




**RECENT DATA FOR EUROPE REFLECTING THE
ATTITUDES OF CONSUMERS, STAKEHOLDERS, MEDIA
AND PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION TOWARDS THE USE OF
GMOS AND CO-EXISTENCE**

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The need for social research

The trajectory of a novel technology is determined by its integration into society

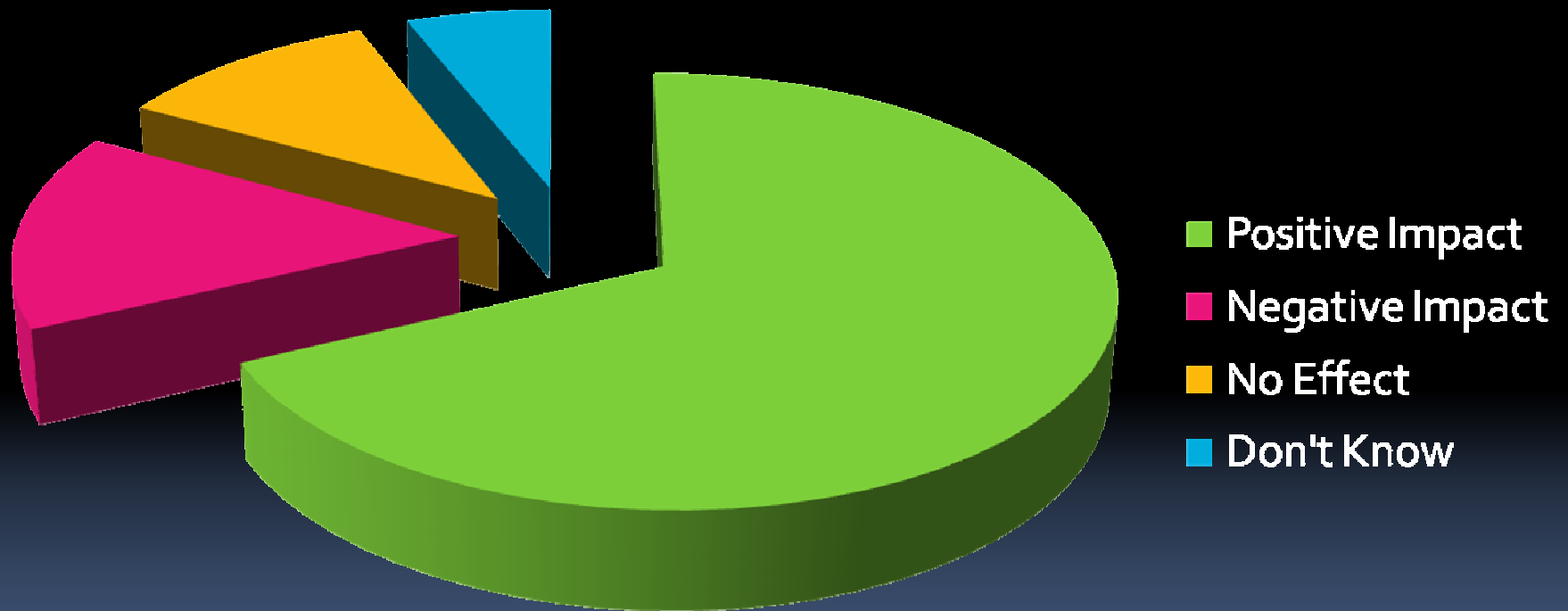
- ✓ *In relation to public knowledge and understanding*
- ✓ *In relation to social priorities and expectations*
- ✓ *In relation to the broader socio-economic and cultural context*



