

## European Interest in and Perception of Science

In May and June 2001, 16 000 people were interviewed in Europe to establish their views on and interest in science and technology. The interviewees were 15 years and older and approximately 1 000 people from each country were interviewed. The results of the survey were compared to the previous results of a similar survey done in 1992.

Interesting results of the survey were:

- Sixty per cent rarely read articles on science and technology. More than a third of the respondents felt that the subject was presented negatively.
- To improve European research, 84% said that co-operation between researchers must be developed.
- The younger people did not have a better appreciation for science than the average respondents, in the sample.
- Forty two per cent of the respondents agreed, while the same percentage disagreed with the statement that scientist should be held accountable for the misuse of their discoveries by other people.
- Eighty per cent said that scientists must respect ethical standards and that authorities must formally force them to do it.
- Some national trends: Sweden has the highest interest in science and technology, France is the most positively oriented towards research coordination, Greece is the most concerned with ethics, Portugal and Finland have the lowest awareness of EU research policy and Ireland has the lowest regard for scientists.

Overall, according to the results, the perception of science amongst Europeans did improve slightly over the past nine years, but the majority of Europeans are not interested in science at all.

For additional information see

<http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/press/2001/pr0312en.html>