

7<sup>th</sup> October 2015

# Science Foundation Ireland Science in Ireland Barometer

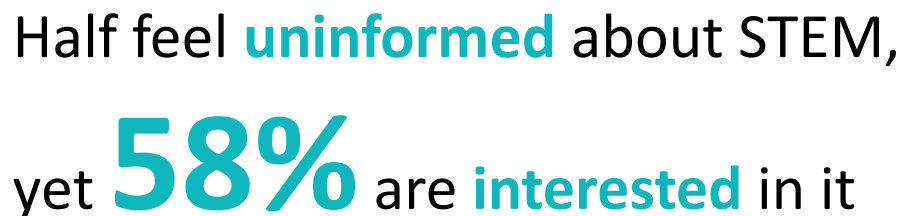
A study completed by Millward Brown on behalf of SFI



# Who we interviewed

- **Nationally Representative** sample of 1,008 adults aged 15+ in the Republic of Ireland.
- All interviews were conducted **face-to-face** in the respondents own homes in March 2015.
- Quotas set on **Gender**, **Age**, **Social Class** and **Region**.
- Margin of error is **+/- 3.1%**.
- **Eight focus groups** spread across the country to understand further the public's **perceptions** and **understanding** of science.





# How the Public Value STEM

**\*It is important to support training and education in STEM**



**\*Science is important for addressing key challenges affecting our society**



**\*Research in STEM will lead to an improvement in the quality of life in Ireland in the next 20 years**



**\*Government investment in STEM is worthwhile**



Science is highly valued for its role in advancing society

# Science and Education



**9 out of 10** Agree young people's interest in STEM is essential for our future prosperity



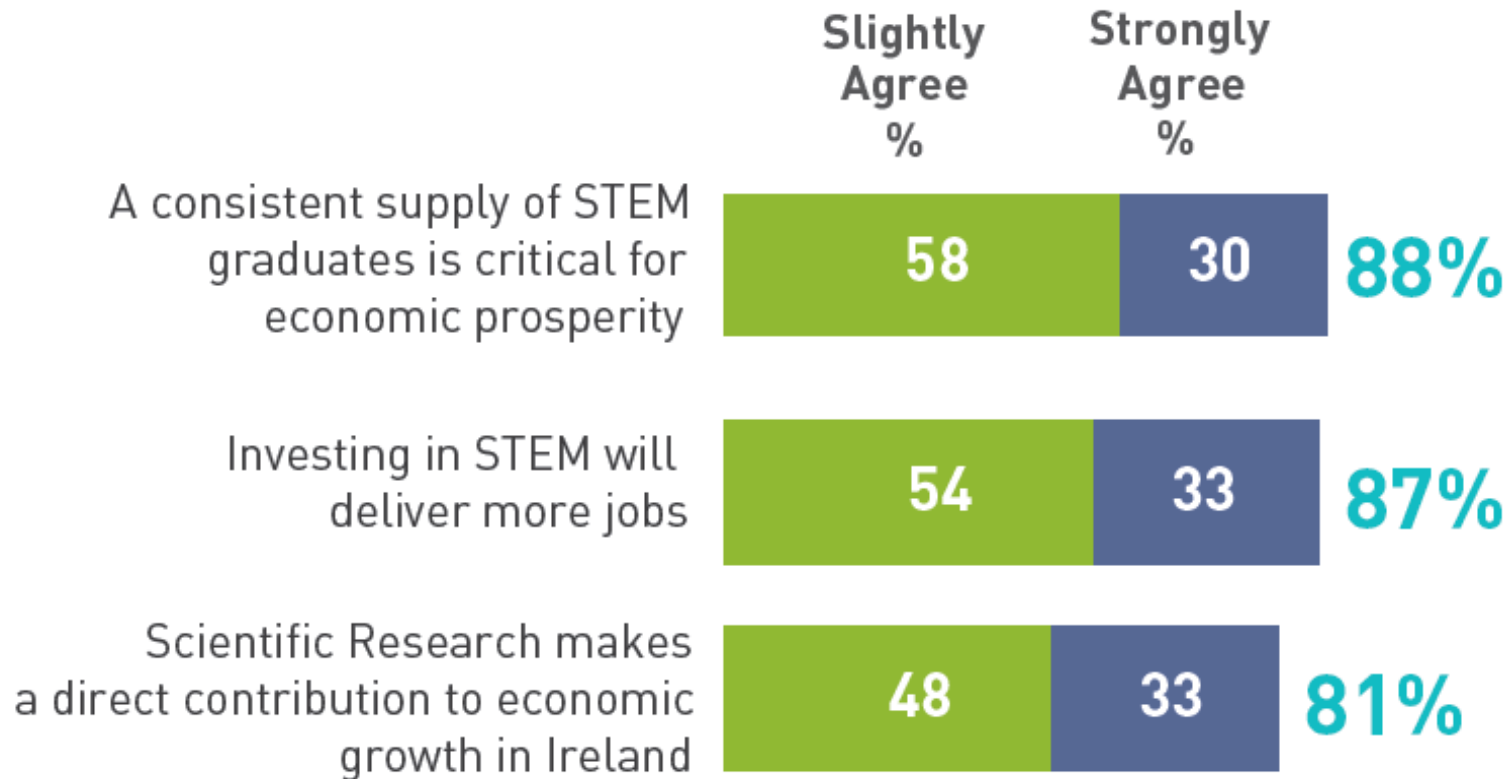
**88%** Think science is an important subject to **study** at school