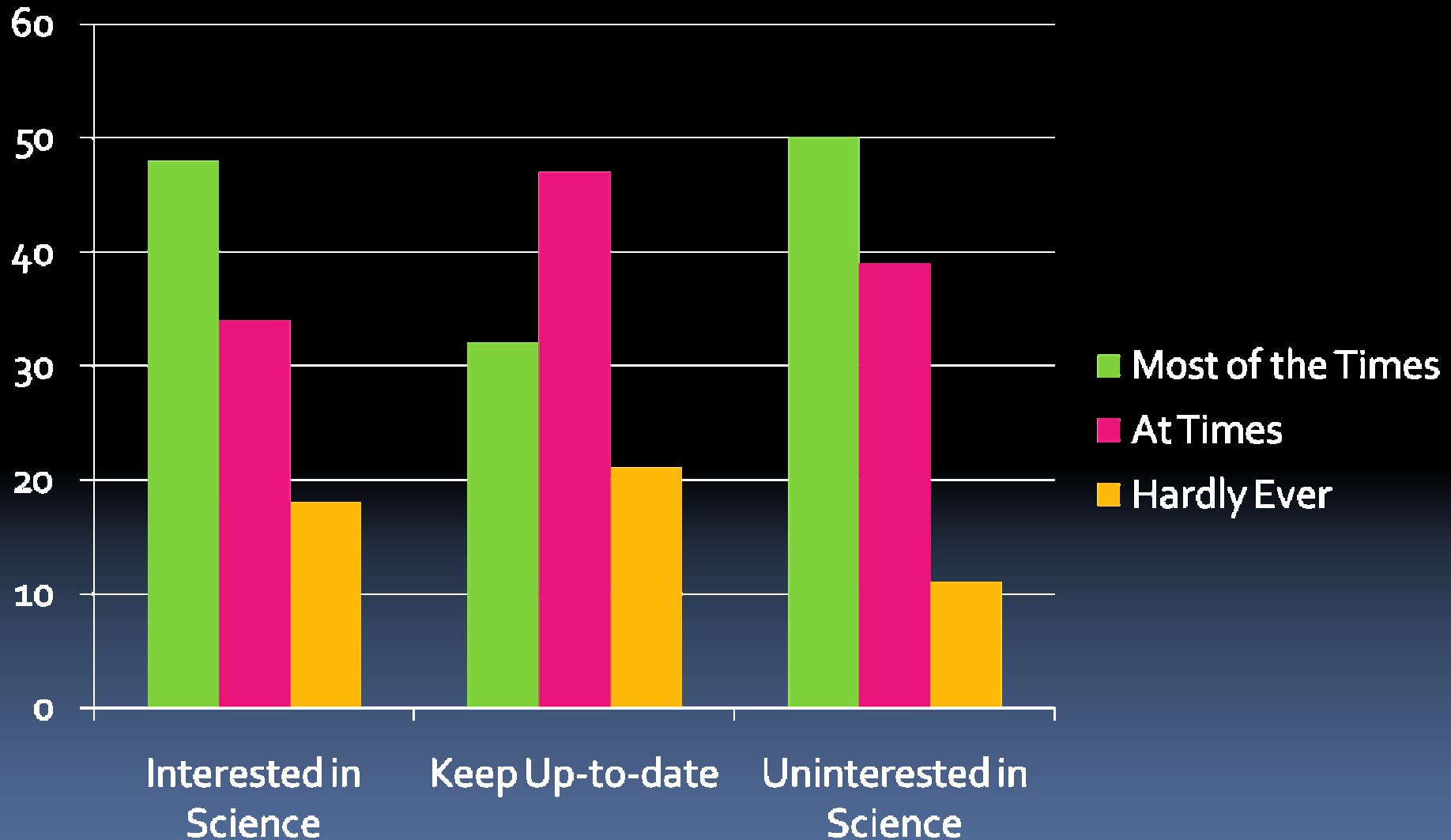
Analysis and deliverables

- Descriptive statistics
 - Identification of correlations and underlying patterns in responses
