



OECD GUIDELINES ON MEASURING TRUST

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Outline

- Why produce *Guidelines on Measuring Trust*?
- Scope of the Guidelines?
- Key issues
- Timeframe



Why produce *Guidelines*?

- 2013 Ministerial Council Meeting: call to strengthen efforts to understand trust in public institutions and its influence on economic performance and people's well-being
- OECD Trust Strategy
 - Measuring and assessing trust
 - Case studies on the past and future drivers of trust
 - Securing fairness in policy making
 - Strengthening the reliability of governments through foresight
 - Building trust in key policy areas
- Other OECD work on trust
 - PISA, PIAAC – the role of education in driving trust
 - STI – trust in information on technology



Why produce *Guidelines*?

OECD@50 : Better Policies for Better Lives



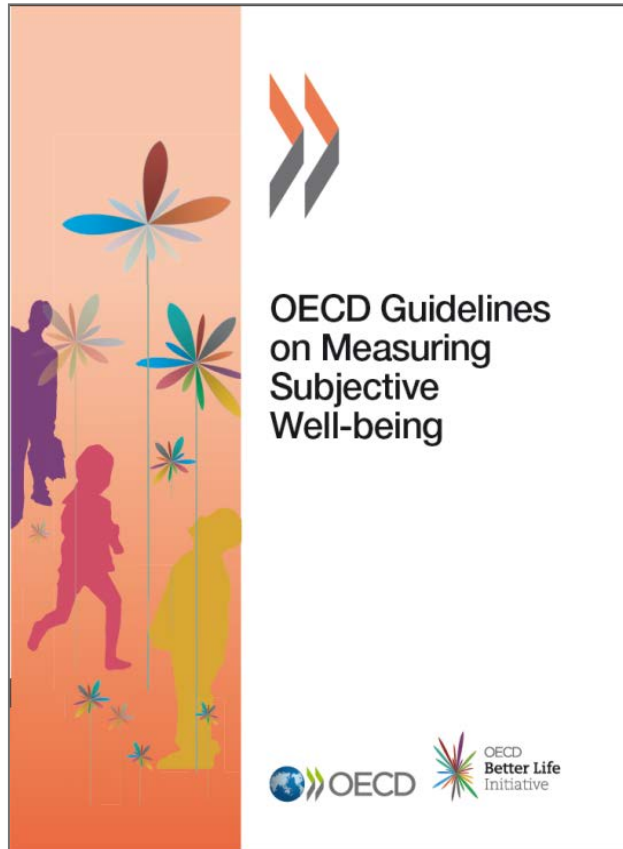
- Ultimately, it is well-being that should be the focus of policy
- Monitors both flows (current well-being) and stocks (the capital stocks/factors of production that produce well-being)
- Trust features both as a flow and as a stock
 - *trust in institutions* is part of the civic engagement domain
 - *generalised trust* is the best indicator available of social capital



Why produce *Guidelines*?

- Sustainable Development Goals
 - Goal 16: *Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions at all levels*
 - There is a clear UN imperative to better measure trust in government
- Praia City Group on Governance Statistics
 - Aims to inform the SDGs – particularly the targets for Goal 16
 - Chaired by Cape Verde

Scope of the *Guidelines*?



- The *Guidelines on Measuring Trust* will be modelled on the *OECD Guidelines on Measuring Subjective Well-being*
- The *Guidelines on Measuring Subjective Well-being* cover:
 - Concept and validity
 - Methodological issues
 - Best practice in measuring subjective well-being
 - The output and analysis of subjective well-being measures
 - Prototype question modules on subjective well-being



Scope of the *Guidelines*?

- Objectives
 - Improve international comparability of trust measures by establishing common standards
 - Summarise what is known about the reliability and validity of measures of trust and, where possible, extend this body of information
 - Act as a catalyst for broader work by NSOs and academics
 - In the longer run, increase the number of countries for which official measures of trust are produced



Scope of the *Guidelines*?

