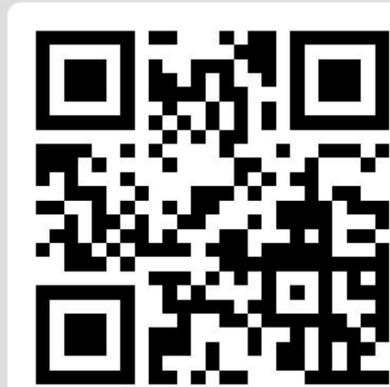


The Science and Scientist Bias

Giovanni Mazzitelli, Giornata Women in Science 2021, LNF-INFN
reference: <https://arxiv.org/abs/1905.02936>



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Active poll

Quali pensate siano le difficoltà maggiori nel capire la scienza?

068



stereotype bias



age bias



gender bias





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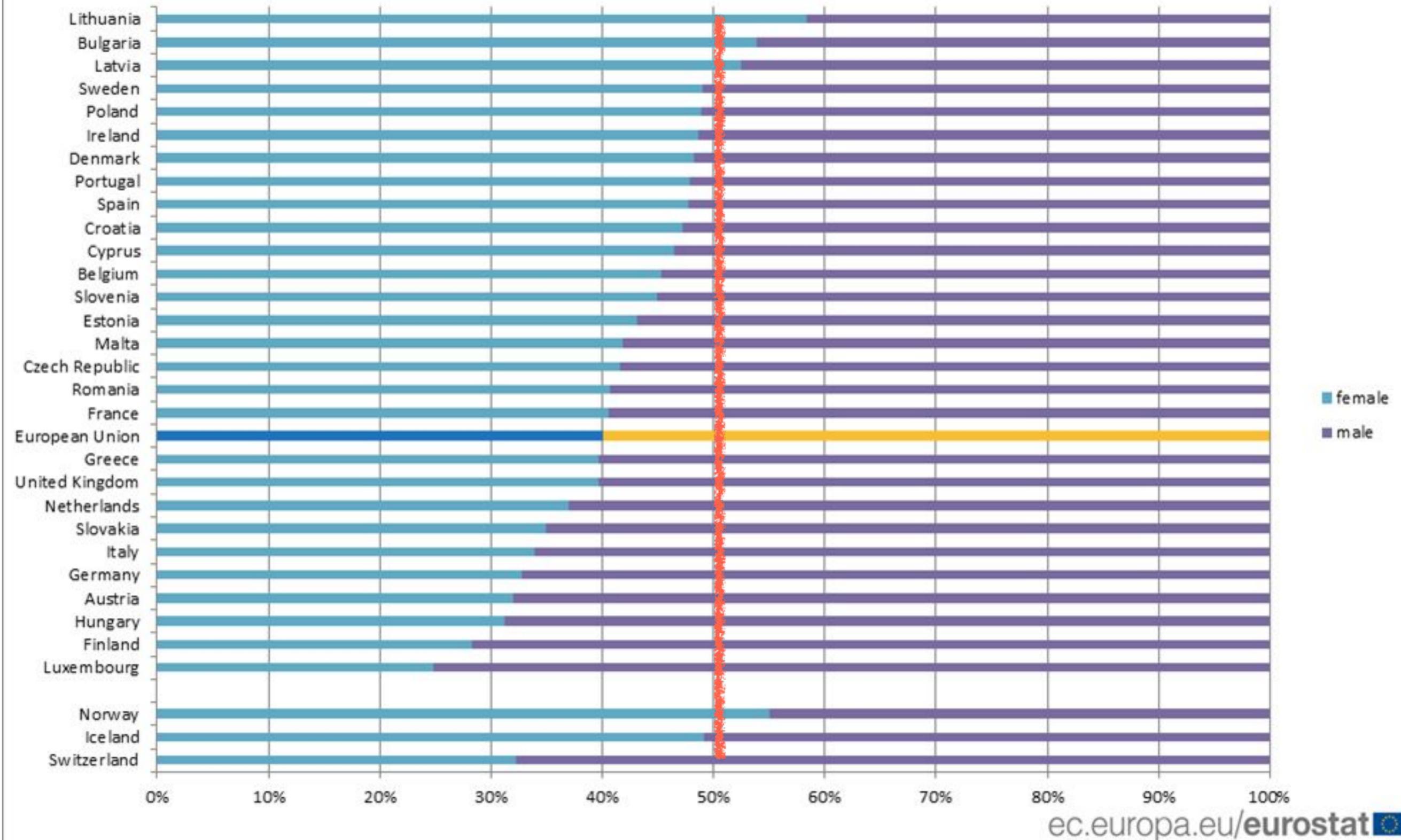
Active poll

