



# UK Science & Innovation Network Country Summary

## The Netherlands

### 1. Science and Innovation Landscape

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#### Research in Numbers

The Netherlands is one of the world's most open and innovative economies, **ranking 5th in the 2023 World Competitiveness Ranking<sup>1</sup>, and 7th in the Global Innovation Index.<sup>2</sup>** The Netherlands successfully develops, attracts, and retains talent, ranking 5th in the Global Talent Competitiveness Index 2023.<sup>3</sup>

**The Netherlands spent 2.26% of GDP** or Euro 19.5 bn on Research & Development (R&D) in 2021. This is over 1 billion more than in 2020 and makes the Netherlands a top 10 investor in R&D in Europe. Corporate R&D intensity as a percentage of GDP stood at 1.52 percent, a percentage that has been stable for several years.<sup>4</sup> In 2019 over 33%, or Euro 3.9 bn, of private R&D expenditure was attributable to businesses in the Province of North-Brabant. This is home to some of the powerhouses of the Dutch semiconductor and high-tech industry. **The highest level of R&D activity can be found in the Brainport region around Eindhoven, with an R&D spend of Euro 3 bn in 2019.** Due to its R&D strengths in semiconductors, high tech systems and materials, logistics, healthcare and life sciences, it was declared the World's Most Intelligent community in 2011.

#### Government Structures and Policies

Government responsibility for science and innovation (S&I) policy is split across two ministries in the Netherlands. The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science oversees science policy. Innovation policy, stimulating corporate R&D and translating S&I into economic value are overseen by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Climate Policy.

The Dutch Science & Innovation policy focusses on strengthening 'top sectors': ten high-performing broadly defined sectors in which the Netherlands excels.<sup>5</sup> To bring these sectors together, streamline efforts and improve collaboration, the Dutch government has formulated 25 missions under four overarching social challenges. These relate to - Energy transition and Sustainability, Agriculture, Water and Food; Health and healthcare; Security. These missions stimulate;

- Science and innovation towards common goals on ensuring a greater and healthy life expectancy.
- Sufficient clean water and safe food, lower greenhouse gas emissions, affordable sustainable energy and
- A safe Netherlands to live and work in.



## Research Institutions

The Netherlands has a highly developed and well-connected research landscape, with strong connections and collaborations between universities, institutions for (higher) vocational training, research institutes, advisory bodies, municipal, regional, and national governments. It is home to some particularly successful innovation hubs. The Dutch Food Valley around Wageningen University and Research is one of the world's leading regions in agri-food, living environment and health and lifestyle. The Netherlands is also home to; world-leading clusters and centres in quantum technologies, health and life sciences, data & AI, water management, creative industries, chemistry and energy. Some leading international research institutes are based in the Netherlands, such as ESTEC, the European Space Agency's research centre.

## 2. UK- Netherlands Partnership on ST&I

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The Netherlands represents a strong collaborative partner for the UK. The Netherlands is the 5th collaborative partner for the UK in Europe, after Germany, France, Italy, and Spain. The UK is the 2nd collaborative partner for the Netherlands in Europe, after Germany. Of the UK international collaborations, 8.9% took place with the Netherlands.

The UK and the Netherlands also collaborate through several multilateral programmes, including global research funding forms such as Horizon Europe, the Global Research Council, and the Belmont Forum. At institutional level, UK and Dutch universities, research institutes and advisory bodies collaborate one-on-one and through a wide range of multilateral associations. This includes League of European Research Universities (LERU), Science Europe, and the Young European Research University Network.

## 3. SIN Contacts

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### Sources

- <sup>1</sup> [World Competitiveness Ranking 2023 - IMD business school for management and leadership courses](#)
- <sup>2</sup> [Global Innovation Index 2023: Innovation in the face of uncertainty \(wipo.int\)](#)
- <sup>3</sup> [Global Talent Competitiveness Index | INSEAD](#)
- <sup>4</sup> [R&D expenditure in the Netherlands by sector of performance | Rathenau Instituut](#)
- <sup>5</sup> [Dutch Solutions to Grand Challenges | Ministry of Economic Affairs and Climate Policy \(Topsectoren.nl\)](#)