- Generalised trust or trust in institutions?
 - The OECD Trust Strategy is focused on trust in institutions
 - From a well-being perspective generalised trust is more important, but both are of interest
 - The Praia group will cover both
- The Guidelines will address both types of measure
 - Measurement issues are likely to be similar
 - Significant overlap in use (generalised trust is closely related to institutional quality)



Key Issues

- **Tight time constraints** to produce the *Guidelines*, and the need for key decisions to be made before the *Guidelines* are finalised
- Wide range of different questions and measurement scales in use and **no consensus in the literature** as to the best measurement approach
- **Space constraints in official surveys** (pressure for a single measure/short module vs desire for detail)
- **Validation** (how do we know what measures of trust are actually telling us; which measures of trust work best)
- **Sensitivity of NSOs** around questions on trust in government



Key Issues

- We are well placed to address some of these issues:
 - **ONS split sample testing** allows us to look at how different questions relate to each other
 - The ***Trustlab*** will allow us to test validity with a high level of rigour
 - Opportunities from **Trust Strategy** case studies
 - **NSO participation in expert group** will be crucial to credibility of the *Guidelines*



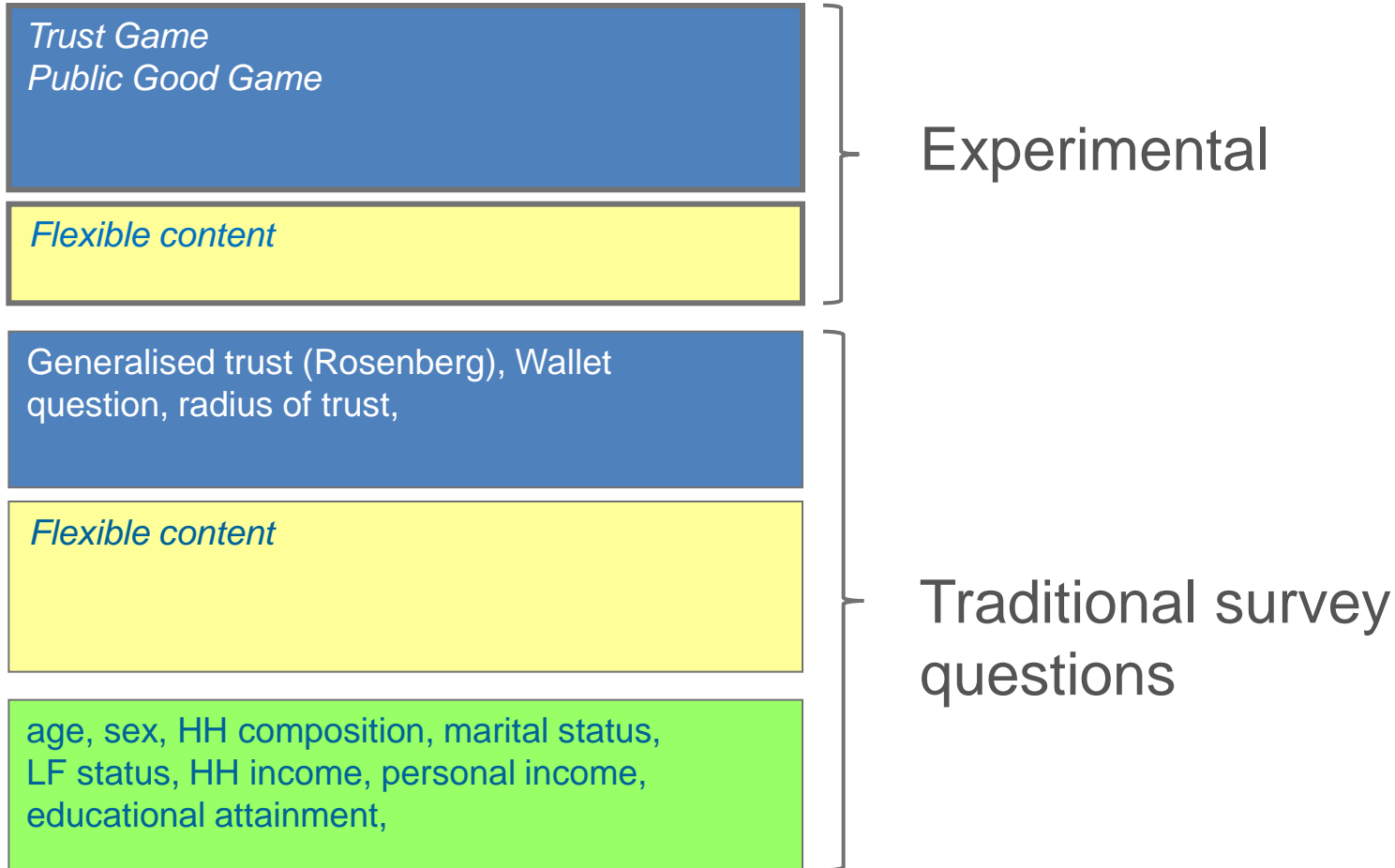
Experimental testing

- ONS:
 - Split sample trial testing on the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (1000 people per month, April 2011 – now)
 - Iterative cognitive testing
 - Used to understand the relationship between the Cantril Ladder and the Satisfaction with Life Question
 - Used to understand the implications of a yes/no response vs a 0-10 scale for questions on mood/emotion

