

# **Trust and reciprocity in Germany**

## **Integration of survey and experimental data as powerful new method**

Ernst Fehr, Urs Fischbacher, Michael Näf, Jürgen Schupp and Gert G. Wagner

### **Abstract**

Typically, laboratory experiments suffer from homogeneous subject pools and self-selection biases. The usefulness of survey data on the other hand is limited by measurement error and by the questionability of their behavioral relevance. Here we present a method integrating interactive experiments and representative surveys thereby overcoming crucial weaknesses of both approaches.

One of the major advantages of our approach is that it allows for the integration of experiments, which require interaction among the participants, with a survey of non-interacting respondents in a smooth and inexpensive way. By showing that high stakes don't change behavior in a social dilemma situation compared to low stakes, and furthermore by making use of the longitudinal information of our sample, we illustrate the power of our approach. With the analysis of trust and reciprocity in Germany, by combining representative survey data with representative behavioral data from a social dilemma experiment, we identify which survey questions intended to elicit people's trust correlate well with behaviorally exhibited trust in the experiment.

Keywords: Experiment, Survey, Trust, Trustworthiness, Altruism

JEL Classification: A13, C42, C82, C92, C93, D84, J24