

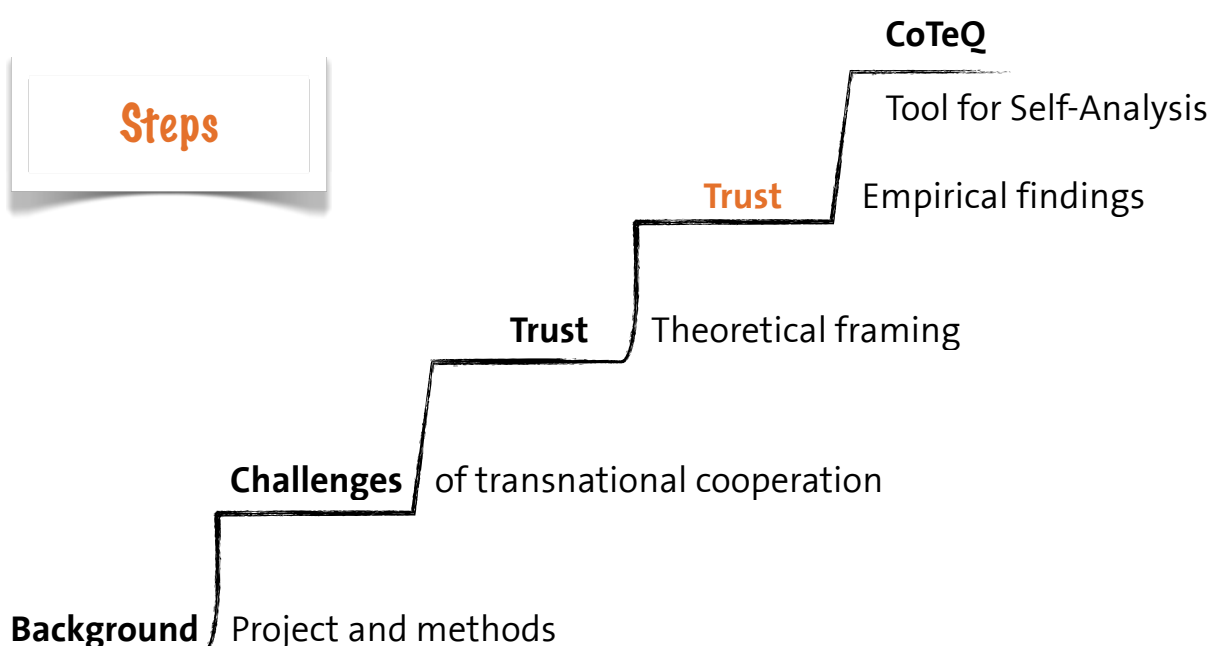
# Making Distributed R&D Work

Internationalization of Teamwork in R&D Teams  
and its Formal and Informal Aspects

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**ISFMÜNCHEN**  
Institut für Sozialwissenschaftliche Forschung e.V.



Joint Project

Science and automotive industry

Funding: German Ministry of Research and EU

Technical University Darmstadt  
ISF Munich  
Fraunhofer Institute Stuttgart  
Several Tier-1 companies



Förderschwerpunkt  
Balance von  
Flexibilität und Stabilität

## Empirical Background

Qualitative case studies.

45 semi-structured interviews.

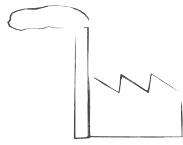
6 group discussions.

In-depth content analysis and Grounded Theory.

Standardized online survey.

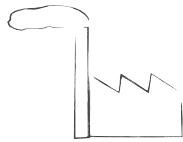
3 transnational cases of R&D cooperation.

## Three Cases of R&D Cooperation



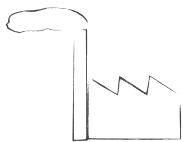
Germany  
Romania

Tier 1 – Electronic Applications



Germany  
China

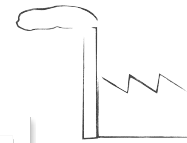
Tier 1 – Joint venture – Gearing / Hydraulics



Germany

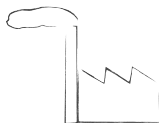
Tier 1  
Engineering mobility

Tier 1  
Car Electronics



Finland

## Necessity of transnational and interorganizational cooperation in R&D



Increasing globalization, flexibilization, informatization.