- All currently available cross-national data on trust comes from survey questions...
- ...it would be good to have measures based on a different methodology so that we could better assess the validity of trust measures
- Trustlab is a new OECD programme to collect data on trust from representative samples in different OECD countries using both experimental games as well as standard survey questions on trust and situational questions on people's expectations.



Trustlab Survey Structure





Content – experimental module on generalised trust

[OXYTOCIN EXPERIMENTS]

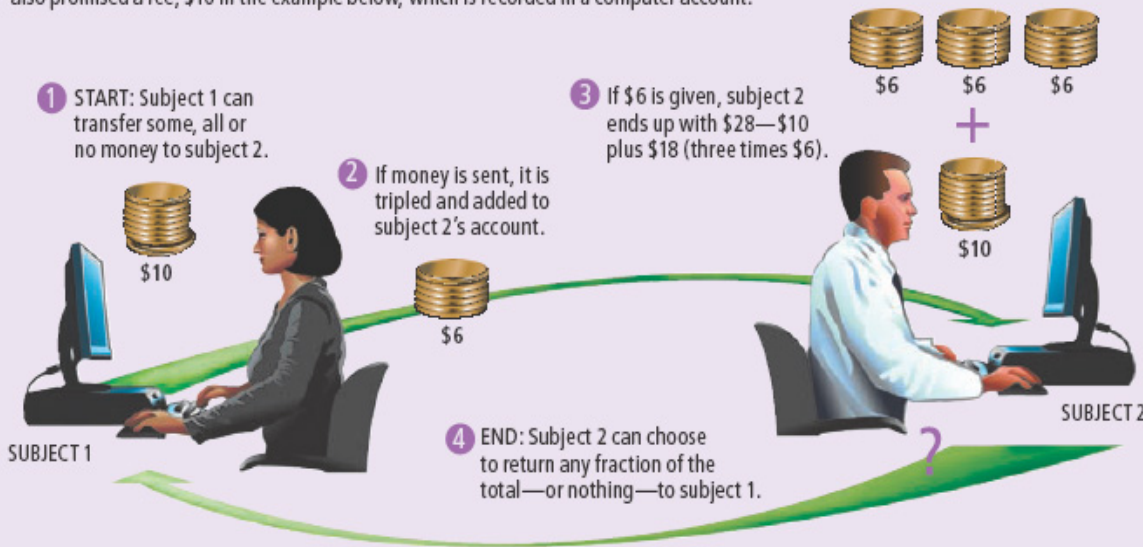
PLAYING THE TRUST GAME

To study the role of oxytocin in trust, the author and his colleagues had subjects play what is called the trust game. The team found that receiving a signal of trust led to a rise in oxytocin in the blood (an

indication of greater production by the brain). Further, oxytocin caused an increase both in trust and in trustworthy behavior.

THE BASIC GAME

SETUP: Two players, who have no face-to-face contact, are told the rules in advance. They are also promised a fee, \$10 in the example below, which is recorded in a computer account.



FINDINGS

An oxytocin rise boosts trust:

- After inhaling an oxytocin nasal spray, subject 1s sent 17 percent more money than control subjects who took a placebo did.
- Twice as many subject 1s (almost half the total) who received oxytocin gave all their cash to their partners.

Oxytocin increases trustworthiness:

- Subject 2s showing the highest oxytocin blood levels returned the most money to their partners.

Flaws in the brain's ability to respond to oxytocin might contribute to social disorders:

- A few subject 2s with unusually high oxytocin levels returned nothing. This observation could be explained by a disturbance in the brain's oxytocin system that could suggest pathology.



Timeframe

- Meeting of the Expert Group to be scheduled in September
- Question design for Trustlab (especially the Korean wave) to take place before September
 - Draft questionnaire complete by end of June
- Aim for an outline of the Guidelines, including draft question modules by November 2015