A cosa pensate sia legato il pregiudizio di genere

079



Distribution of scientists and engineers by gender, 2016



technological bias



SHANAHAN



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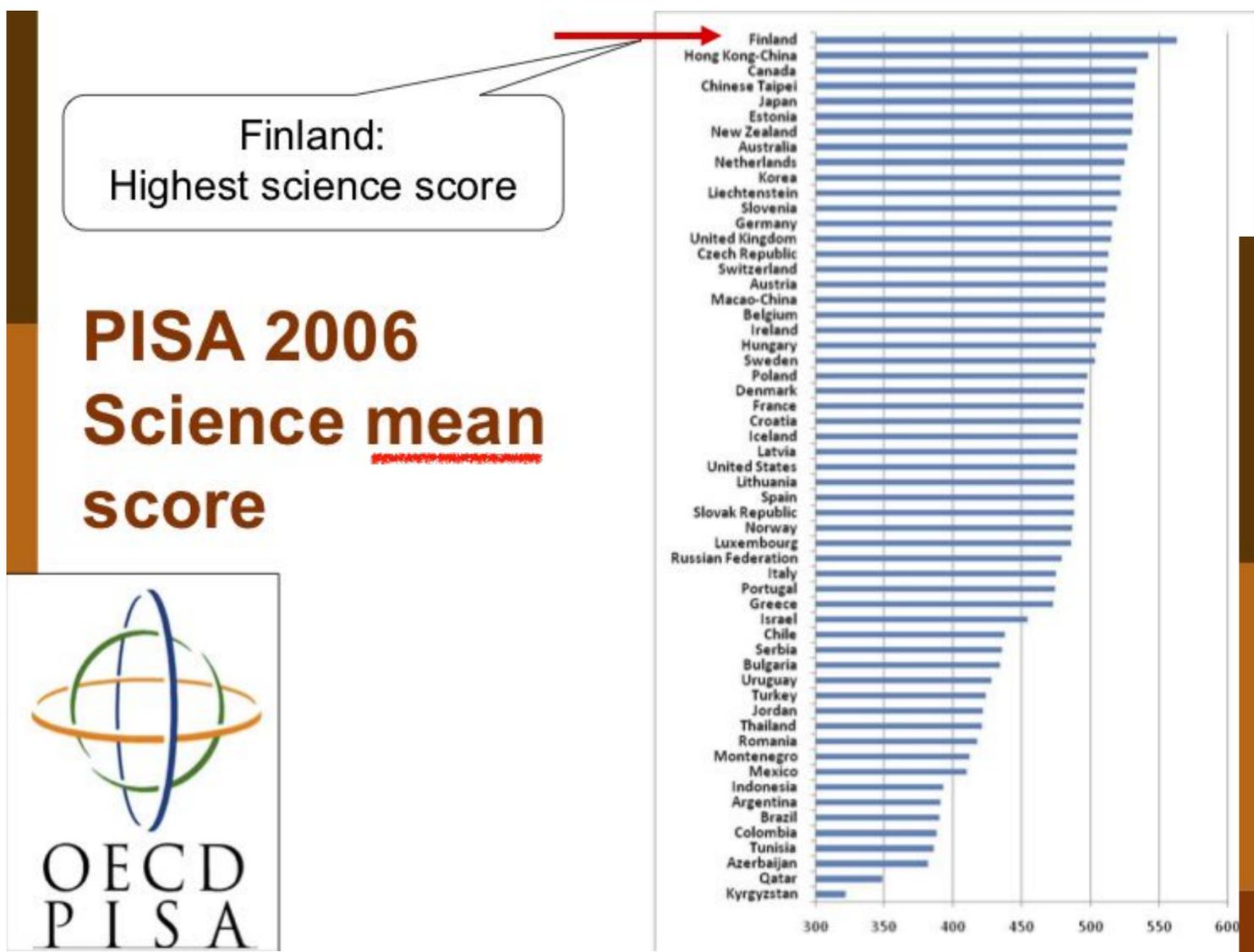
Active poll

Come vorreste essere educati alla scienza?