Speeding up innovation cycles.

Highly competitive markets.

Peak Oil.

Glocalization.

Rapidly changing constellations between the Triad/BRIC.

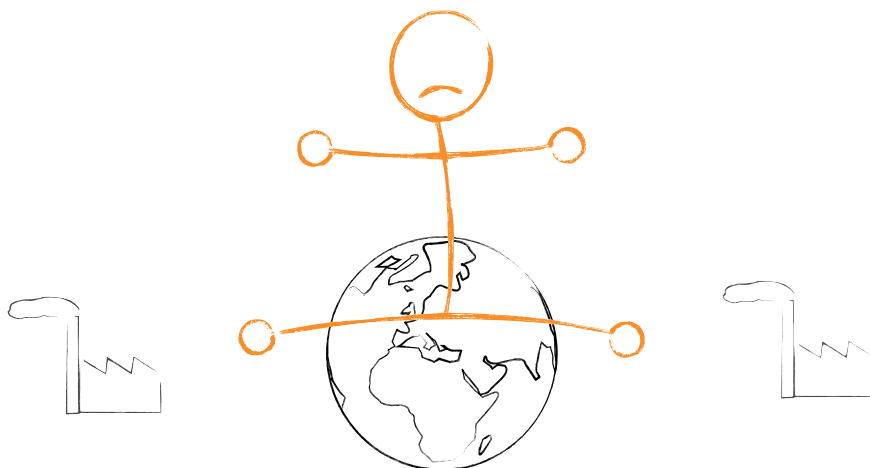
Challenges in coping appear not only on the macro/meso level of branches, business strategies and organizational structures, but...

...are to become real in everyday innovation work.



Challenges in coping are not only solved by processes and standardization...

...but have to be revived daily by innovation workers.



### **(Informal) challenges of transnational cooperation in R&D**

Coopetition – Cooperation and competition

Increasing uncertainty due to organizational, spatial and cultural aspects

Challenges for daily (team-)work

## Trust – theoretical framing

**Trust** as a mechanism to reduce social complexity

**Trust** as a individual ressource of action

Economic impact of **Trust**

**Trust** as a „risky advance concession“ (Luhmann 1979)

**Trust** cannot be established in a (only) strategic way

## Trust – mainstream sociological view

Luhmann (1979) distinguishes between systemic trust (confidence) and personal trust (Luhmann 1979)

Systemic trust (confidence) is defined as

Trust in persons  
representing  
systems

Generalized trust in  
systems

## Trust – our perspective

What does trust mean in everyday work?

How is trust produced in cooperation work?

What makes innovation workers capable „doing“ trust in a competitive ecology?

But??

