Universities UK International

MAY 2026

Realising our potential: UK participation in Horizon Europe

Contents

Section 1: Executive summary

This report outlines new longitudinal analysis, survey findings and case studies from Universities UK International (UUKi) members, illustrating long-term trends in the UK's participation in Horizon Europe, and five key learnings:

1. New longitudinal analysis shows decade-long trends of the UK's participation in Horizon 2020 and successor programme, Horizon Europe. Data on applications and grants awarded across the programmes shows the clear reversal of a long-term downward trend following the UK's association to Horizon Europe in 2024.

2. There is positive recovery across all three pillars, but a tailored approach will be required if we want to make even more progress. The funding share received by UK organisations is already exceeding the later years of Horizon 2020 across all three pillars, and there is evidence of strong talent attraction to the UK in Pillar I. However, further support is needed in Pillar II, and greater business engagement is required across the piece to ensure further success in Pillars II and III.

3. Case studies from UUKi members demonstrate the distinct value delivered by Horizon Europe as a long-term, large-scale programme with a tight focus on international collaboration – including in areas vital to the UK economy.

4. Certainty is vital, but form matters too. Certainty is central in maintaining momentum on long-term partnerships, and members emphasise the necessity of clarity for long-term planning. However, member feedback also points to the independent value of the Horizon programme, rather than certainty alone.

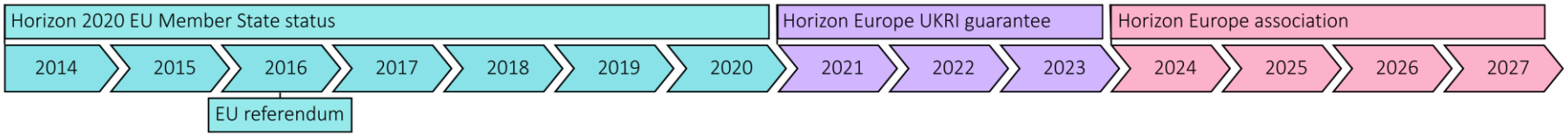
5. The UK should continue to learn from good practice in associated countries and member states in maintaining high levels of excellent quality participation.

Section 2: Introduction and background

This report presents analysis of long-term trends of the UK's participation in the European Union's (EU's) framework programmes: Horizon 2020 (2014–20) and Horizon Europe (2021–27). Horizon Europe is the world's largest collaborative research and innovation funding programme. It is run by the European Commission on behalf of EU member states, in seven-year funding cycles aligned with the EU's multiannual financial frameworks. Each seven-year programme has a slightly different legal basis, structure and budget. Once the European Parliament and the Council officially adopt the programme legal basis, non-EU member countries can negotiate to associate to the programme, paying a budget contribution in exchange for access to all or part of the programme.

Following the UK's departure from the EU in 2020, the UK entered negotiations with the European Commission regarding the terms of association. The period 2021–23 was one of uncertainty for UK applicants and for our international partners, with doubt about whether the UK would eventually associate and how to continue engaging with the Horizon programme during this time. The UK Government provided a 'Horizon Europe guarantee' through UK Research and Innovation (UKRI), whereby any funding won by UK entities from Horizon applications would be honoured by the UK Government. This guarantee was repeatedly extended as negotiations to associate were ongoing. During this period, UK entities were unable to lead Horizon research consortia or hold highly prestigious European Research Council (ERC) grants. This meant that, although funding was available, the uncertainty and an evolving political and policy landscape offset the stability offered by the financial guarantee. The UK associated to the Horizon Europe programme (and Copernicus) on 1 January 2024.

Figure 1: Timeline of UK status in EU framework programmes.



Following the UK's association to the programme on 1 January 2024, UUKi delivered a year-long programme of work with a focus on boosting participation in Horizon Europe and re-engaging with European partners.[1] This included senior-level delegations to France, the Netherlands, Norway/the Nordics, Poland, Ireland and Germany, in addition to a delegation to Brussels and an event for early-career researchers.[2] This sector-led work has been vital in reconnecting with European member states and associated countries, engaging in conversations with the European Commission and Brussels-based colleagues, and learning from best practice as we work to make the most of the opportunities presented by association.

With data on the UK's participation in Horizon Europe now available up to 2024, and discussions already underway regarding the next framework programme, UUKi has undertaken this quantitative analysis to evidence the value of association to the UK's research and innovation sector. With thanks to colleagues at UKRI for their support with data refinement, this project draws on data from the European Commission for the full duration of Horizon 2020 and the 2024 call year of Horizon Europe, and UKRI data for 2021–23. We look forward to further analysis from the Department for Science, Technology and Innovation (DSIT) to be launched shortly. The full methodology of this report is outlined in Annexe 1.

The quantitative analysis is supplemented with qualitative insights from UUKi members, capturing experiences of challenges faced between 2021 and 2023, and the response of the UK higher education research community since association in 2024. Case studies are also included to illustrate the tangible impacts and the unique value of the EU framework programmes.

[1] This work was kindly funded by Wellcome, and supported by in-country partners including France Universités, Universities Netherlands, Universities Norway and Universities Finland, the Polish Rectors' Conference, Irish Universities Association and German Rectors' Conference, as well as the Science and Technology Networks (STN), UK Mission to EU, the Embassies and the British Council teams and the in-country host universities.
[2] We are grateful to Imperial College London for hosting and speaking at this event, and to speakers from the University of Reading, the University of Surrey, Queen Mary University of London, Innovate UK, CONNECTS-UK and the British Academy.

Section 3: Key learnings

1. Association to Horizon Europe has reversed a long-term downward trend.

Our longitudinal data analysis shows that the UK's association to Horizon Europe has seen a clear recovery in the UK's performance in awards and funding received. The first year of UK association, 2024, stands out as the only year since 2016 to show a significant reversal in the long-term trend of declining numbers of UK awards and funding received in the Horizon programmes. This demonstrates the value of association in providing certainty to galvanise participation and enable UK partners to develop cutting-edge research with diverse international partners.

