VOTE FOR SCIENCE

6-9 JUNE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT ELECTIONS

SCIENCE EUROPE
Shaping the future of research

FACT SHEET

INTRODUCTION

Scientific research fuels European progress, addressing challenges like climate change, inequality, and global health crises. Ahead of the European parliamentary election, prioritising research investment and scientific freedom is essential for sustained economic growth and improved quality of life.

Through this fact sheet, Science Europe offers an overview of research in Europe, highlighting its current state and pivotal developments shaping the future of our research ecosystem.

RESEARCH FUNDING

The largest support for European research comes from EU research framework programmes – but will the next one be big enough?

2014 - 2020 — HORIZON 2020 BUDGET: €75.6B — Only 26% of high quality proposals funded

2021 - 2027 — HORIZON EUROPE BUDGET: €95.5B — Only 29% of high quality proposals funded

2028 - 2034 — FRAMEWORK PROGRAMME 10 BUDGET: LOADING...

University alliances, research groups, industry representatives and members of the European Parliament have called for a budget of **€200 billion**

ARE WE SPENDING ENOUGH?

Is the EU spending enough on R&D? The short answer is, no. The target was to spend 3% GDP by 2010, but spending peaked in 2020 at only 2.30% – now its on the way down!

2022
GDP: 2.24%
€352B

TARGET
GDP: 3%
€471B

This would be enough to fully fund FP10 with the €200 billion it needs.

SCIENTIFIC LEADERSHIP

The EU is remaining competitive, with a global share of top 10% highly cited scientific publications remaining high. But it will need to keep funding up, as this figure has declined slightly from 24% to 22.7% between 2000 – 2018.

RESEARCH COMMUNITY SIZE

The number of full-time equivalent researchers in the EU increased by more than 45% between 2012 and 2022, from 1.43 to 2.08 million.

2.08 million researchers

WIDENING GAP

Differences across EU Member States in research quality, access to funding, and R&D spending remains high.

HORIZON 2020 FUNDING ALLOCATION

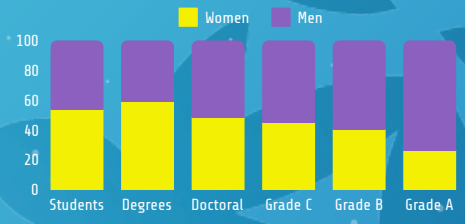
ONLY 4.4%

of funding went to EU13 countries (who joined after 2004), compared to 95.6% of for EU15 countries.

WOMEN IN SCIENCE

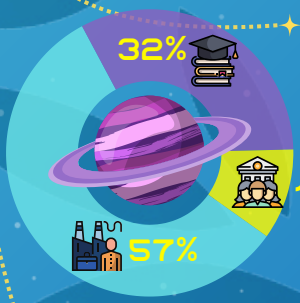
Despite women making up the majority of the people employed in science and technology, they were underrepresented at higher levels.

Proportion (%) of men and women in a typical academic career, students and academic staff



Women remain considerably underrepresented among researchers based on head count in the EU, accounting for only 32.9% in 2019. There has been no considerable progress since 2005, when the share stood at 30.2%.





More than half (57%) of full-time equivalent researchers in the EU worked in business enterprises, 32% in higher education and 10% in the government sector in 2022.

INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION

The share of international co-publications with non-EU partners in the public sector has increased constantly between 2010 and 2021.

217 PUBLICATIONS PER 1000 RESEARCHERS 2010 TO 358 IN 2021

EDUCATION

Between 2007 and 2022, the share of 25-34 year-olds completing a university degree or similar increased from 28.9% to 42.0%. The EU is on track to reach its target of raising this share to:

45% BY 2030

ACADEMIC FREEDOM

According to the Academic Freedom Index, academic freedom in the EU has been on a decreasing trend between 2010 and 2022, with this trend accelerating after 2020.

This is part of a larger global decline. In 1973, only about 1.6 billion people (43.5%) lived in countries with completely restricted academic freedom. Now, 45.5% of the world's population – 3.6 billion people – live in 27 countries where academic freedom is completely restricted.

OPEN ACCESS

95% FREE

Horizon 2020 pushed for greater open access to research papers, which became a general requirement under the programme, wth an evaluation founding that 82% of publications were freely available online.

Currently, 91% of all publications and 95% of all peer-reviewed publications funded by Horizon Europe are open access. These percentages are exceptionally high globally.

SOURCES

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