Trust in persons  
representing  
systems

Generalized trust in  
systems

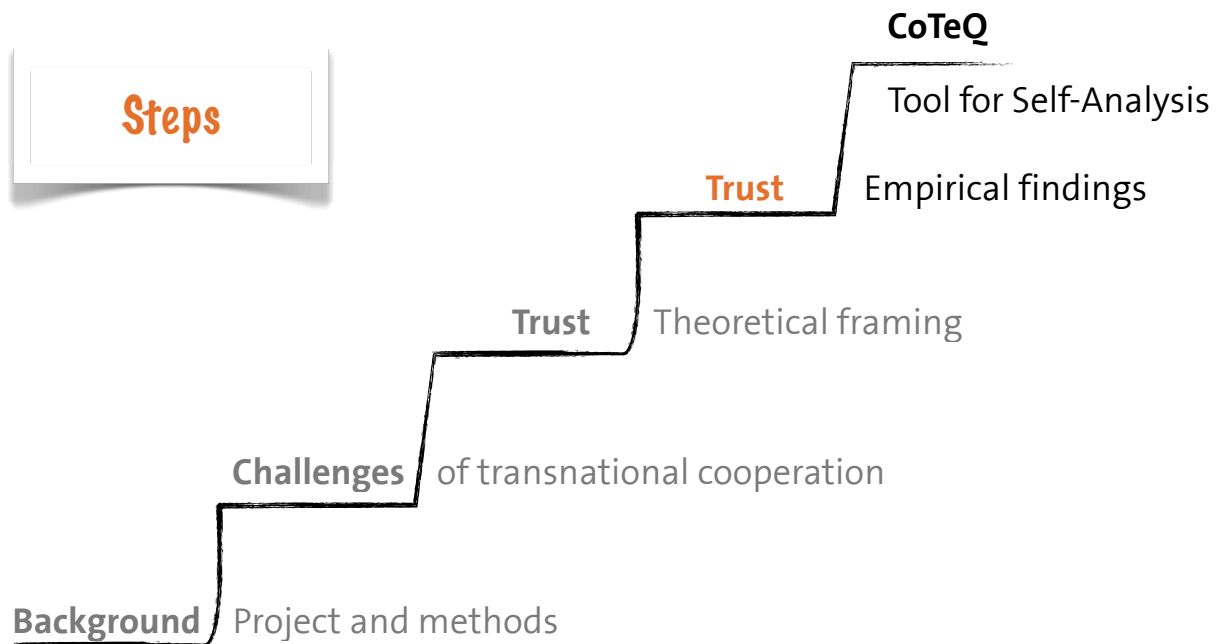
## Trust – our perspective

No separation between systemic trust (confidence)  
and personal trust

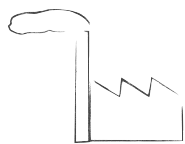
Trust has always personal and systemic components

Trust is a fluid concept

--> Trust-based teamwork depends on cultural,  
social, and organizational (informal) aspects



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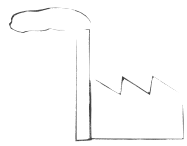


Germany  
Romania

### Case 1: Intraorganizational cooperation in Europe

- Fast growth of the Romanian subsidiary
- Lack of experience of the Romanian colleagues and high workload
- Very differing communication and feedback- culture
- Meeting colleagues in person as a key factor for developing trust
- Increasing mistrust because of the lack of transparency

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Germany

China

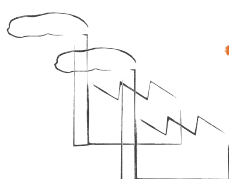
## Case II: Joint Venture Triad-BRIC

High level of mistrust among German employees

Two dimensions of cross-cultural communication: linguistic skills and diverging communication styles