The data shows a continued decline in the proportion of UK funding and awards from 2014, with a very small increase in 2022[3] followed by a strong recovery in 2024. This recovery holds true across funding received, the number of projects UK organisations were involved in, and the total number of participations from UK organisations (Figures 2–5).[4]

Universities account for over two-thirds of UK awards in 2024: 67% of all participations were universities, compared to 65% at the end of Horizon 2020, showing that universities have bounced back well from the non-association period. However, there is still progress to be made for the UK to perform in Horizon Europe at a level which reflects our world-leading universities and expertise. The recovery is promising, but this momentum must be maintained and built upon given the scale of Horizon Europe budget.[5]

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[3] The fluctuation in 2022 is likely due to a greater volume of awards received in ERC calls in this year, in addition to large Clean Aviation calls in which UK organisations saw strong success.
[4] In this report, 'participations' is used to mean the number of times a UK institution received funding to participate in the programme. For example, in a collaborative project including three different UK universities, this would count as three participations. 'Projects' is used to mean the number of projects which included at least one UK partner. This means in the example of a collaborative project including three UK universities, this would count as one project.
[5] Throughout this report, data is presented as a proportion of the total programme. Reviewing funding and awards data as a proportion of all countries' awards reveals trends that are independent of the number of grants which were available in each year or the overall programme budget, allowing for comparisons with Horizon 2020 and across years.

Figure 2: Funding received by UK organisations as proportion of all funding awarded, 2014–24.

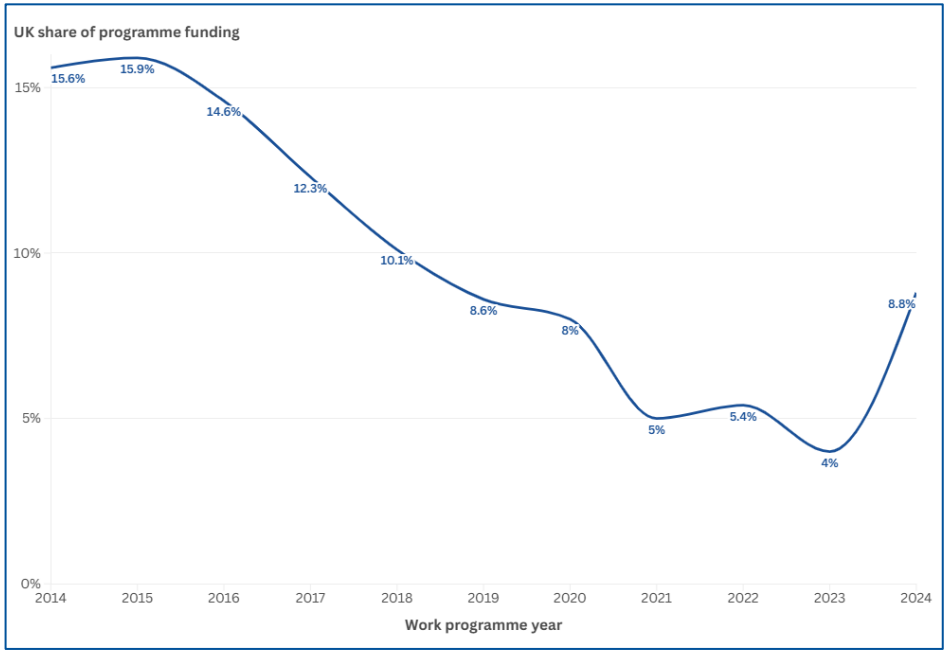


Figure 3: Funding received by UK organisations through Horizon programmes (€), 2014–24.

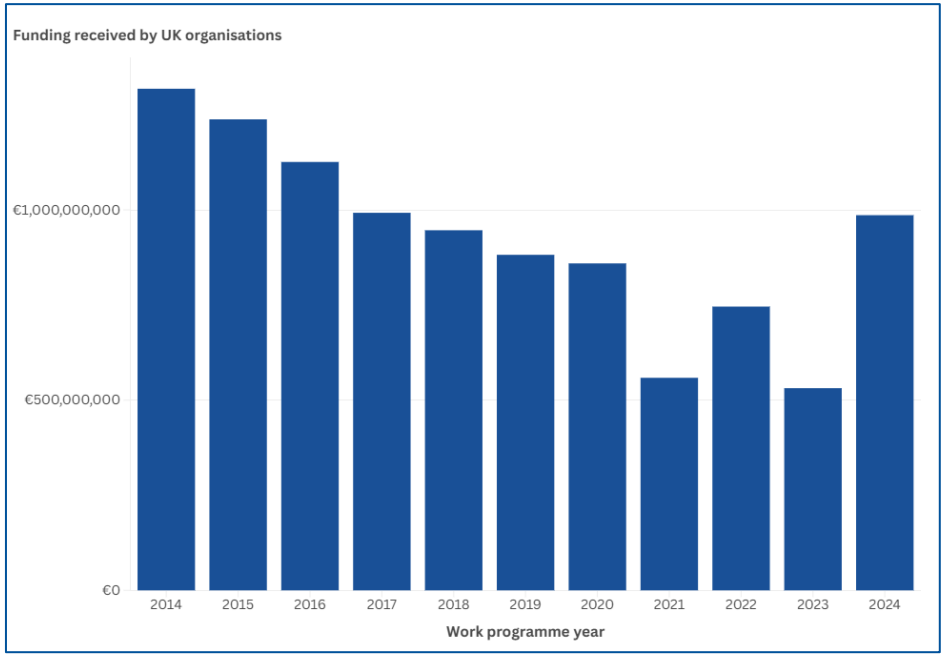


Figure 4: Projects with at least one UK partner as a proportion of all projects, 2014–24.

