might use as a heuristic for determining their response to the trust question. This includes questions on social contact, victimisation, political beliefs, risk or insecurity. The best questions to precede trust questions are demographic questions.
- Transition questions should be used to refocus respondent attention. However, it is important to consider the risk that transition questions might introduce their own context effects. For example, drawing attention to a respondent's personal life may lead them to focus on personal relationships rather than on strangers when answering subsequent questions about interpersonal trust. Development of effective transition questions is a priority for future work.

- Introductory text should be used to distinguish between question topics. Well-worded text preceding each question or topic can serve as a buffer between measures of trust and sensitive questions. Further cognitive testing or experimental analysis of the impact of different types of introductory text would be of high value.

Question order

- In terms of ordering question modules, evidence suggests that moving from the general to the specific is the best approach. For interpersonal trust, a question on generalised trust should be placed ahead of more specific questions relating to limited trust. Also, questions on interpersonal trust should be asked before questions on institutional trust, which tend to be more specific and are also likely to have a significant priming effect.
- Questions on trust in institutions should proceed from better-known institutions to more obscure ones. Where comparisons between levels of trust in different institutions are important, the order in which questions are presented should be randomised for each respondent. If this is not possible for the whole sample, pilot testing should involve the randomisation of question order so that the size of any bias in measured trust is known.

Translation

- Initial translation should ideally be carried out by at least two independent translators who have the destination language as their mother tongue and who are fluent in the source language. Translators should be informed about the goal of the study and be familiar with the background, origin and technical details of the source questionnaire, as well as with the nature of the target population. As with any survey design, cognitive interviewing and field testing should be undertaken, with the results reviewed before the full survey goes into the field.

Questionnaire design

- These Guidelines provide five prototype question modules for the measurement of trust. Module A contains a set of **core measures**, which include a single primary measure of generalised interpersonal trust that is intended to form the baseline for international comparisons, and is the highest priority for inclusion in any attempt to measure trust.
- Module A contains those questions for which evidence of validity and policy relevance is the strongest and which are most apt to achieve some degree of international harmonisation. Unlike all of the other question modules included in these Guidelines, the core module is intended to be used without significant amendment and in full.
- Modules B to E are focused on different approaches to measuring trust. These modules are not intended to be used in their entirety or unaltered, but provide a resource for national statistical agencies that are developing their own questionnaires.

Survey Implementation

- Interviewer training is crucial to the quality of responses in any survey. To manage risks around respondent attitudes to questions on trust, interviewers should be well-briefed, not just on what concepts the questions are trying to measure, but also on how the information collected will be used.
- Evidence suggests that measures of trust are relatively non-problematic for respondents to answer. Item-specific non-response rates for interpersonal measures of trust are

similar to those for marital status, education and labour market status, and much lower than for those on income. Non-response rates for questions on institutional trust are somewhat higher, but still lower than is the case of income. This suggests that, in general, trust questions are not perceived as problematic by respondents.

- Normal data-cleaning procedures include looking for obvious errors such as transposed numbers, duplicate records, loss of records, incomplete responses, out-of-range responses or failure to follow correct skip patterns. Some issues are of particular relevance to trust data. In particular, where a module comprising several questions with the same scale is used, data cleaning should also involve checking for response sets (see Chapter 3).

Notes

1. The distinction between cardinal and ordinal measures is important when measuring trust. With ordinal measures, the responses are assumed to show the rank-order of different states, but not the magnitude. For example, with ordinal data a 5 is considered higher than a 4, and an 8 is considered higher than a 7; however, nothing can be said about the relative size of the differences implied by different responses. Conversely, for cardinal data it is assumed that the absolute magnitude of the response is meaningful, and that each step on the scale of responses represents the same amount. Thus, a person reporting a level of trust of 5 would deem strangers to be more trustworthy than someone reporting a 4 by the same amount as someone reporting an 8 compared to a 7. There is little direct evidence on how trust measures should be treated. In principle, such measures are ordinal, but it is worth noting that in the case of subjective well-being – which presents a similar measurement challenge – there is strong evidence suggesting that treating the measures as cardinal does not bias the results obtained (Ferrer-i-Carbonell and Frijters, 2004).
2. Equivalised income is a measure of the level of economic resources available to the 'consumption units' in a household. Total household income is adjusted by the size of the household to reflect the fact that larger households will have to spread a given level of income more widely over the members, but also that some economies of scale in consumption are possible. A commonly used approach to equivalising income is to divide household income by the square root of the number of people living in the household.
3. While many surveys provide information on whether respondents live in an urban or rural area, the use of such data raises issues for international comparability. This is because, in some cases, respondents may self-report whether they live in an urban or rural area, while in others they are classified as urban or rural according to their socio-economic conditions, and in other cases yet the urban/rural classification may rely on a settlement-based approach. Because of these differences in national practices, a better solution could be for interviewers to classify respondents as urban/rural based on information on the characteristics of their place of living. OECD TL3 regions are classified as *predominantly urban*, *predominantly rural* or *intermediate* based on the population density within the region, based on the same method and thresholds across countries; in the case of the larger OECD TL2 regions, the classification is based on the share of population living in each functional urban area.
4. Where these detailed labour force guidelines cannot be implemented in full because of space constraints, employment status can be reported based on the self-assessment of respondents.
5. The OECD Guidelines on Measuring Subjective Well-being (2013) provide advice on the use of subjective well-being measures in a range of fields.
6. This is not, in fact, beyond the realm of possibility. Many government agencies may have an interest in collecting measures of clients' satisfaction with the services that these agencies provide and in client trust of the agency.
7. Deaton (2011) finds a large effect for Valentine's Day on measures of subjective well-being in the United States, despite the day not being a public or bank holiday.
8. Internet surveys are, from this perspective, a way of implementing CASI.
9. In fact, the OECD Guidelines on Measuring Subjective Well-being (2013) recommend that the core questions on subjective well-being are placed at the start of relevant surveys. For this reason, these Guidelines do not make the same recommendation for measures of trust.
10. In this case the precise transition question used was: "Now thinking about your personal life, are you satisfied with your personal life today?", and the subjective well-being measure that followed

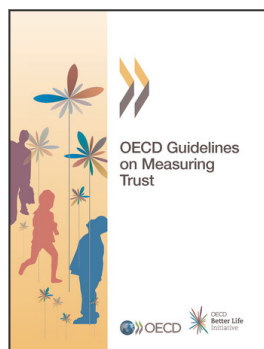
was the Cantril self-anchoring ladder of life measure. It does not follow that the same transition question will work in other contexts, and transition questions should be tested empirically before being relied on.

11. The Rosenberg question is: “Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted or that you need to be very careful in dealing with people?” (Rosenberg, 1957).
12. See Annex 1 for the wording of the lost wallet question.
13. One key difference between the questions used here and Glaeser’s original questions relates to the use of the phrase *your rooming group’s hallway door* which is replaced by the phrase *your door* in the question used here. This reflects the fact that Glaeser’s questionnaire was intended for students living on campus at an American university.

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