

The Future of Science

Food and Water for Life

PUBLIC PERCEPTION OF SCIENCE AND FOOD RELATED ISSUES

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Observa is an independent, non profit organization set up in 2001, which aims at promoting informed and constructive debate and reflection on science in society issues, among researchers, policy makers and citizens.

Research tools

- ◆ Science in Society Monitor
- ◆ Science in Society Facts and Figures (A yearly publication with data and information on the state and development of research and innovation in Europe)
- ◆ Media Science Monitor (launched in 2008)
- ◆ Website (www.scienceinsociety.eu)





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HIGHLIGHTS
Science & the City
A palladian Villa hosted unedited dialogues on science in society

A closer relationship between science and society is today considered to be a necessary premise for economic development and social well-being in general. There is widespread discontent regarding the poor dialogue between research and the productive world, between experts and citizens. Research and innovation, howev...

ACTIVITIES

science COMMUNICATION

research and INNOVATION POLICIES

science and CITIZENS

NEWS

Women and Science
 Data and information on gender relationships in science and research.

Italy takes part in the ROSE project
 Observa chosen as the national partner

A Handbook of Public Communication of Science
 Edited by Massimiano Bucchi and Brian Trench

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PUBLICATIONS CONTRIBUTIONS

Science in Society Fact and Figures
 Fourth Edition

Journalism, science and society: communication between news and public relations
 Edited by M. W. Bauer and M. Bucchi

the Handbook of Science and Technology Studies

Women and science: can we break the glass ceiling?
 by Valeria Arzenton, Elisabetta Giuffra and Simona Palermo

The theme of **gender equality** has taken a central place in the debate between institutions, social partners, industry and in all spheres of social and professional life. Scientific research is not an exception to this, as its problems are similar to those in other professional sectors. In the last few years the more important international organisations, starting from the United Nations and the European Commission, have also recognized the extre

Monitoring science in (Italian) society

Science in Society Monitor: a periodic survey on Italian citizen opinions and attitudes to science and technology.



