



Public Understanding of Life Sciences A Cornerstone for the Today's Democracies

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ABSTRACT A global promotion of public understanding of Science is more than urgent under today's circumstances, characterised by the accelerated interference of biotechnology in our lives. Many negative consequences, like mysticism, racistic behaviours, misguided consumption, cruel competition etc., derive from the departure of people from the scientific knowledge, gradually leading our societies to a totalitarian, biotechnologically manipulated, world. This should be prevented through an intensive and properly planned educational effort. Rationalism, objectivity and transparency are promoted through scientific education, which is needed both for the specialists and the wide public. As the influence of life sciences increases, the more crucial becomes the issue of their public understanding, in order to prepare properly educated and conscious citizens. Historically the humankind has experienced Democracy as the best viable political system, in spite of its weak points. Democracy's protection and amelioration, finally its quality, depends crucially upon the development of public understanding of Science.

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