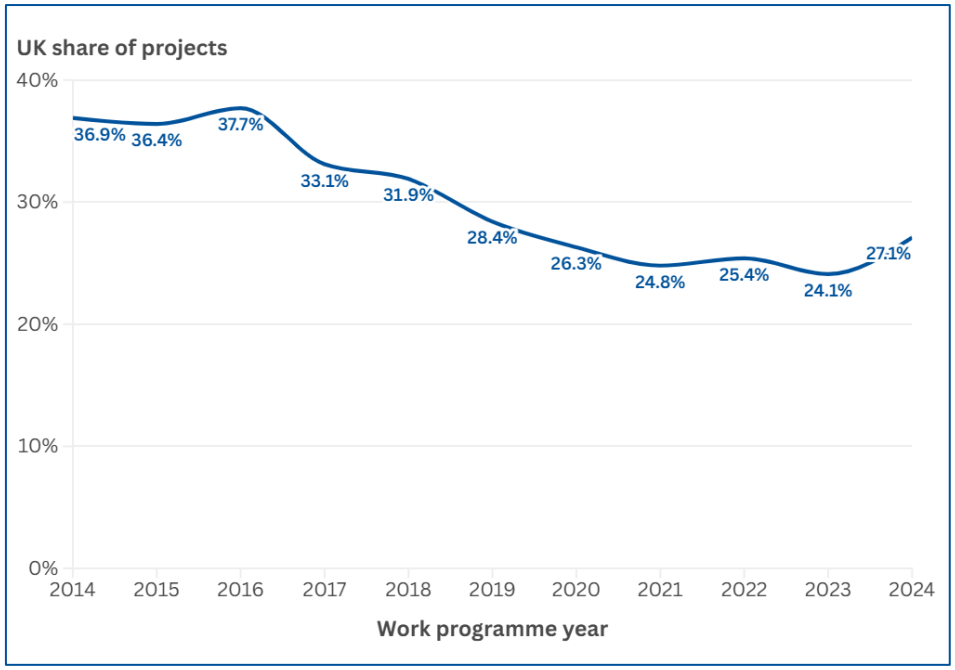
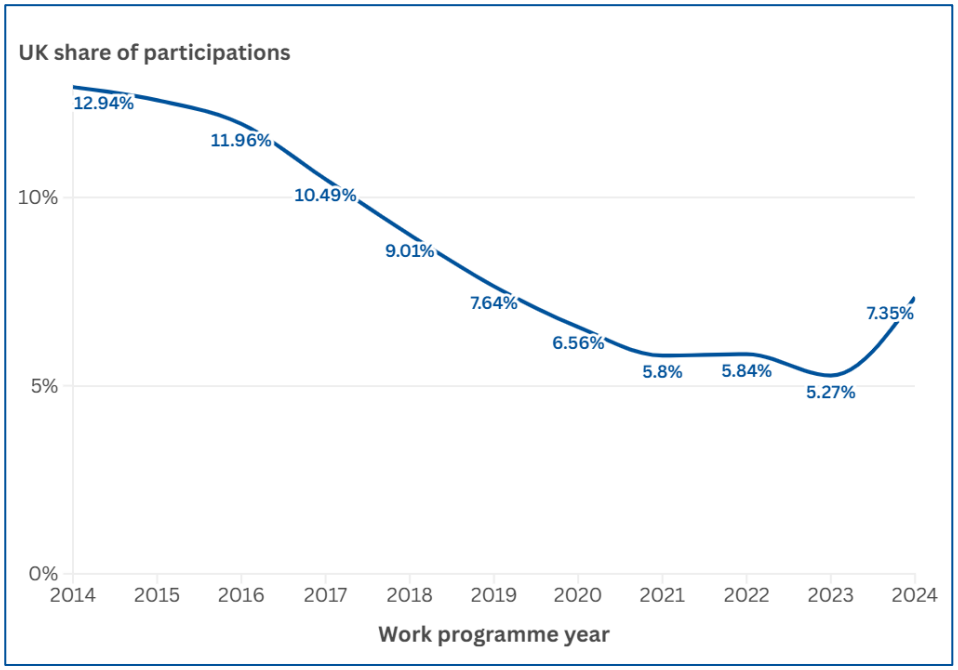


Figure 5: UK participations as proportion of all participations, 2014–24.



This case study shows how the UK collaborating with partners across Horizon can address global challenges, working in different pillars to continue driving forwards advanced technology.

Newcastle University: Converting dirty water into clean hydrogen – collaboration across pillars

*In collaboration with academic and industrial partners across nine EU members and associated countries, researchers at Newcastle University are developing new technology to create clean hydrogen from dirty water using renewable energy sources. Crucially, this hydrogen will be developed by relying on more sustainable, non-critical materials. **This will not only improve the UK's access to affordable hydrogen and reduce carbon emissions, but will improve UK energy security by improving its energy independence and reduce UK reliance on critical materials**.*

ANEMEL, funded under Pillar III in 2022, was devoted to converting dirty water into clean hydrogen using renewable wind and solar energy sources. Newcastle University led the membrane development work creating novel polymer chemistry with improved performance and lifetime. The project team demonstrated a 1 kWe proof of concept electrolyser (TRL4-5) which led to the formation of Delta-Spark, a Swiss spin-off company, and a patent filed on the design of electrolyser stack flow.

*In 2024, a follow-on project ASTERISK secured €4 million in Pillar II to scale up the technology to 5 kWe and demonstrate it independently at the Joint Research Centre JRC (TRL 6), working with partners across eight countries as well as Agata Communications, a business based in the UK. This has been made possible through **long-term collaboration across different dimensions of Horizon**, and researchers are seeking further EU funding to take the technology to higher technology-readiness levels.*

2. There is positive recovery in the UK's funding share across all three Horizon pillars, with strong talent attraction under Pillar I – but work remains under Pillar II and Pillar III.

Longitudinal funding trends also reveal that an increase in funding received by UK entities was observed across all three pillars in 2024 (Figure 6), with Pillar I leading the recovery. While there remains work to do in Pillar II and Pillar III, particularly in business engagement, funding capture is rebounding – and early results from 2025 calls show we can expect the UK's performance to keep improving.