**85%** Agree it is important to encourage more **girls** to study STEM

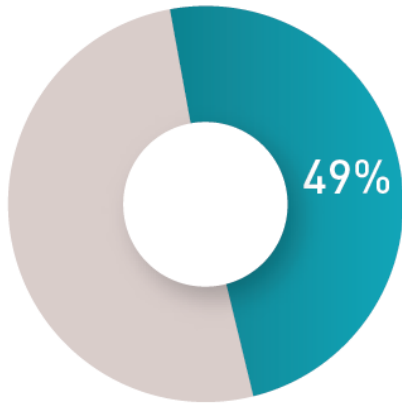
The importance of support for education is incontrovertible

# Science and the Economy



The contribution that science makes to the economy is seen as both tangible and critical for the future

# Trust and Ethics in Science



**Do you trust the opinions of Scientists/Engineers?**

**49% have at least a great deal of trust.**

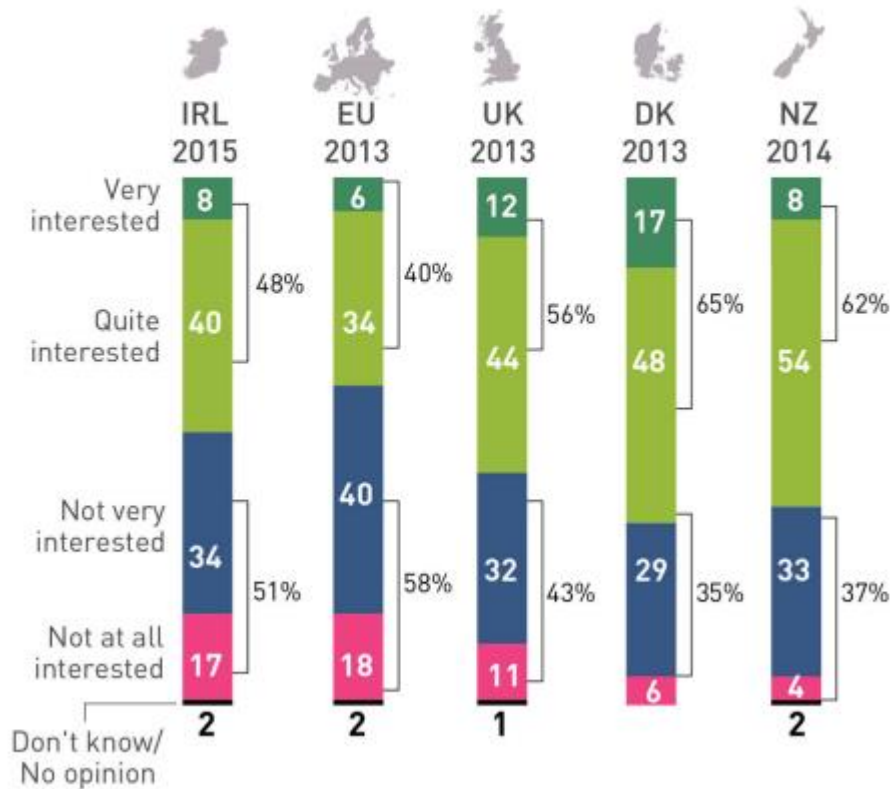
## What undermines trust?

