

Trusting the Energy System

Past, Present, Future

Patrick Sumpf, ITAS/KIT



Structure

1. Introduction: Trust Research
2. Architecture of Trust
3. Empirical Study: Approach
4. Exemplary Findings
5. Conclusions for the „Energiewende“

Trust Research

- *Trust in Persons, Organizations, Systems?*
- *“In today’s complex society, we often trust systems more than people. It’s not so much that I trusted the plumber at my door as that I trusted the systems that produced him and protect me. I trusted the recommendation from my insurance company, the legal system that would protect me if he did rob my house, [...] and - most of all – the general societal systems that inform how we all treat each other in society. Similarly, I trusted the banking system, the corporate system, the system of police, the system of traffic laws, and the system of social norms that govern most behaviors. [...] I’m not really concerned about how specific people come to trust other specific people” (Schneier 2012, 6).*
- **How** do trustors “construct a fiction of reality that allows them to trust?” (Möllering, 2006)? How is the energy system translated into their daily lives? What are the references people use when expectations toward energy provision are addressed?

Architecture of Trust

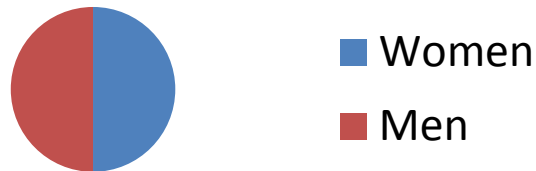
<i>Possible Trustors</i>		<i>Possible Trustees</i>						
<i>Comments</i> →		<i>Reference of Personal Trust; Possible Intermediary</i>	<i>Reference of System Supervision and Control</i>	<i>Reference of System Trust</i>	<i>Reference of Confidence</i>	<i>Densification of Roles and Programs; Possible Intermediary</i>	<i>Possibly insinuated with social quality; contingency in operating</i>	<i>Emergent background reality as open or closed system</i>
<i>Individual</i>	<i>Collective</i>	<i>Persons</i>	<i>Roles</i>	<i>Programs</i>	<i>Values</i>	<i>Organizations</i>	<i>Technology</i>	<i>Systems</i>
Citizens Consumers Investors Stakeholders The German population Those Affected	Public, Groups Producers Distributors Regulators, Policy makers Intra-firm States	Finance Minister Chancellor Friend Neighbor Co-Worker Family Member	Authority Supervision Sanctioning Scientists Experts Engineers	Demand-Side Management Spatial Planning Smart Metering Emissions impact (Global and local) Costs (Affecting consumers/economy) Employment	Security of Supply Profitability Efficiency Privacy Sustainability Transparency	Bundesnetzagentur (BNetzA) Bundesamt für Sicherheit in der Informationstechnik (BSI) Local Provider Power company Government Climate alliance	ICT Gateway The Grid Smartphone Nuclear Plant Electric Vehicle Smart Meter	Complete (Energy) System Politics Economy The Public Mass Media Legal Procedures

Legend: **addressable** (important for sanctioning)