The UK has recovered strongly in Pillar I, with a return to leading in excellent, curiosity-led research through the ERC and talent attraction and training through the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA). The UK's funding share in Pillar I increased from 8% to 14% between 2023 and 2024, with the UK winning significantly more ERC Advanced Grants than any other country in 2024. The UK was also joint-second in ERC Consolidator Grants and third in ERC Starting Grants in 2024 calls. We know that the UK has continued to excel and build on this performance in 2025 calls, with UK organisations moving to first position for awards in ERC Consolidator Grants and second position for ERC Starting Grants; joint fourth for awards in the 2025 call for MSCA Doctoral Networks; and first for awards to MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowships 2025.

The UK has recovered less strongly in Pillars II and III, with only a small increase in Pillar III funding capture (Figures 6–8). The slower growth in Pillar II is not a surprise as longer lead times are needed for large-scale collaborative projects, and we know that relationships have been severely impacted due to the period of uncertainty. However, the reversal of the downward trend – while driven significantly by Pillar I – is also evident in many clusters in Pillar II.[6] The UK's historic performance suggests that we can do more in Pillar II and Pillar III, but the data shows that success in 2024 was not confined to Pillar I. It now remains to build on this initial recovery and ensure the UK is well-placed to take advantage of collaborative opportunities, and achieve the levels of success of which the UK is capable.

[6] The UK's participation in Pillar II in 2024 is slightly underestimated in this report as calls from which the UK is excluded have not been removed from the analysis for methodological reasons.

Figure 6: UK funding as a proportion of all funding awarded by pillar, 2014–24.

Figure 7: Number of UK participations by pillar in Horizon 2020, 2014–20.

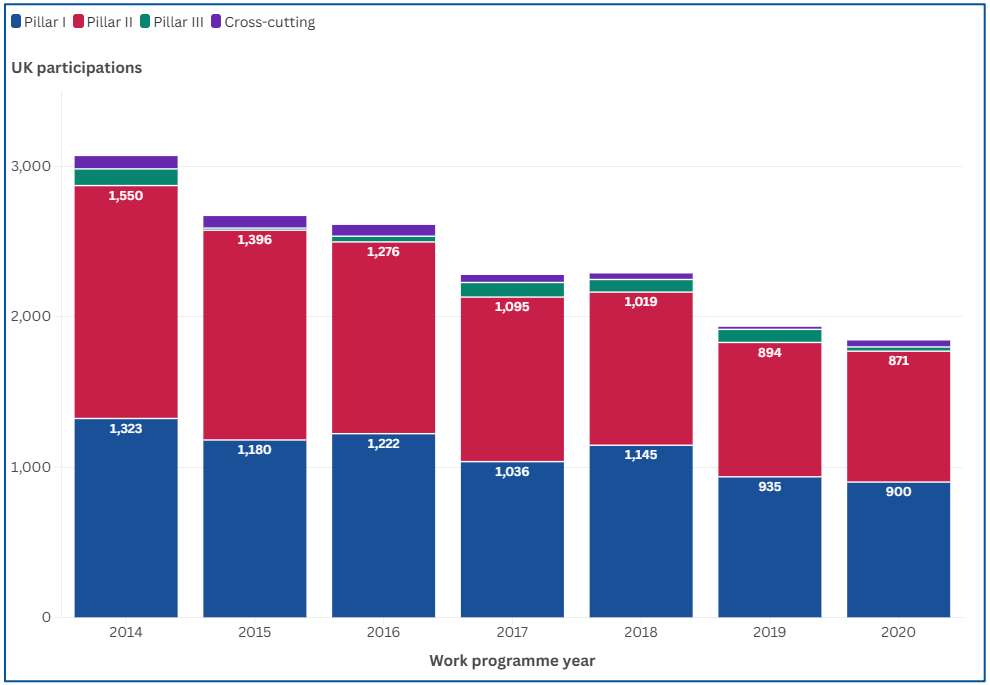
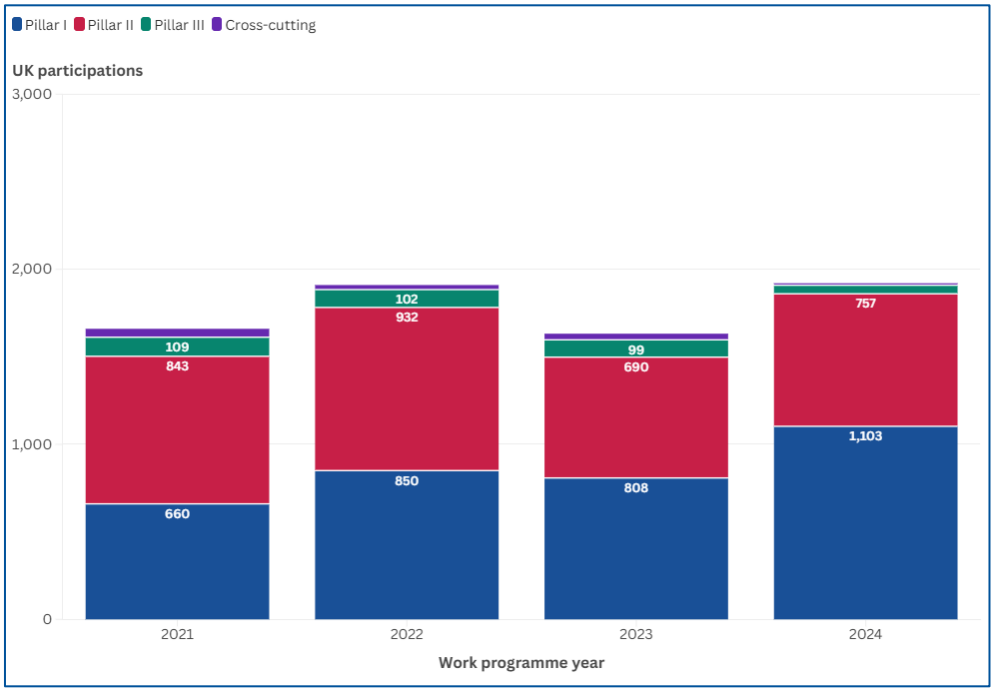


Figure 8: Number of UK participations by pillar in Horizon Europe, 2021–24.