 - Mapping and clustering countries
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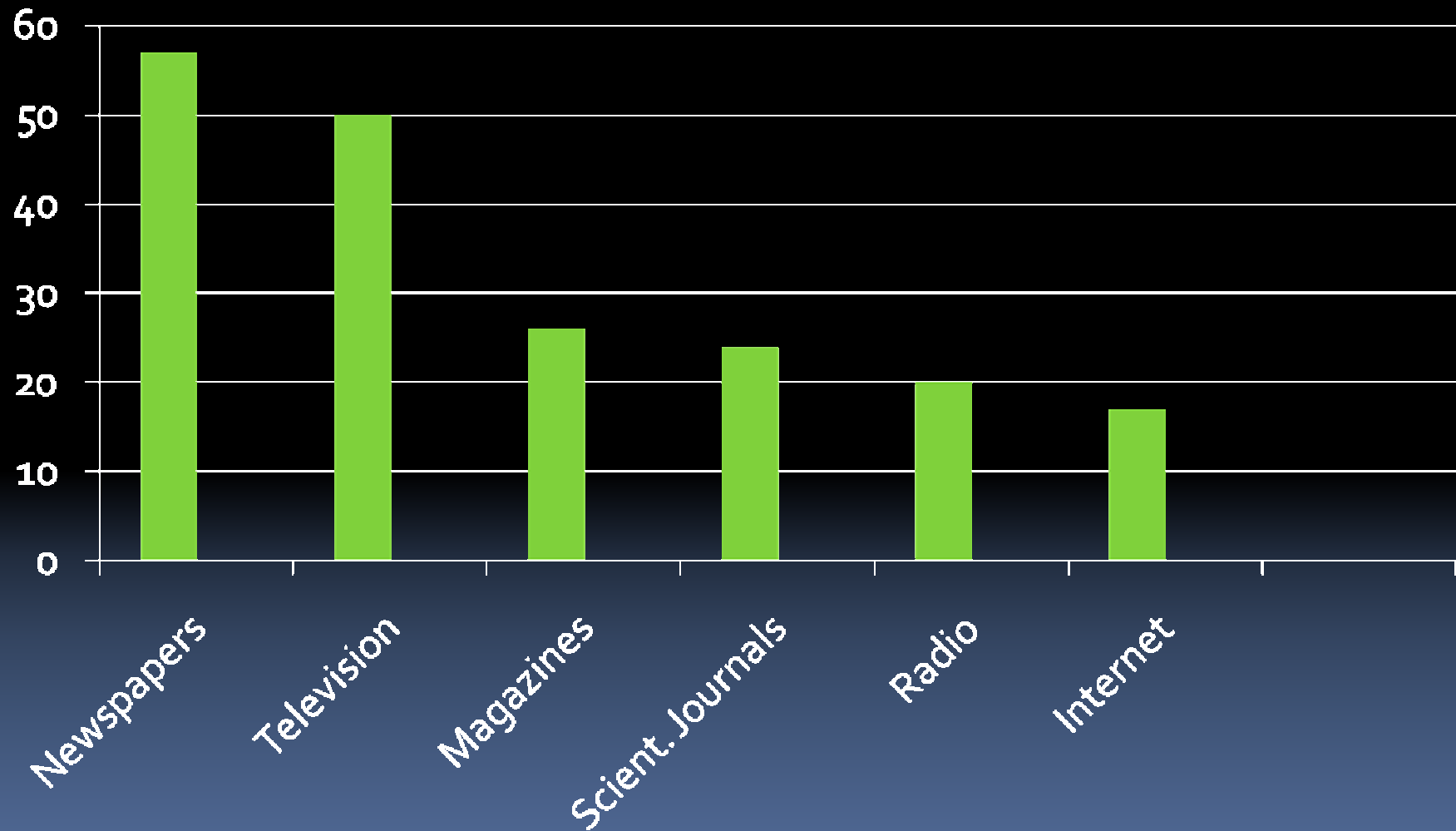
Europeans and not technophobic