081



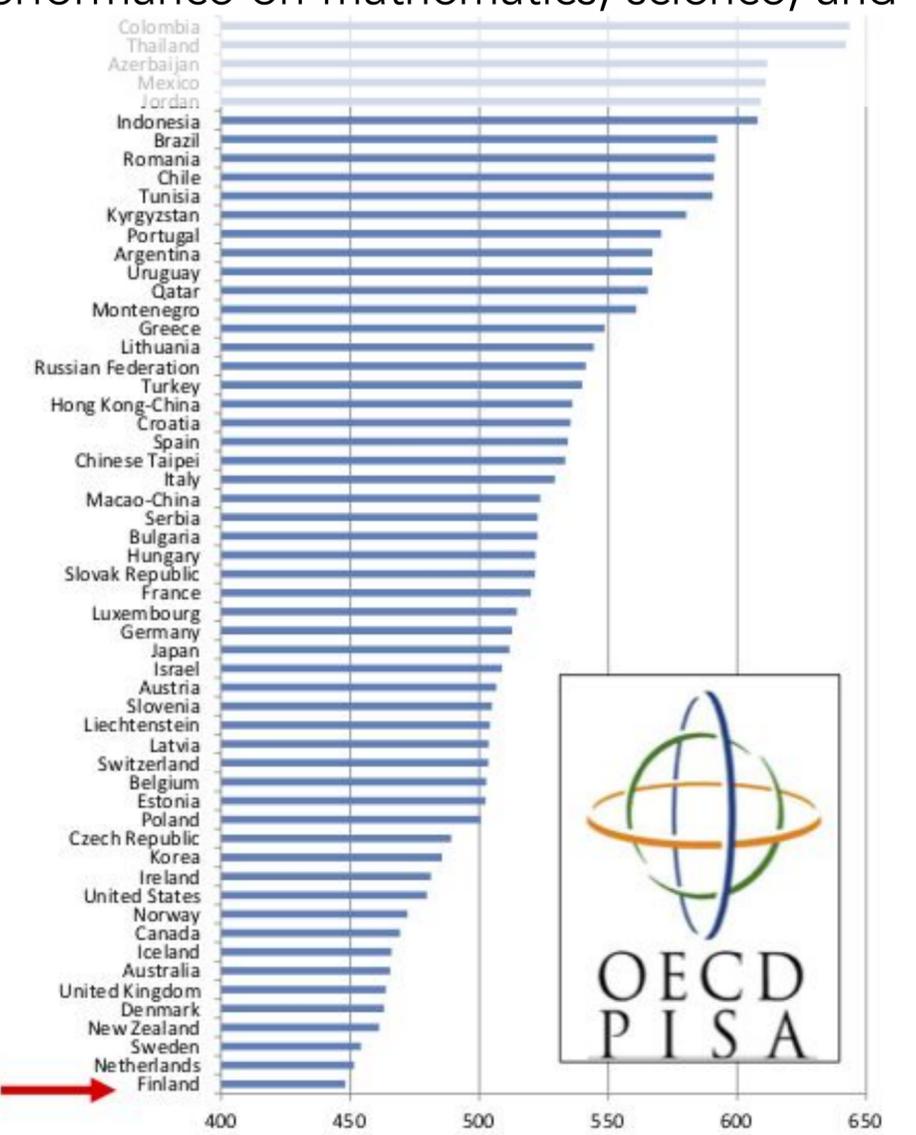
methodology bias



The Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) is a worldwide study by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in member and non-member nations intended to evaluate educational systems by measuring 15-year-old school pupils' scholastic performance on mathematics, science, and reading



**PISA 2006
Science
Interest score**



credits Prof Svein Sjøberg UiO

	Deficit	Dialogue	Participation
Main Focus	Public ignorance and technical education	Dialogue, engagement, transparency, building trust	Direction, quality and need for sociotechnical change
Key Issues	Communicating science, informing debate, getting the facts straight	Re-establishing public confidence, building consensus, encouraging debate, addressing uncertainty	Setting science and technology in wider cultural context, enhancing reflexivity and critical analysis
Communication style	One-way, top-down	Two-way, bottom-up	Multiple stakeholders, multiple frameworks
Model of scientific governance	Science-led, 'science' and 'politics' kept apart	Transparent, responsive to public opinion, accountable	Open to contested problem definitions, beyond government alone, addressing societal concerns and priorities
Sociotechnical challenge	Maintaining rationality, encouraging scientific progress and expert independence	Establishing broad societal consensus	Viewing heterogeneity, conditionality and disagreement as a societal resource
Overall perspective	Focusing on science	Focusing on communication and engagement	Focusing on scientific/ political cultures
Emphasis	Content	Context	Content and Context
Aims	Transferring knowledge	Discussing implications of research	Setting the aims, shaping the agenda of research
Ideological contexts	Scientism; Technocracy; Rhetoric of the knowledge economy	Social responsibility; Culture	Civic science; Democracy



