

gesis

Leibniz Institute  
for the Social Sciences



## Solidarity, Trust, Social Contract: Indicators From The ISSP Surveys

Presentation prepared for the UNESCAP  
Expert Meeting on „Our Common Agenda“

*Markus Quandt, GESIS, 2021-12-16*

# Concepts

- Solidarity
- Trust
- Social Contract

# Solidarity...

- = Provide support to others in need
- *Reported behavior*, through support to specific people/groups
  - ▶ Direct, interpersonal helping behavior
  - ▶ Indirect, e.g. support for redistribution policies
- Challenge for observing active solidarity: can only occur when one party is in need, the other has resources
- *Attitudinal measures*
  - ▶ Scope – role of social boundaries, how universal?
  - ▶ Justification/reasons – role of norms/values, when/why?
  - ▶ Empirically, both aspects always overlap

## Trust...

- WHO trusts WHOM to do WHAT?
- *Trust in specific institutions*: trust is usually contingent on past performance of the institution at hand, relative to expectations
- *General social trust* abstracts this: generic other person, generic acts.  
Broadest indicator of ‘bridging social capital’.

# Social Contract...

Where trust and solidarity meet:

- If ppl trust institutions to do what they expect from them, they **offer** support/tax money (=indirect solidarity)
  - ▶ *Citizenship* obligations, i.e. ideas about the "good citizen"
  - ▶ *Regime support*, legitimacy
  - ▶ *Pay taxes/higher prices* to support *specific policy objectives*
  
- What do ppl **want** from their states/governments?
  - ▶ Broad preference *for specific responsibilities of state/government*
  
- Social contract at higher level?
  - ▶ which **vision** of the *future* do societies grant their own members?
  - ▶ degree of **consensus** within societies on goals/*perception of conflict*

# Topic Coverage of Modules

- Role of Government (1985, 1990, 1996, 2006, 2018)
  - ▶ Government responsibilities: reduce income diff., provide housing...
  - ▶ Taxation, economy
  - ▶ Political participation, efficacy
  - ▶ Trust: *only* for civil servants!
- Social Inequality (1987, 1992, 1999, 2009, 2019)
  - ▶ Individual life chances
  - ▶ Perceived degree of inequality
  - ▶ Perceived reasons for inequality
  - ▶ Perceived conflicts in society
- Citizenship (2004, 2014)
  - ▶ Good citizens (compliance with norms)
  - ▶ Balance of state and citizen obligations
  - ▶ Efficacy
  - ▶ General trust, trust in institutions, rule of law, corruption

## Country Coverage

Module	New					South				
	Australia	China	India	Japan	Zealand	Philipp.	Korea	Surinm.	Taiwan	Thailand.
1991 Religion I	1				1	1				
1992 Social Inequality II	1				1	1				
1993 Environment I	1			1	1	1				
1996 Role of Government III	1			1	1	1				
1998 Religion II	1			1	1	1				
1999 Social Inequality III	1			1	1	1				
2000 Environment II				1	1	1				
2004 Citizenship I	1			1	1	1	1			1
2006 Role of Government IV	1			1	1	1	1			1
2008 Religion III	1			1	1	1	1			1
2009 Social Inequality IV	1	1		1	1	1	1			1
2010 Environment III	1			1	1	1	1			1
2014 Citizenship II	1		1	1		1	1			1
2016 Role of Government V	1		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
2018 Religion IV				1	1	1	1	1	1	1
2019 Social Inequality V	?	?	?	1	1	1	?	1	1	1

## Question Example: ‚Social Trust‘

- *Generally speaking, would you say that people can be trusted or that you can't be too careful in dealing with people?*

*1 People can almost always be trusted*

*2 People can usually be trusted*

*3 You usually can't be too careful in dealing with people*

*4 You almost always can't be too careful in dealing with people*



## Question Example: ‚Confidence in...‘

- *How much confidence do you have in ...*
  - ▶ *Parliament? <use national legislature, e.g. U.S. Congress>*
  - ▶ *Business and industry?*
  - ▶ *Churches and religious organizations?*
  - ▶ *Courts and the legal system?*
  - ▶ *Schools and the educational system?*

- 1 Complete confidence*
- 2 A great deal of confidence*
- 3 Some confidence*
- 4 Very little confidence*
- 5 No confidence at all*

Asked in:  
Religion

# Question Example: ‚Gov. Responsib.‘

- Short format, in many modules:
  - ▶ *It is the responsibility of the government to reduce the differences in income between people with high incomes and those with low incomes*

- Or detailed, e.g. in Role of Government and Social Inequality, with variations:

*On the whole, do you think it should be or should not be the government's responsibility to:*

- ▶ *a Provide a job for everyone who wants one*
- ▶ *b Keep prices under control*
- ▶ *c Provide health care for the sick*
- ▶ *d Provide a decent standard of living for the old*
- ▶ *e Provide industry with the help it needs to grow*
- ▶ *f Provide a decent standard of living for the unemployed*
- ▶ *g Reduce income differences between the rich and the poor*
- ▶ *h Give financial help to university students from low-income families*
- ▶ *i Provide decent housing for those who can't afford it*
- ▶ *j Impose strict laws to make industry do less damage to the environment*

## ISSP ... and Other Surveys

- No inventory of all ISSP questions ever asked
  - ▶ ...but we can help w/ identifying time series for particular concepts, if needed
  - ▶ Modules „Social Inequality“ and „Role of Government“ have partial cumulated datasets (most recent data not included yet)
- Project „ONBound“ as a template for combining relevant data from different survey sources?
  - ▶ <https://www.gesis.org/en/services/processing-and-analyzing-data/data-harmonization/onbound>