The case study below illustrates an example of partnerships rebuilding in Pillar II in 2025, as momentum continues to pick up since association.

University of Edinburgh: UK AI Factory Antenna – bringing international AI programmes to the UK

The UK AI Factory Antenna (UKAIFA) project won €10 million in a 2025 Joint Undertaking collaborative project under Horizon Europe with the HammerHAI AI Factory, led by the High Performance Computing Centre (HLRS) in Germany. This project enables EPCC, a UK national supercomputing centre, to bring the value of the EuroHPC AI Factory programme to the UK. This will help UK organisations adopt AI into their day-to-day activities, delivering both social and economic benefits directly to the UK.

The UK AI Factory Antenna is focussed on enabling the economic impact of the practical application of AI by public and private sector organisations across the UK from 2026 onwards. As part of the EuroHPC network of centres across Europe and building on over 20 years of collaboration between EPCC and HLRS, this project links the UK into the heart of the EU's AI programmes.

There is strong evidence of impact, giving UK organisations access to EuroHPC AI Factory resources, while providing national activity to help UK organisations get the benefits of this transformational technology quickly. Horizon funding has helped to align the UK's AI programme with that of EuroHPC, supporting the government's AI for Science Strategy to build the UK AI ecosystem and become a beacon for international talent. This project is just one example of UK science going from strength to strength since association in 2024, rekindling relationships and building collaborations in key strategic areas.

The longitudinal data on Pillar II (Figures 9 and 10 below) shows the UK representation across projects increased in 2016, when overall participation declined, and showed steeper increases in 2021 and 2024 than broader participation. This is because, in these years, UK partners engaged with a wider number of projects – meaning there were relatively fewer projects which had multiple UK partners participating.

Figure 9: UK projects as proportion of all projects in Pillar II, 2014–24.

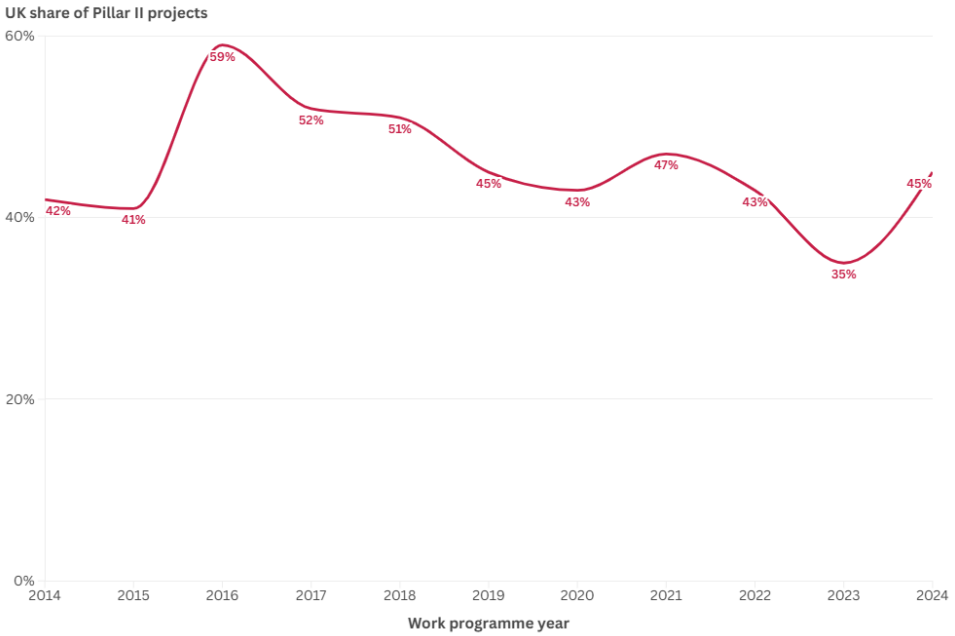


Figure 10: UK participations as proportion of all participations in Pillar II, 2014–24.

