

Case study – Sweden

Lotta W Tomasson, Public & Science Sweden

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Lotta@vetenskapallmanhet.se



The Swedish Science Barometer

Understanding the public's knowledge, interest, and trust in science is essential for securing broad support and sufficient funding for research and innovation. Evidence base for developing relevant science communication and engagement initiatives.

- Representative survey of Swedish citizens attitudes towards science and research.
- Annual since 2002.
- Telephone interviews with a sample of individuals aged 16–74. (Approx 1,000)
- The response rate decreases from approx 60% → 35 %
- Respondents are representative in terms of gender, age and place of residence.
- The results are weighted retrospectively to ensure representativeness in terms of level of education.
- Exquiro Market Research has carried out the interviews since 2012.
- A reference group with expertise in survey methodology helps to formulate the battery of questions.
- Survey paid by Public and Science Member fees (Approx 100 member organisations)

The Swedish Science Barometer

Some questions have been asked repeatedly since the surveys began in 2002, while some new questions are being developed to follow societal developments and current events.

We monitor :

- TRUST in Researchers in general
 - ...at universities
 - ...at companies
 - ... at institutes
- TRUST for other groups in society for comparison
- INTEREST in different areas
(including science & research)
- VIEWS on Technological/Scientific development

The social perception of Science 2025

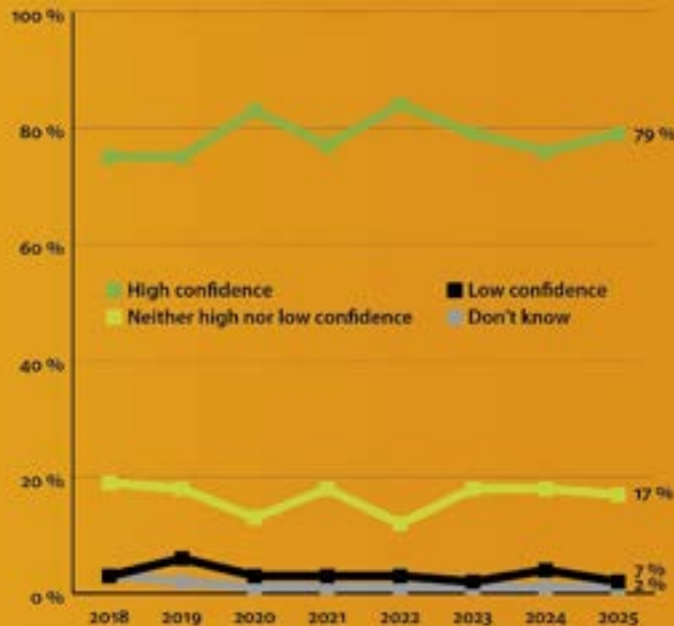
- **Confidence in Science and Scientists**
- **Optimism towards Scientific and Technological advancements**
- **Researchers' role in public and political debates**

Results / State of trust in science

HIGH CONFIDENCE IN RESEARCH

The graph shows responses to the question:
**Generally speaking, how much confidence
do you have in research?**

High confidence refers to the responses fairly and very high confidence, while low includes the responses fairly and very low. Five point scale: Very low, Fairly low, Neither high nor low, Fairly high, Very high.

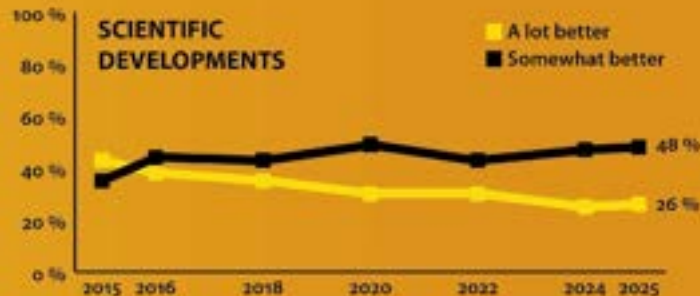
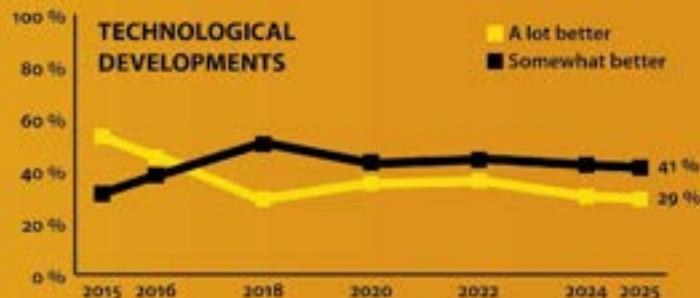


Results / State of trust in science

SCIENCE SEEN TO MAKE LIFE BETTER

The graph shows the proportion of Swedes that think that scientific/technological developments in the last 10–20 years have made life somewhat or a lot better.

