

# Under Pressure! Investigating Academic Freedom

ALLEA Symposium in Vienna „The Freedom of Scientific Research in the Face of Political and Societal Demands”

## **Vorbereitende Recherche**

Vienna, April 18th, 2016  
Stefan Hornbostel

# Content

## 1. WHO are the subjects (freedom for whom)?

- Persons, Professionals, Organizations?

## 2. Freedom WHERE OF?

- External steering influences / pressure ? (politics / industry / law)
- New Public Management ( strong Governance, Evaluation, PBF, ) :
- Is external influence a contradiction to self-regulation and academic freedom?
- Is funding the problem (Societal usefulness vs. Science as self-referential endeavor / “Grand Challenges”)?
- Is it a new problem at all?

## 3. Freedom WHAT FOR?

- The ivory tower?
- societal function: ensuring freedom of discourse, discovery ?
- Public trust and mistrust in Science
- Political correctness

# 1. WHO?

- Academic freedom underlies the changes of the Higher Education Institutions from compounds of individuals to „Entrepreneurial Universities“ (Clark, 1998)
- From interest organisation to working organisation
- The governance of Higher Education Institutions is increasingly transferred from politics to the governing bodies of the universities (NPM)
- How is this new power of the Higher Education Institutions compatible with the demand for academic freedom and self-governance?

**Consequence:** Continuous balancing of organisational and individual interests.



## Freedom whereof?

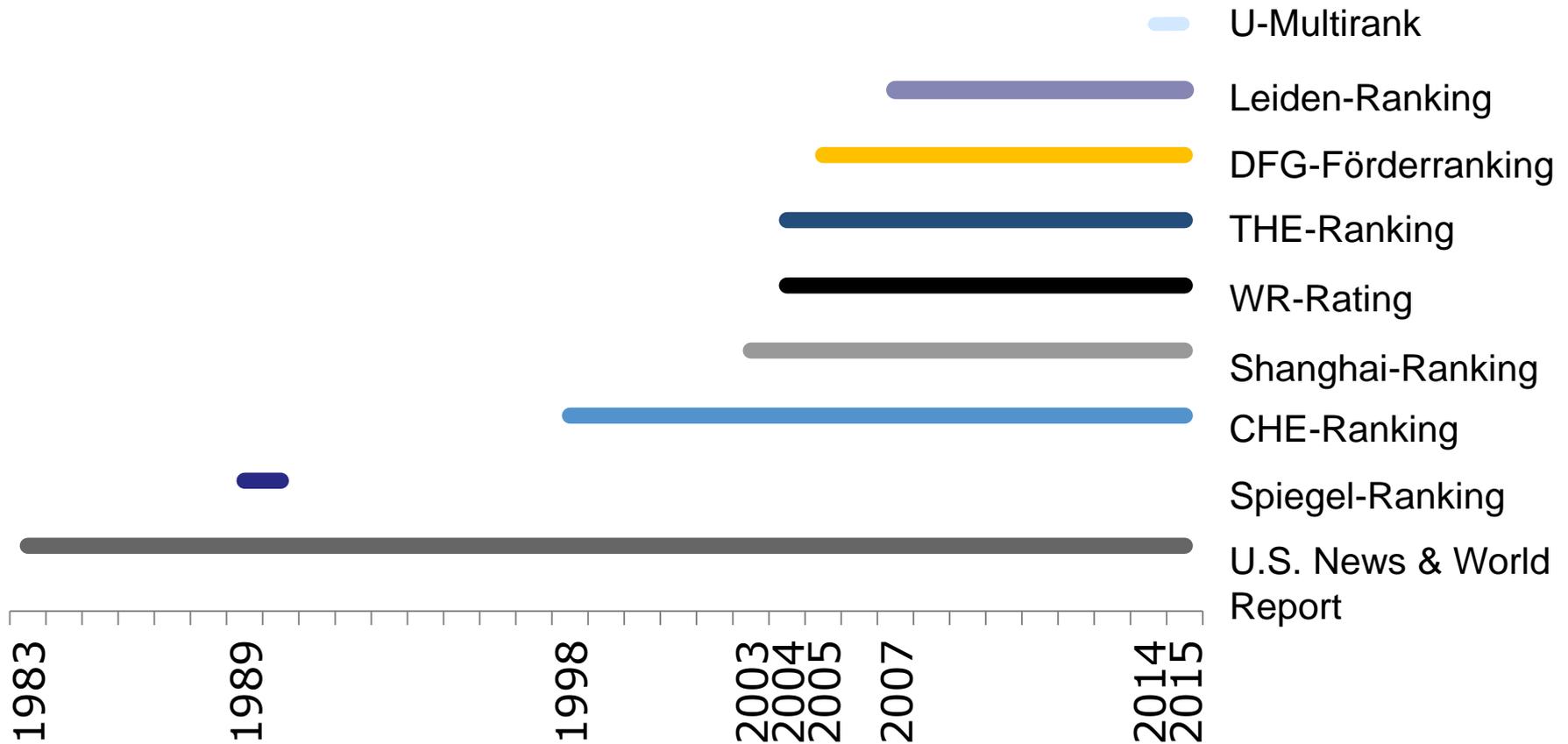
- Academic freedom is no end in itself but includes the demand for freedom from external steering influences
- Aim is self-regulation
- Do new forms of governance, in particular the New Public Management, foster academic freedom or are they a gateway for external influences
- Are external influences necessarily a threat for academic freedom?

gov2.0

# New Public Management (NPM) and the recruitment of young academics

- Introduction of NPM at German Higher Education Institutions to enhance efficiency 20 years ago
- NPM is product-oriented (Zechlin), produces evaluable numbers concerning Third-Party-Funds, graduates, drop-outs, research results, PhD-programmes, publications etc. with the goal of more transparency
- **Two problems occur with the NPM:**
  1. Significance of scientific work is not fully considered: In a system that only values and counts results, longterm processes of scientific research are penalized
  2. Demands of NPM have consequences for young academics: In a system that honors only scientists that are successful in the competition for Third-Party-Funds, publications, etc. the danger of creating streamlined „offspring“ grows.

# Rankings



# PFRS – Evaluation by peers or indicators?

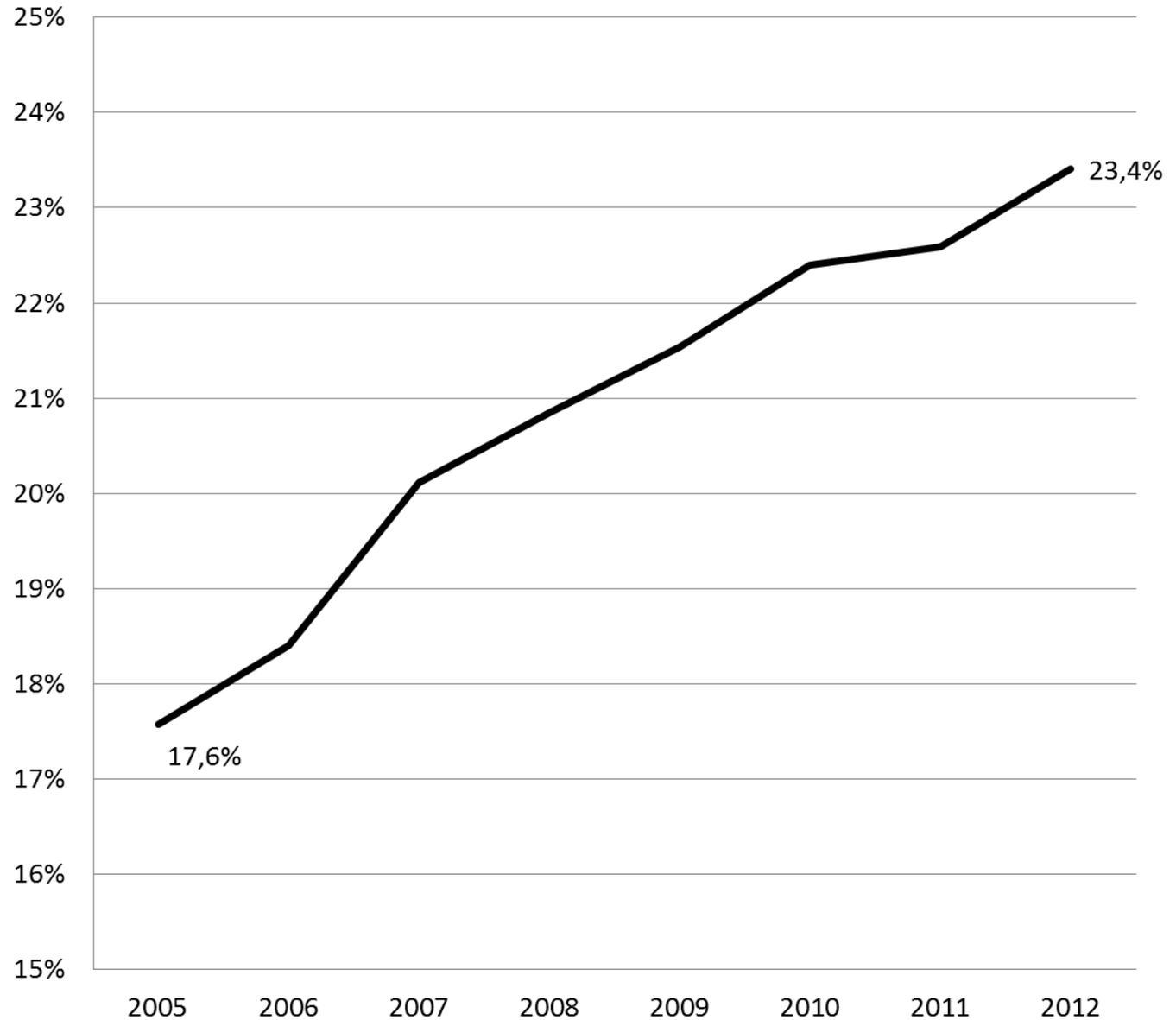
**Table 4: Predicted RAE outcome in chemistry and political science using metrics (OLS estimates)**

	Over-prediction			Under-prediction	
	Actual	Predicted		Actual	Predicted
<i>Chemistry</i>					
Huddersfield	3b	3a	Imperial	5*	5
Surrey	3a	4	Loughborough	4	3a
Northumbria	3b	3a	Bristol	5*	5
			Durham	5*	5
			Heriot-Watt	4	3a
			East Anglia	5	4
<i>Political science</i>					
Southampton Institute	2	3a	Kings College (War)	5*	5
Open University	3a	4	Queens Univ Belfast	5	4
LSE	5	5*	Bradford	5	4
Sussex (Politics, IR)	4	5	St Andrews	5	4
Cambridge	4	5	De Montefort	5	4
Univ College London	3a	4	Reading	5	4
Westminster	4	5	Bristol	5	4
Kent	3a	4	Exeter	5	4
Derby	3b	3a	Sheffield	5*	5
Middlesex	3b	3a	Aberystwyth	5*	5
Swansea	3a	4	Essex	5*	5
Sussex (SPRU)			Birmingham	5	4
			Coventry	4	3a
			Dundee	4	3a
			Keele	5	4
			Durham	4	3a
			Hull	5	4
			Queen Mary	4	3a

“Overall, only one of the 113 departments would have received an outcome on the metrics model which would have differed by more than one unit on the peer evaluation grading used by the RAE.”

