



Department for
Business, Energy
& Industrial Strategy

UK PARTICIPATION IN HORIZON 2020

UK government overview

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Summary

The UK government is committed to ensuring that UK and EU researchers, universities and businesses will be able to continue to collaborate after EU exit.

The government's priority remains ensuring the draft Withdrawal Agreement is finalised and concluded. This would mean that UK Horizon 2020 participants and projects would be unaffected by EU exit.

However, as a responsible government, we are planning for every eventuality to ensure cross-border collaboration in science and innovation can continue after EU exit in all scenarios.

This Q&A sets out how the UK government will seek to ensure collaboration continues through a variety of measures, the following of which are detailed below:

- Focussing on finalising and concluding the **Withdrawal Agreement**;
- The **Underwrite Guarantee** and the newly announced **Post EU Exit Guarantee Extension**, should this be required;
- Facilitating **mobility** for UK and EU researchers; and
- Looking beyond Horizon 2020 to UK participation in **Horizon Europe** and the future **Euratom Research and Training (Euratom R&T)** programme.

This Q&A is applicable to competitively bid for actions under any parallel [Euratom R&T programme](#).

Definitions in this document

Implementation Period

The **Withdrawal Agreement** would cover the terms of the UK's withdrawal from the EU. This would include the UK's involvement in activities under the EU's multi-annual financial framework (2014-2020) and the UK's relationship to **Horizon 2020** for the remainder of the programme.

Post Implementation Period

Looking beyond 2020, the proposed **science and innovation accord** would form part of the UK's future partnership with the EU. As set out in the [white paper on the future relationship between the UK and EU](#), the UK wishes to explore association in research and innovation programmes, including **Horizon Europe** and the parallel **Euratom Research and Training Programme**.

Withdrawal Agreement

What is the current status of negotiations?

UK and EU negotiators published a '[Joint Report](#)' in December following the first phase of EU exit negotiations. The Joint Report set out the political agreement that was reached on several key issues, including the financial settlement and its impact on participation in Horizon 2020.

The negotiating teams subsequently published the draft [Withdrawal Agreement](#) in the run-up to March European Council, having reached agreement on the terms of a time-limited implementation period, citizens' rights, and the financial settlement.

The June European Council [welcomed the further progress](#) made on finalising the terms of the Withdrawal Agreement.

The UK will continue to discuss outstanding issues with the EU and intends to reach an agreement on the final text of the Withdrawal Agreement in the autumn.

On 24 July 2018, the government published a [white paper](#) setting out the government's proposals for the legislation that will implement the Withdrawal Agreement in UK law.

The UK is in parallel negotiating the terms of its future relationship with the EU ('the future framework').

What exactly did the Joint Report say about Horizon 2020?

The key commitment in the Joint Report in relation to Horizon 2020 is as follows:

“Following withdrawal from the Union the UK will continue to participate in the Union programmes financed by the MFF 2014-2020 until their closure (excluding participation in financial operations which give rise to a contingent liability for which the UK is not liable as from the date of withdrawal). Entities located in the UK will be entitled to participate in such programmes. Participation in Union programmes will require the UK and UK beneficiaries to respect all relevant Union legal provisions including co-financing. Accordingly, the eligibility to apply to participate in Union programmes and Union funding for UK participants and projects will be unaffected by the UK's withdrawal from the Union for the entire lifetime of such projects.”

This means that UK entities should have continued eligibility to participate in Horizon 2020 projects, as one of the 'Union programmes financed by the MFF 2014-2020.'

What's the draft Withdrawal Agreement?

The Withdrawal Agreement, when ratified, will translate the content of the political agreement outlined in the December 2017's Joint Report into legal text.

UK and EU negotiators are continuing to finalise areas of the Withdrawal Agreement, with both negotiating teams clear that the intention is to reach agreement in the autumn, alongside the framework for the future UK-EU relationship.

How will the Withdrawal Agreement be implemented?

The UK government has published a [white paper](#) titled 'Legislating for the Withdrawal Agreement between the United Kingdom and the European Union', which sets out the government's plans for legislating for the Withdrawal Agreement. This will include the implementation period.

