

Trust in scientists high globally, Pew survey finds, but public still skeptical of GM crops

The good news is that there's [widespread trust in scientists](#) and a strong desire to act on their findings on issues like climate change. But [s]ome of the outcomes of scientific development, such as genetically modified foods, are widely mistrusted by the public in most countries. And, in many countries, there's a large partisan divide in views of scientists—and the divide is the most extreme in the United States.

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The top-line question was how much trust people have in scientists doing the right thing. Respondents were given the following options: “a lot,” “some,” “not too much,” and “none at all.” India was the country where people had the most trust in scientists, with about 60 percent saying they had a lot. That was followed by a large collection of European countries, with the United States falling in the middle of the pack.

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But the biggest gap came when food technology was considered. Almost nobody considered genetically modified foods safe, with a median percentage of only 13 and the absolute peak of support coming in Australia at 31 percent. By contrast, there were eight countries in which more than half the public said GMOs were unsafe, despite the complete absence of any evidence for this claim. But it's not just GMOs; the numbers were remarkably similar when the use of pesticides or artificial preservatives were asked about

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