Five point scale: A lot worse, Somewhat worse,
Neither better nor worse, Somewhat better, A lot better.

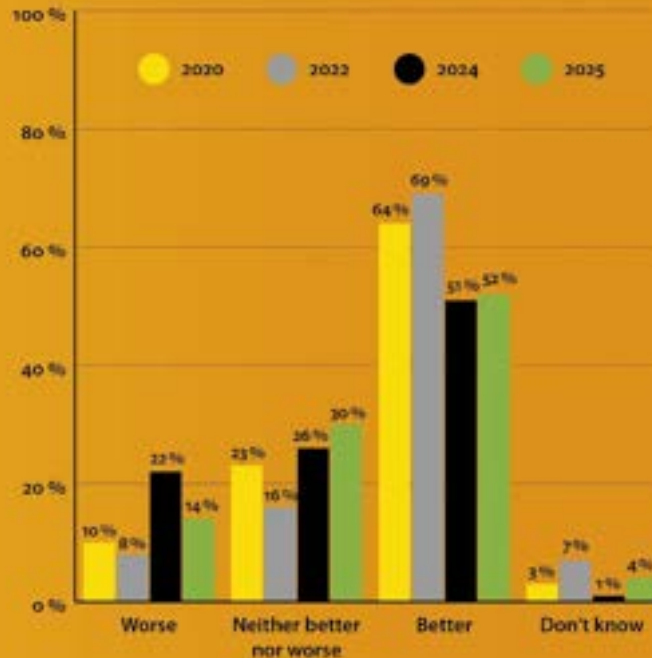


Results / State of trust in science

...BUT TECHNOLOGY OPTIMISM DECLINES

The graph shows the proportion of Swedes that think that technological developments in the next 10–20 years will make life better or worse.

Better includes the perception of somewhat or a lot better, while worse includes somewhat or a lot worse. Five point scale: A lot worse, Somewhat worse, Neither better nor worse, Somewhat better, A lot better.

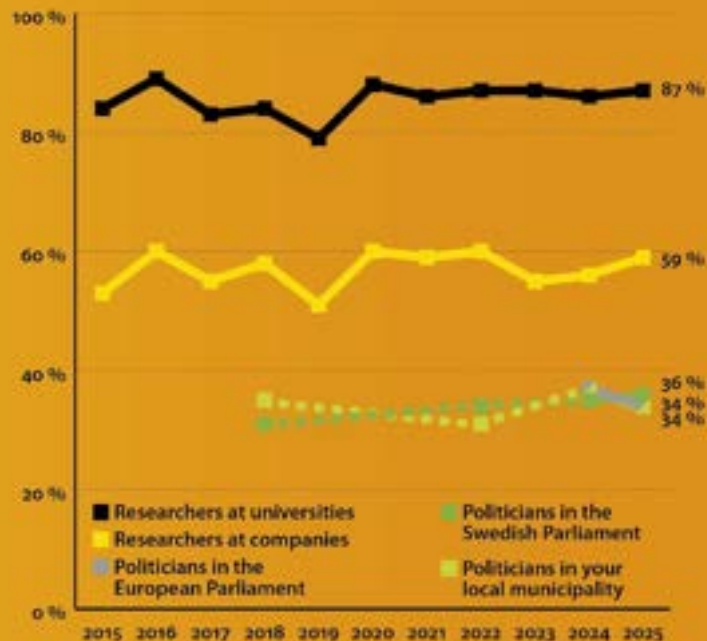


Results / State of trust in science

HIGH CONFIDENCE IN RESEARCHERS

The graph shows the proportion of Swedes
with high confidence in ...

High confidence includes the perception of having fairly
and very high confidence. Four-point scale: Very low,
Fairly low, Fairly high, Very high.