Different speed in performing work process

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Germany

Finland

## Case III: Interorganizational cooperation in Europe

Transparency and mutual goals

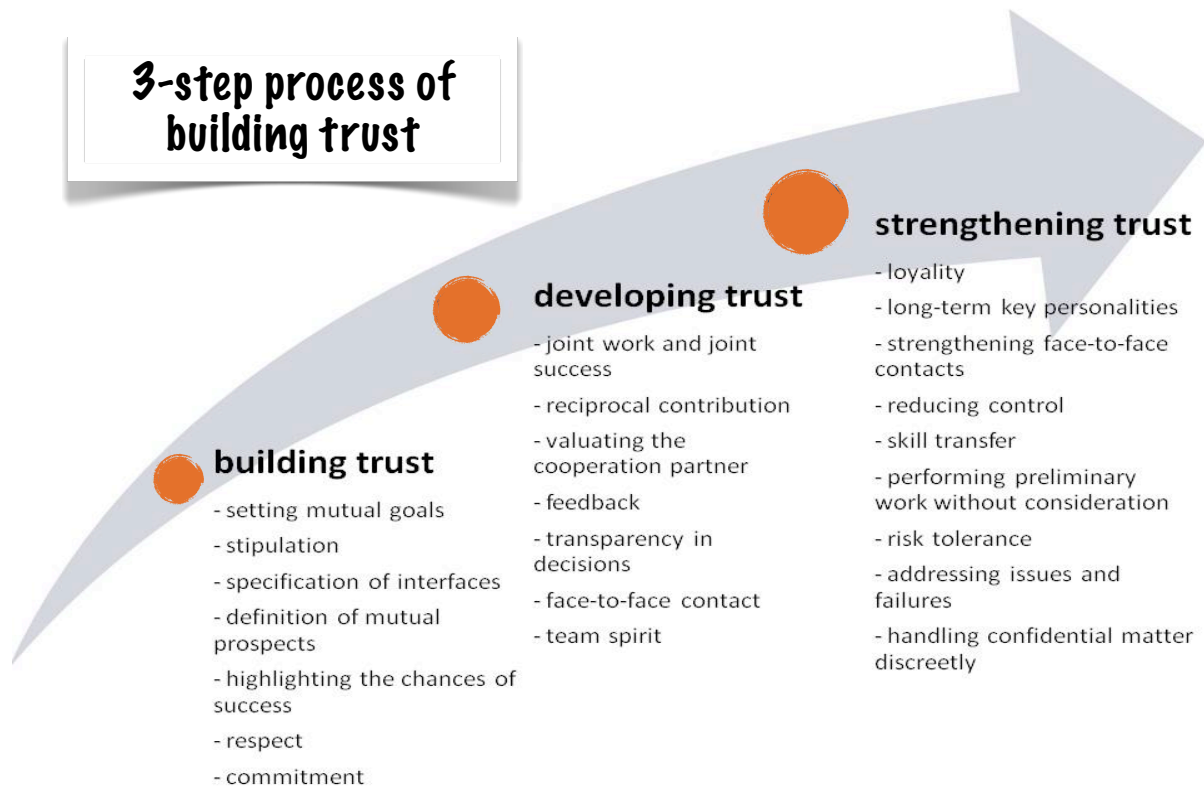
Team building and project meetings

Easier communication concerning technical issues in English

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### 3-step process of building trust



### CoTeQ: Collaboration and Teamwork Questionnaire

Managing teamwork is a complex mission, depending on many measures

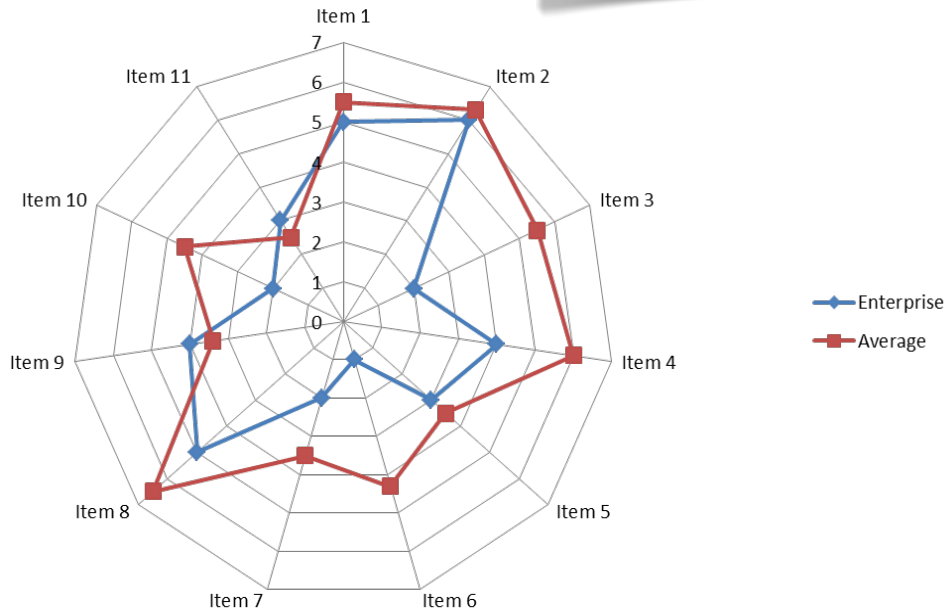
Purpose: help teams to analyze their teamwork

12 items and 22 questions with standardized response categories

Guideline based on our empirical findings

CoTeQ should not be a solution but a ,helping hand‘

## CoTeQ: The Kiviat Graph



Thank you!

**TRUST**  
teamwork  
[www.trust-teamwork.de](http://www.trust-teamwork.de)

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