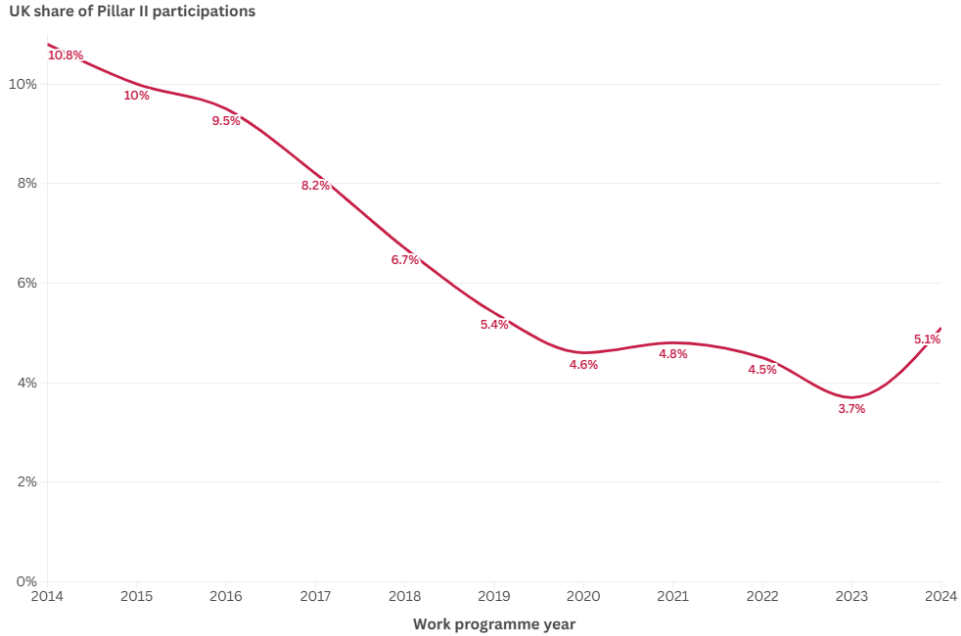


Figure 6, showing UK funding share as a proportion of all Pillar III projects, indicates that Pillar III is also an area where engagement could be grown. However, the UK is not currently eligible for the European Innovation Council (EIC) Fund, which accounts for a significant proportion of Pillar III funding. Figure 11 below shows UK funding share excluding non-grant funding through the EIC Fund between 2021 and 2024, more accurately capturing funding share for the elements of the programme in which the UK has been able to participate in this period. Accounting for this, UK participation has grown in the last three years. One example of this growing success is the UK's performance in Women TechEU awards for 2024–25 for women-led deep tech starts, with the UK claiming joint-first with France in this scheme. UK universities and businesses have a shared ambition to strengthen research commercialisation, supporting an innovative and productive economy. There are significant rewards to be reaped in Pillar III, and with additional support for engagement, the UK's ambitions can be realised.

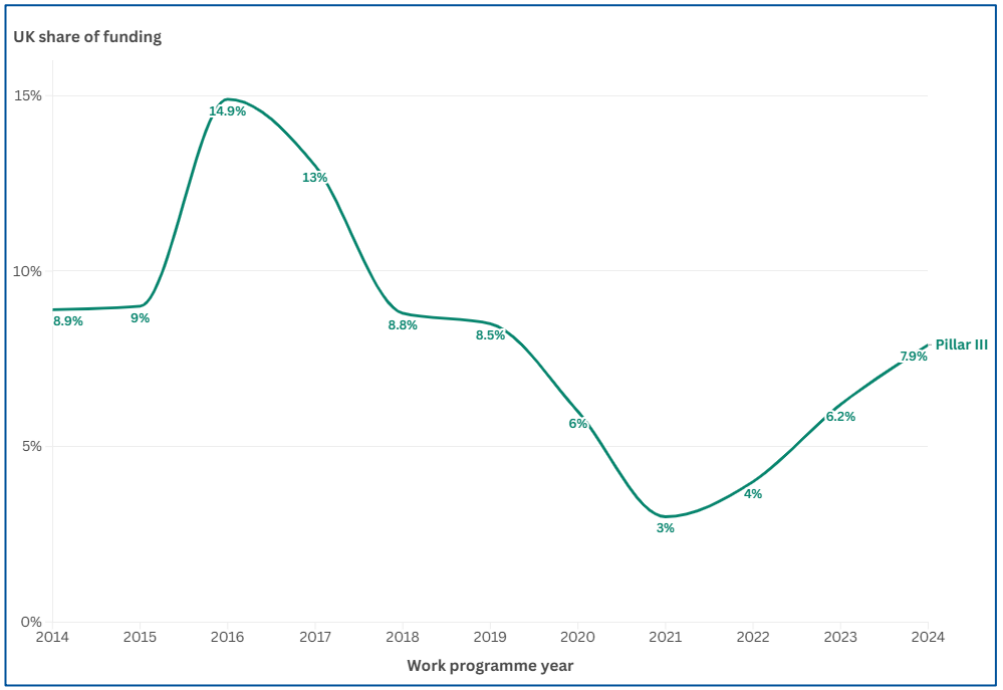


Figure 11: Funding received by UK organisations as a proportion of all funding awarded in Pillar III, excluding non-grant elements of the EIC Fund (2021–24), 2014–24.

The case study below shows that relatively small amounts of funding can kick-start the connections needed to create consortia, supporting the UK's success in the programme.

Coventry University: UUKi UK-France pump-priming to Horizon Europe success

UUKi's UK-France Science, Innovation, and Technology Pump-Priming Scheme was launched in 2024 to develop and advance partnerships between researchers based in the UK and France with a view to submitting a Horizon Europe proposal. The scheme, funded by DSIT, focused on the UK Government's priority areas: energy transition and hydrogen, space and Earth observation, artificial intelligence (including ethics) and quantum. Two beneficiaries of the scheme, Coventry University and the French Alternative Energies and Atomic Energy Commission (CEA), were recently successful in obtaining a €2 million grant from the Horizon Europe Joint Undertaking in Clean Hydrogen (HORIZON-JU-CLEANH2) in 2025, coordinated by CEA.

The Horizon project 'UPeM (Understanding existing PFAS emissions in water electrolysers and FC through existing fluoride measurement techniques)' will provide recommendations for proper usage and mitigations, including filtering and operational strategies, as well as recommendations on the type of membranes with lower expected release of PFAS, synthetic chemicals also known as 'forever chemicals'.

*The UPeM consortium comprises Europe's leading research experts in modelling, analysis and testing procedures on PFAS, including Coventry, stack manufacturers (ITM Power and Intelligent Energy) and one of Europe's leading service providers on electrolyser and fuel cell technology, connecting both parts of the value chain. **This project demonstrates how pump-priming schemes can create connections that flourish into success in Horizon, and the value of bringing together leading experts across academia and industry to tackle complex challenges.***

3. Horizon Europe offers unique value in delivering benefit to the UK through international collaboration.

UUKi conducted a survey of our members in spring 2026 to evidence the extent to which Horizon Europe plays a role in institutional strategies. UUKi members highlight the long-term stability, the shared framework with international colleagues, and talent attraction due to prestige and familiarity, which could not be replaced with a national equivalent:

- *'Being a member of an increasing global research partnership is worth more than can be quantified in purely financial terms, especially in these challenging times. We need to be a dependable and reliable partner.'*

- *'A UK-only scheme does not carry the same collaboration, partnership and prestige opportunities […] European Commission Framework Programmes span over 7-year periods with a set budget split across different pillars from the get-go. Unlike national programmes and budgets, they provide great long-term research funding visibility, stability and continuity for all active stakeholders in the research landscape in Europe (including the UK) and beyond, from responsive mode to targeted call, as well infrastructure and networking actions.'*

This strong sentiment is supported by clear quantitative evidence from the UUKi members surveyed:

- 97% of respondents consider Horizon Europe central to their institutional strategy: 76% strongly agree, 21% agree and 3% are neutral.