Sc.: Linda Butler / Ian McAllister:  
Evaluating university research performance using metrics. In: European Political Science 10 (2011). p. 44-58

# Rise of Third-Party-Funding at German Universities



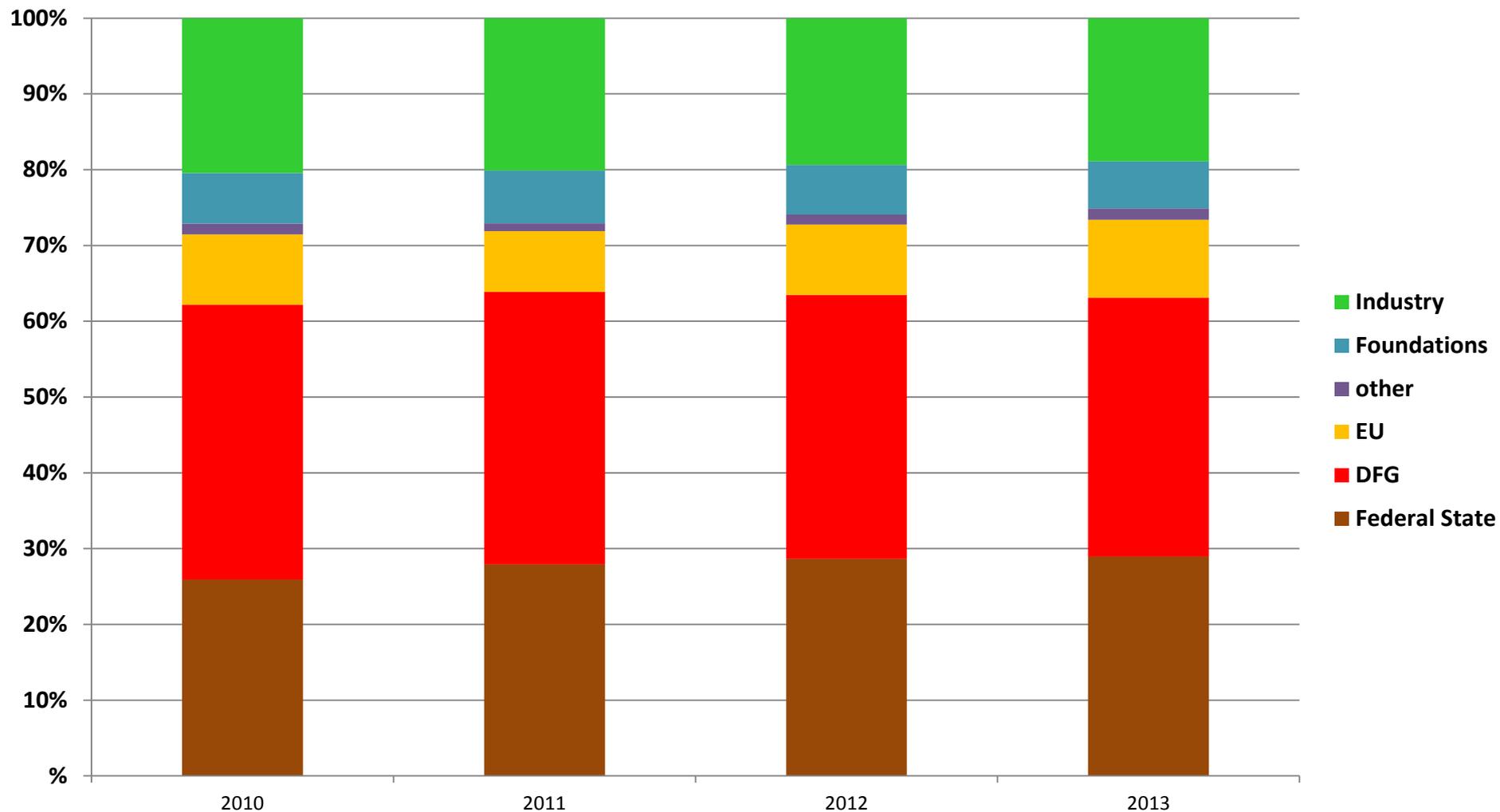
Quelle: Statistisches Bundesamt:  
Bildung und Kultur. Finanzen der  
Hochschulen 2012. Fachserie 11  
Reihe 4.5. Wiesbaden 2014. S.  
16f. (Zusammenfassende  
Übersicht 1.2.4)

# Third-Party-Funding as a means of interference with academic freedom?

## Relevance of Third-Party-Funding increases significantly

- Increasing of the basic funds (Grundmittel) of Higher Education Institutions from 1998 to 2010 by 23% from 12.6 to 15.5. billion Euros
- Third-Party-Fundings mounted in the same time from 2.5 to more than 5.3 billion Euros, a plus of more than 100%
- The Third-Party-Funding rate has augmented from 16 to 26% in just one decade
- Around 30% of the funding come from companys or private foundations

## Third Party Money – German Universities (Percentages)



Source: DESTATIS (2015) Fachserie 11 Reihe 4.5

# Third-Party-Funding as a means of interference with academic freedom?

## „HORIZON 2020“

### Horizont 2020 im Blick

Informationen zum neuen EU-Rahmenprogramm für Forschung und Innovation

- Biggest EU Research and Innovation programme ever
- Nearly 80 billion of funding available over 7 years (2014-2020)
- Goal is to ensure Europe produces world-class science, removes barriers to innovation and makes it easier for the public and private sectors to work together in delivering innovation.
- Aims and contents have been set by policy-makers, concentration on 7 „challenges“:
  1. Health, Demographic Change and Wellbeing
  2. Food Security, Sustainable Agriculture and Forestry, Marine, Maritime and Inland Water Research and the Bioeconomy
  3. Secure, Clean and Efficient Energy
  4. Smart, Green and Integrated Transport
  5. Climate Action, Environment, Resource Efficiency and Raw Materials
  6. Europe in a changing world – Inclusive, innovative and reflective societies
  7. Secure Societies – Protecting freedom and security of Europe and its citizens



# Third-Party-Funding as a means of interference with academic freedom?

## Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

- Largest private foundation in the world
- Endowment of 44.3 billion US \$ as of 31 December 2014
- **Critique:**

Leading managers of the foundation are associated with big American and International corporations and support multinational corporational interests rather than social justice



THE WORLD WON'T GET BETTER BY ITSELF. WE MUST SET BIG GOALS AND HOLD OURSELVES ACCOUNTABLE EVERY STEP OF THE WAY.

— SUE BISHOP-HELLMANN, 2006

Gated Development - is the Gates Foundation always a force for good?

Published on Wednesday, August 23, 2006 by CommonDreams.org

The Gates and Buffet Foundation Shell Game  
by Sheldon Drobny

We seek to drive change on a global scale.

Our focus on economic empowerment unlocks possibility on the individual and communal level. Our work in the field of global health saves lives, helping families and communities thrive, both today, and tomorrow. Our efforts on education help ensure that individuals have the tools they need to achieve the promise in their own lives.

# Third-Party-Funding as a means of interference with academic freedom?

»Die Relevanz der Exzellenzinitiative für die Wissenschaftsfreiheit kann nicht ernstlich bezweifelt werden.«

## The German Excellence Initiative

*"The Excellence Initiative aims to promote top-level research and to improve the quality of German universities and research institutions in general, thus making Germany a more attractive research location, making it more internationally competitive and focussing attention on the outstanding achievements of Germany universities and the German scientific community."* (DFG Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft)

- **Critique** of Programme from judicial perspective:

The granting of funds of the Excellence Initiative notably touches the scientific freedom by producing a disadvantage for non-promoted researchers that have no access to newly provided resources

- Request: An interference of that kind needs a strong legal basis as well as a well-defined catalogue of evaluation and funding criteria.

# Third-Party-Funding as a means of interference with academic freedom

## Problematic of the competition for Third-Party-Funds has already been acknowledged by the DFG in the year 2012

*„A critical notion towards [...] an excessive competitive pressure and the necessity for Third-Party-Funds has grown in the Science System, because they distract from the essential, from the core of Science and Research [...].“*

(Prof. Dr. Matthias Kleiner, Talk at the DFG New Year's Reception, Berlin, 16 January 2012)

**DFG** Deutsche  
Forschungsgemeinschaft

Förderung

Geförderte Projekte

DFG im Profil

DFG MAGAZIN

# Third-Party-Funding as a means of interference with academic freedom?

## Third-Party-Funding versus academic freedom?

- Third-Party-Funds are granted in coherence with their Funding Programme
- As a result to this code of practice the competitive pressure, the setting of parameter and thus a limitation of research areas can occur.

→ Are Third-Party-Funds therefore automatically an external steering-influence and thus a threat for academic freedom?

# New Public Management (NPM) and the recruitment of young academics

## Critique of the NPM by Uwe Schimank (2014)

„ (...) This governance regime clips, the more consequently it is performed, the **individual autonomie of scientists** in their **thematic choices**, the **prosecution of unorthodox perspectives**, the **choice of cooperation forms and partners** as well as the choice of publication forms. This results from, firstly, an increasing **dependance on Third-Party-Funds** (...), secondly, from **recommendations by evaluation committees**, and thirdly, the **strengthened government** of Higher Education Institutions that - by referring to these recommendations -perform pressure.“

René Krempkow, André Lottmann, Torger Möller (Hg.)  
**VÖLLIG LOSGELÖST?**  
**GOVERNANCE DER WISSENSCHAFT**  
BAND DER 6. iFQ-JAHRESTAGUNG  
iFQ-Working Paper No.15 | März 2014

# The function of Science in and for Society

## Requirement of “usefulness” of Science for Society: Science as a tool to help solve the societal “Grand Challenges”

WR

WISSENSCHAFTSRAT

Science can contribute to the recognition and understanding of Grand Societal Challenges; however, the establishing a societal consensus on the significance of these challenges is a separate task. In this regard, political, scientific and other societal stakeholders |<sup>37</sup> must work together in identifying new Grand Societal Challenges. To initiate the necessary changes, decisions need to be taken that provide long-term orientation and encourage coordinated action. Ulti-



For example, the term “Grand Societal Challenges” |<sup>1</sup> is used in programmes for research and innovation funded by the EU and at state level to refer to the contributions of science for society as a whole, to identify areas of action that are of particular importance for science policy, to describe the rationale for public funding of science and to formulate the expectations associated with this funding for recipients. In addition, scientific institutions and universities use this term to emphasise the societal relevance and the profile of their research work and to support their claims for resources. Although this term ap-

## The function of Science in and for Society

**Is the idea of societal usefulness compatible with the picture of Science as a self-referential endeavor (“Ivory Tower”)?**

→ Not everybody seems to believe that:

*„[...] Reason enough to be careful. In the 20th century we have already painfully experienced what it means when science and research are exclusively put into service for so-called societal demands [...].“*

„[...]Grund genug, sorgfältig aufzupassen. Im 20. Jahrhundert haben wir in Deutschland zweimal auf bittere Weise erfahren, was es bedeutet, wenn Forschung und Wissenschaft ausschließlich in den Dienst sogenannter gesellschaftlicher Interessen gestellt werden [...].“

(Günther Stock, President of the Academy of Sciences and Humanities In Berlin, „Festsitzung“ - Leibniz Day, 28 June 2014)

