



## UK Science & Innovation Network Country Summary

# Portugal

### 1. Science and Innovation Landscape

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In 2022 Portugal's gross domestic expenditure on Research and Development (GERD) reached €4.12bn, some 1.7% of GDP (Source: DGEEC); below the EU27 average (2.23% of GDP) but 49% up from 2018. More than half of Portugal's R&D spending (roughly 62% of GERD) came from the private sector and this increased from 0.58% of GDP in 2015 to 1.06% in 2022. The remaining spending (38%) came from public sources, including from higher education institutions, who contributed approximately 0.64% of GDP.

Despite ranking 14th by EC net contribution under Horizon 2020, Portugal has a good story to tell in terms of attracting EU funding for science and innovation. From being a net contributor under FP6 to becoming a net recipient since 2012, Portugal aims to double its awarded contributions in Horizon 2020, in order to reach €2bn under Horizon Europe. This is part of the Government's wider ambition of reaching a total R&D expenditure of 3% of GDP by 2030.

Government responsibility for science and innovation (S&I) policy sits with the Ministry for Education, Science and Innovation. Innovation policy, stimulating corporate R&D and translating S&I into economic value are jointly overseen with the Ministry for Economy. The main research-funding agency is the Foundation for Science and Technology (FCT).

### 2. UK- Portugal Partnership on Science, Innovation and Technology

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Building on strong historical ties (in 2023, the UK and Portugal celebrated the 650th anniversary of the longest standing bilateral alliance in the world) and close people-to-people links (there are some 400k Portuguese in the UK, making it the 6th largest immigrant community), Portugal and the UK are important research partners.

In 2022, the British and Portuguese Prime Ministers signed the UK-Portugal Joint Declaration on Bilateral Cooperation that emphasises Science & Innovation as a cornerstone of the UK bilateral relationship with Portugal and which presents an important tool to progress and strengthen the bilateral science and innovation and R&D links. The Joint Declaration stresses a few thematic areas for collaboration including emerging technologies, climate and ocean, renewable energies, life sciences and global health and space.





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The study PUMP - Mapping Scientific Collaborations between Portugal and the United Kingdom commissioned by the British Embassy in Lisbon and the Portuguese Foundation for Science and Technology, confirms the depth of the wider science relationship achieved between both countries under the EU science framework programmes. It also confirms that scientific collaborations between Portugal and the UK are highly productive, impactful and of recognised quality. Almost 15,000 publications, 80% of which published in the top 25% most prestigious journals of their respective fields, and 40 patent applications were identified.

Portugal and the UK are also important partners in European Space Agency programmes, and in the Square Kilometer Array projects, among other international research organisations. A Memorandum of Understanding between the UK and Portuguese Space Agencies to collaborate on future space science and developing space industry opportunities was signed in 2019.

### 3. SIN Contact

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