

### **Interorganizational governance: the trust-control perspective**

The growing importance of partnerships between companies is considered to be one of the most important trends in the development of contemporary business – it is almost impossible today to succeed alone and cooperation becomes an everyday reality, a necessity. However, it is extremely difficult to manage in practice. Despite significant advances in research on interorganizational cooperation in the last two decades, we are still far from understanding why most cooperative ventures do not lead to the planned results and quite often just fail.

The application of appropriate governance mechanisms can prevent many problems in cooperation or alleviate their effects. The current state of knowledge indicates that trust is one of the most important mechanisms of such governance. The literature abounds in descriptions of the advantages of trust, although there are also some indications that it may sometimes have a dark side in business relationships. Therefore, it is pointed out that trust can be an effective tool for managing cooperation only if it is accompanied by properly designed and applied control mechanisms. Both trust and control are an irremovable part of the reality of organizing. Despite the key role of both trust and control in the management of inter-organizational relations, we still do not fully understand what the relationship between trust and control in inter-company relations looks like. We know from previous research that there is an interaction between control as a function of management and trust as a condition of inter-organizational cooperation. However, we do not know what the interaction looks like, how it changes over time, and the discussion about whether trust and control are complementary or antagonistic with each other is still inconclusive. Moreover, we do not have an established body of knowledge of how managers involved in inter-organizational relations balance and integrate control activities and focus on building trust in everyday activities.

In this research project, we try to fill this gap with unique field research conducted in Poland with the support of foreign researchers - experts in the field of research on trust and control in the management of inter-organizational cooperation. In the project, we plan to run three interrelated types of research. The first of them will be an extensive quantitative study among Polish business entities implementing cooperation strategies. The second is an in-depth qualitative research case study, which allows us to gain insight into the relationship between trust and control by looking at specific management practices. The third is a methodological study focused on the creation of proprietary research tools that can then be used in other projects.

We believe that the results of our research project will be interesting not only for scientists, but also for business practitioners pursuing their goals in cooperation with partners, as well as for the wider public.