Regarding participation in the EU budget, the white paper notes:

*“Under the financial settlement, the UK will contribute to the EU’s budget in 2019 and 2020, which covers the implementation period following the UK’s withdrawal. The UK will also benefit from the implementation of the budget as if it had remained a Member State over this period. **This means that the UK will continue to draw advantages from the normal management of projects and programmes funded through the current Multiannual Financial Framework until their closure**, whether they are managed by the UK government (such as the European Regional Development Fund) or **directly allocated to beneficiaries from EU institutions (such as Horizon 2020).**”*

What does the draft Withdrawal Agreement say about Horizon 2020?

Those parts of the published Withdrawal Agreement highlighted in green have been agreed at negotiators' level. This includes the following Articles concerning participation in Horizon 2020.

Article 130(1) states:

“The Union programmes and activities committed under the multiannual financial framework for the years 2014-2020 ('MFF 2014-2020') or previous financial perspectives shall be implemented in 2019 and 2020 with regard to the United Kingdom on the basis of the applicable Union law.”

Article 131(1) states:

“In respect of the implementation of the Union programmes and activities committed under the MFF 2014-2020 or previous financial perspectives, applicable Union law, including the rules on financial corrections and on clearance of accounts, shall continue to apply with regard to the United Kingdom after 31 December 2020 until the closure of those Union programmes and activities.”

Horizon 2020 is a Union programme committed under the MFF 2014-2020 and as such the intention is that, when ratified, the Withdrawal Agreement will allow for continued UK participation on the same basis as now.

Will UK beneficiaries in existing projects continue to receive EU funding?

The draft Withdrawal Agreement envisages that existing projects will continue to receive an uninterrupted flow of EU funding for the lifetime of the project.

Will UK participants continue to be able to bid for Horizon 2020 funding after the UK's withdrawal from the EU?

The draft Withdrawal Agreement envisages that UK participants will be eligible to bid for Horizon 2020 funding for the duration of the programme, including after the UK's withdrawal from the EU.

Will UK participants be eligible to participate in and coordinate Horizon 2020 consortia?

The draft Withdrawal Agreement envisages full UK participation in Horizon 2020 for the lifetime of projects, which includes participating in and coordinating consortia.

Will UK participants be eligible to bid for individual Horizon 2020 grants?

The draft Withdrawal Agreement envisages full UK participation in Horizon 2020 for the lifetime of projects, which includes individual grants.

Will UK participants in Framework Programme 7 continue to receive EU funding?

The draft Withdrawal Agreement envisages that existing projects will continue to receive an uninterrupted flow of EU funding for the lifetime of the project. This includes funding for FP7 participants.

Underwrite Guarantee

The government's priority remains ensuring the draft Withdrawal Agreement is finalised and concluded. This would mean that UK Horizon 2020 participants and projects would be unaffected by EU exit.

However, as a responsible government, we are planning for every eventuality. The two major components of our planning in a scenario where the Withdrawal Agreement is not ratified (a 'no deal' scenario) are the **underwrite guarantee** and the **post EU Exit extension to the guarantee**. These mechanisms would ensure cross-border collaboration in science and innovation could continue after EU exit in this unlikely scenario.

What is the underwrite guarantee?

In August 2016, the [UK government announced](#) that it would underwrite all competitively bid for EU funded projects submitted while we are still a member of the EU.

On Horizon 2020, the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, Greg Clark said:

"The government's commitment to our world-leading science and research base remains steadfast. By underwriting the significant Horizon 2020 grants we are showing the extent of our commitment, standing squarely behind our researchers and scientists as they continue working with their European partners to develop new technologies, discover life-saving medicines and pioneer every day innovations that will benefit all hard-working Britons."

What is covered by the underwrite guarantee?

Under what circumstances would it be necessary to administer the underwrite guarantee?

The UK expects that the underwrite guarantee will not be needed, as we intend to successfully conclude the Withdrawal Agreement. However, in the unlikely event the Withdrawal Agreement is not ratified, the government has committed to underwrite Horizon 2020 funding for all successful UK bids submitted before exit, even if they are notified of their success after exit, for the lifetime of the projects.

Who will be eligible to receive the underwrite guarantee?

UK participants that receive Horizon 2020 funding from the European Commission or have submitted a bid before EU exit and are notified of their success after exit will be covered by the underwrite guarantee, for the lifetime of the projects.

The continued participation of UK entities in Horizon 2020 projects after exit in a no deal scenario would depend on the details and mechanism of our participation as a third country.

Does the guarantee cover proposals where the grant agreement is signed after the UK has left the EU?

The government has committed to ensuring all successful UK proposals submitted before EU exit are funded. This includes projects that are only informed of their success or sign a grant agreement after the UK's withdrawal from the EU.