- 97% of respondents agreed that being associated to Horizon Europe, rather than participation as a third country, is important for their institution. 95% strongly agreed on the importance of association. Members cited the ability to lead consortia as a crucial part of association, in addition to clarity for researchers and international partners around eligibility.

These results and comments show that Horizon Europe plays a unique role for the UK and our international standing. A key strength of Horizon Europe and its predecessors is that they enable international collaboration to solve global challenges across key areas, including those of direct interest to the UK. The programmes have a complementary relationship with UK funding streams, offering a highly collaborative and long-term programme which supports UK research and ambitions alongside domestic programmes. The case study below also shows how the programme enables the UK to retain and attract talent through prestigious globally recognised brands such as the ERC.

The size of the programme enables science to be developed across a diverse range of fields which cannot all be supported at scale within national systems. This includes areas not of immediate strategic priority, but whose becomes apparent in later years. It also forms a crucial part of the UK-EU relationship, with research excellence and collaboration strengthening ties between the UK and our close neighbours, allowing us to go further together. The increasing number of associated countries, including those with which the UK has close strategic connections, means that the programme represents an opportunity for collaboration not only with EU member states, but a diverse and growing cohort of global partners.

University College London: Attracting global talent – Dr Nadine Dijkstra

Dr Nadine Dijkstra is Principal Research Fellow at the Department of Imaging Neuroscience, University College London (UCL), and the founder of the Imagine Reality Lab. She came to the UK on an MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowship, and won an ERC Starting Grant in 2024 following the UK's association to Horizon Europe. Of her experiences in the framework programmes, she says:

'The MSCA is well-known in Europe as one of the most prestigious international postdoctoral fellowships, and during my PhD it was my dream to obtain one. I applied for an MSCA to combine the work I had done during my PhD in the Netherlands with unique scientific expertise at University College London in the UK. My PhD work showed that mental imagery and visual perception activate many of the same brain regions. The MSCA gave me the possibility to further investigate whether this neural overlap could lead to people confusing imagination for reality.

'During my time at UCL in the UK, I learned new techniques such as psychophysics and computational modelling to be able to answer this question. Together with supervisors at UCL, we found evidence that the brain uses a 'reality threshold' to determine whether sensory activation reflects reality or imagination. This discovery was named by Quanta Magazine as one of the top three discoveries in Neuroscience and Biology of 2023. The work done during my MSCA formed the basis of the project I proposed for an ERC Starting Grant on the 'Neurocomputational underpinnings of perceptual reality monitoring'.

'With the ERC, I started the Imagine Reality Lab at the Institute of Neurology in UCL at the start of 2025. At the Imagine Reality Lab, we combine a range of techniques from neuroimaging, machine learning and psychology to understand the relationship between reality and imagination in our brain. The UK being a part of the Horizon programmes is essential for the viability of my research as well as for the global talent that my lab attracts at UCL.'

4. Certainty is highly valued – but it is not the only factor.

UUKi members were also asked if a long-term commitment to a UK-based fund would be preferable to Horizon Europe: 89% of respondents disagreed that a long-term commitment to an equivalent UK-only scheme would be preferable to association with Horizon Europe, citing the unique value of the European programmes.

This shows that, for a significant proportion of members, the source and specific design of the funding programme remain critical and certainty alone cannot substitute for the distinctive benefits of Horizon Europe. This underlines the importance placed on the specific characteristics and opportunities offered by Horizon Europe, over a domestic alternative. Comments from UUKi members highlight the benefits of association, and boost to collaborations, independent of the certainty factor. This includes the ability to lead projects, working from a shared playbook with international colleagues, and improved perceptions of the UK's commitment to collaboration:

- *'The inability to lead projects and influence funding priorities also marginalised UK universities and organisations and limited the scope for scientific leadership and engagement in large, high-impact projects. The impact of association has been considerable and has allowed our academic researchers to reengage their collaborative networks and rebuild their relationships as trusted partners.'*

- *'Having confidence in the UK's continued association to the next Horizon Europe framework programme (FP10) is critical to maintain momentum. Although the UKRI guarantee may have been in place, this clearly is not a sufficient enough vehicle to convince our staff (or EU partners) that we can continue to participate in EU funding programmes.'*

However, certainty is still important. UUKi members cited uncertainty as the key reason for reduced engagement during the 2021–23 period, even though funding was still available. It is clear that it isn't enough for the funding to be there; it must come with a clear, long-term strategy, which reflects the UK's commitment to international collaboration and allows for informed resourcing decisions to be made in research offices.

- *'We had several examples of established partners in Europe not wanting to include us in their application as a beneficiary given the uncertainty, which damaged relationships and our reputation as a reliable partner.'*

- *'To halt any future association to EU [programmes] or reduce the level of association would have a serious knock-on effect on academic engagement and university commitment to invest in support for EU applications.'*

The value of these long-term relationships is evident in examples of projects which span many framework programmes. Horizon is a natural home for long-term collaborations, including cutting-edge science which can take decades to mature – and the UK benefits hugely from this long-term view.

Imperial College London: DIAMONDS – a success story from decades of collaboration

Professor Michael Levin in Imperial's Department of Infectious Disease coordinated the Horizon 2020 project DIAMONDS, bringing together partners from across the world to develop a tool to diagnose the causes of illness in under two hours by using a simple blood test. The €23.8 million DIAMONDS award and consortium of 29 research partners from Europe and beyond was built on consecutive successful collaborations in Framework Programme 6 (FP6), Framework Programme 7 (FP7) and Horizon 2020, encompassing almost 20 years and €60 million of funding from EU programmes.

This research collaboration began in FP6 as understanding the biological markers of disease such as tuberculosis to better diagnose patients more quickly. This led to further large-scale studies in FP7 to identify the biological pathways that determine the severity of disease, which then built an understanding of how effective tests could be developed, funded by a Horizon 2020 award.