## How to increase value and reduce waste when research priorities are set

Iain Chalmers, Michael B Bracken, Ben Djulbegovic, Silvio Garattini, Jonathan Grant, A Metin Gülmezoglu, David W Howells, John P A Ioannidis, Sandy Oliver

Lancet 2014; 383: 156–65

Published Online

January 8, 2014

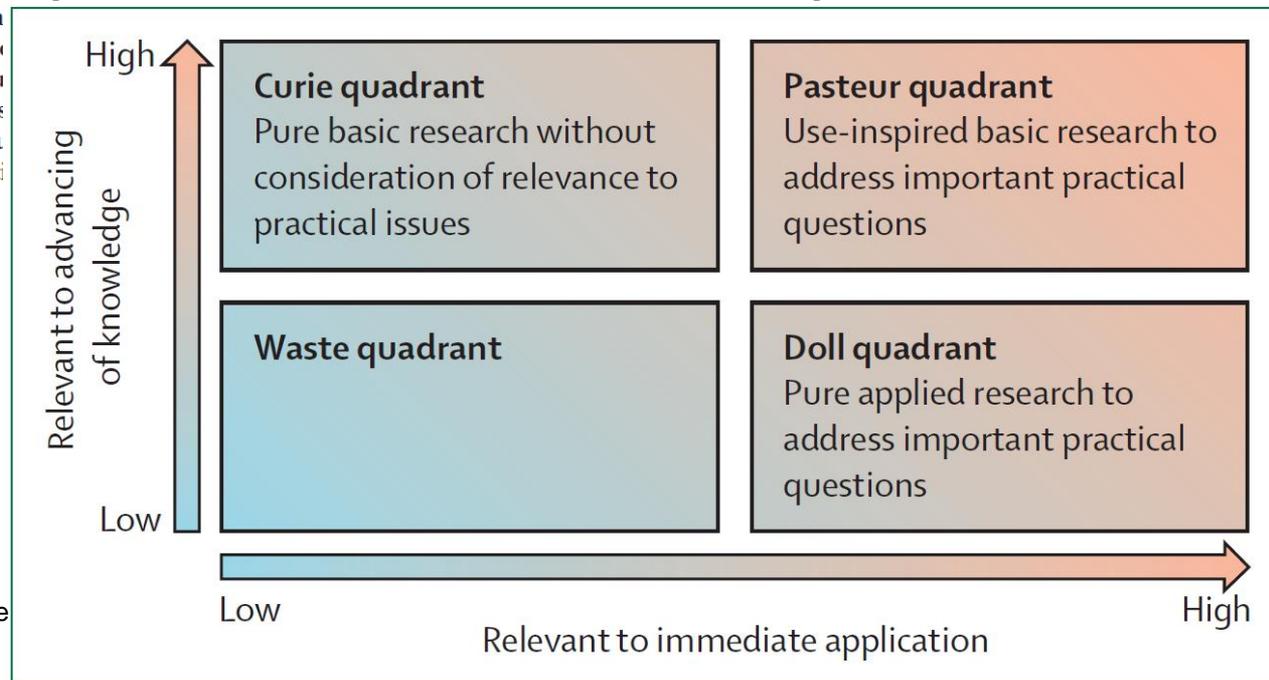
[http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(13\)62229-1](http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(13)62229-1)

This is the first in a Series of five papers about research

James Lind Initiative, Oxford, UK (Sir I Chalmers DSc); School of Public Health and School of Medicine, Yale University, New Haven, CT, USA (Prof M B Bracken PhD); Center for Evidence-Based Medicine and Health Outcomes Research, Division of Internal Medicine,

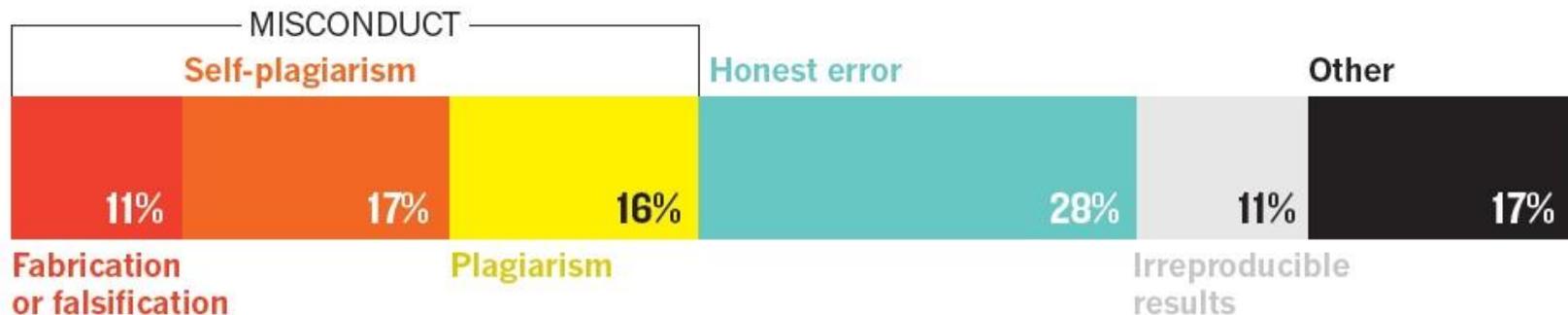
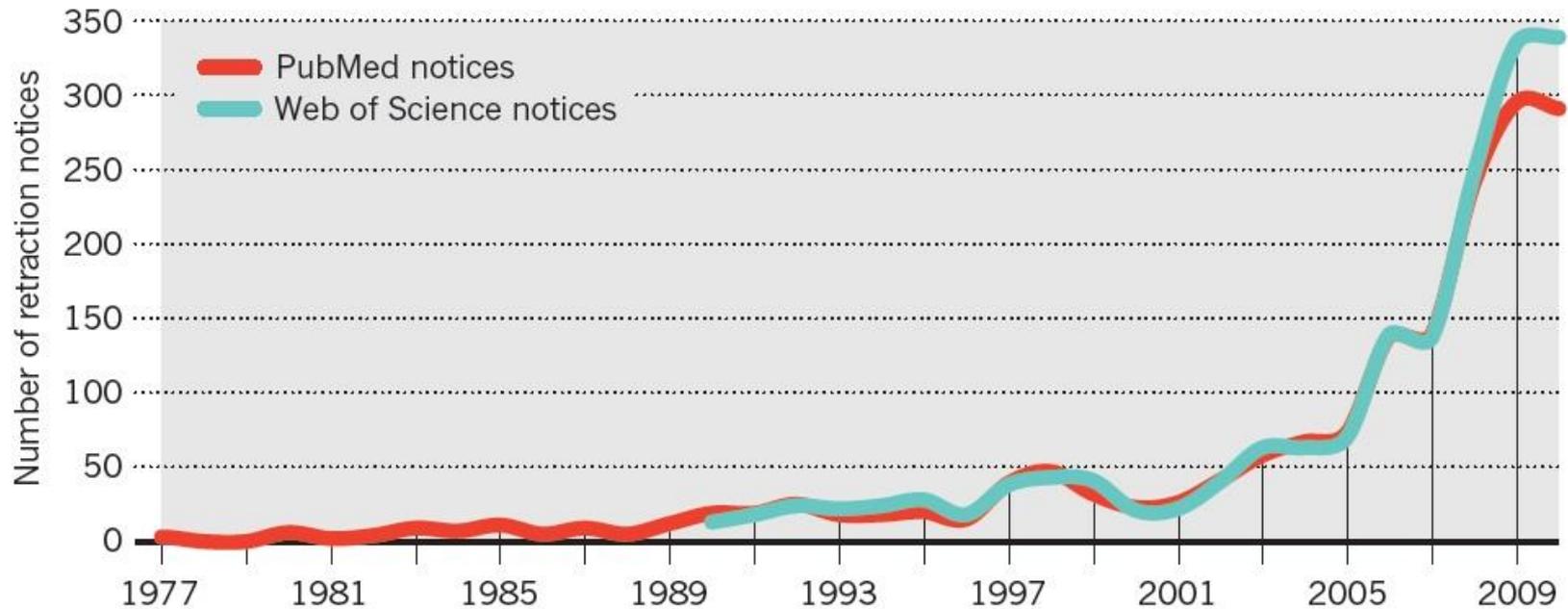
The increase in annual global investment in biomedical research—reaching US\$240 billion in 2010—has resulted in important health dividends for patients and the public. However, much research does not lead to worthwhile achievements, partly because some studies are done to improve understanding of basic mechanisms that might not have relevance for human health. Additionally, good research ideas often do not yield the anticipated results. As long as the way in which these ideas are prioritised for research is transparent and warranted, these disappointments should not be deemed wasteful; they are simply an inevitable feature of the way science works. However, some sources of waste cannot be justified. In this report, we discuss how avoidable waste can be considered when research priorities

are set. We have four recommendations. First, the transparency of research should always be preceded by research that is in progress should have primary responsibility for reducing waste. Second, the transparency of research should always be preceded by research that is in progress should have primary responsibility for reducing waste.



Quelle: Chalmers, Iain et al. 2014: How to increase value and reduce waste when research priorities are set." In: Lancet 383 (2014), S. 156–165.

# Misconduct



Richard van Noorden 2011: The trouble with retractions. In: Nature 478 (2011), S. 27.

## Art. 5 Absatz III GG

(3) Kunst und Wissenschaft, Forschung und Lehre sind frei. Die Freiheit der Lehre entbindet nicht von der Treue zur Verfassung.

