



# Innovations in measuring household finances

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# Innovations in *Understanding Society*

- Household panel survey
- New ways of collecting data about our sample members
- General aims:
  - New data for new science
  - Empirically-based guidance on best practice for survey design and implementation



# Starting point

- Annual interviews with all adults in HH
  - Face-to-face interviews
  - Online surveys
- Data on household finances

$$\text{Income} = \text{Spending} + \Delta \text{ Assets}$$

- Constraints
  - Questionnaire space
  - Respondent burden, recall



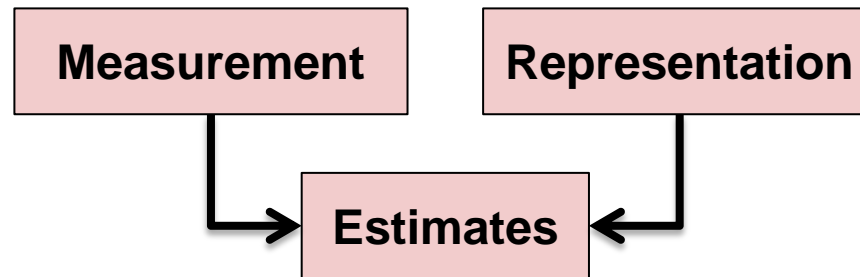
# Examples

## Three innovation projects

- Event-triggered data collection
  - Financial implications of life events
- Mobile apps
  - Spending diaries
- Consent to data linkage
  - Link administrative data to survey
  - E.g. tax records, benefits and pensions, credit accounts and rating

# General approach

- Innovate and evaluate
  - Total Survey Error assessment



- *Understanding Society* Innovation Panel
  - Experimental testing



# Event-triggered data collection

- The challenge
  - Better data about life events
  - So far: retrospective questions in annual interviews
- The aim
  - Monthly contact with sample members
  - Questions about life events
  - Health, job, partner, pregnancy, moves
- Testing on the Innovation Panel (2020)



# Event-triggered data collection

- Funder
  - ESRC
- More information
  - <https://www.iser.essex.ac.uk/research/projects/event-triggered-data-collection>



# Mobile app spending diaries

- The challenge

- How to collect data about monthly spending
- In a way that is easy for respondents and produces good data

- The aim

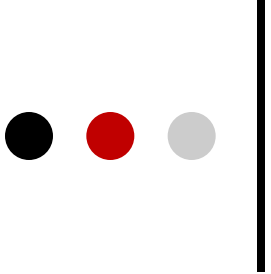
- Develop protocols for mobile-app based data collection





# Mobile app spending diaries

- Sources of measurement error?
- Barriers to participation?
- Representativeness of those who participate?
- Effectiveness of different fieldwork protocols designed to increase participation and improve representativeness of participants



# Mobile app spending diaries

## Some things we've learnt...

- Cannot ignore those who do not have mobile devices
- Getting people to install apps is biggest challenge
- Those who do participate
  - Experience low burden
  - Show little sign of fatigue
- Weighted estimates are comparable to benchmark data



# Mobile app spending diaries

## o Funders

- ESRC Transformative Research
- NCRM Methodological Research Project
- ESRC
- Kantar Worldpanel

## o More information

- <https://www.iser.essex.ac.uk/research/projects/understanding-household-finance-through-better-measurement>

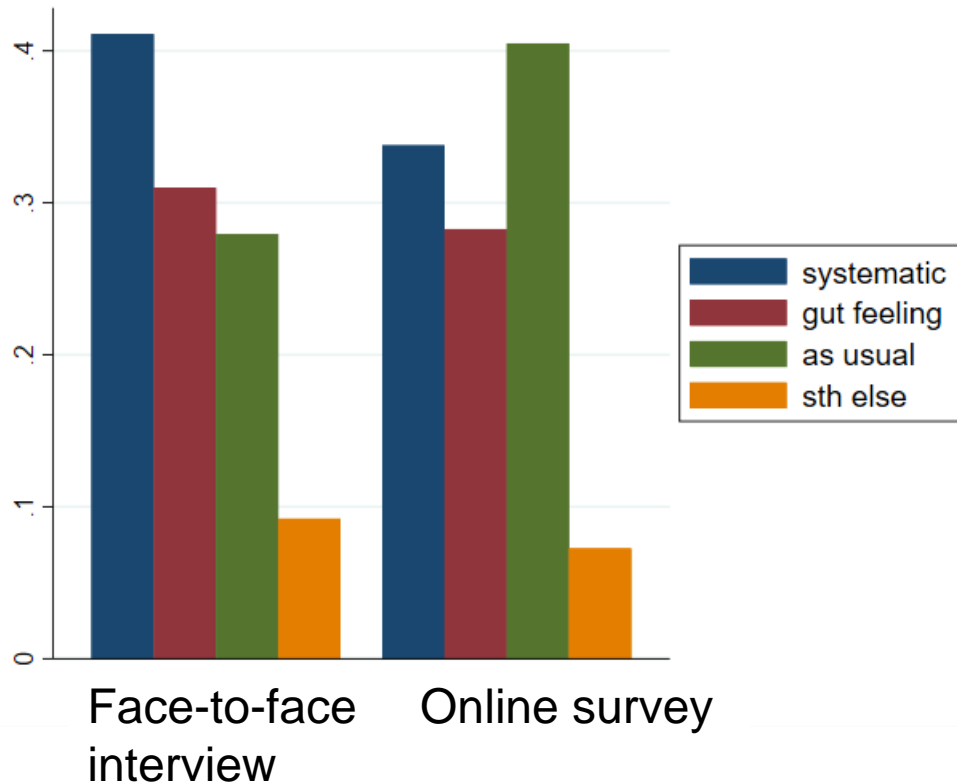


# Consent to data linkage

- The challenge
  - Mixed mode survey
  - Respondents less likely to consent in online surveys than with interviewer
- The aim
  - Understand how respondents make the consent decision
  - What can we do to increase informed consent?

# Consent to data linkage

How did you decide...?



- Minority process question systematically
- Web respondents
  - More likely to make habit-based decision
- But survey design to increase consent
  - Typically: provide more information



# Consent to data linkage

- Funders

- Nuffield Foundation
- ESRC

- More information

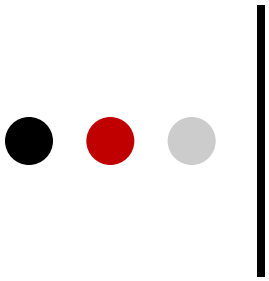
- <https://www.iser.essex.ac.uk/research/projects/understanding-and-improving-data-linkage-consent-in-surveys>



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# Mobile app spending diaries