social bias



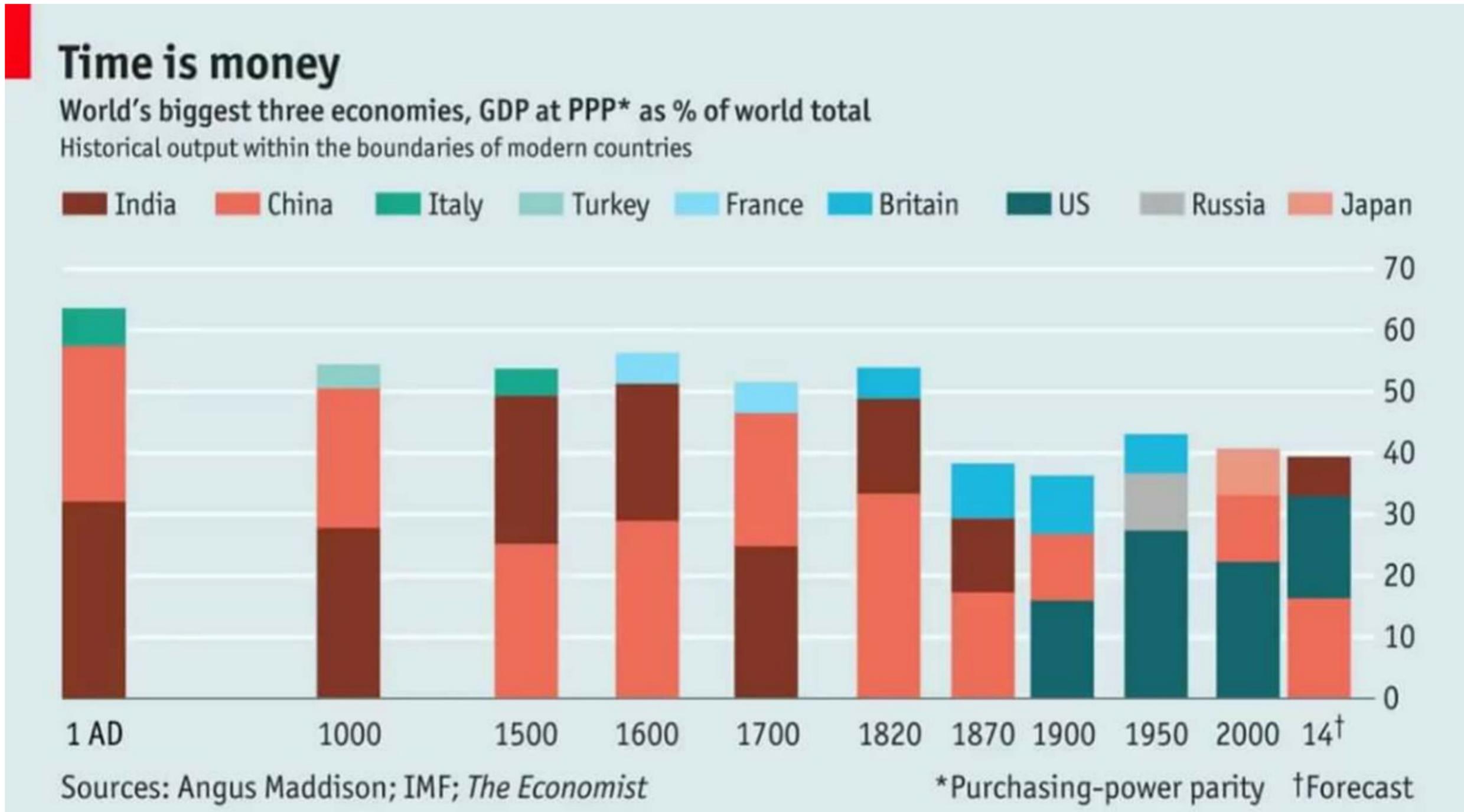
Join at
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Active poll

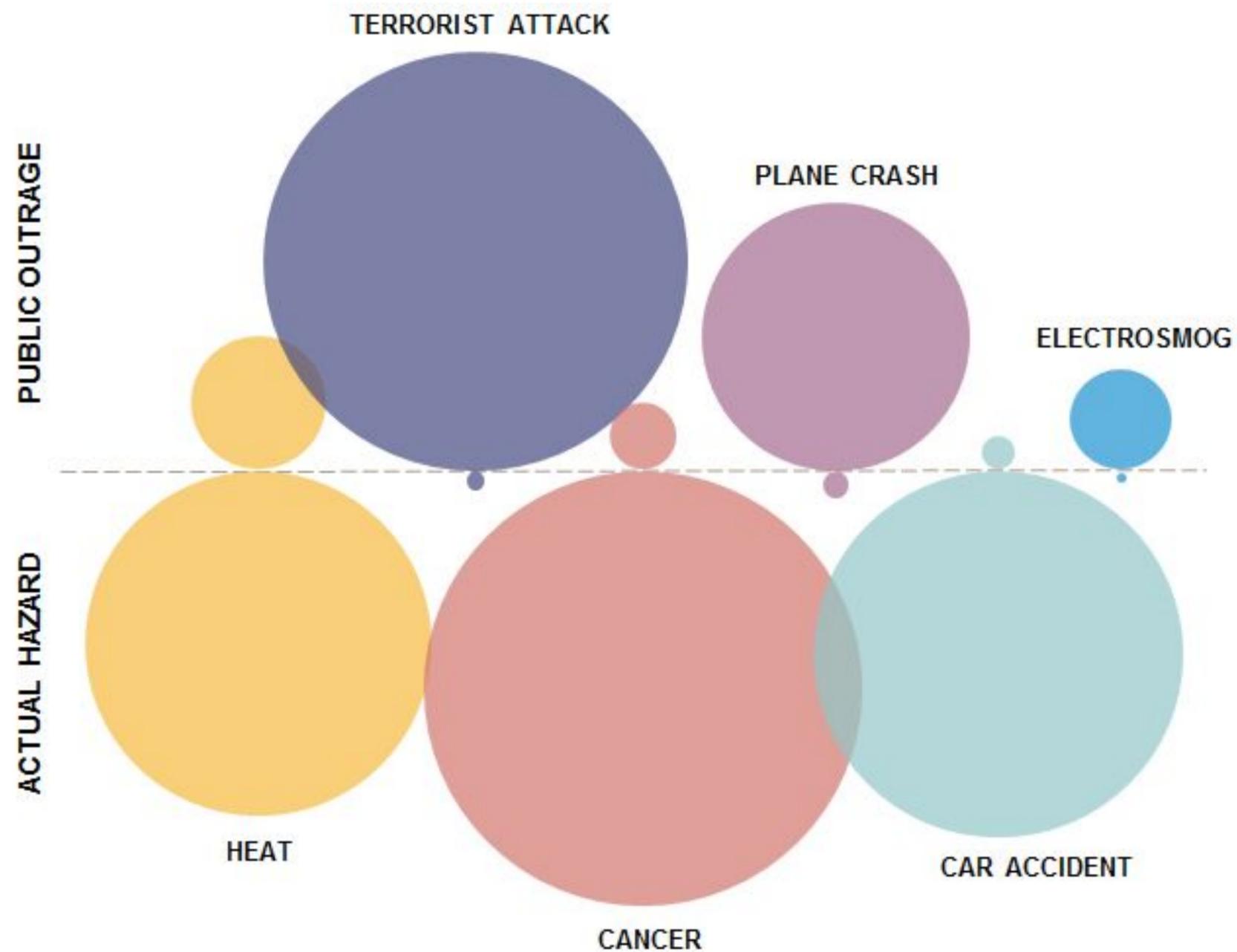
Quali sono le potenze che negli ultimi 2000 anni hanno governato l'economia mondiale? 081