# Why do we need academic freedom?

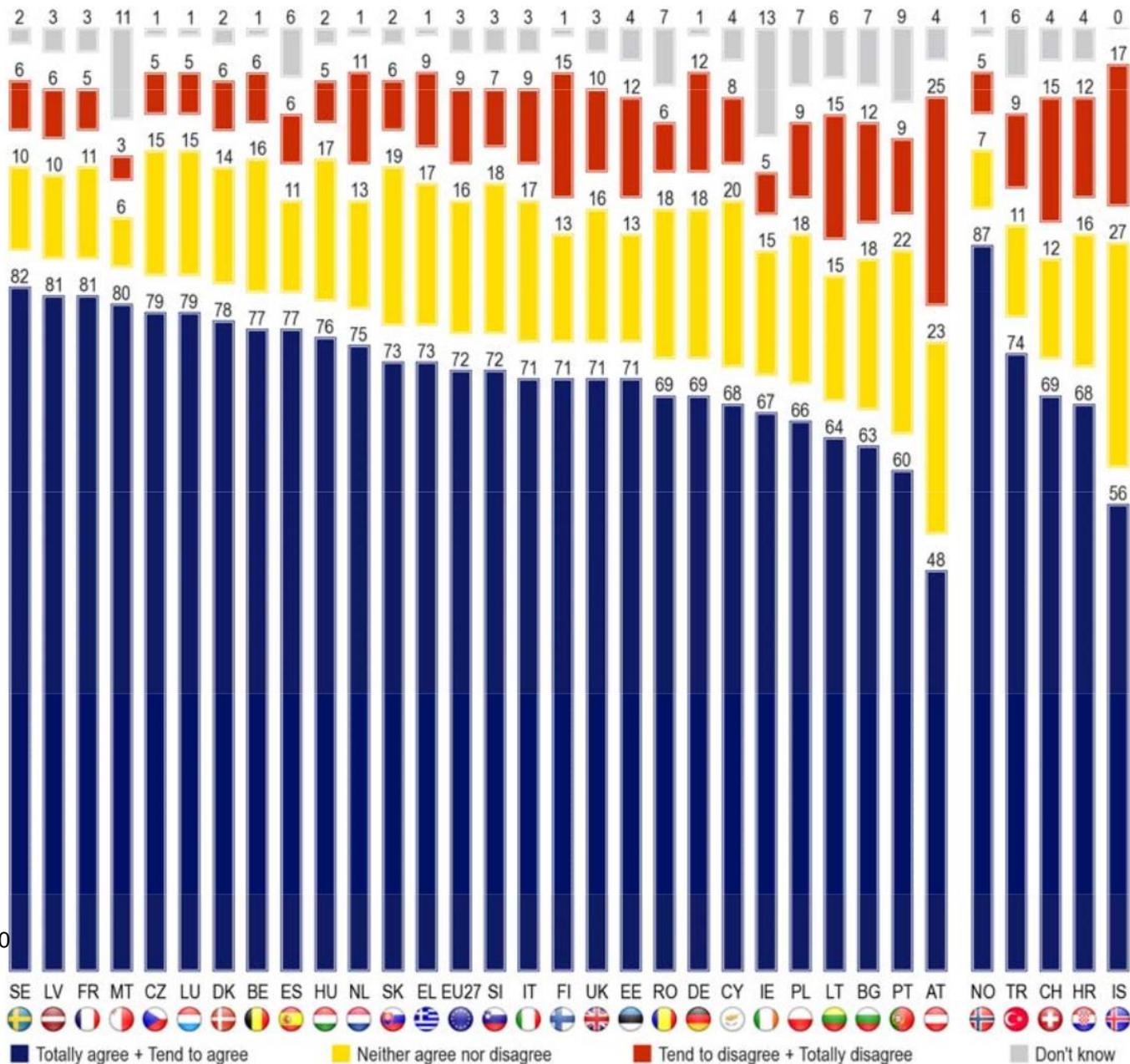
**Science resumes a societal function by ensuring the freedom of discourse; Science discovers, science searches for truth**

→ This idea of science is not ubiquitous:

*„America risks drifting into a new Age of Ignorance. [...] Science deniers are on the march - and they're winning hearts and minds more successfully than the academic experts whose work they deride and undermine.“* (The Washington Post, 30 January 2015)

- Public mistrust towards science stems from various reasons, such as scientific fraud and misconduct in the past, or the assumption that science serves the scientists' self-interests
- Report „Public and Scientists' Views on Science and Society“ (AAAS) shows that both the public and scientists value the contributions of Science. However, there are large differences in how each perceives science issues: 86% of scientists e.g. favor **vaccinations for children**, while only 68% of the general public agree; 87% of scientists say that **climate change** is caused by human activity compared to 50% of the public.

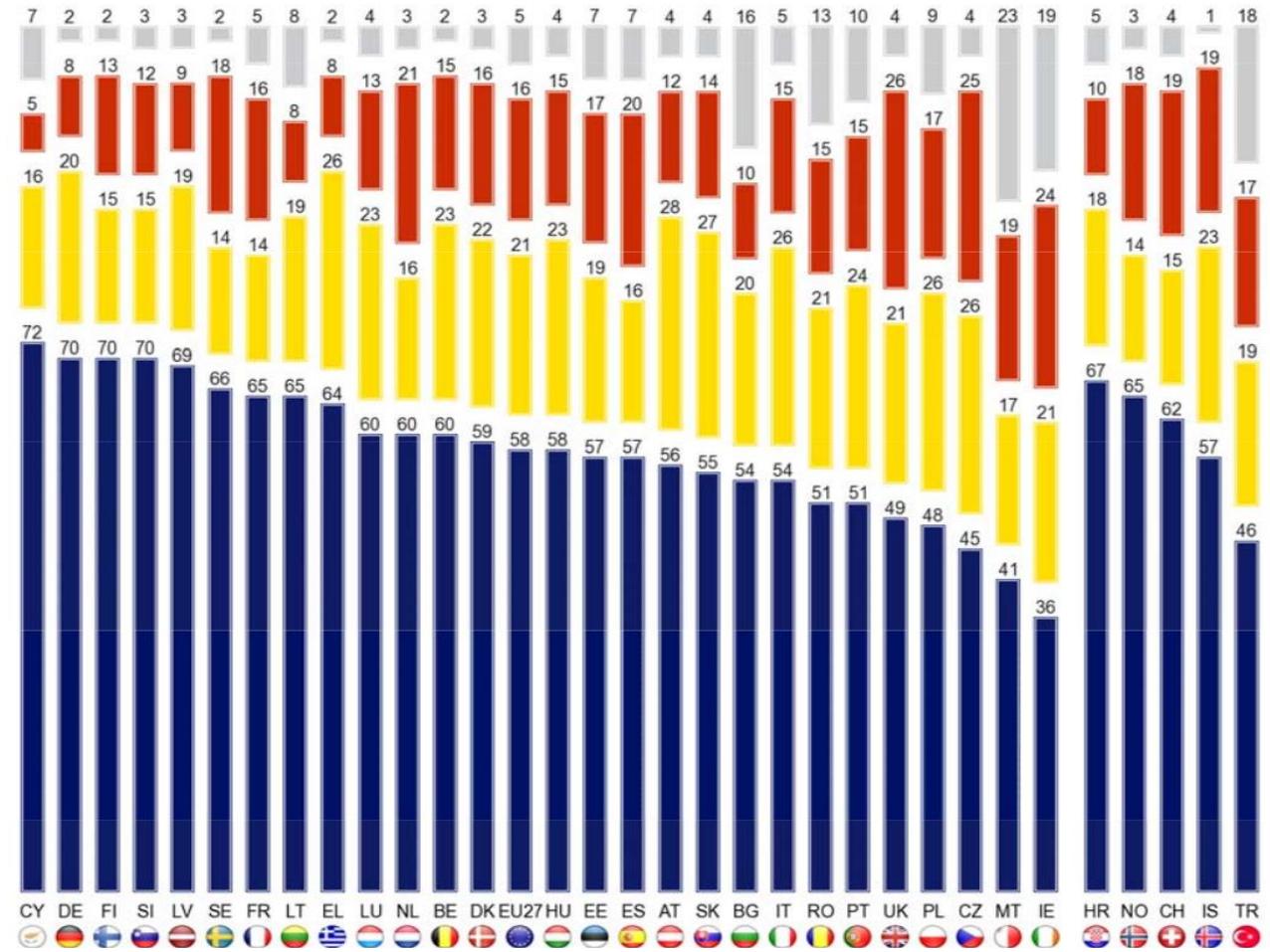
# Even if it brings no immediate benefits, scientific research which adds to knowledge should be supported by Government.



Special EUROBAROMETER 340 "Science and Technology" European Commission 2010

# We can no longer trust scientists to tell the truth about controversial scientific and technological issues because they depend more and more on money from industry.

Special EUROBAROMETER 340 "Science and Technology" European Commission 2010

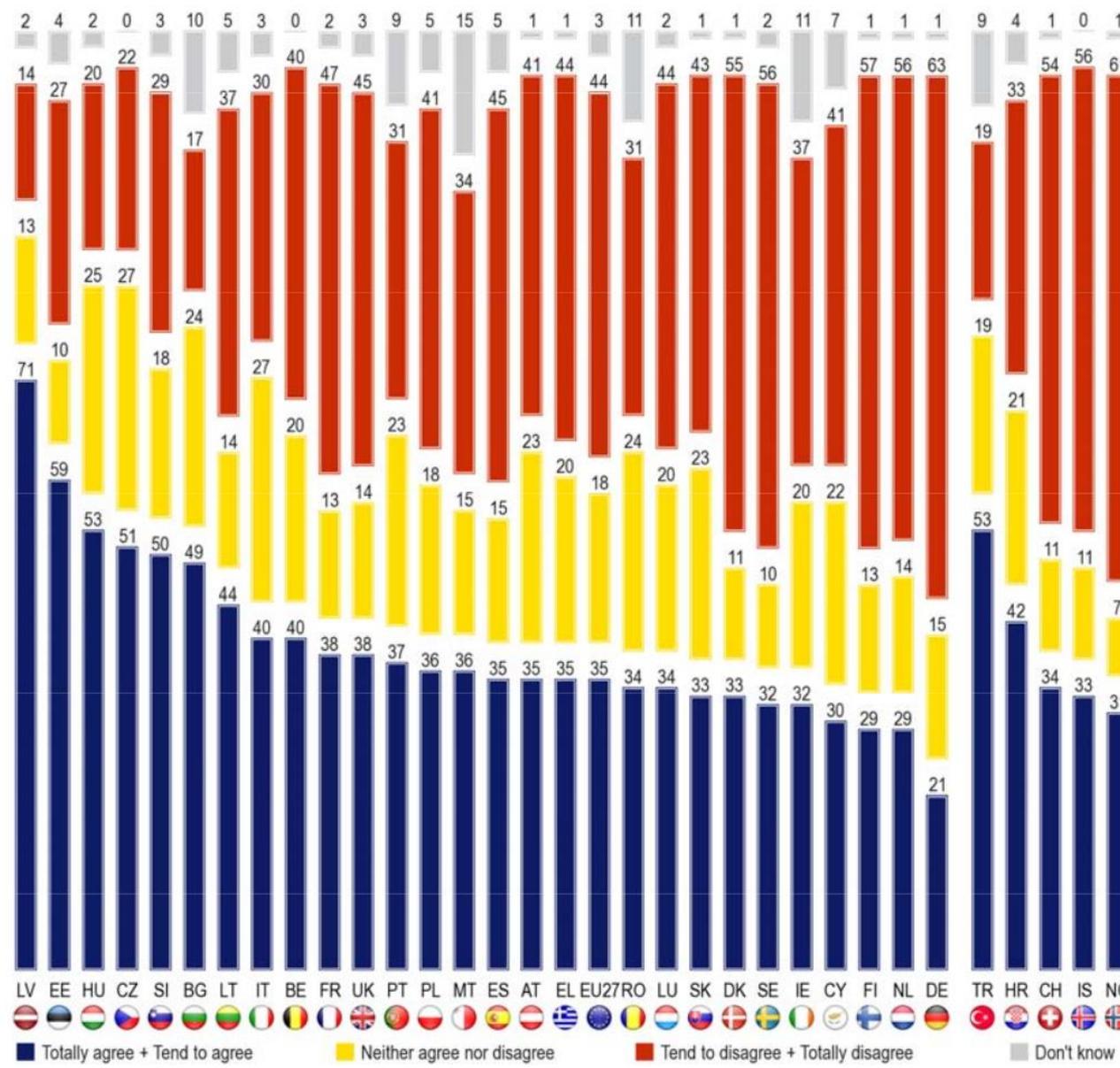


We can no longer trust scientists to tell the truth about controversial scientific and technological issues because they depend more and more on money from industry



