



UK Science & Innovation Network Country Snapshot

Netherlands

The Netherlands science and innovation landscape

The Netherlands has the **6th largest economy in Europe**, with the 12th largest per capita GDP in the worldⁱ. It is one of the world's most open and innovative economies, the Netherlands ranked 4th in both the 2019 Global Competitiveness Indexⁱⁱ and 5th on the Global Innovation Indexⁱⁱⁱ.

The Netherlands spent 2.0% of GDP or €16.7 bn on R&D in 2019^{iv}. The Netherlands has a highly developed research landscape, with strong connections between universities, research institutes, advisory bodies and municipal, regional and national governments. The Netherlands is home to some particularly strong innovation regions. The 'Brainport' region in the Southeast, with R&D strengths in high tech systems and materials, logistics, healthcare and life sciences, was declared the World's Most Intelligent community in 2011. Wageningen Food Valley 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 in health and life sciences, data & AI, water management, creative industries, chemistry and energy**. Several leading international research institutes are based in the Netherlands, such as ESTEC, the European Space Agency's research centre.

The international reputation of the Dutch Higher Education sector is excellent. In the Times Higher Education's World University Rankings 2021, 7 Dutch universities appear in the top 100, and all 13 universities in the Netherlands appear in the top 250^v. All Dutch universities in the ranking teach more than 40 different undergraduate and postgraduate degrees in English and some – such as the University of Amsterdam and the University of Leiden – teach well over 100 degrees in English.

The Netherlands' Mission-driven Top Sector and Innovation policy focuses on tackling 4 social challenges: Energy transition and Sustainability; Agriculture, Water and Food; Health and healthcare; Security. The Dutch Government has formulated 25 missions focusing on achieving lower greenhouse gas emissions, affordable sustainable energy, sufficient clean water and safe food, a greater and healthy life expectancy and a safe Netherlands in which to live and work. Dutch businesses, academia and government joined forces in 9 Top Sectors – Agri-Food, Water and Maritime Management, Energy, Chemistry, Creative Industries, Horticulture, High Tech Systems and Materials, Logistics, Health and Life Sciences – which will work together to address the 4 social challenges. The government looks to support innovation in these sectors in order to address the four social challenges. It aims to do this by investing in research, amending laws and regulations, and supporting public-private partnerships, responsible procurement and financial arrangements. The aims of the Netherlands Mission-driven Top Sector and Innovation Policy and the UK Industrial Strategy are highly complementary.

Key Organisations

- [Ministry of Economic Affairs and Climate Policy](#)
- [Ministry of Education, Culture and Science](#)
- [Royal Dutch Academy of Sciences \(KNAW\)](#)
- [The Dutch Research Council \(NWO\)](#)
- [The Netherlands Organization for Health Research and Development \(ZonMw\)](#)
- [The Association of universities in the Netherlands \(VSNU\)](#)
- [Netherlands Enterprise Agency \(RVO\)](#)
- [TNO](#)

Netherlands position in
Global Competitiveness
Index 2019:

4th

Netherlands position in
Global Innovation Index
2020:

5th



UK – The Netherlands Science and Innovation Collaboration

UK position as a collaborative partner for the Netherlands in Europe

3rd

Netherlands position as a collaborative partner for the UK in Europe

5th

The Netherlands R&D expenditure, 2.0% GDP

€16.7bn

The Netherlands represents a strong collaborative partner for the UK. The Netherlands was the 5th collaborative partner for the UK in Europe, after Germany, France, Italy and Spain, in the previous EU Framework programme Horizon 2020. The UK represents the 3rd collaborative partner for the Netherlands in Europe, after France and Germany, with 12,246 collaboration links under the Framework involving at least one partner from both the Netherlands and the UK^{vi}. When looking into the UK International Collaborations, from 2013-2017, 8.9% take place with the Netherlands^{vii}. The quality of UK-Dutch scientific collaboration is strong, with 32,233 publications co-authored between UK and Dutch researchers, from 2011 – 2015, the 9th highest collaboration worldwide for the UK^{viii}. These collaborations also receive a Field Weighted Citation Index (FWCI - an indication of quality) of 3.14, making this the strongest country collaboration in the world in terms of FCWI.

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

UK Science and Innovation Network (S&I) Netherlands

The S&I Netherlands team is based in the British Embassy in the Hague. The team works to support UK Science and Innovation international objectives and UK – Netherlands collaboration through exchange with Dutch counterparts and through reporting on developments in the Dutch science and innovation landscape. The team works closely with UK stakeholders such as the Foreign Office, the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, UK Research and Innovation, Innovate UK, the Royal Society and the UK universities. S&I Netherlands priorities are closely linked to the [Global Britain in a Competitive Age: the Integrated Review of Security, Defence, Development and Foreign Policy](#)

S&I Netherlands contacts

Liesbeth Bouwhuis

Senior Science and Innovation Officer Benelux

E. liesbeth.bouwhuis@fco.gov.uk

The information in this document is believed correct at the time of distribution. However, HM Government accepts no liability for any loss or damage incurred as a result of any inaccuracies, however caused.

i International Monetary Fund, World Economic Outlook 2018

ii <https://www.weforum.org/reports/global-competitiveness-report-2019>

iii <https://www.globalinnovationindex.org/Home>

iv <https://www.rathenau.nl/en/science-figures/investments/how-much-does-netherlands-spend-rd/funding-and-performance-rd>

v https://www.timeshighereducation.com/world-university-rankings/2021/world-ranking#!/page/0/length/25/locations/NL/sort_by/rank/sort_order/asc/cols/stats

vi <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/dashboard/extensions/CountryProfile/CountryProfile.html?Country=Netherlands>

vii https://www.elsevier.com/_data/assets/pdf_file/0004/824836/Elsevier_UK_Factsheet_5.0_October_2018.pdf

viii https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/660855/uk-research-base-international-comparison-

