

The State of Science Communication and Public Engagement with Science in Switzerland

Mandated by the Swiss academies of arts and sciences, the Expert Group “Communicating Sciences and Arts in Times of Digital Media” assessed the status quo of science communication and public engagement with science in Switzerland. In a report incorporating scholarship, original data and secondary analyses, the Expert Group identified the following key results:

Science-related Perceptions of the Swiss Population and their Sources of Information and Contact with Science

- largely positive perceptions and high trust in science in Switzerland – but critical segments of the population exist
- The Swiss expect scientists to communicate to the public
- The population encounters science through a broad set of media, mostly online

From Individual to Organizational Science Communicators: Who Engages with the Swiss Public?

- many scientists think science communication is necessary – but far fewer do it
- Higher education and scientific organizations have expanded their communication
- many other stakeholders communicate about science

How Science is Publicly Presented and Discussed in Switzerland

- wide range of science communication formats is available to Swiss public
- share of science-related news has risen in past decades
- news media reporting on science is mostly accurate, but increasingly vulnerable to biased framing and PR

Digital Platforms: The Role of Google, Facebook and Co

- have become strongly used sources of information about science, especially for young people
- offer opportunities for science communication, but also facilitate mis- and disinformation

Science Journalism in Switzerland

- science journalism faces significant challenges
- specialized science journalism is declining, working conditions are worsening
- new models of science journalism have emerged, but their future is unclear