# Science should have no limits to what it is able to investigate

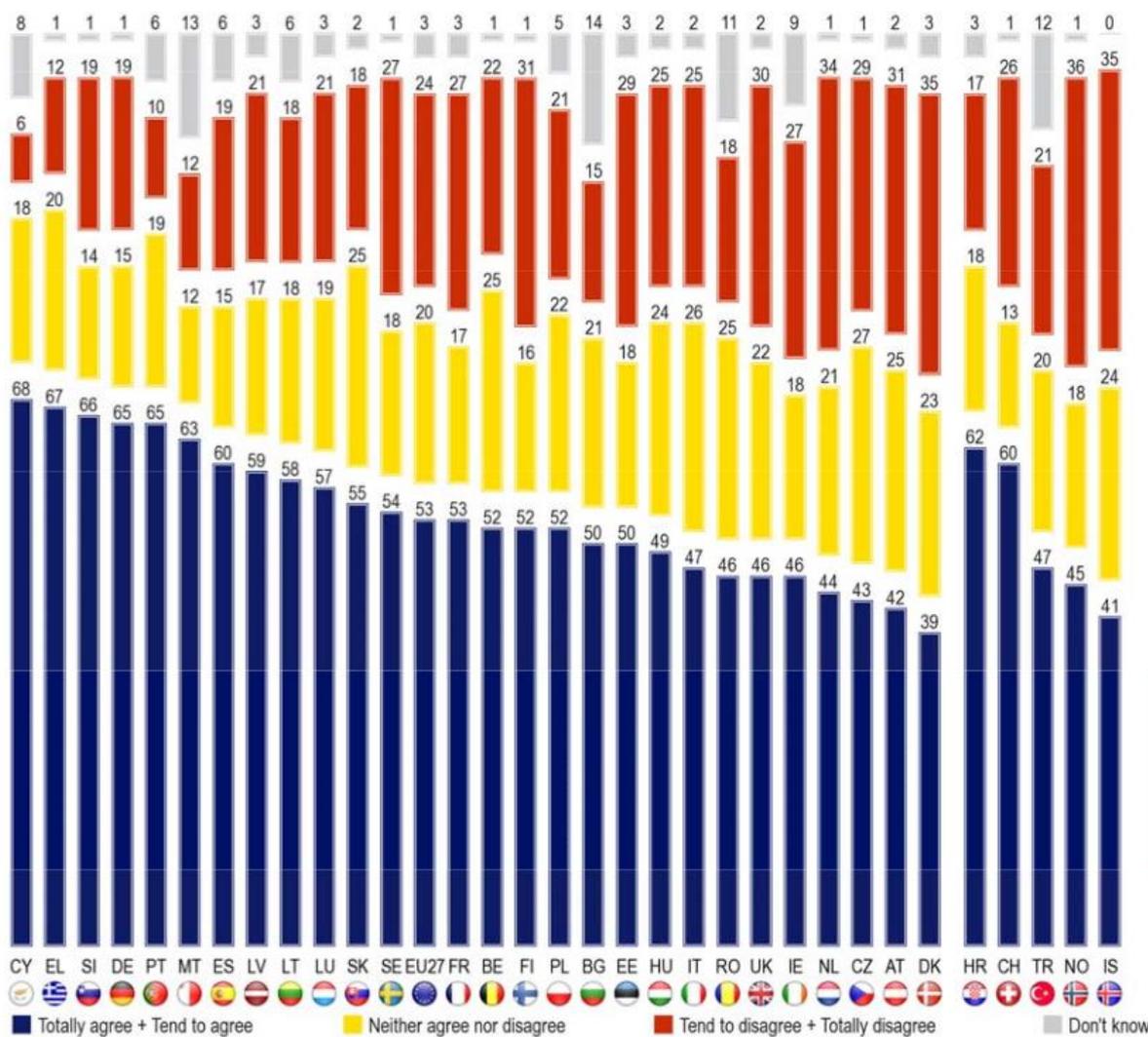
for the group who are very interested in science 42% of respondents are likely to agree that science should have no limit, while for the group who has no interest in science only 29% of respondents agree.



Special EUROBAROMETER 340 "Science and Technology" European Commission 2010

# Because of their knowledge, scientists have a power that makes them dangerous.

Special EUROBAROMETER 340 "Science and Technology" European Commission 2010





# Political Correctness as a threat for academic freedom?

## Universities are places where the intellectual debate knows no limitation – or does it?

- The shifting of the balance of power rewards the requirements of the students with authority: US students pay high enrollment fees and become thus consumers while the Universities turn into service-providers
- The number of teaching staff with a Full Professorship is sinking, only 25% of the teaching staff are employed indefinite
- As a consequence, there is great uncertainty among the teaching staff, critique of excessive political correctness among students is only expressed anonymously
- *Microaggressions, Trigger Warnings, Safe Place*: tools in a struggle for an emotional well-being of American students
- → This grasp of political correctness intervenes as regulation tool for the free discourse

## Political Correctness as a threat for academic freedom?

### „Recognizing Microaggressions and the Messages They Send“

- To satisfy the discussions on „Microaggressions“, the University of California (UCLA), Los Angeles released a Code of Conduct in 2014 for a politically correct use of language

THEMES	MICROAGGRESSION EXAMPLES	MESSAGE
<p><b>Alien in One's Own Land</b> When Asian Americans, Latino Americans and others who look different or are named differently from the dominant culture are assumed to be foreign-born</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“Where are you from or where were you born?”</li> <li>“You speak English very well.”</li> <li>“What are you? You're so interesting looking!”</li> <li>A person asking an Asian American or Latino American to teach them words in their native language.</li> <li>Continuing to mispronounce the names of students after students have corrected the person time and time again. Not willing to listen closely and learn the pronunciation of a non-English based name.</li> </ul>	<p>You are not a true American.</p> <p>You are a perpetual foreigner in your own country.</p> <p>Your ethnic/racial identity makes you exotic.</p>

# Political Correctness as a threat for academic freedom?

## In the case of the professor Herfried Münkler, the Internet played an important role

- Via an anonymous Blog called „Münkler-Watch (sic!) the highly respected political scientist is defamed as a „militaristic extremist“
- Münkler offered to talk to the students in a public debate. The offer was declined for „fear of retribution“.



über uns Münkler-Watch materialien kontakt

HU.BLOGSPORT.DE ZU BERLIN  
GEGEN DEN EXTREMISMUS  
DER MITTE

Type and Wait to Search

**Warum Münkler-Watch? Eine Aktions-Beschreibung**

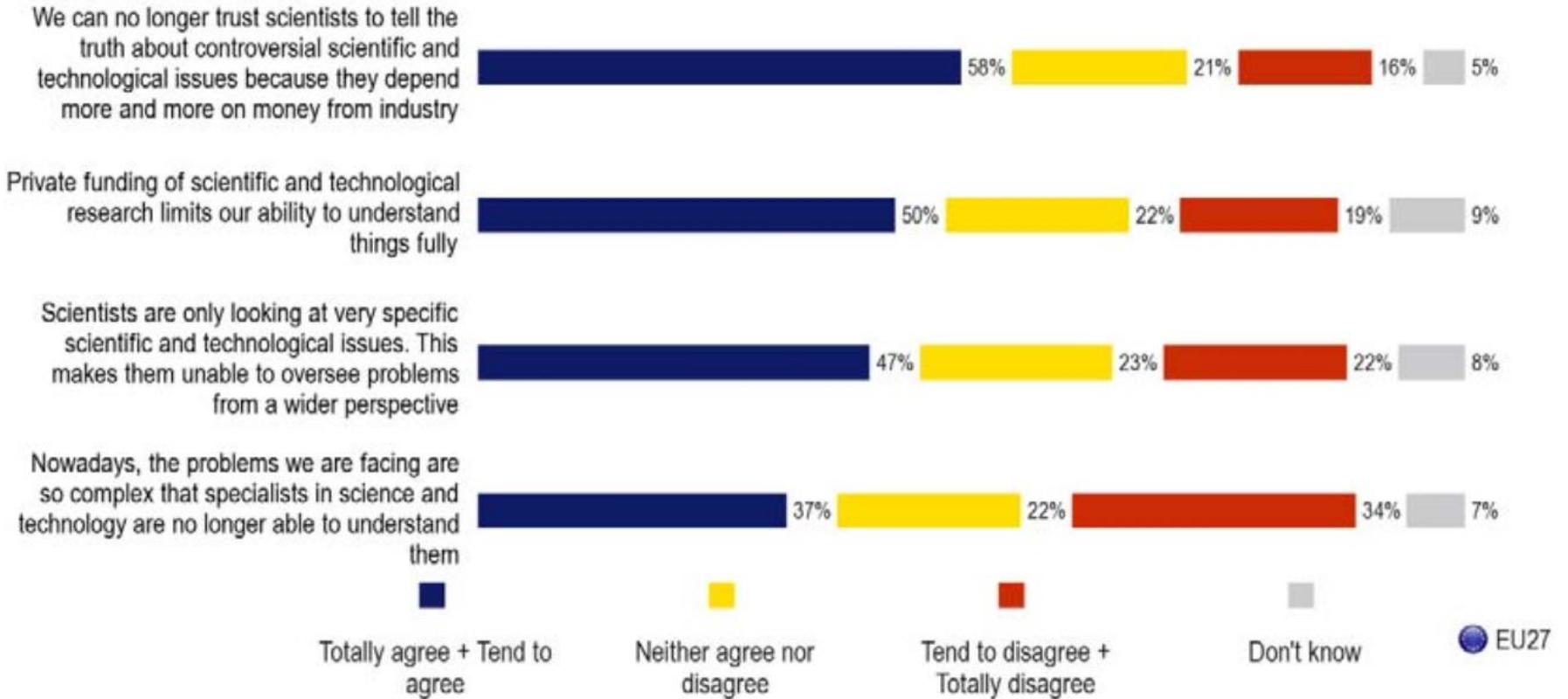
Der Professor für „Theorie der Politik“ am humboldt’schen Institut für Sozialwissenschaften in Berlin ist eine kontroverse Figur für Studierende. In wöchentlichen Abständen veröffentlichen sie kurze Zusammenfassungen seiner Vorlesung „Politische Theorie und Ideengeschichte“. Danach folgt stets ein kritischer Kommentar frei gewählter Versatzstücke aus der Vorlesung – oft mit weiterführenden Lesetipps und einer Einbettung in Münklers sonstige Tätigkeit für Militär, Politik und Medien.



