

Table SPSS-1

Public assessment of benefits and harms of scientific research: Selected years, 1979–2018

(Standard error)

Year	Benefits of scientific research strongly or slightly outweigh harmful results	Benefits of scientific research are about equal to harmful results	Harmful results of scientific research strongly or slightly outweigh benefits	Don't know
1979 (<i>n</i> = 1,635)	1.3	0.9	0.9	0.7
1981 (<i>n</i> = 1,581)	1.4	1.0	1.2	0.3
1985 (<i>n</i> = 1,986)	1.4	0.6	1.2	0.9
1988 (<i>n</i> = 1,021)	1.7	0.9	1.3	1.0
1990 (<i>n</i> = 2,005)	1.3	0.7	1.0	0.9
1992 (<i>n</i> = 974)	1.7	0.9	1.4	0.8
1995 (<i>n</i> = 2,006)	1.3	0.5	0.9	1.0
1997 (<i>n</i> = 2,000)	1.4	0.7	1.1	0.9
1999 (<i>n</i> = 1,882)	1.4	0.6	1.2	0.8
2001 (<i>n</i> = 1,574)	1.5	1.1	1.0	0.7
2004 (<i>n</i> = 2,025)	1.0	0.4	0.8	0.6
2006 (<i>n</i> = 1,864)	1.9	1.3	0.8	1.0
2008 (<i>n</i> = 2,021)	1.6	1.3	0.7	0.7
2010 (<i>n</i> = 1,434)	2.3	1.6	1.2	1.1
2012 (<i>n</i> = 2,256)	1.4	1.1	0.8	0.7
2014 (<i>n</i> = 2,130)	1.4	1.5	0.7	0.7
2016 (<i>n</i> = 1,390)	1.8	1.1	0.8	0.9
2018 (<i>n</i> = 1,175)	1.8	1.2	1.1	0.8

n = number of survey responses.

Note(s):

Table displays data for years when the question was proffered. Responses are to the following: *People have frequently noted that scientific research has produced benefits and harmful results. Would you say that, on balance, the benefits of scientific research have outweighed the harmful results, or have the harmful results of scientific research been greater than its benefits?*

Source(s):

Data are sourced from multiple surveys that used either identical or similar survey items. National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics, Survey of Public Attitudes Toward and Understanding of Science and Technology (1979–2001); University of Michigan, Survey of Consumer Attitudes (2004); NORC at the University of Chicago, General Social Survey (2006–18).

Science and Engineering Indicators