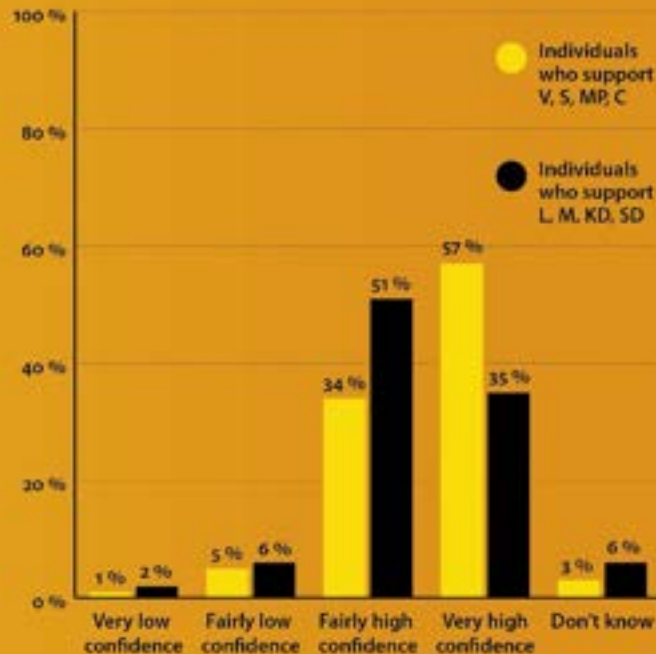


Results / State of trust in science

...AND GREATER AMONG OPPOSITION VOTERS

The graph shows how respondents who say they would vote for an opposition party versus a Tidö bloc party answer the question: **How much confidence do you have in researchers at universities?**

Four-point scale: Very low, Fairly low, Fairly high, Very high.



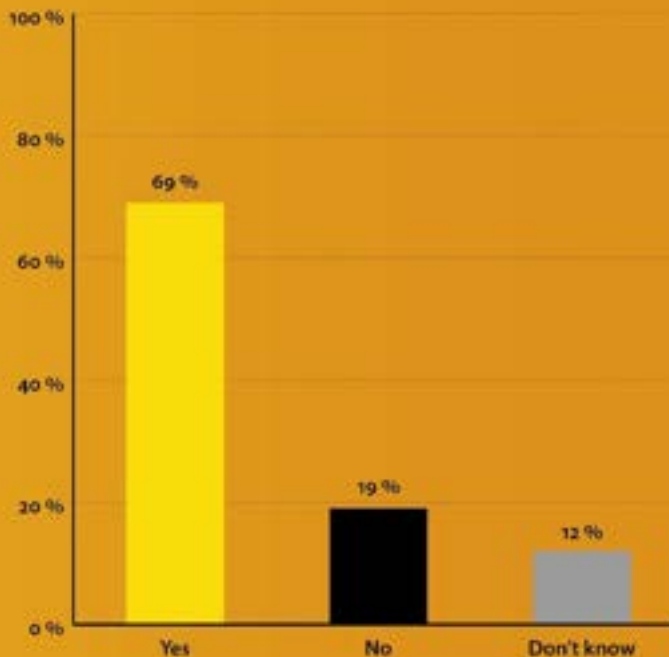
Results / State of trust in science

RESEARCHERS SHOULD EXPRESS OPINIONS

The graph shows responses to the question:
**Do you think researchers should express their
opinions on political issues related to their
research?**



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CASE-STUDY

European Social Survey

Most people can be trusted or you can't be too careful

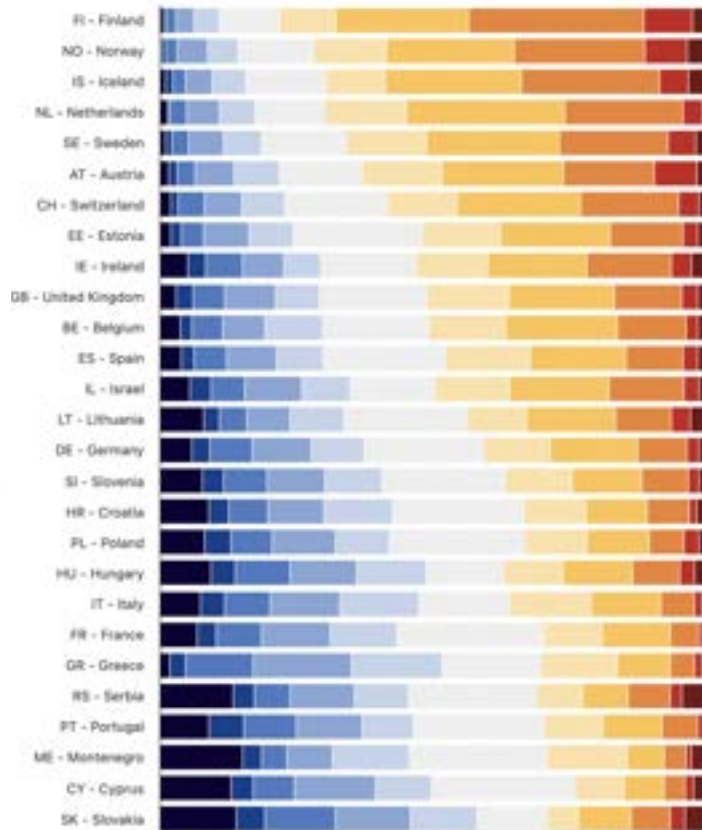
Mean



ESS round 7 (2018-2019). Social Inequality in Europe. London: contemporary Europe (18) 488077

Most people can be trusted or you can't be too careful

Ordered by mean



Trust matters!