- Environmental issues
- For profit corporations
- Interference with the natural order
- Conflict within the scientific community

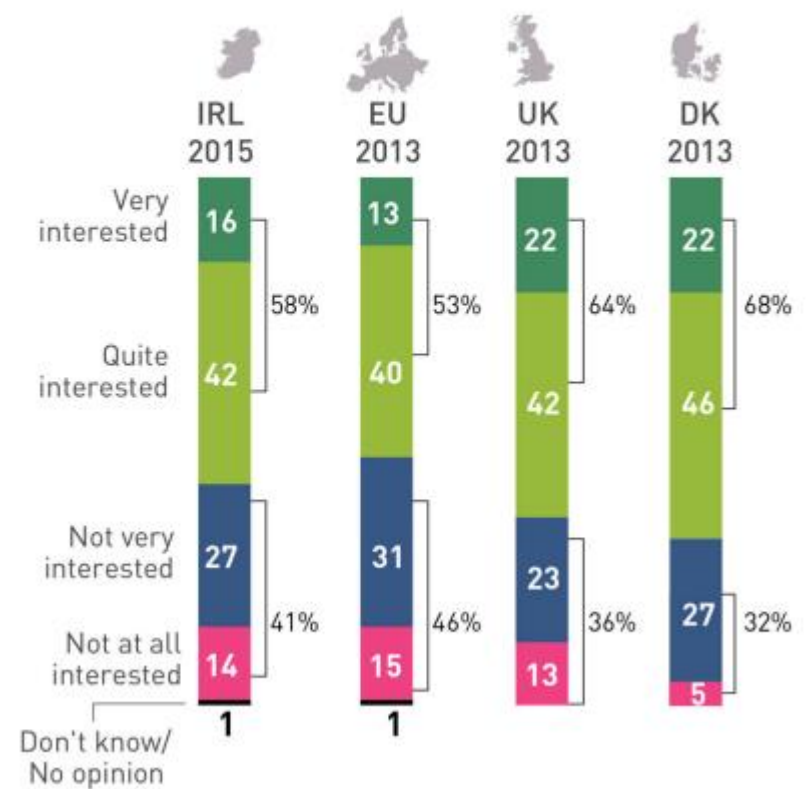
The public seek clarity and consistency in what they hear about science

# Where do We Stand Internationally?

How informed do we think we are on Research and Development in STEM?

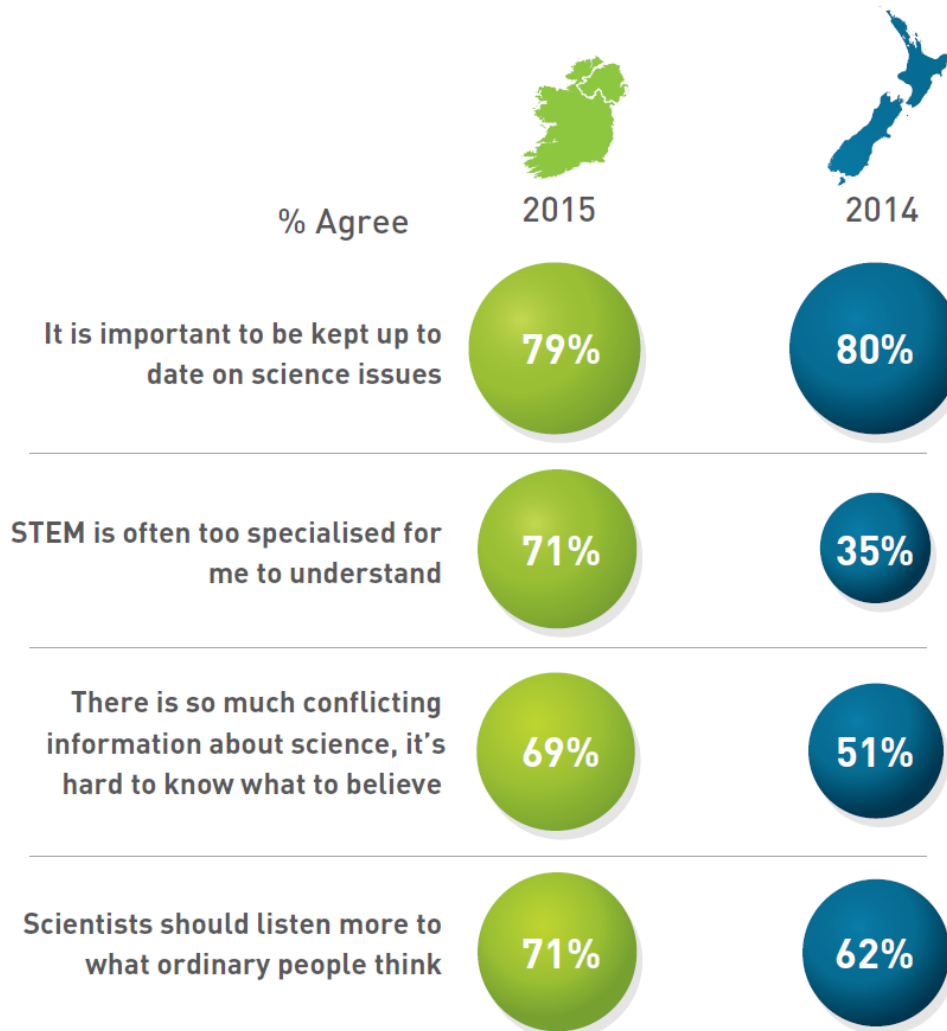


How interested are we in Research and Development in STEM?