Empirical Study: Approach

- Sample: N=30; Average Age: 39

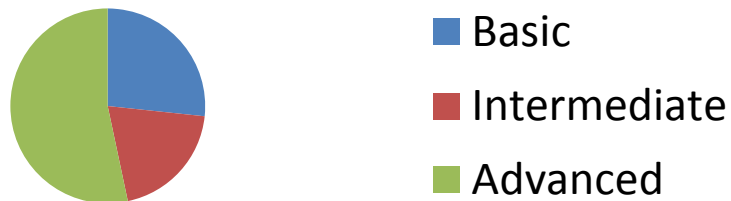
Gender



Residence



Education



Living Space

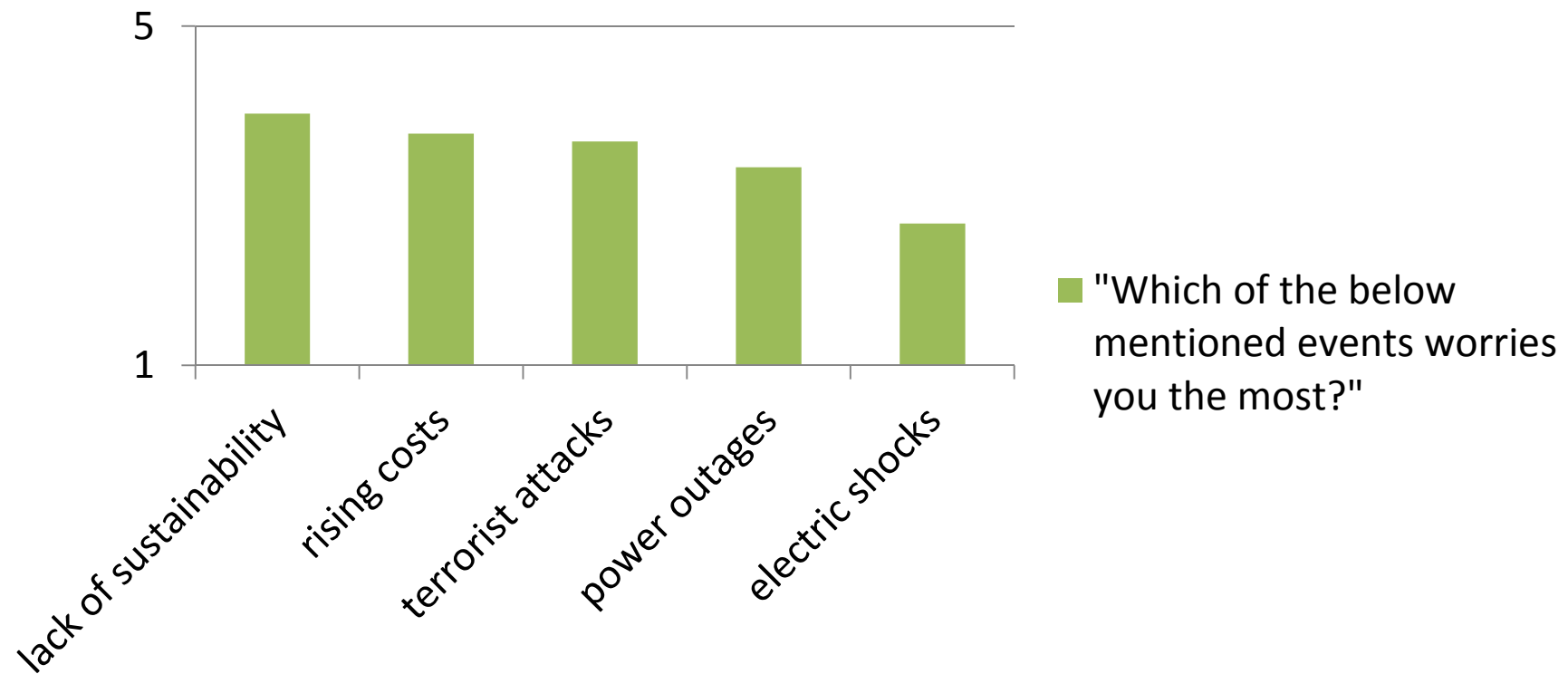


Trust & Risk I

- ***H1: The different facets of trust can be linked to dominant risk perceptions that are either absorbed (trust), absent (confidence) or rejected (distrust).***