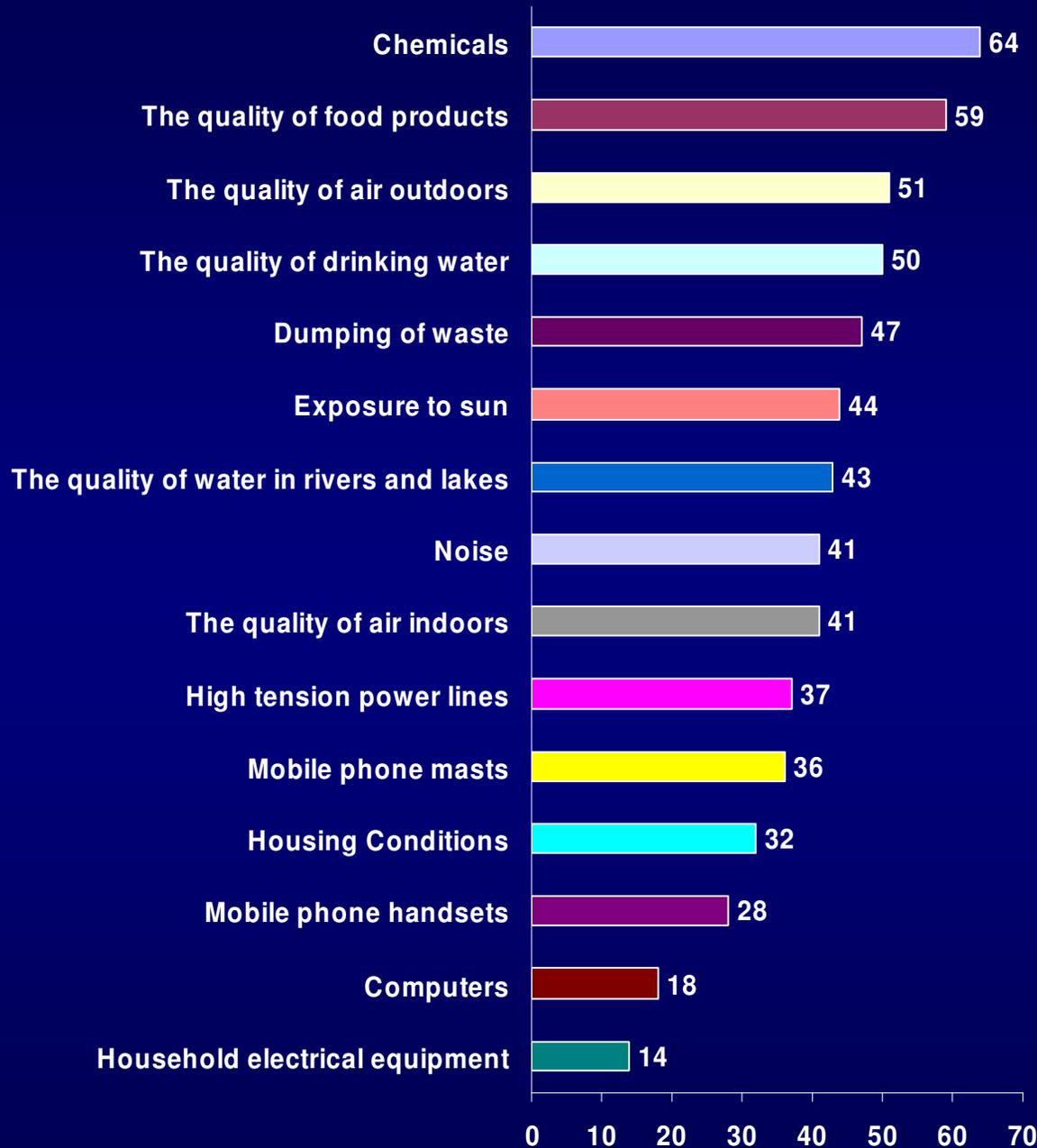
- ◆ Data are collected **two- three times a year** through (CATI) phone **interviews** on a sample of **1000 Italian citizens**, representative of Italian population of more than 15 years of age, stratified by gender, age and geographical area.
- ◆ Each survey generally covers **two broad types of questions**:
 - **General aspects**: literacy, exposure to science and technology in the media, trust in science, scientists and research institutions.
 - **Salient science and technology issues** in terms of policy agenda and public debate (GMOs, embryo cells, pollution, climate change).

Monitoring science in (Italian) society



- ◆ Questions are formulated to make **comparison** possible with international studies (e.g. Eurobarometer)
- ◆ Same key issues are addressed repeatedly across time, to monitor the most significant **trends and changes.**
- ★ An international **Scientific committee supervises** the activities. It encompasses a broad range of disciplinary expertise from the natural to the social sciences.
- ★ Observa Staff members are Valeria Arzenton, Massimiano Bucchi, Federico Neresini, Giuseppe Pellegrini.
- ★ Research supported by Foundation Compagnia di San Paolo.