The continued participation of UK entities in Horizon 2020 projects after exit in a no deal scenario would depend on the details and mechanism of our participation as a third country.

Does the underwrite guarantee cover all types of projects?

The guarantee covers any Horizon 2020 funding which was awarded to a UK participant after a successful competitive bid.

For all activities that include a match funding element, the underwrite guarantee would only apply to the EU portion of the award, any other match funding should still be provided by industry or other partners.

Does the underwrite guarantee cover projects with a two-stage application process?

Provided that the first stage of a two-stage application is submitted prior to the UK's exit, bids from UK participants would be covered by the underwrite guarantee if they were subsequently successful after exit.

What has the European Commission said regarding UK participants in the case of no deal?

The European Commission have published the following disclaimer notice on the Horizon 2020 website:

For British applicants: "Please note that until the UK leaves the EU, EU law continues to apply to and within the UK, when it comes to rights and obligations; this includes the eligibility of UK legal entities to fully participate and receive funding in Horizon 2020 actions. Please be aware however that the eligibility criteria must be complied with for the entire duration of the grant. If the United Kingdom withdraws from the EU during the grant period without concluding an agreement with the EU ensuring in particular that British applicants continue to be eligible, you will cease to be eligible to receive EU funding (while continuing, where possible, to participate) or be required to leave the project on the basis of Article 50 of the grant agreement."

This statement suggests that, in a no deal scenario, UK participants would continue to be eligible to take part in those calls open to third country participation.

The UK is considering what further measures we could take to support UK research and innovation in this scenario if required.

The provisions in the Withdrawal Agreement would mean that UK entities' right to participate in current EU programmes, including Horizon 2020, would be unaffected by the UK's withdrawal from the EU for the lifetime of the projects.

I am about to apply for a programme but might not get a response until after Exit. What should I do?

The provisions in the Withdrawal Agreement would mean that UK entities' right to participate in and bid for funding in current EU programmes, including Horizon 2020, would be unaffected by the UK's withdrawal from the EU for the lifetime of the projects.

The government has committed to ensuring all successful UK proposals submitted before exit are funded in a no deal scenario. This includes projects that are only informed of their success or sign a grant agreement after the UK's withdrawal from the EU.

The continued participation of UK entities in Horizon 2020 projects after exit in a no deal scenario would depend on the details and mechanism of our participation as a third country.

The statement issued by the Commission suggests that UK participants would continue to be eligible to take part in those calls open to third country participation.

We are also considering what other measures may be necessary to support UK research in the unlikely event that the guarantee is required.

Post EU Exit Guarantee Extension

What is the Post EU Exit Guarantee Extension?

On 24 July 2018, the [UK government announced](#) that it would extend the guarantee to cover all successful collaborative bids to Horizon 2020 involving UK entities in a no deal scenario up until the end of the programme.

How is the extension to the guarantee different to the underwrite guarantee announced in August 2016?

In August 2016, the government committed to underwrite all successful UK Horizon 2020 bids submitted before EU exit. This includes projects that are only informed of their success after EU exit.

Through the extension to the guarantee, the government has now committed to fund all successful collaborative bids to Horizon 2020 involving UK entities who apply after exit day and until the end of Horizon 2020. The guarantee would cover the lifetime of their projects, even if they last beyond 2020.

In a no deal scenario, UK researchers and businesses would be able to apply to and participate in all those Horizon 2020 calls open to third country participants from the date of exit.

Can I still work with EU partners to submit bids? If yes, how would this work?

In a no deal scenario, the funding provided would support UK Horizon 2020 applicants to continue to collaborate with European partners and prepare quality bids to Horizon 2020.

The [statement](#) laid in Parliament in July 2018 represents a commitment by the UK government to fund the UK portion of the bid in the case of a successful application to Horizon 2020.

Funding would be provided for the lifetime of the project, even if this lasts beyond 2020.

On what basis will my bids be assessed? Will these be the same as before Exit?

We understand that continuity in approach will be important for prospective participants. More details will be made available in due course in relation to individual programmes.

What assurance can I provide to my European partners that my portion of the bid will be funded?

In a no deal scenario the funding provided would support UK Horizon 2020 applicants to continue to collaborate with European partners and prepare quality bids to Horizon 2020.

The statement laid in Parliament represents a commitment by the government to fund the UK portion of the bid in the case of a successful application to Horizon 2020.