Europeans are attentive to science and technology



Awareness and Media Sources of Information



Public Perception & Risk Tolerance

◎ Parameters

- Usefulness
- Risk
- Morality
- Acceptance

◎ Supporters

Y-N-Y-Y

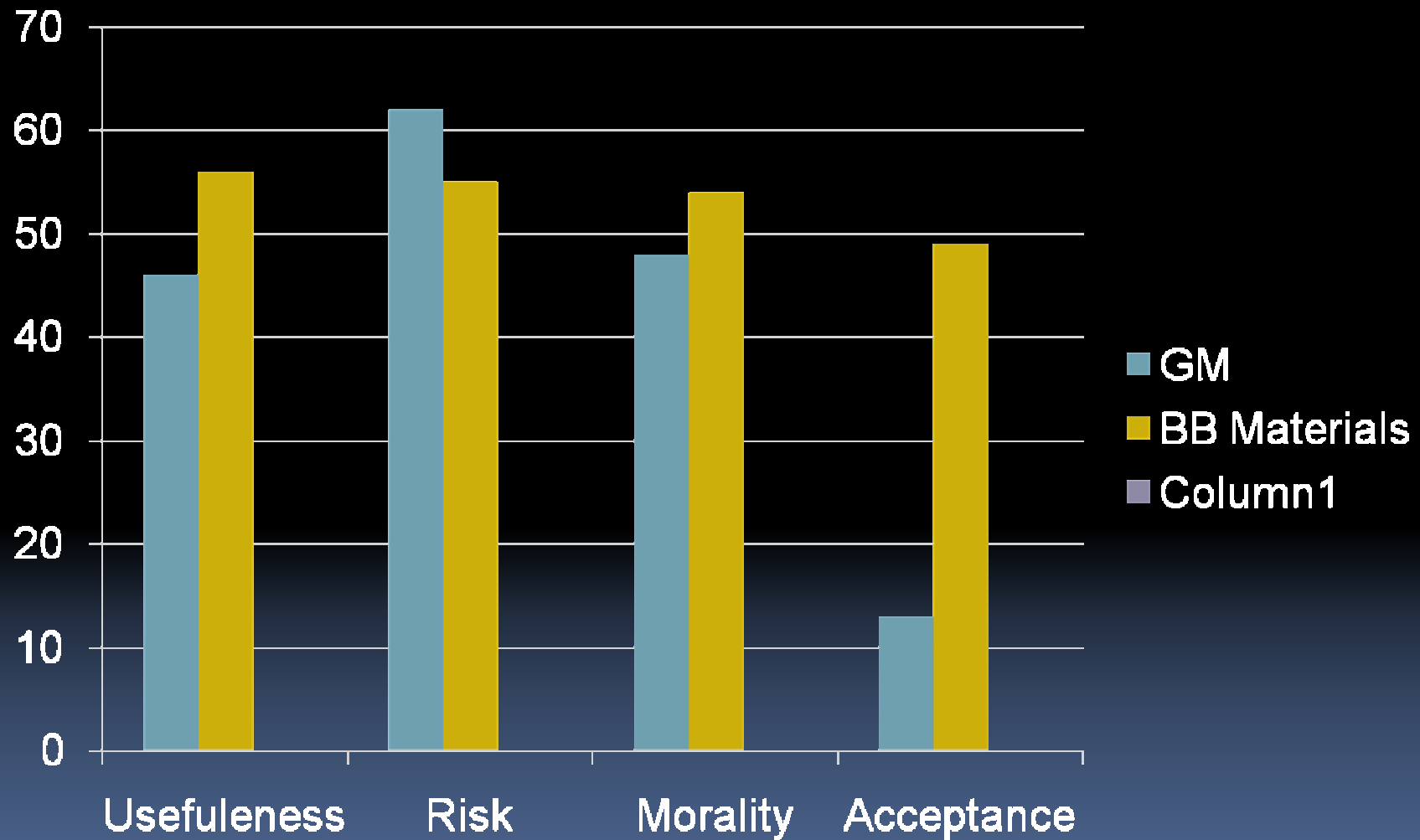
◎ Opponents

N-Y-N-N

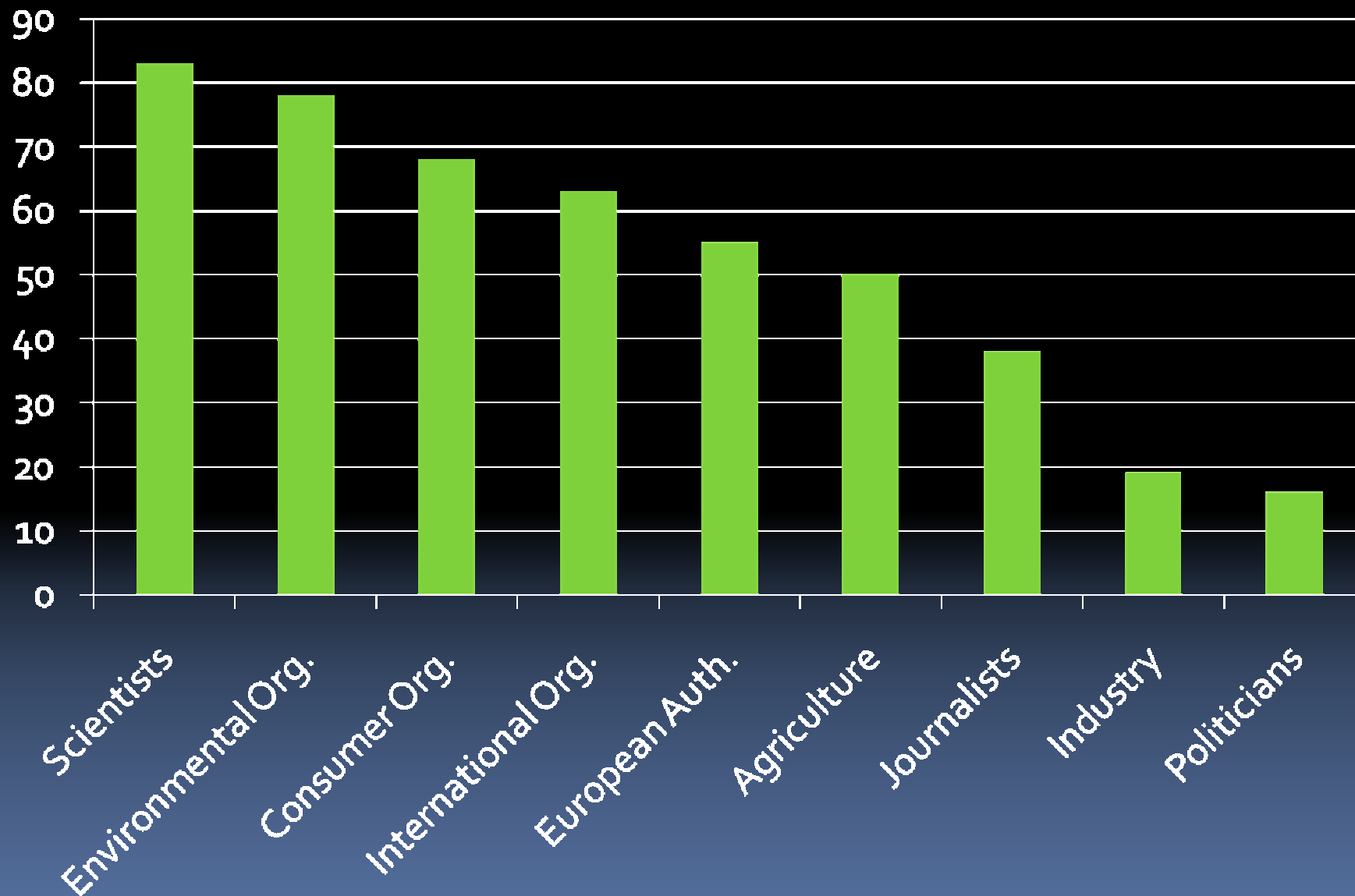
◎ Risk Tolerant

Y-Y-Y-Y

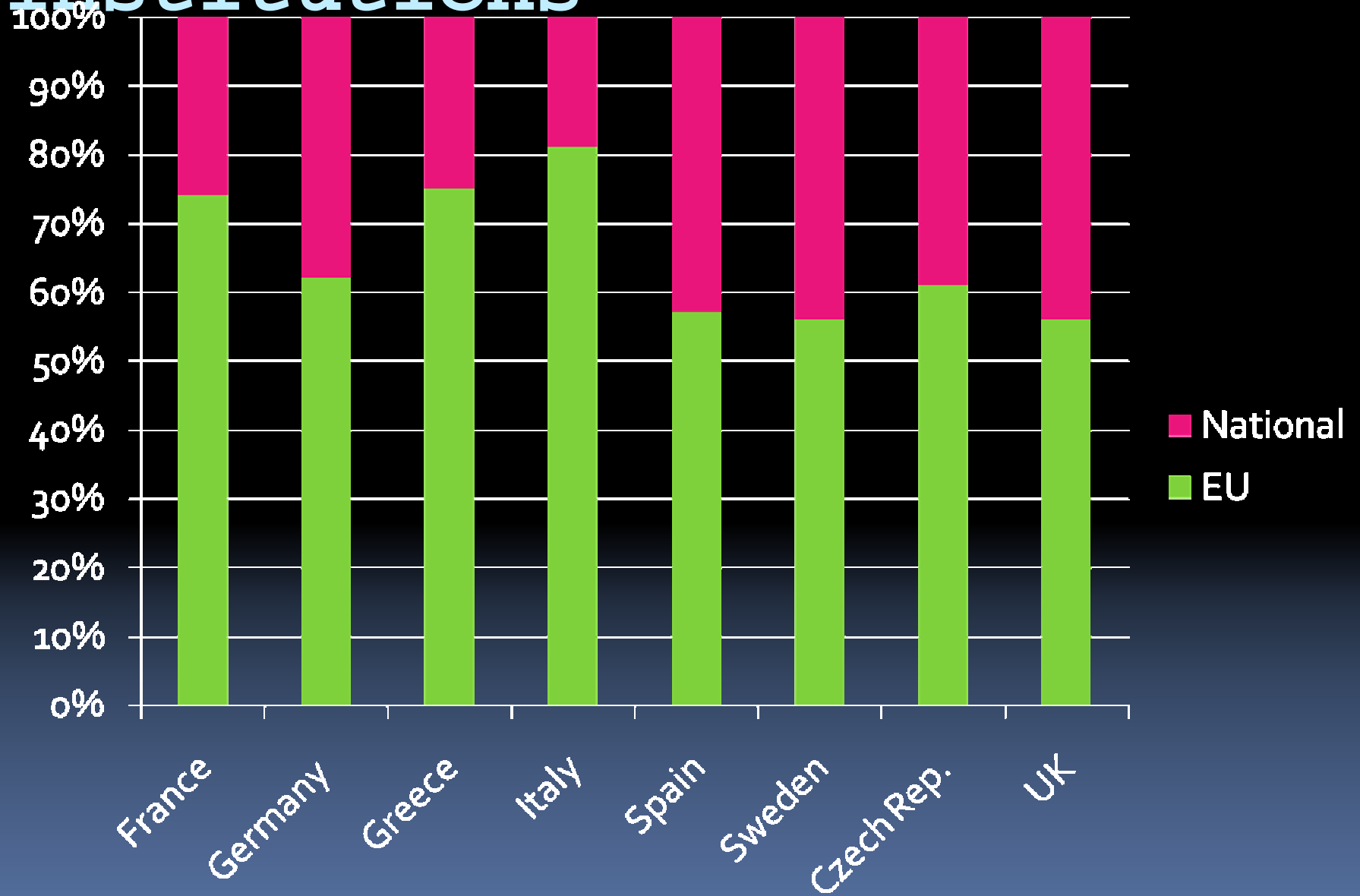
Risk Tolerance



The Trust Issue (I) - Sources



The Trust Issue (II) - Institutions



National differences regarding

The levels of public knowledge

The ordering of media according to their popularity

The records in 'positive' vs. 'negative' media coverage

2 clusters

France,
Greece,
Italy
Austria
Poland

Germany,
Sweden
Spain, Belgium
Netherlands
UK, Denmark
Czech Republic
Slovenia,




The On-line Survey

- ✓ Sketch out the profile of a different public
- ✓ Compare experts with the lay public
- ✓ Identify variable and invariable characteristics of public opinion
- ✓ Reveal the dynamics of public perception


Outlining the profile of on-line respondents

- ✓ High levels of attentiveness, optimism and awareness
- ✓ Internet and scientific journals the most effective media
- ✓ Higher levels in overall approval
- ✓ Low trust in interest groups