Trust & Risk II

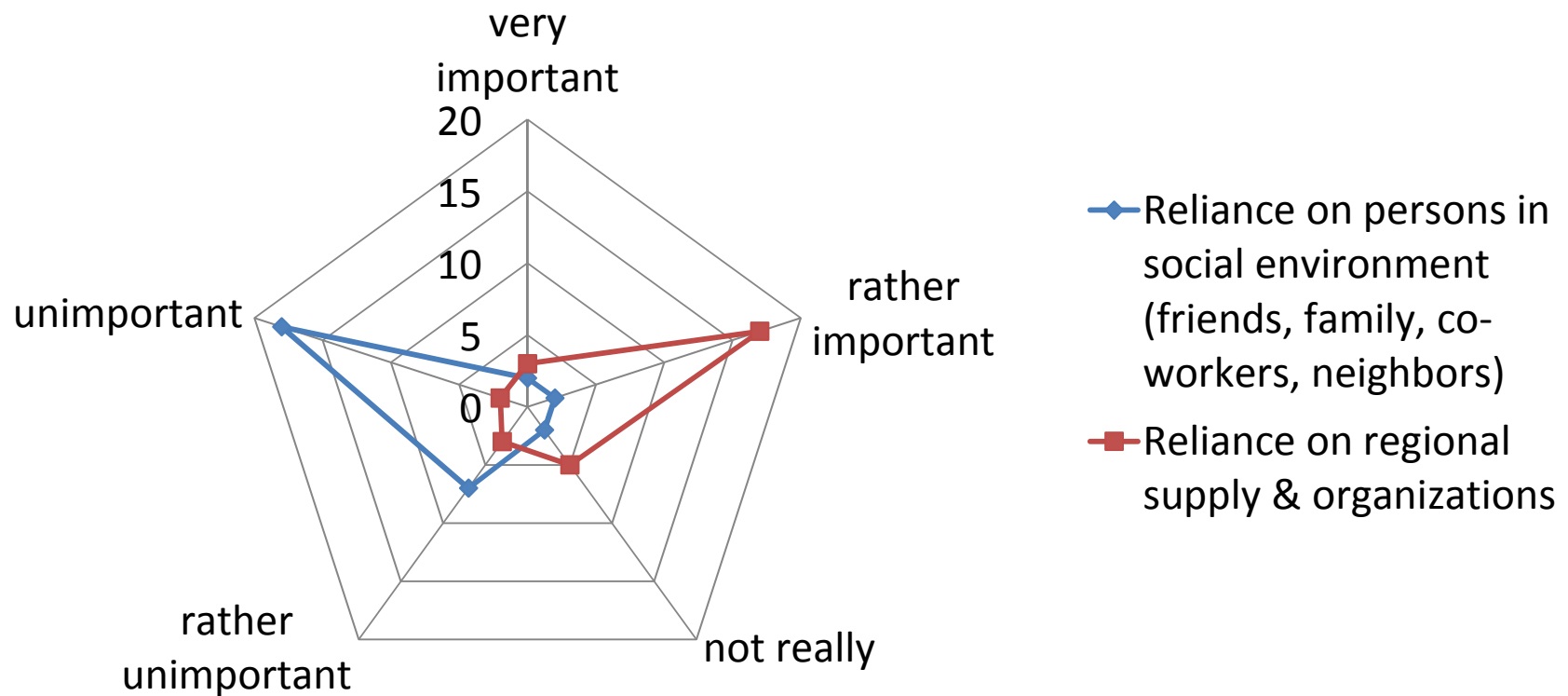
"Which of the below mentioned events worries you the most?"



Trust Intermediation I

- ***H2: Persons (e.g. friends, co-workers) and regional organizations (e.g. utilities) play a major role in reassuring trust/distrust in the energy system.***

