

”Roadmapping Science in Society”

Comments to chapter 3: ”Context”

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Key issues

- 1) The historical background
- 2) Sources, forms and functions of scepticism towards science (and the appropriate responses)
- 3) The rationale behind SiS-initiatives
- 4) Relationship and tension between science and democracy

The historical background

The overall narrative: The birth of modern science; from individual to socially organized science; from Mode 1 to Mode 2 research

A need for more precision?

- The creation of national institutions was well under way in the 19th century (e.g. France, Germany)
- The "new visions" belong mainly to post-WW2-science (e.g. the OECD initiatives in the early 1970ies)
- Mode 1 and Mode 2: Not a distinction between basic and applied research (cf. The Manhattan project), but rather between independent and strategic research

Central to Mode 2: Research objectives identified not by the scientific community, but by external stakeholders.

Scepticism towards science

Very apt: Scepticism is a multifaceted phenomenon, which might be caused both by a lack of "science literacy" and an abundance of it – and so requires a flexible response (cf. p. 6 below; especially p. 8 above – this could be expanded)

The point could be further emphasized and elaborated (a main argument for rejecting a linear conception of SiS)

The rationale behind SiS-initiatives

- The right and wish of the public to have a say
- Enhancing legitimacy and acceptance Decreasing trust means leads to less funding (p. 4)
 - Missing (?): Participation can strengthen science
Identification of problems (and even solutions)
(particularly relevant as science is expected to meet
"grand societal challenges")
 - Talent recruiting?

Science and democracy

Very apt: A tension between the norms of democracy and the norms of science (p. 4)

Take seriously the worries of scientists (cf. p. 7. above). Even if we recommend a two-way approach, caution is in place

It's about finding the right balance between scientific autonomy (and the scope and limit of scientific expertise) and public participation, democratic control and ethical and other constraints)

Cf. Arie Rip: Participation may undermine representative democracy

Possible rejoinder: Representative democracy is already always undermined; multiple sources of inputs to the political process. A need to counterbalance the influence of other actors (industry etc.)?

Further comments

- Sensitivity to cultural differences – but we should avoid stigmatizing certain countries as backwards (“return of the deficit model”)
- Definition of SiS?