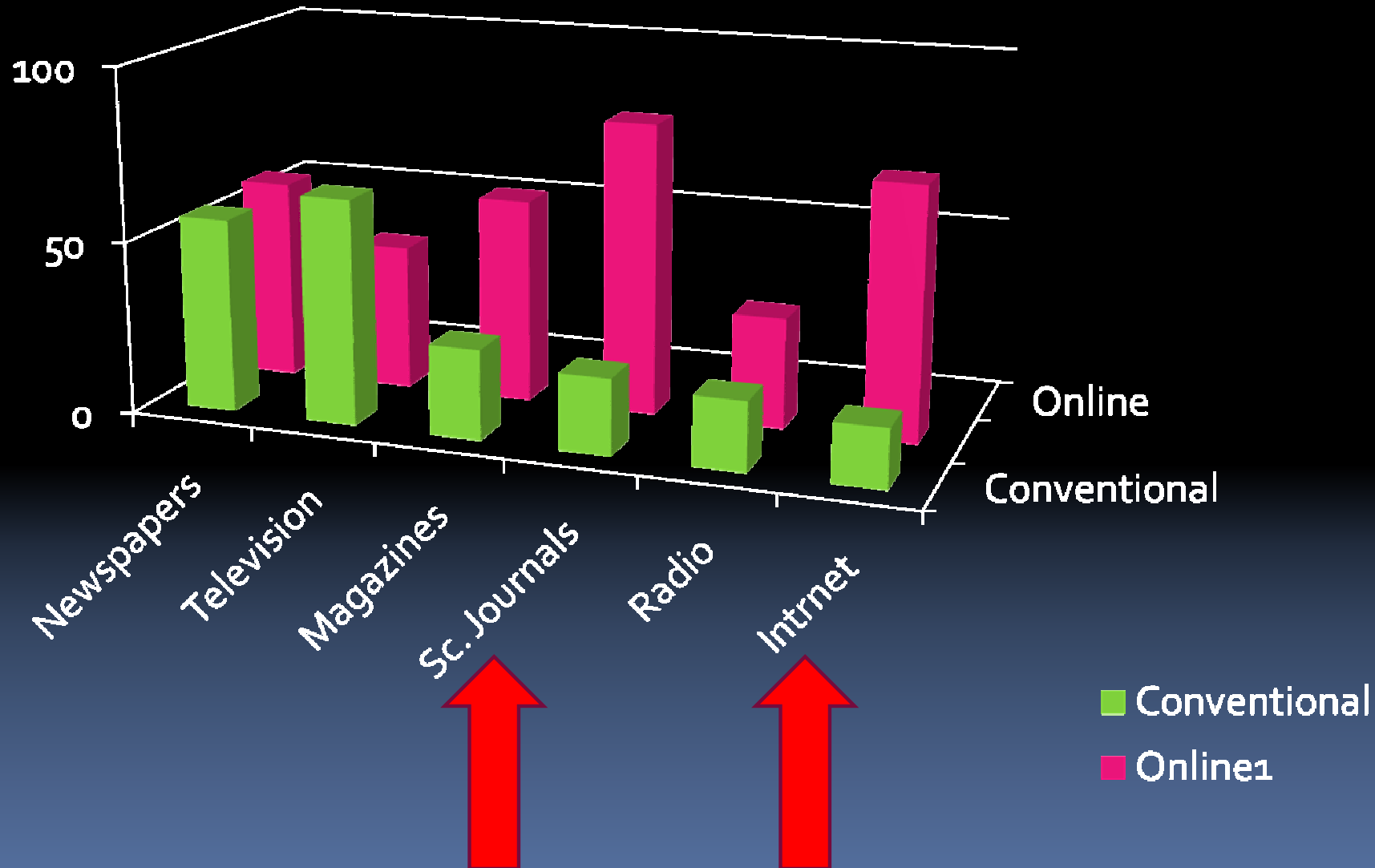


Conventional vs. Online survey

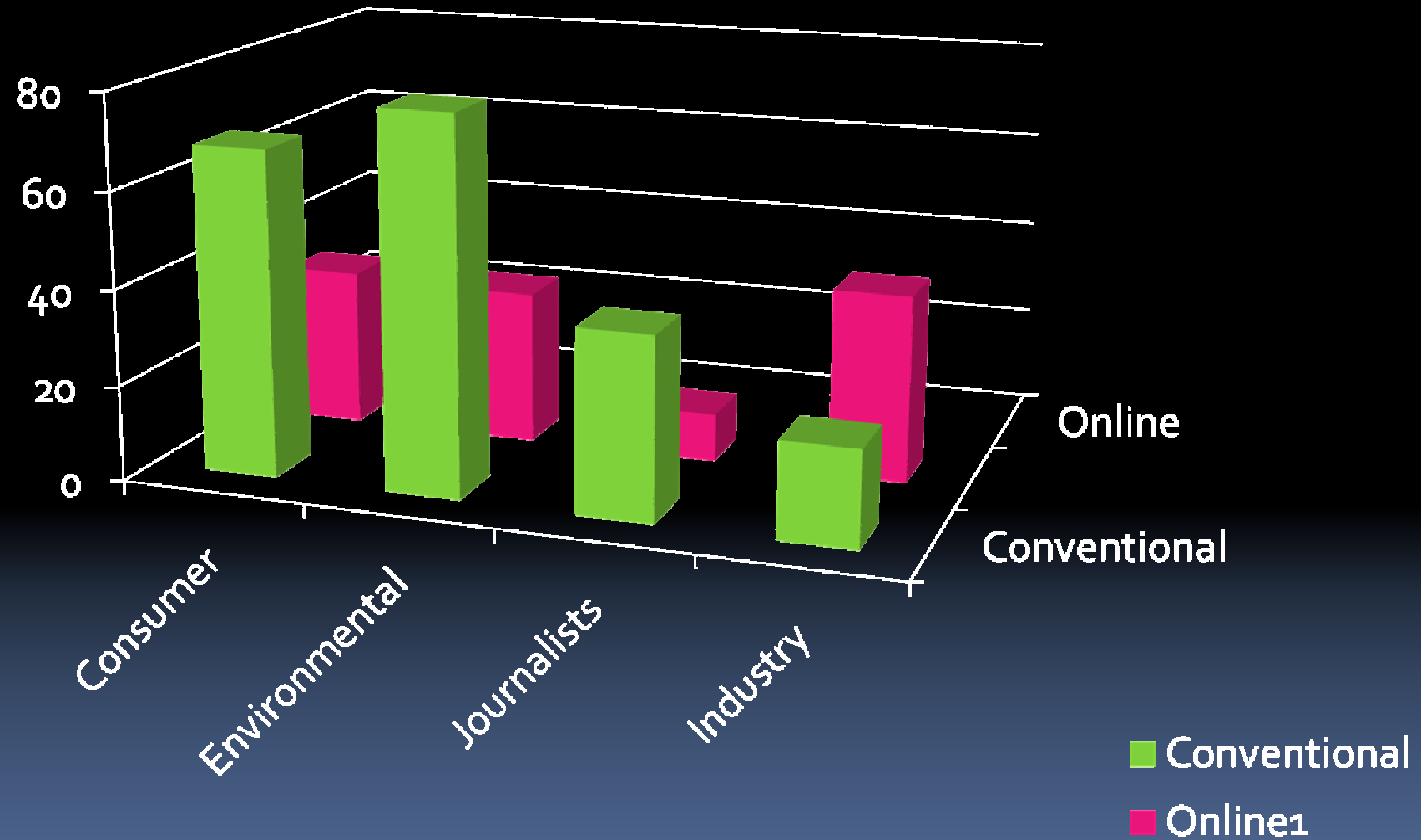
Online Responders have:

- Higher Attentiveness
 - Higher Interest
 - Higher Involvement
 - Better Understanding
 - Higher Awareness
 - Higher Optimism
- 

Source of Information



Trust in Actors and Institutions



Communicating the Risk


Scientists

- Rational approach
- Quantitative perception
- Risk means *potential deviation*
- Evidence of the consequences
- Familiarization with risk management principles


General Public

- Emotional approach
- Qualitative perception
- Risk means *harm*
- Absence of Evidence
- Ignorance concerning risk management





Public view of stakeholders and the decision making process

- Trust in actors and institutions
 - Preferred level for decision making
 - Reasons for supporting the development of
the new technologies
- 



Questionnaire

Methodological aspects

- Open access, web-based questionnaire
- Differences between categories of stakeholders presented
- Vast majority closed questions (60) – 5 point scale

Outcomes: General attitudes

I

- Genetic modification will improve the sustainability in modern agriculture.
- GM food is as safe as conventional food.
- Meat, eggs and milk from animals fed on GM feeds should be labeled as G M
- Co-existence measures will only have a marginal impact on cost and administration when compared with existing traceability systems
- Quantitative GMO detection is robust and reliable
- Practical co-existence measures should be set at the EU level



Outcomes: General attitudes


II

- GM foods are creating a need for testing non-GM foods and additional costs for non-GM foods
- Separate labeling thresholds are necessary for adventitious presence of GMOs in seeds for conventional and organic agriculture.
- GM farmers remain liable for economic losses on neighboring farms, whatever the co-existence legislation says
- Co-existence measures should be designed to prevent any detectable adventitious GM presence in non-GM foods


Regional stakeholder

workshops

- To enable the identification of commonalities and differences between countries Policy climate plays important role in co-existence debate
- More advanced, technical discussions in countries like England, France, Germany, Netherlands
- Issues that come up in several countries:
 - Need for seed thresholds
 - Testing requirements
 - Not (yet) authorized GMOs
 - Need for harmonizing co-existence requirements
 - Greece: GM free zone within Europe



Preliminary conclusions

- **Co-existence not only seen as an economic issue, but also perceived, used or presented as another issue**
 - **The 0.9% threshold mostly seen as appropriate, certainly not too low, and by some as too high**
 - **Many stakeholders not very pleased with current mix of national and EU legislation**
 - **Many stakeholders like to see similar co-existence requirements in all EU countries**
 - **Co-existence requirements are generally believed to have an impact on the choice of growing GM**
 - **Some surprising opinions on prices of GM versus non-GM, and on costs**
 - **Retailers have quite 'green' opinions (but only few respondents)**
- 



General Questions

- Production in Agriculture is the only possible vision?
- How is possible to calculate the benefits of the new technology?
- Sustainability is the guiding concept. But in which terms?
- Material cost / Processing cost
- Energy versus Hunger?

Recommendations:

Towards an integrated communication strategy

- ✓ Plans tailored to the needs of specified targets
- ✓ Enhance public interest, knowledge, participation
- ✓ Intensify coverage in the mass media
- ✓ Communicate environmental and economic benefits
- ✓ Improve the corporate profile of industry
- ✓ Intensify dialogue with NGO's