scientific literacy



don't be the turkey



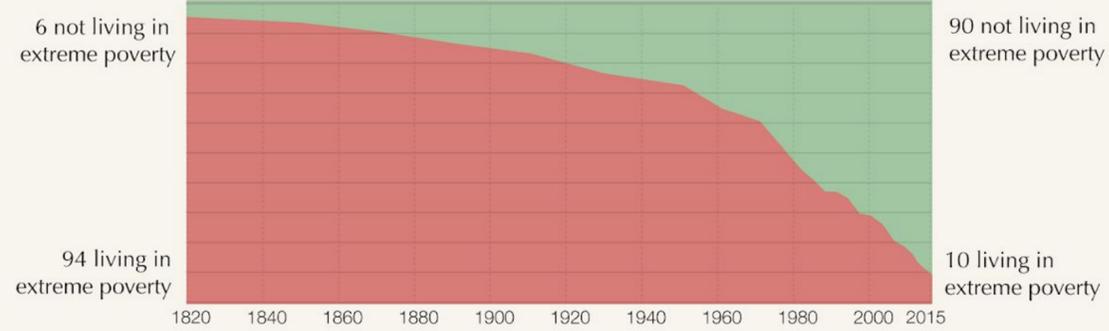
[...] There is a risk of ending up like Bertrand Russell and Karl Popper's famous Inductivist Turkey.

Russell presented the example of a turkey that was very well cared for, receiving food and water every day. The turkey got used to this comfortable situation, feeling increasingly secure and confident. The turkey's trust grew every day before being broken suddenly (and tragically, at least from the point of view of the turkey) on Thanksgiving Day!

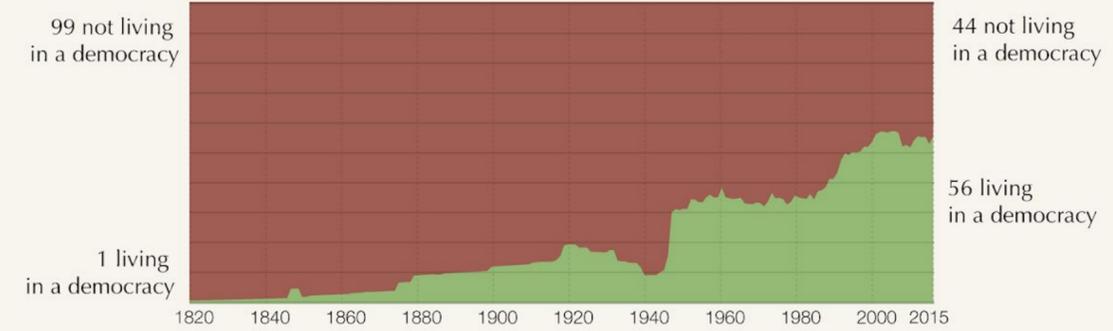
Russell used the poor turkey to demonstrate the inductivist trap: the risk of believing that the past contains all the useful information we need on the future. [...]

