

HOW DO SOCIAL SCIENCES CONTRIBUTE TO INNOVATION?

WHY IS IT DIFFICULT TO ASSESS THE CONTRIBUTION OF SOCIAL SCIENTISTS TO INNOVATION?

Diversity of contributions to innovation

Social scientist contribute critically to the diffusion and adaptation of innovation, as well as the implementation of process and organizational innovations. However, these are challenging to quantify.

Soft skills

Social scientists often provide soft skills that are key for innovation, but are difficult to fully capture (e.g. creative & critical thinking, communication skills)

HOW TO ASSESS THEIR CONTRIBUTION TO INNOVATION?

Traditional approaches



PATENT DATA ANALYSIS

Mainly capture contributions to technical innovation, thus underestimating contributions of social sciences



CASE STUDIES

May capture social sciences contributions, but most mainly document contributions of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM fields)



LABOUR FORCE SURVEYS

Allow identifying the sector of employment of graduates in all fields, an indicator of science-industry knowledge transfer, but do not assess involvement in innovation

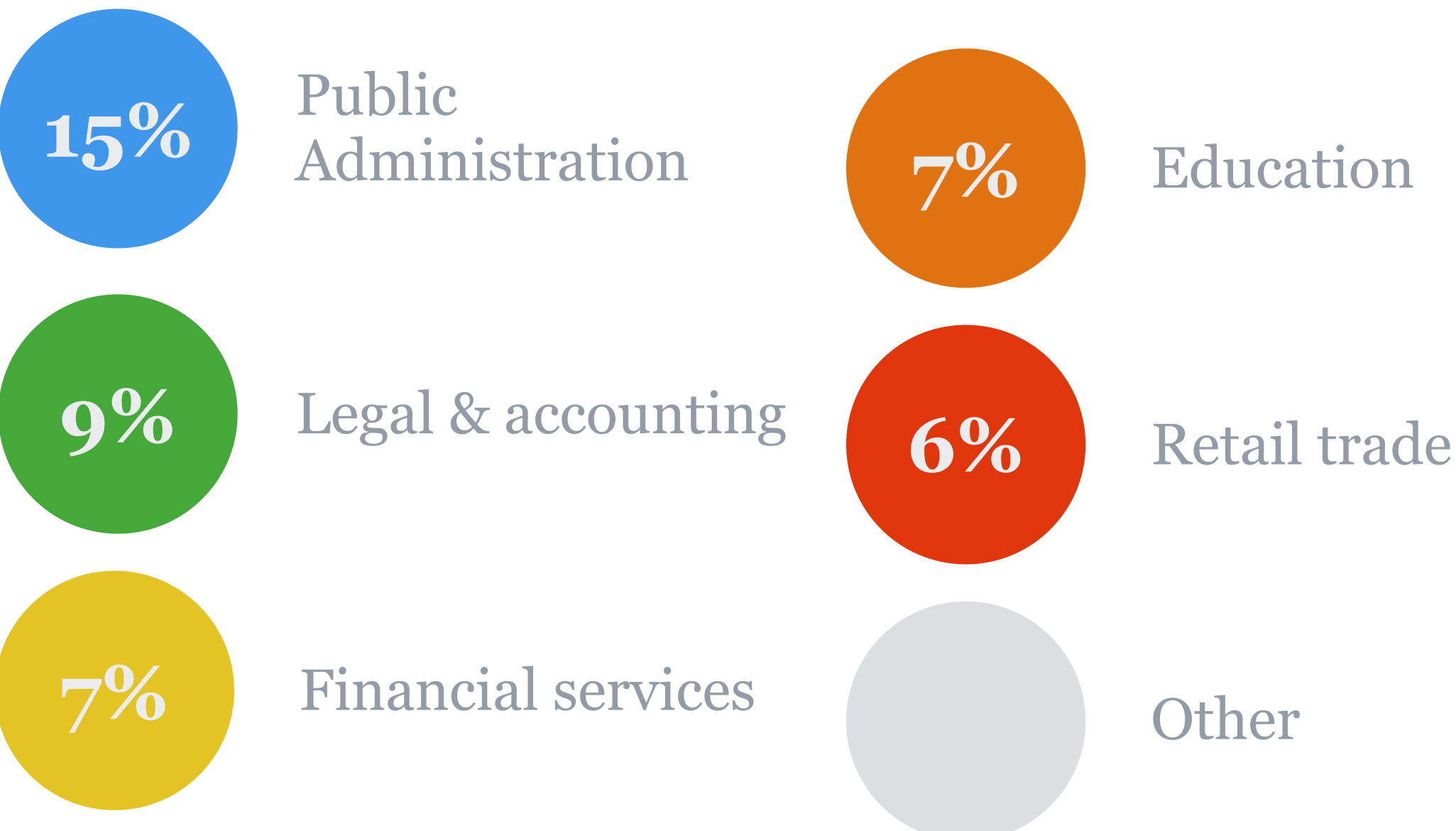
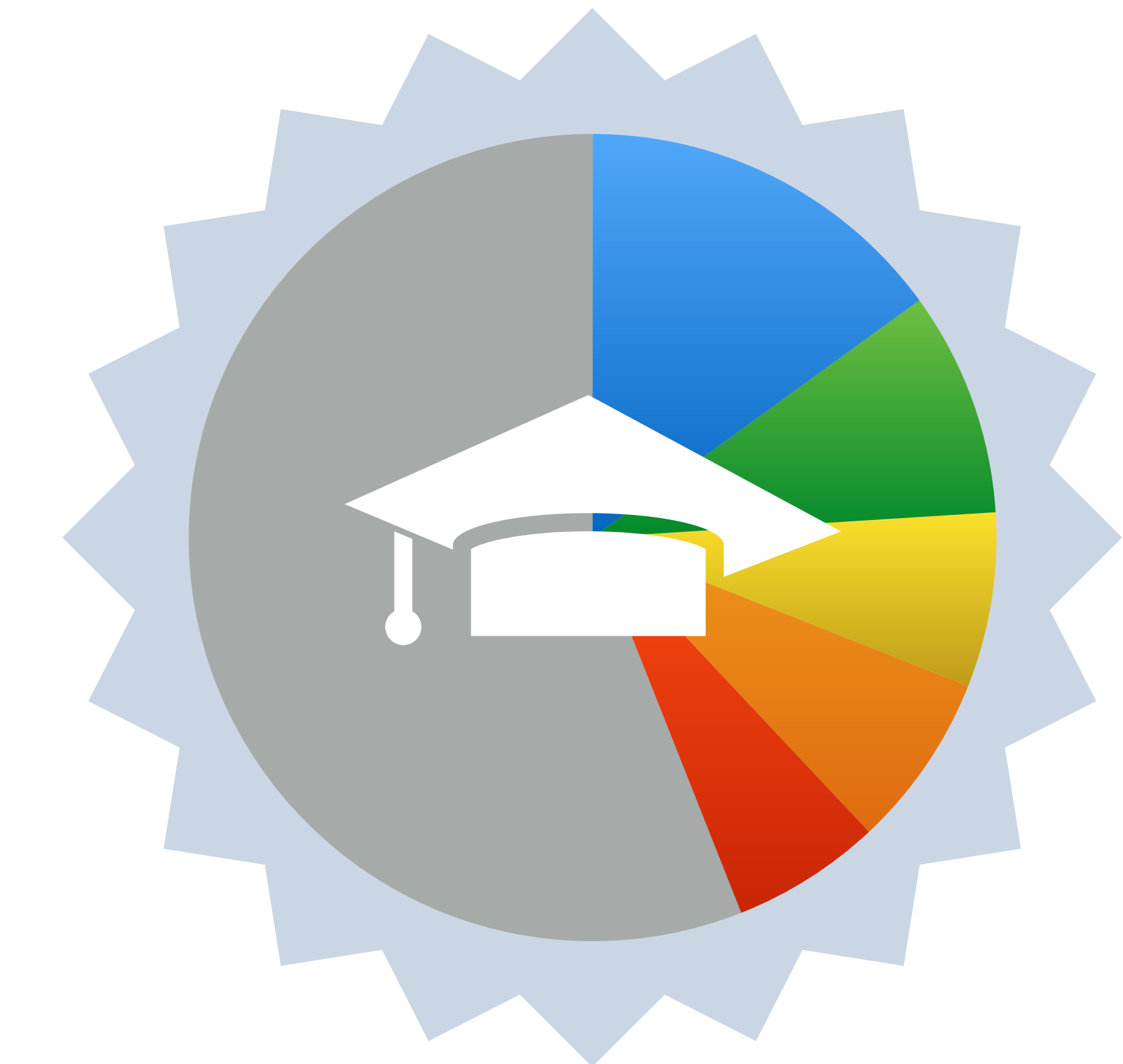


FUTURE AVENUES

New data and big data analysis offers new opportunities (e.g. web scraping of online job advertisements allows exploring demand for social scientists)

SECTORS OF ACTIVITY OF GRADUATES IN SOCIAL SCIENCES (EU-28,2013)

Main sectors of activity for graduates in social sciences



How do sectors of activity of social scientists compare to those of engineers?