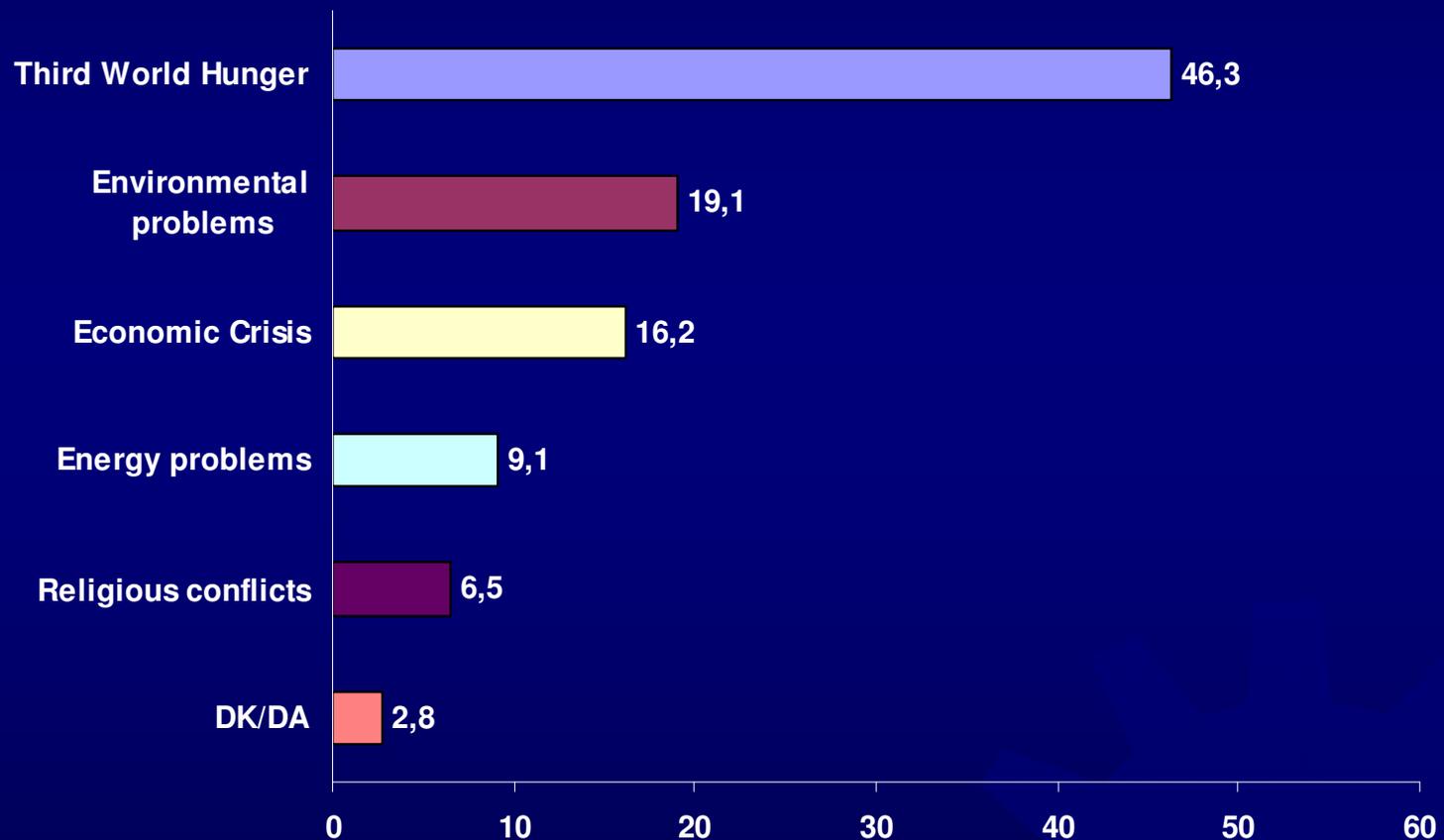
The Environmental factors that are most hazardous for health, according to European citizens



Percentage of respondents who answered that "the item affects their health to a big extent"