The World as 100 People over the last two centuries

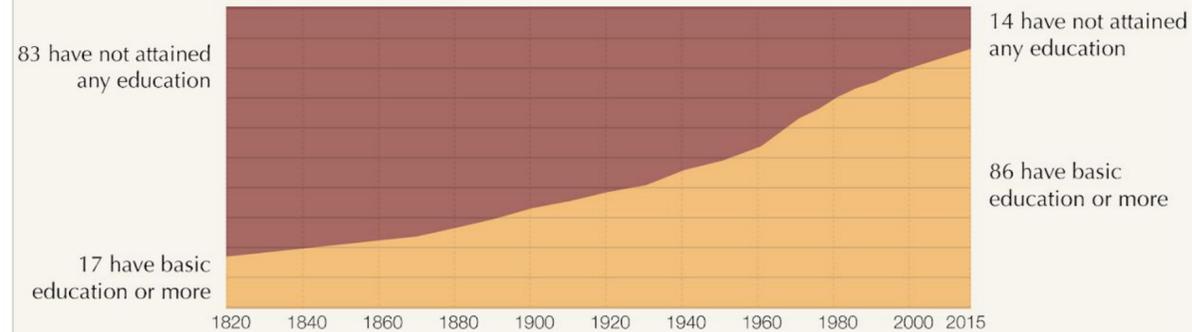
Extreme Poverty



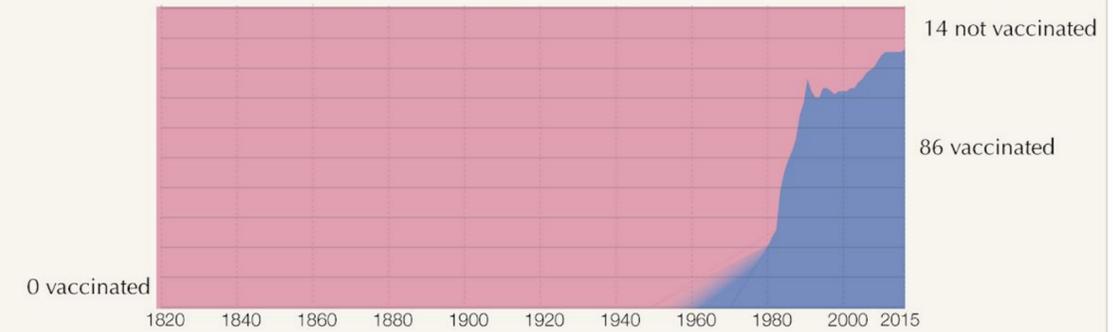
Democracy



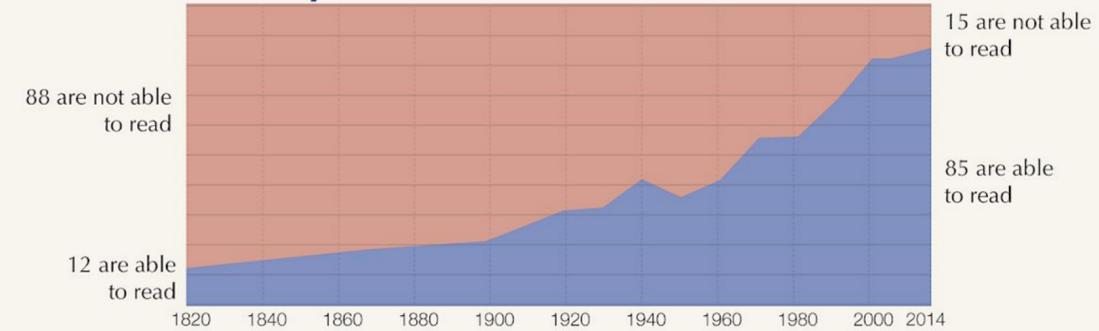
Basic Education



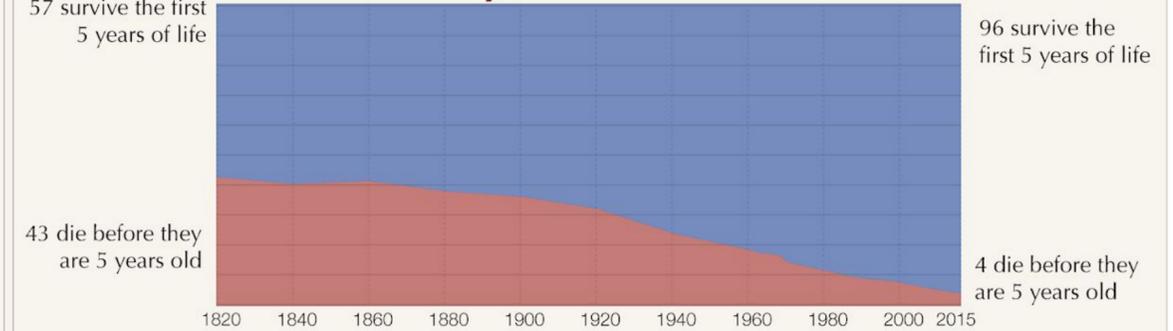
Vaccination against diphtheria, pertussis (whooping cough), and tetanus