Through the DIAMONDS project, a new revolutionary diagnostic tool has been developed that is now in clinical validation studies, demonstrating an extremely high accuracy for rapid diagnostics. The molecular diagnostic tool will not only save patients from unnecessary and potentially painful tests, but can be easily deployed and utilised in practically any environment, revolutionising the way healthcare can be delivered across the world. This long-term partnership, supported by the framework programmes and leveraging expertise from across Europe, is a clear example of how global collaboration can drive early-stage discovery research to impact.

5. Learning from the good practice of like-minded associated countries will be important in supporting the UK's efforts to boost participation.

Being a country associated to Horizon Europe comes with different challenges – and opportunities – than participation as a member state. While we are seeing much welcomed positive recovery in the 2024 calls data in terms of the UK's recovery in Horizon Europe, collectively we need to do more. This includes continuing to learn how to operate effectively as an associated country and as a trusted, like-minded partner for the EU. The role of the UK is clear in the continent's economic and innovation ambitions, and we have a great deal to offer thanks to our world-leading universities – but there is much we can learn from expertise in other associated countries.

This also includes learning from strong examples of practice from other associated countries who have successfully supported their research communities in extensive, high-quality engagement with the framework programmes. For example, Norway has a well-developed support network for research offices and academics applying to Horizon Europe to improve the quality of applications, and strong feedback mechanisms for Norwegian engagement on the work programmes. We are pleased that the UK already has a strong support network and active voices in programme committees. However, the scale of the resource available and its connectivity with the wider UK system may not be commensurate with our collective ambition for Horizon Europe. Government must continue its efforts to support and connect the UK system, including committing resource to support a wide range of competitive applications, boosting participation and enabling our world-leading research and innovation sector to realise its potential through the programmes. Simultaneously, universities should target support to Pillar II and Pillar III applications, including business engagement, to ensure the sector is making the most of the opportunities posed by association.

As the programme continues to grow, there are opportunities for the UK to consolidate relationships with global partners, strengthening partnerships through Horizon. Good practice will continue to develop as new countries associate to the programme (or a part of), and mutual exchange of learnings will ensure the UK can continue to build on its success in collaboration with partners old and new. We have already seen excellent examples of exchange, such as the UK Mission to the EU and UKRI's joint event, Harnessing international collaboration to boost competitiveness, in February 2026. This event brought together associated countries to discuss shared strengths and best practice. We should continue to integrate learnings from European and global colleagues into our system, ensuring that UK research and innovation is able to thrive.

Norway's approach to Horizon Europe

We learnt about the Norwegian operating model for Horizon Europe during a delegation to Oslo in February 2025, funded by Wellcome, as part of our engagements across key European partners to boost participation in Horizon Europe. Norway has exceeded government targets for engagement thanks to a coherent strategy and delivery model, with key learnings for international partners including the UK.

Norway refined its operating model for supporting EU framework programmes at the start of Horizon 2020, following a government decision and underpinned by a government strategy with implementation supported by the Norwegian Ministry for Education and Research. The cost-benefit analysis of Norway's participation in FP7 and Horizon 2020 demonstrated the added value of the new model, including greater financial drawdown of funds to Norway: from 1.68% at the end of FP7 to 2.22% at the end of Horizon 2020. Norway's government strategy for Horizon Europe expanded on this further, noting 'the Government's ambition is for Norwegian actors to receive 2.8 per cent of the competition-based funding in Horizon Europe'.

The supporting mechanism continued in Horizon Europe, with the Research Council of Norway (RCN) being central to the delivery, working closely with Ministry and Norway's Delegation to the EU. The RCN has delivered the following functions:

- *hosting the 45 National Contact Points and the coordination function, with the Innovation Norway hosting the business side*
- *national reference groups with over 200 experts on programme committees closely linked to the development of work programmes*
- *a structured series of courses for applicants*
- *the Coordinators Forum, where coordinators can meet regularly and discuss common challenges*
- *financial schemes that provide support for proposal writing and financial incentives for bringing industry into consortia*
- *a projects databank which gives applicants sight of successful proposals in their areas of interest*
- *an annual conference to bring all stakeholders together*

With such a developed mechanism for support, Norway has continued to participate strongly in Horizon Europe, winning approximately 3% of the overall funding to date and exceeding the 2.8% government target (data provided by RCN).

Section 4: Policy recommendations

We recommend that government:

1. Provides early and clear signals of intent to associate to the next framework programme. This will allow the sector to invest in long-term partnerships and networks through Horizon Europe that deliver the greatest impact.

2. Continues to deliver initiatives which support the sector to maximise the benefits of UK association with Horizon Europe. We welcome the work focused on boosting participation so far, including UKRI's ongoing work to support and upskill the sector to ensure high-quality applications; and DSIT's funding for pump-priming schemes and its Horizon Europe Roadshows across England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

3. Prioritises support for collaborative activity under Pillars II and III. This should build on positive ongoing work by Innovate UK, including support and awareness-raising for businesses to promote engagement with Pillar III.

4. Invests in system-wide capability and learning from international best practice. This should include learning from other associated countries and replicating best practice to ensure connectivity and guidance that maximises returns on the UK's participation in Horizon Europe.

We recommend that universities:

5. Build on the strong results following UK's association to Horizon Europe. This should include continuing to advocate for the central role that Horizon Europe plays in institutional international strategies.

6. Continue to implement and grow support which fosters participation in Pillars II and III. This should include work with business and industry partners to raise awareness and build capacity to take full advantage of Horizon Europe opportunities.

Universities UK International (UUKi) represents UK higher education institutions (HEIs) globally and helps them flourish internationally.

To do this we actively promote UK HEIs abroad, provide trusted information for and about them, and create new opportunities through our unique ability to act at sector level. We draw on UK university expertise to influence policy in the UK and overseas, delivering information, advice and guidance to facilitate mutually beneficial collaboration between UK HEIs and a broad range of international partners.

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Data access:

The data behind all charts and tables in this report is available in a downloadable file: download the full dataset.

Each tab corresponds to a figure in the report and is labelled accordingly.

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