

## Editorial note

### Trust in science and the role of open access publishing

Recently the Finnish Society for Scientific Information published the latest figures from the Finnish Science Barometer. Tiede, a popular scientific magazine and the second-most-read Finnish magazine after Donald Duck (Kansallinen mediatutkimus, 2018), wrote that trust in science is at a historically high level in Finland (Tiede, 2019). According to the barometer, science as an institution as well as scientific organizations more specifically, enjoy a high degree of trust among Finns. For example, three out of four Finns were reported to express either very great or fairly great trust in universities (The Finnish Science Barometer, 2019).

The Finnish Science Barometer is based on nationwide survey data. Every third year a random sample of 18–70-year-olds living in Finland (excluding the Åland Islands) are asked about their relationship and attitudes towards science. For scientists the results have been, for the most part, flattering. In addition to high population-level trust in science, general interest in science has also been relatively high in Finland. More than two out of three barometer respondents were reported to be interested in “sciences, research and technology”, attracting more interest than sports (The Finnish Science Barometer, 2019.) Despite a seeming increase of critical views towards science, most notably visible in discussions related to vaccinations and climate change, trust in science is at a record high level – though over-time comparisons should be made cautiously due to changes in data collection methods.<sup>1</sup>

The bad news, however, is that both trust and interest vary according to respondents’ background. A positive attitude to science is linked with high education, and some differences can also be found according to gender and age (for a review see Saarinen et al., 2018; Saarinen et al., 2019). In addition, party preference is also associated with attitudes towards science. The findings from the barometer indicate that individuals supporting the Green Party are the most likely to trust science whereas trust in science is at the lowest level among those supporting the True Finns (The Finnish Science Barometer, 2019). To some extent these results may be explained by other factors that are relevant for both party support as well as trust in science. Nevertheless, research has also shown that the association between party preference and positive attitudes toward science is not just a matter of socio-demographics (Saarinen et al., 2018).

Interest in science, a positive attitude towards it and trust in it are naturally not all the same thing. One way of increasing trust in science is increasing its transparency. High standards in terms of peer review but also aspects relating to accessibility – being able to read research results – may also contribute to trust. Scientific knowledge should not hide behind paywalls or disciplinary jargon.

In making scientific knowledge more accessible, open access journals play a key part. However, it should also be acknowledged that journals tend to have some running costs. Thus, members of scientific societies as well as broader societies supporting them, such as the Federation of Finnish Learned Societies, are vital. As a scientific open access Finnish journal, our aim is also to share information about recent scientific results to the wider general public. Thus, we also publish Finnish abstracts online.

This year we have three great regular articles. The first article by Henri Hyvönen focuses on how work-related self-care is depicted in the media, finding that self-care is often related to productivity in media portrayals. The second article by Sampo Varjonen examines Finnish parliamentary discourses about the basic income experiment, on the one hand, and activation measures towards the unemployed, on the other. The study finds that the seemingly contradictory unconditional and conditional measures were made compatible by framing them in connection to the prevailing cognitive activation paradigm. The third article by Julia Klein and Jan Saarela studies whether mortality rates among Finnish-speaking and Swedish-

speaking disability pensioners are similar. The findings indicate that they are indeed so, suggesting that health care for this group is distributed evenly regardless of language group.

In the descriptive findings article, Fredrica Nyqvist, Mikael Nygård and Fredrik Snellman demonstrate that Finnish municipalities differed in their active aging outcomes and that men and Swedish speaking men had higher scores in the active ageing index. The discussion paper by Jussi Tervola, Ilari Ilmakunnas and Pasi Moisio raises important points about how the adequacy of (Finnish) basic social security is measured, and how countries are compared and assessed.

We would like to thank all our readers, authors and anonymous reviewers, and wish you a great year 2020.

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## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> In previous years the survey was collected as a sample from the population registers via a postal questionnaire. In 2019 this was supplemented with an internet-based Gallup Kanava-panel survey collected by Kantal TNS Oy. The analyses reported here combine these two.

## References

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