Literacy



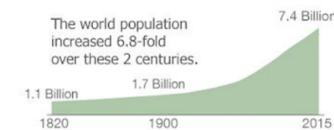
Child Mortality



Data sources:

Extreme Poverty: Bourguignon & Morrison (2002) up to 1970 – World Bank 1981 and later (2015 is a projection).
Vaccination: WHO (Global data are available for 1980 to 2015 – the DPT3 vaccination was licenced in 1949)
Education: OECD for the period 1820 to 1960. IIASA for the time thereafter.
Literacy: OECD for the period 1820 to 1990. UNESCO for 2004 and later.

Democracy: Polity IV index (own calculation of global population share)
Colonialism: Wimmer and Min (own calculation of global population share)
Continent: HYDE database
Child mortality: up to 1960 own calculations based on Gapminder; World Bank thereafter



All these visualizations are from OurWorldInData.org an online publication that presents the empirical evidence on how the world is changing.

Licensed under CC-BY-SA by the author Max Roser.

bias in science communication

- stereotype bias
- age bias
- gender bias
- technological bias
- methodology bias (literacy)
- social bias



the risks of a science popularisation & evolution due to society evolution

- concern about science: vaccines, autism, GMO, homeopathy, xylella history, ...
- feedback risks: turkey example, funds coercion, science freedom limitation, ...
- exploitation of science and science results (positive or negative) to argue “my” theses: conspiracy theories, democracy, populism...
- science projects evaluation, Journal Impact Factor, predatory publishers: fake paper (open-source-peer review) and conferences...

Eurobarometer: PUBLIC PERCEPTIONS OF SCIENCE, RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

“On most issues, respondents in all countries are more likely to think that positive impacts can be achieved through science and innovation than through people’s actions and behaviour. A notable exception is the reduction of inequalities, which is seen in most countries as more of an area for human intervention.

The issue of job creation is one of the two most prioritized by Europeans when they are asked which issues science and technology innovation should focus on over the next 15 years. However, respondents in some countries tend to believe less in the capacity of science and technological innovation to have a positive impact on this issue [...]

However, there are substantial differences from country to country when it comes to the expectation of whether science and innovation, and also people’s actions and behaviour, can have positive impacts. Respondents in some countries are very optimistic about these issues, notably those in the Nordic countries, Ireland, Malta and Spain.

On the other hand, respondents in Austria, the Czech Republic, Germany, Greece and Italy have consistently lower expectations that there will be positive changes over the next 15 years either through science and technological innovation or through the behaviour of citizens.”

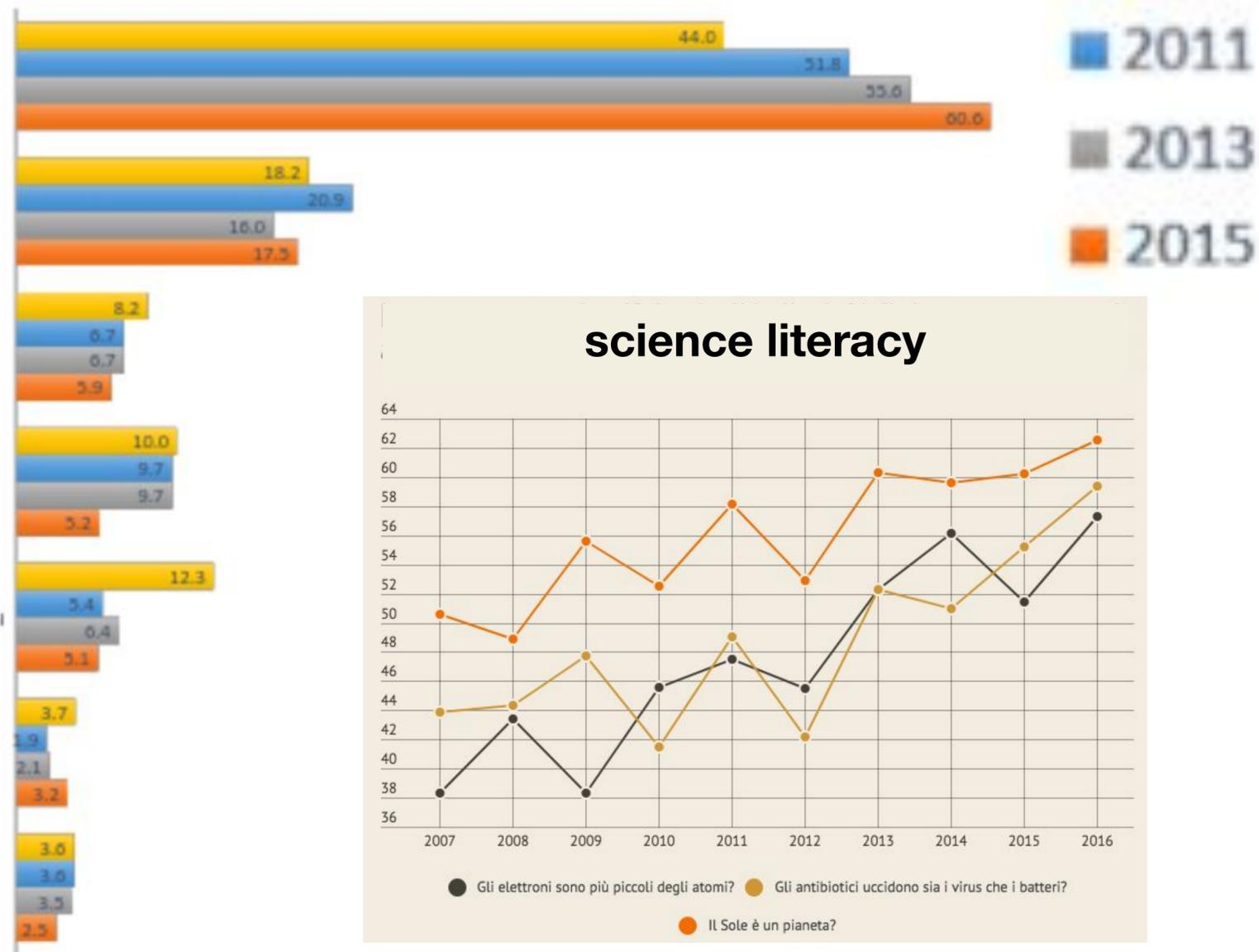
<http://ec.europa.eu/commfrontoffice/publicopinion/index.cfm>