Can we learn from the experience of other small countries?

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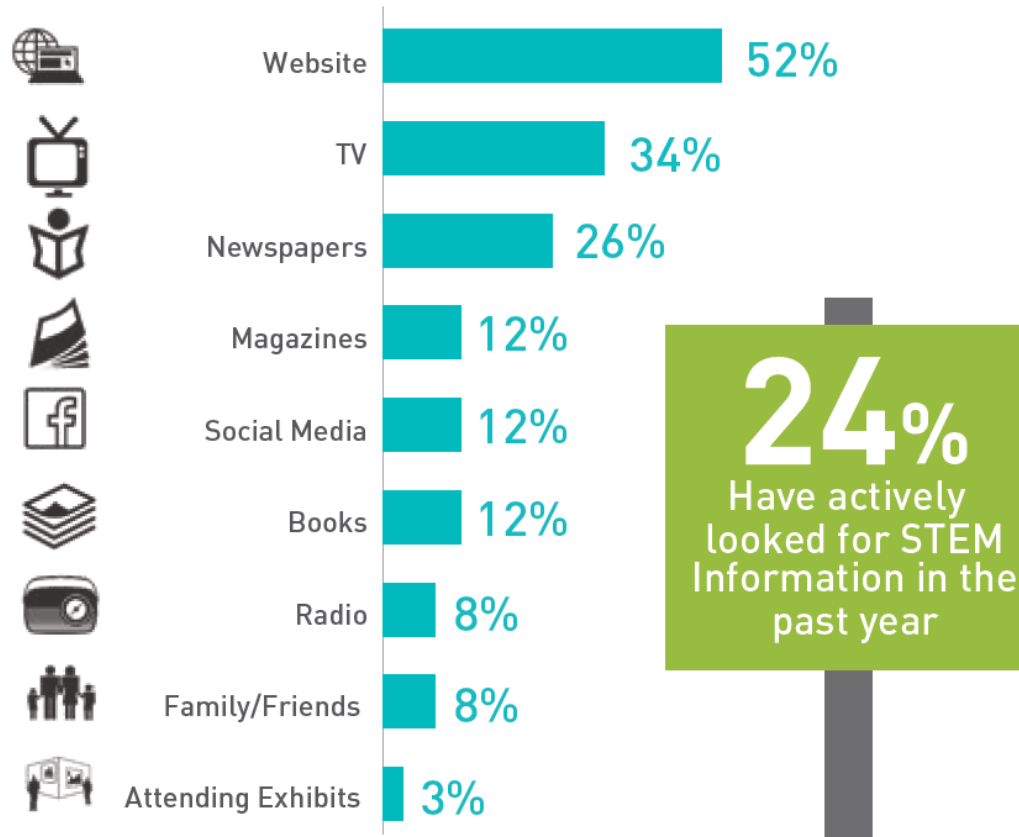


**NZ** have more confidence in their STEM knowledge

Can we learn from the experience of other small countries?

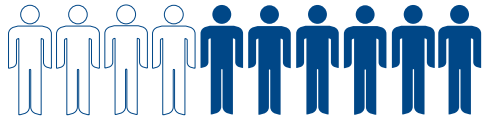
# Do We Actively Seek Information on STEM?

Sources of info when actively looking information on research and developments in science, engineering and technology



We now have a better understanding of where and how to reach out to the public.

# What are the Barriers to Science?



Less than six in ten feel sufficiently **informed** to discuss the impact of STEM on society.



**68%** feel that due to **conflicting information**, it is hard to know what to **believe**.



**71%** feel science and technology are too **specialised** for them to understand.

There is an opportunity to “democratise” science to the wider public – perceived complexity is a barrier

# Does Population Differ in its View Point of Science?



Lower **socio– economic** groups generally tend to be **less engaged** with STEM.



Females also tend to be less interested in STEM.



Both are not only less interested, but also **less informed**.



**Parents** can be a rich source of potential in terms of **stimulating** scientific interest.

There are distinct cohorts who feel more alienated by STEM, but there are opportunities to engage more with them.

# Thank you

To access the full report and datasets please go to [www.sfi.ie](http://www.sfi.ie)