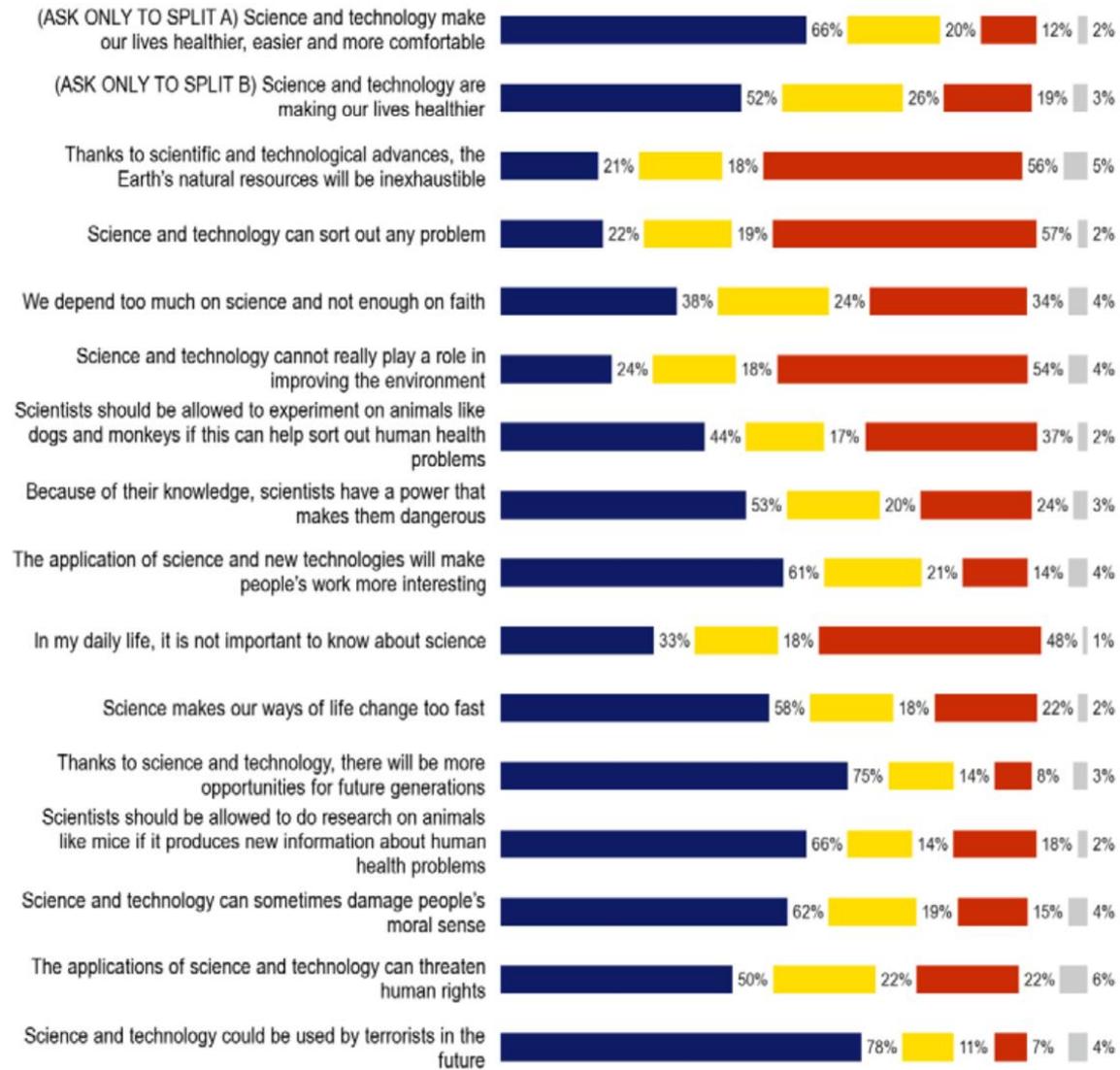
The modified HU logo, that represents a silenced and a deafened Humboldt as well as a blinded third person, maybe a student, leaves room for multiple, though probably not-intended, interpretations. One of them concerns the depiction of the silenced Humboldt which could be interpreted as a symbol for the restriction of the academic discourse at Universities – but in inversed roles: Humboldt as a representative of the University and Science, is gagged and prohibited to speak freely.

# Thank You!

QC8. To what extent do you agree with the following statements?

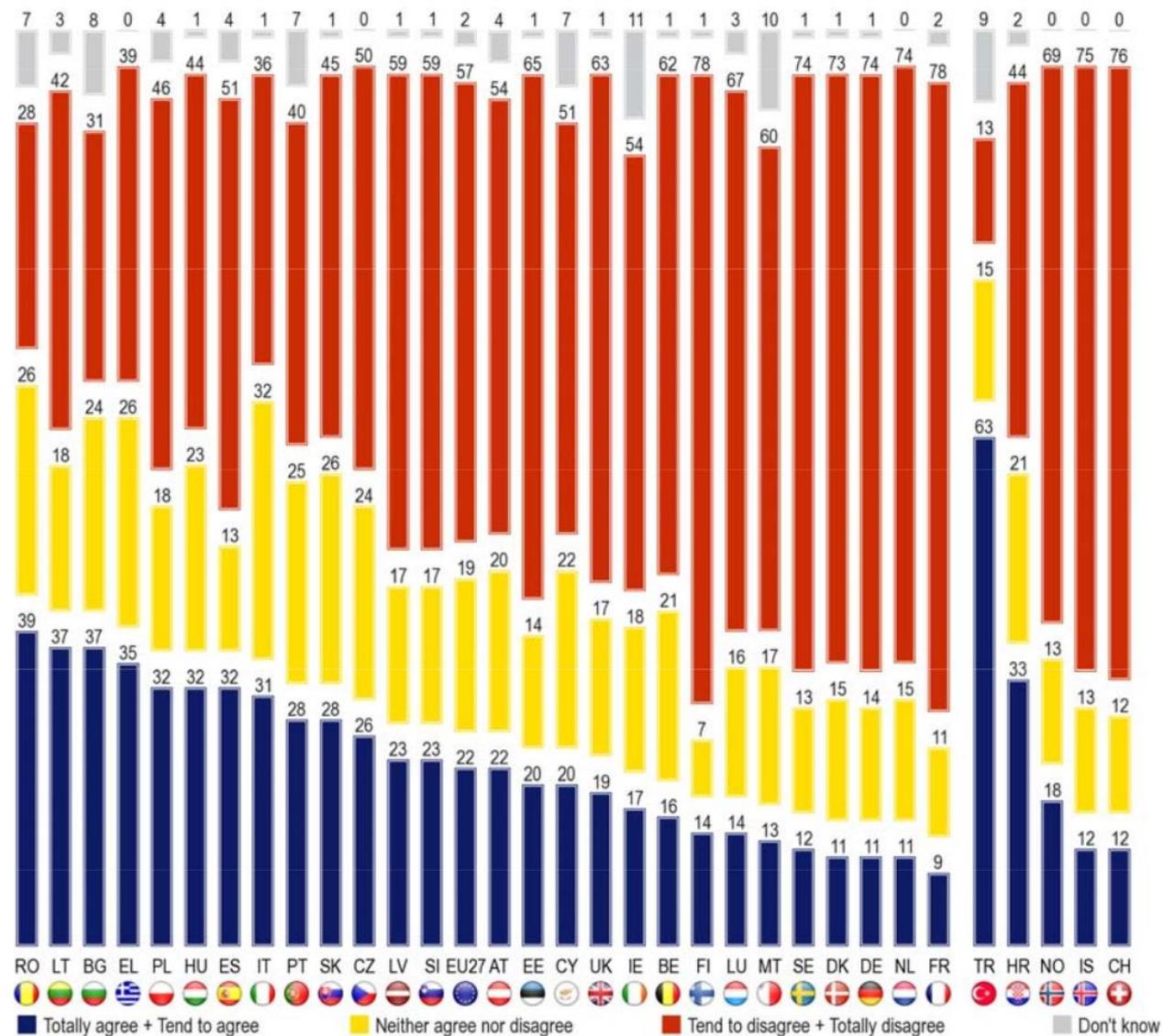


QC6. I would like to read out some statements that people have made about science, technology or the environment. For each statement, please tell me how much you agree or disagree.



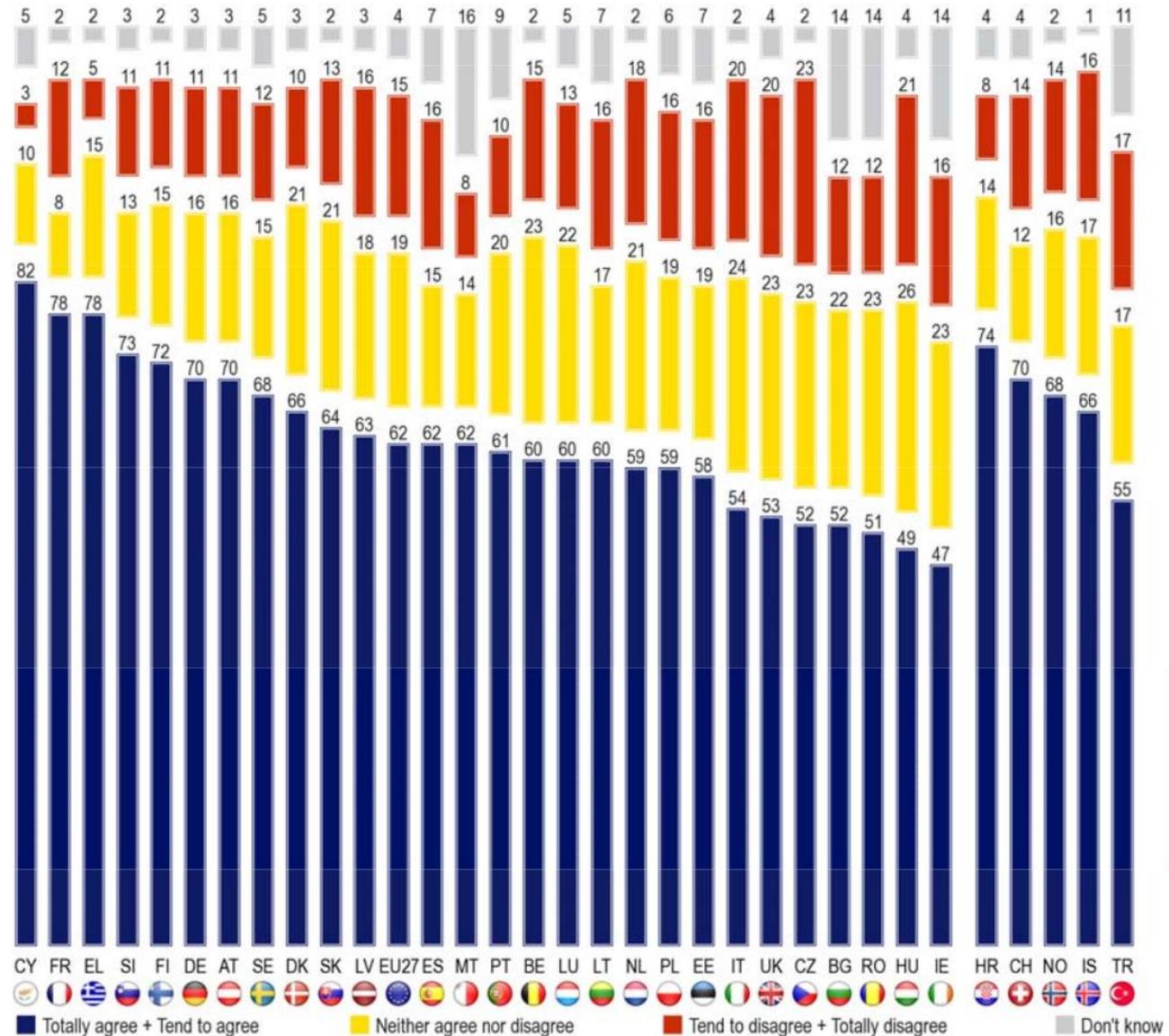
QC6.4. I would like to read out some statements that people have made about science, technology or the environment. For each statement, please tell me how much you agree or disagree.