QB3. Over the next 15 years, what should be the priorities when it comes to science and technological innovation?



impact of science communication

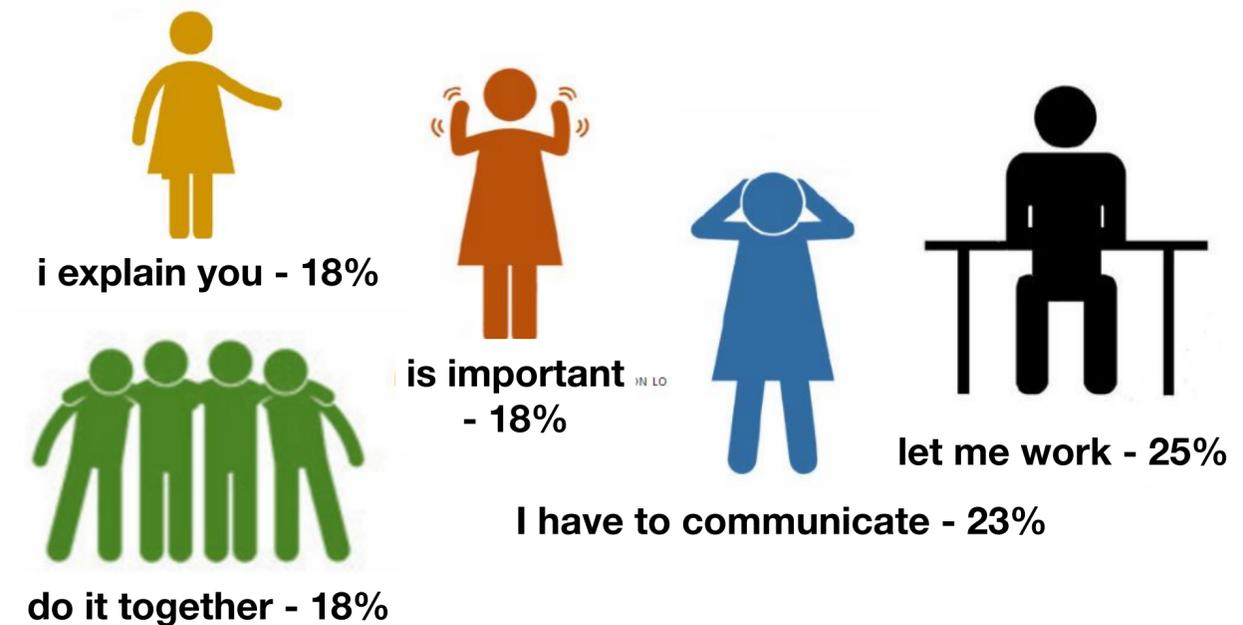
GLI INTERLOCUTORI PIÙ CREDIBILI QUANDO SI PARLA DI QUESTIONI SCIENTIFICHE



people interviewed believes this is mainly related to the growth of information, science manifestation, science shows and the closer connection with researchers.



attitudes of researchers



FONTE: ANNUARIO SCIENZA TECNOLOGIA E SOCIETÀ 2016, ED. IL MULINO.



*“Sorry madam, I’m afraid we can’t give refunds
on this item once the box has been opened.”*