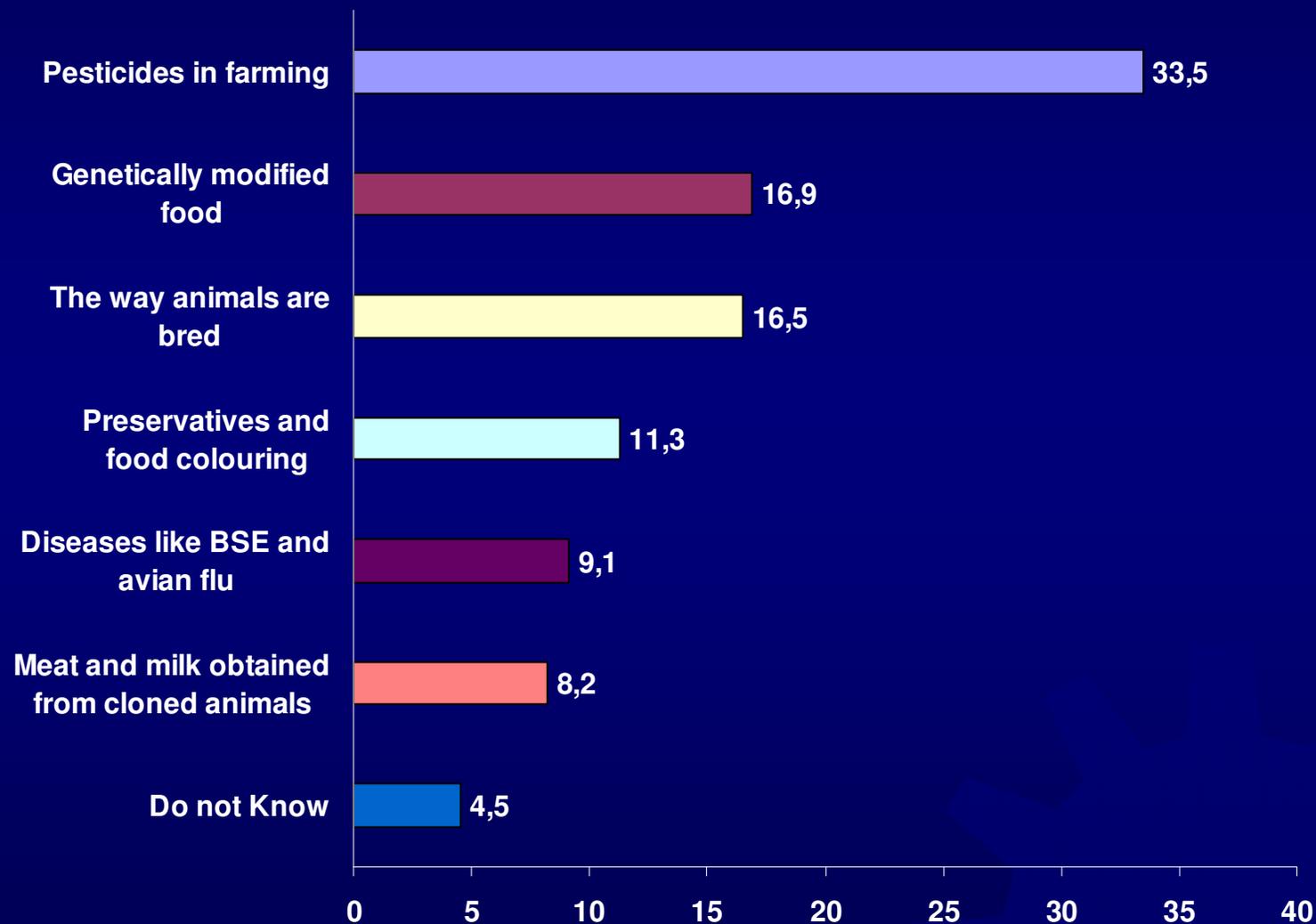
*Source: European Commission, DG – SANCO, Electromagnetic fields, Special Eurobarometer 272a, in *Observe – Science in Society, Annuario Scienza e Società 2008*, Ergon Edizioni, 2008*

The most relevant problems at the global level, according to Italians



Source: Observa, Science in Society Monitor 2008; %, n=996.

The main concerns of Italians with regard to food quality



Source: Observa, Science in Society Monitor 2008; %, n=996.

Science's most important contributions to improve food quality, according to Italians

	%
Improving organic methods for farming and breeding	57,1
Obtaining healthier and more productive animals , through genetic engineering	15,9
Improving food preservation techniques	13,3
Enriching food with vitamins, proteins, minerals	6,6
Obtaining genetically modified plants , more resistant to parasites	4,1
Do not Know	3,0
Total	100,0

Source: Observa, Science in Society Monitor 2008; %, n=996.

Science's most important contributions to fight Third World Hunger, according to Italians

	%
Enriching food with vitamins, proteins, minerals	29,6
Improving food preservation techniques	29,4
Obtaining healthier and more productive animals , through genetic engineering	16,3
Obtaining genetically modified plants that can be more resistant to parasites	14,9
Do not Know	9,8
Total	100,0

Source: Observa, Science in Society Monitor 2008; %, n=996.

Observa- *Science in Society* is a non profit research organization aimed at promoting the study and the discussion on the relationship between science and society, fostering the debate among researchers, policy makers and citizens.

Information, publications, news and research materials at:

www.observa.it

www.scienceinsociety.eu