With a person we perceive as **trustworthy**, we are more likely to ...

- ... pay **attention**
- ... accept and **follow advice**
- ... **share** our own ideas

e.g. Bennett, N., Dudo, A., Yuan, S., & Besley, J. (2019). Scientists, trainers, and the strategic communication of science. In Theory and best practices in science communication training (pp. 9-31). Routledge.



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Trust matters!

A person is regarded as more **trustworthy**, if s/he is perceived as being ...

- ... **honest**
- ... **caring**
- ... **willing to listen**
- ... **similar**
- ... **competent**

e.g. Bennett, N., Dudo, A., Yuan, S., & Besley, J. (2019). Scientists, trainers, and the strategic communication of science. In Theory and best practices in science communication training (pp. 9-31). Routledge.



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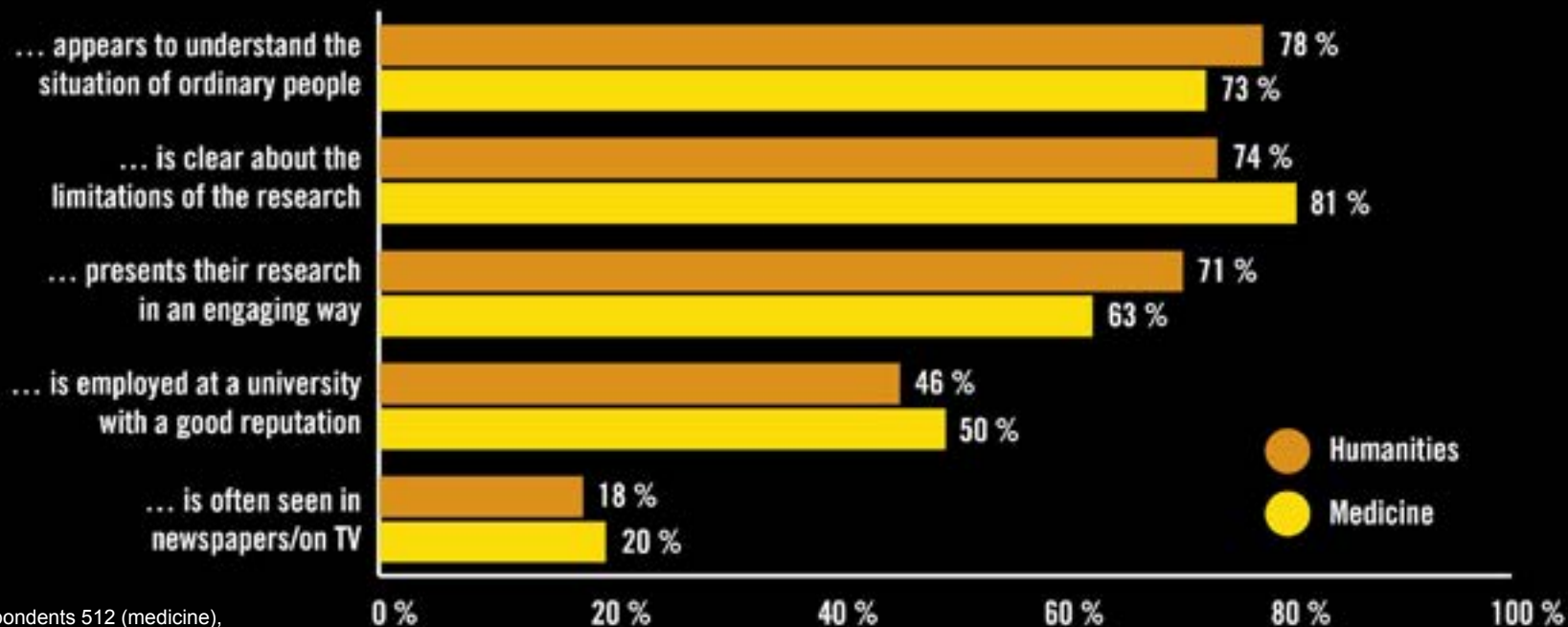
VA – PUBLIC & SCIENCE

What affects confidence?

Process	how research is conducted
Product	research results
Person	the researcher
Presentation	how research is communicated

Source: VA report 2018:5 What affects confidence in research? – Focus groups with members of the public

WHAT IS IMPORTANT FOR TRUST IN INDIVIDUAL RESEARCHERS?



No. of respondents: 512 (medicine),
512 (humanities)

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