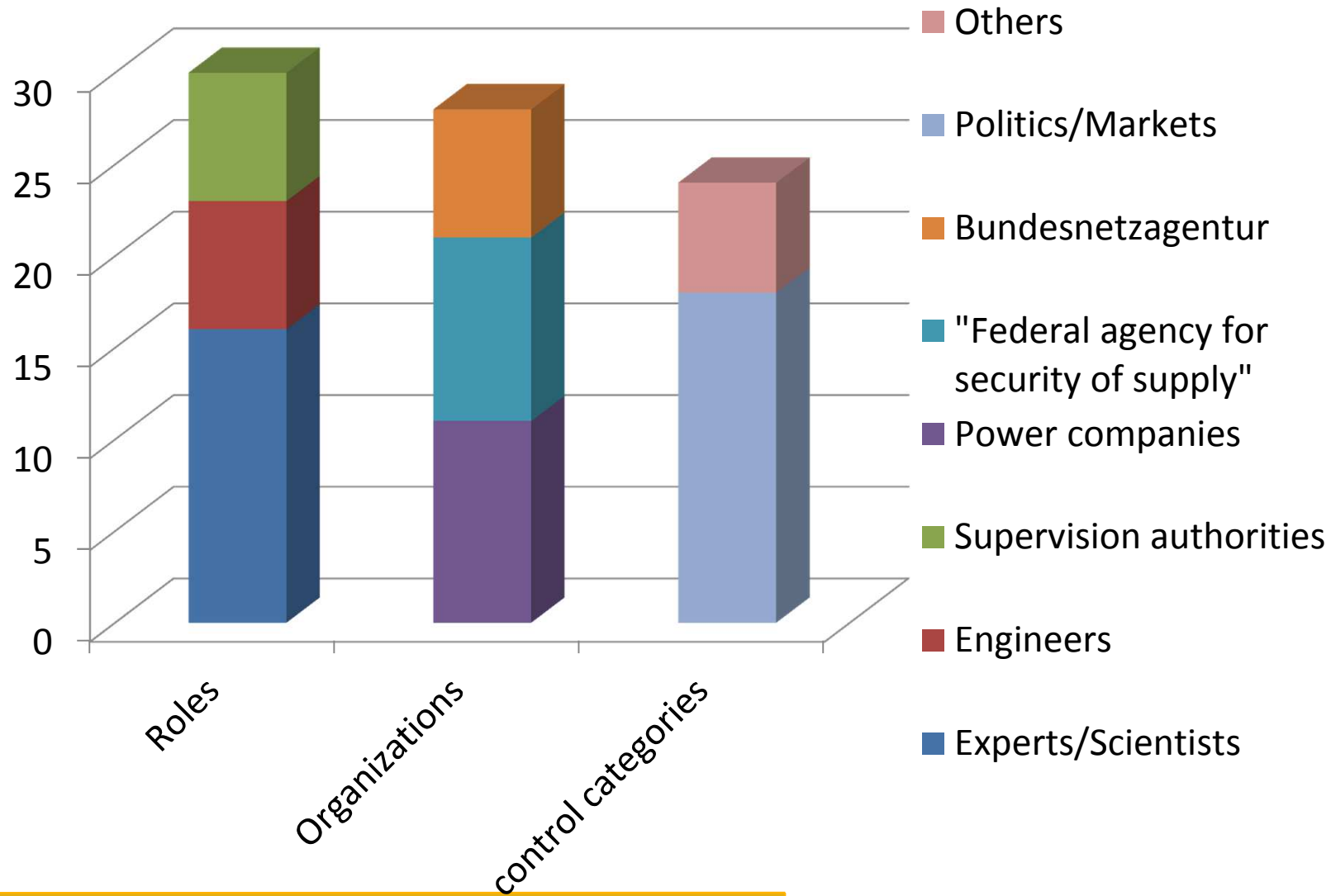
Trust Intermediation II



Roles & Organizations I

- ***H3: To assure system functioning, organizations are less specifically addressed than roles concerned with supervision and system control.***

Roles & Organizations II



Conclusions for the „Energiewende“

- It is not necessary to gain trust among consumers – it is already high, maybe too high
- Expectations of future continuity among interviewees very strong
- „opinion leaders“ are likely to grow in importance
- Local utilities major access point to the energy system

Trusting the Energy System

Thanks for your attention!

Patrick Sumpf, ITAS/KIT