Funding would be provided for the lifetime of the project, even if they last beyond 2020.

What aspects of the Horizon 2020 programme will I have access to?

In a no deal scenario, UK researchers and businesses would, from the date of exit, be able to apply to and participate in all those Horizon 2020 calls open to third country participants from the date of exit.

Third country participation is a well-established part of Horizon 2020 - entities from third countries currently participate in and lead consortia in a wide range of collaborative programmes.

The continued participation of UK entities in Horizon 2020 projects after exit in a no deal scenario would depend on the details and mechanism of our participation as a third country.

We are also considering what other measures may be necessary to support UK research in the unlikely event that the guarantee and the extension are required.

How will the extension to the guarantee be delivered?

Details on how the guarantee will be delivered for Horizon 2020 will be made available in due course.

Mobility

What will happen to EU and international staff and students post EU exit?

To retain the UK's position as a world leader in research and innovation, we recognise the need to continue to attract talent from the EU and beyond, with skills that can support research and innovation, the industrial strategy and benefit the wider UK economy. We hugely value the contribution of EU and international staff and students and all decisions in relation to the future immigration arrangements are being designed to ensure that they work in the national interest.

The UK has reached an [agreement with the European Union on citizens' rights](#) in negotiations on the UK's withdrawal from the EU. The UK government has also agreed that EU citizens and their families arriving during the implementation period will be able to stay on the same terms but will need to register if they choose to stay for longer than 3 months.

What will happen after the implementation period?

We are considering the options for our future immigration system very carefully. Last July, the government has commissioned the independent Migration Advisory Committee (MAC) – an independent body comprised of labour market economists – to provide an assessment of the impacts of exiting the EU on the UK labour market and how our system should be aligned to the modern industrial strategy. In a separate commission, they are also reviewing the impact of international students in the UK. Both of these reports are due to be published in September.

We will carefully consider the MAC's conclusions and will have plenty of time to take account of the MAC's advice when making any decisions about the future immigration system.

Horizon Europe

What will the UK's relationship with the EU be on research and innovation post-EU exit?

The UK remains committed to ongoing collaboration in research and innovation and wants to work with the EU on a mutually beneficial outcome.

The government set out its plan for the future relationship between the UK and the European Union in its [white paper](#), which includes the proposal to form a cooperative accord with the EU on science and innovation.

The UK proposes that such an accord would provide for UK participation in all future EU research funding programmes.

The UK wishes to explore association to research and innovation programmes, including Horizon Europe, the Euratom R&T Programme, the Joint European Torus (JET) project and International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor (ITER).

Will the UK associate to Horizon Europe?

The government's recent [white paper](#) clearly sets out that the UK would like to explore association to the excellence-based European science and innovation programmes, including the successor to Horizon 2020 (Horizon Europe) and Euratom R&T.

Such an association would involve an appropriate UK financial contribution linked to a suitable level of influence in line with the contribution and benefits the UK brings. The UK is ready to discuss these details with the Commission as soon as possible.

What will Horizon Europe include?

The European Commission published their draft regulations for the Horizon Europe programme on 7 June. These draft proposals are now being examined and further developed by the European Council and Parliament.

While we remain a full Member State, the UK intends to play a full and constructive role in shaping these proposals, and we look forward to discussing the detail of any future UK participation with the Commission.

Euratom Research and Training Programme (Euratom R&T)

The Euratom R&T programme runs for 5+2 years with the current programme running between 2014-2018. The 2019-2020 extension of the programme is currently being discussed by the EU. In May 2018 the Council of the EU agreed to the extension in principle; once the European Parliament have submitted their opinion in September 2018 it can be fully agreed.

The UK fully supports the proposal for a regulation to allow for the extension of the Euratom Research and Training Programme for 2019-20 and remains committed to participation in, and its financial commitments towards, the programme.

Upon full agreement, the Euratom R&T 2019-2020 extension would be, alongside the current programme, a Union programme committed under the MFF 2014-2020 and as such the intention is that, when ratified, the Withdrawal Agreement will allow for continued UK participation.

With regards to our future relationship, the UK wishes to explore association to the 2021-2025 Euratom R&T programme based on the Swiss precedent as part of a wider Science and Innovation Accord.

The regulation to establish this programme, including the basis for associated state participation, will be agreed and adopted over the next 12 months. Initial discussions on UK participation in the programme have already begun.

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