Science and technology can sort out any problem



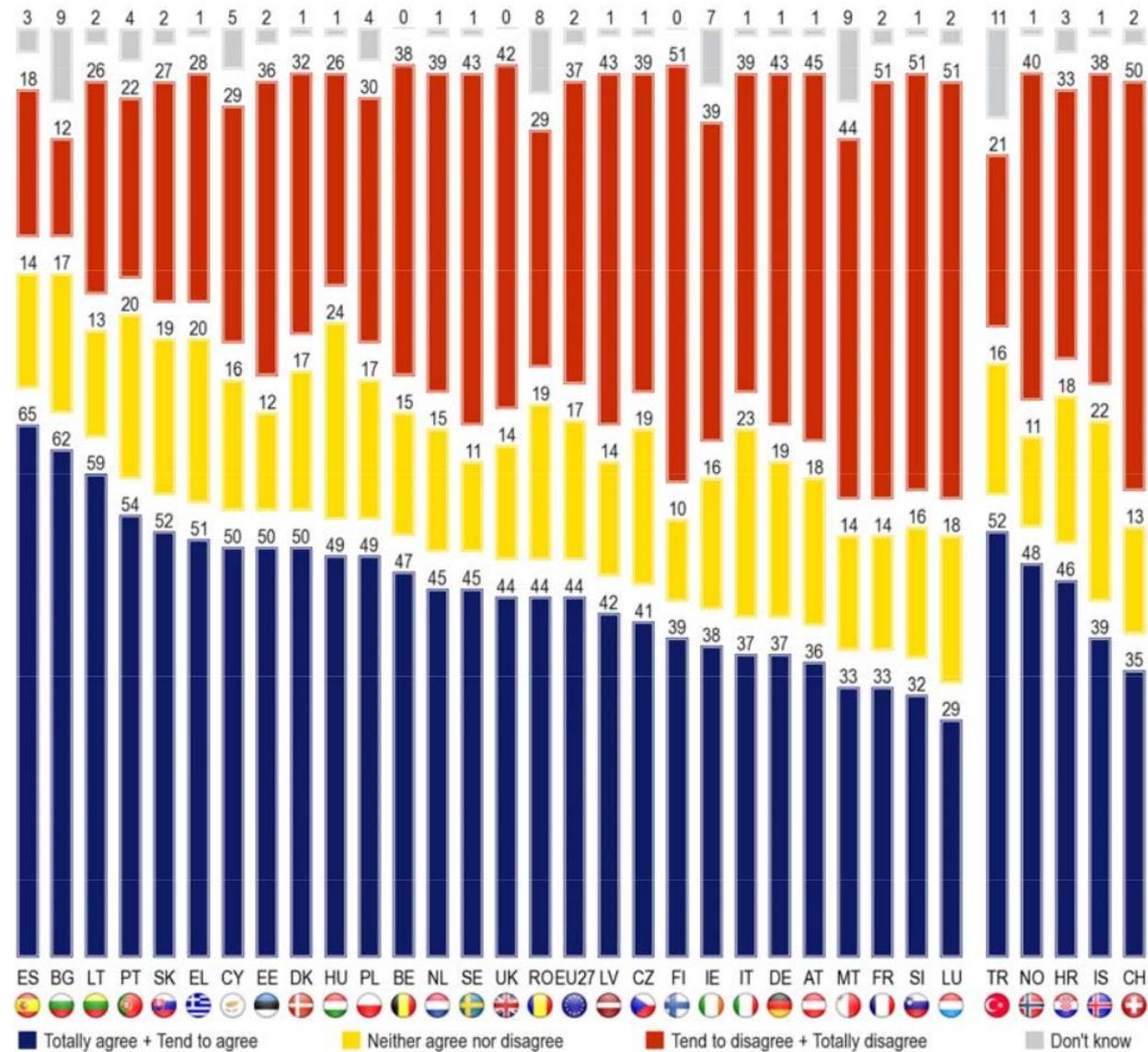
QC6.14. I would like to read out some statements that people have made about science, technology or the environment. For each statement, please tell me how much you agree or disagree.

Science and technology can sometimes damage people's moral sense



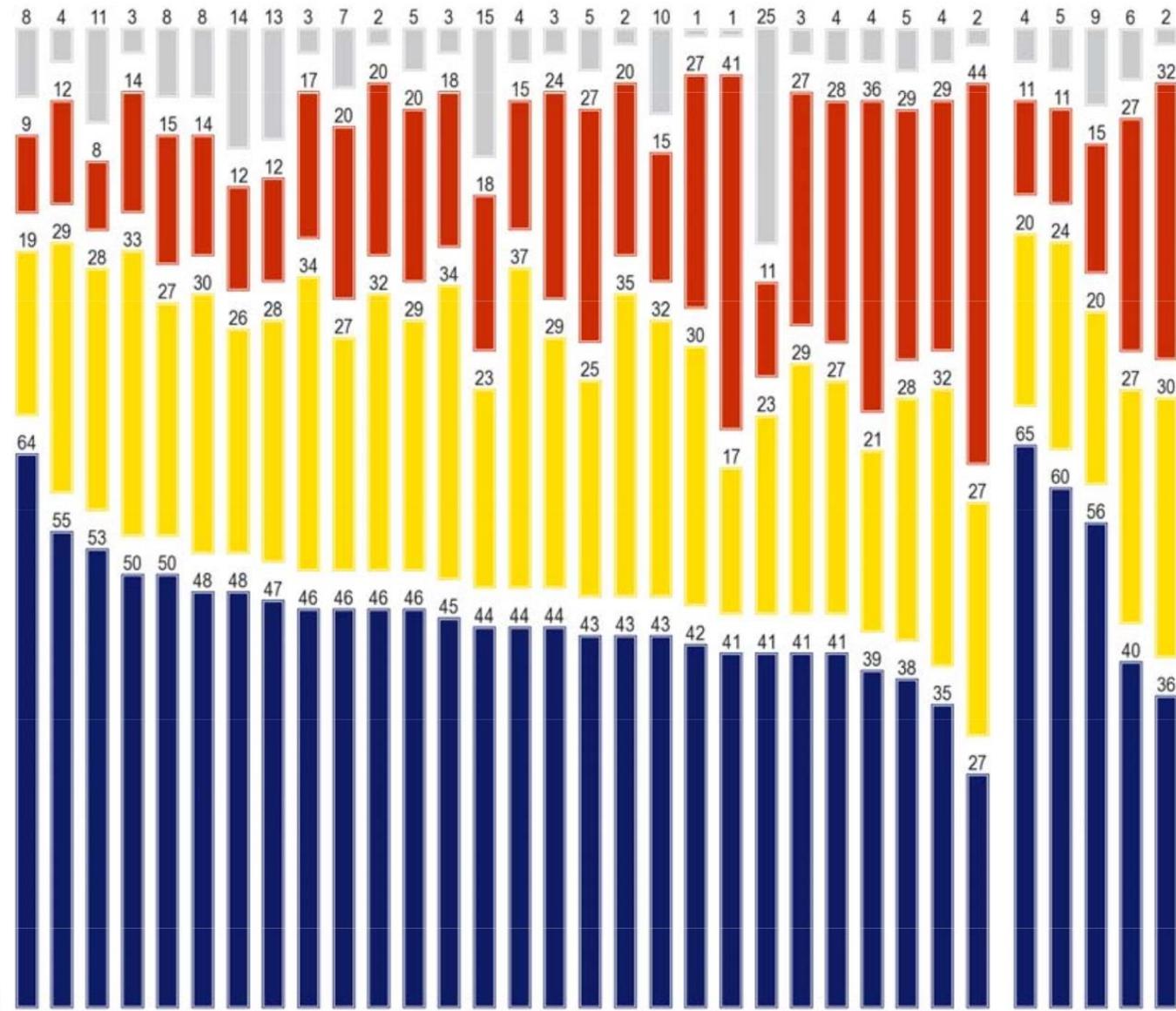
QC6.7. I would like to read out some statements that people have made about science, technology or the environment. For each statement, please tell me how much you agree or disagree.

Scientists should be allowed to experiment on animals like dogs and monkeys if this can help sort out human health problems



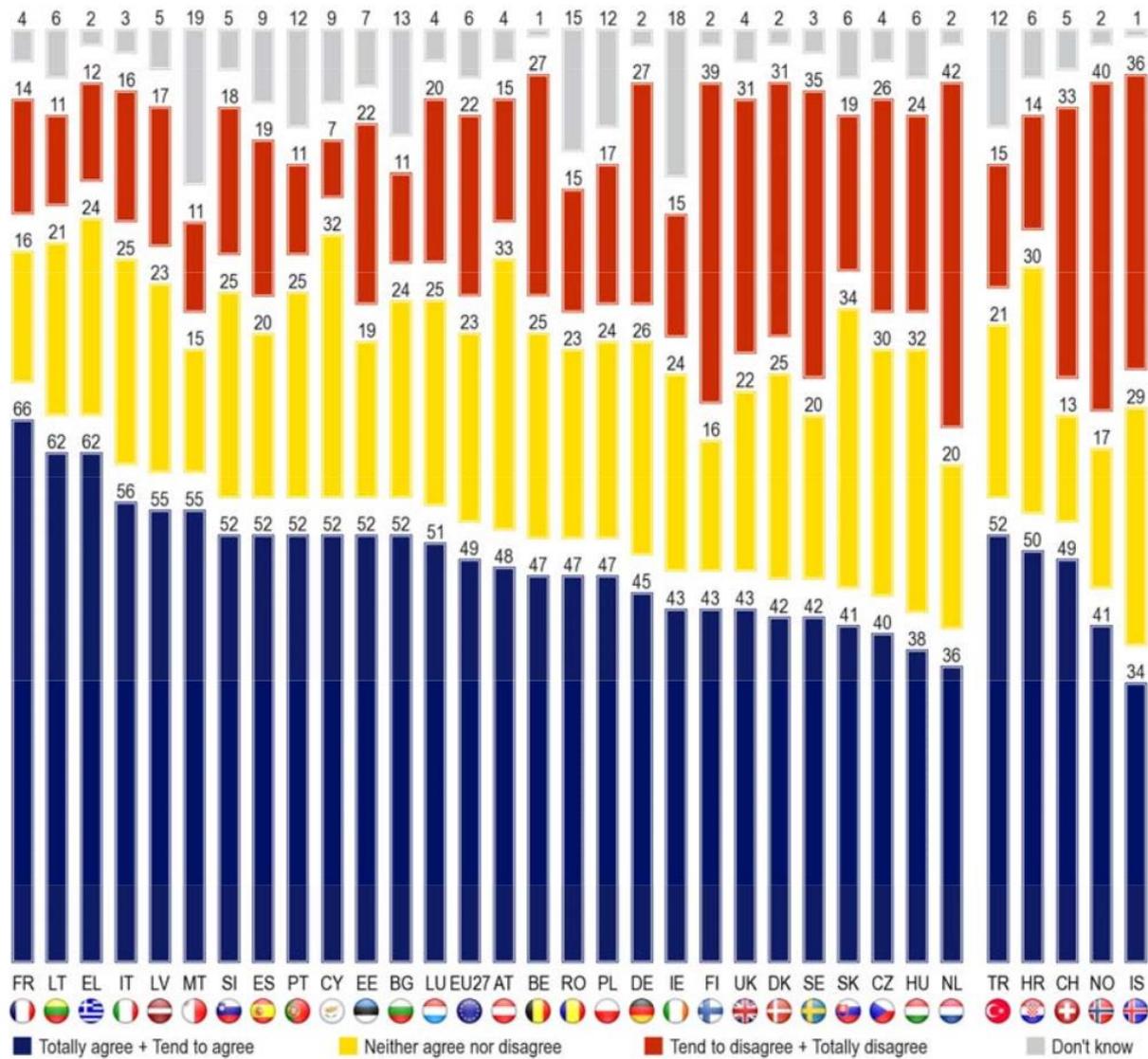
QC7.3. I would like to read out some other statements. For each of them, please tell me how much you agree or disagree.

The benefits of science are greater than any harmful effects it may have

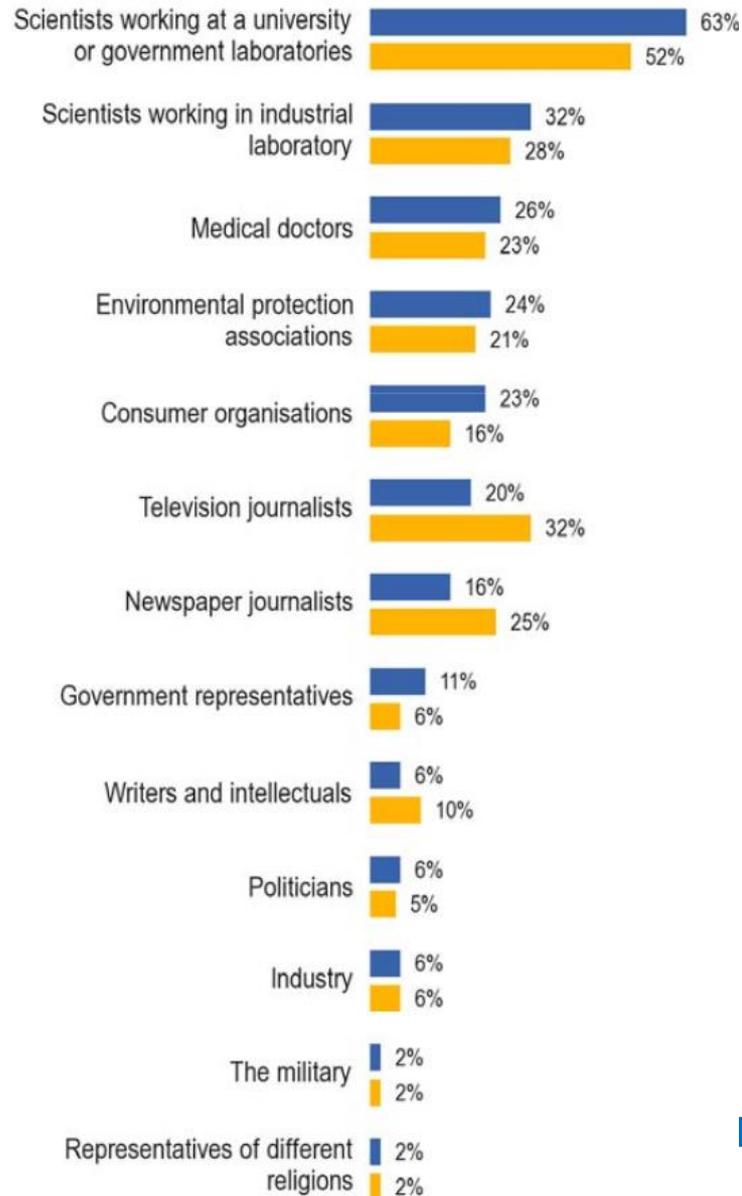


QC7.7. I would like to read out some other statements. For each of them, please tell me how much you agree or disagree.

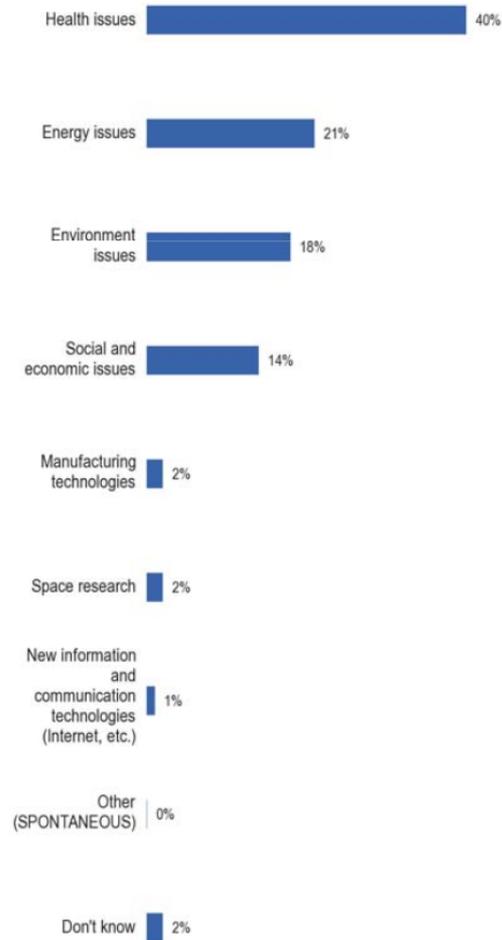
If a new technology poses risks that are uncertain and not yet fully understood, the development of this technology should be stopped even if benefits are expected



QC5. Among the following categories of people and organisations working in (OUR COUNTRY), which are the best qualified to explain the impact of scientific and technological developments on society?



QC12. Which of the following area of research should be tackled in priority by researchers in the European Union?



I

Wieviel Engel sitzen können  
auf der Spitze einer Nadel –  
wolle dem dein Denken gönnen,  
Leser sonder Furcht und Tadel!

»Alle!« wirds dein Hirn durchblitzen.  
»Denn die Engel sind doch Geister!  
Und ein ob auch noch so feister  
Geist bedarf schier nichts zum  
Sitzen.«

Ich hingegen stell den Satz auf:  
Keiner! – Denn die nie Erspähten  
können einzig nehmen Platz auf  
geistlichen Lokalitäten.

II

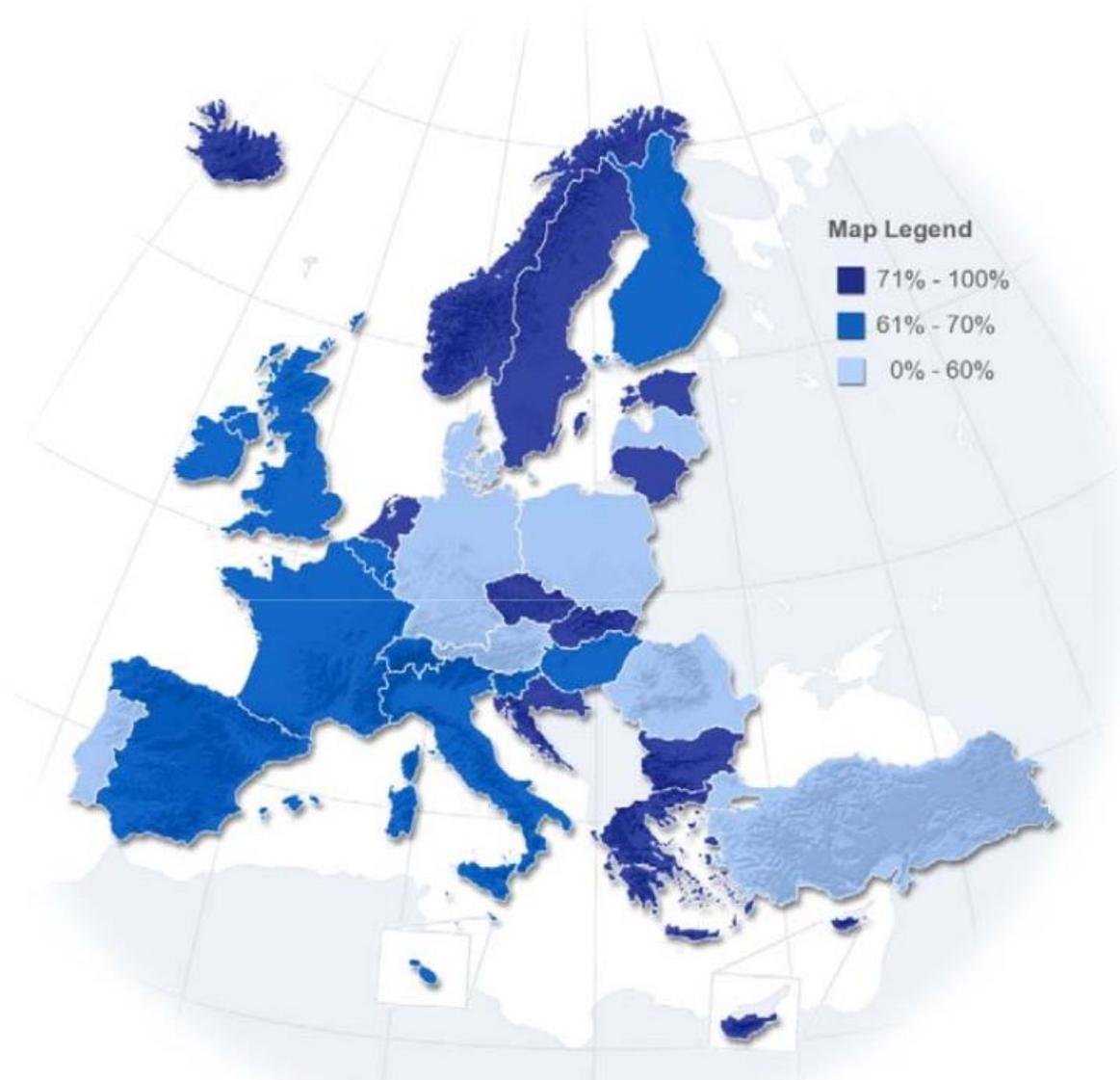
Kann ein Engel Berge steigen?  
Nein. Er ist zu leicht dazu.  
Menschenfuß und Menschenschuh  
bleibt allein dies Können eigen.

Lockt ihn dennoch dieser Sport,  
muß er wieder sich ver-erden  
und ein Menschenfräulein werden  
etwa namens Zuckertort.

Allerdings bemerkt man immer,  
was darin steckt und von wo –  
denn ein solches Frauenzimmer  
schreitet anders als nur so.

Question: QC5. Among the following categories of people and organisations working in (OUR COUNTRY), which are the best qualified to explain the impact of scientific and technological developments on society?

Answers: **Scientists working at a university or government laboratories**



# Political Correctness as a threat for academic freedom?

## The role of the Social Media

- Students belong to the first generation that grew up with Social Media
- Anonymity in the Internet and its extreme form „the shitstorm“ fronts the universitarian culture of debate
- In Germany, the phenomenon occurred in inverted roles, concerned were three professors of the Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin: Herfried Münkler, Jörg Baberowski, Michael Makropoulos
- A leftist students` association criticized the historian Prof. Dr. Jörg Baberowski. They accused the internationally highly respected researcher that his controversial thesis concerning the influence of stalinism on the crimes of the Third Reich relativized the German responsibility for war crimes and led to warmongering
- The defamation was distributed via flyers, in public lectures and in the Internet; finally, the Department of History stepped in and released a statement in defense of their professor