



A JOURNEY OF RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

Brazil & Mexico's Collaboration with Horizon Europe

Founded with the mission of democratizing access to public and private funding, Grants Lab is a consultancy specialized in grant acquisition and financial resource mobilization for public institutions, civil society organizations, and innovative companies across Latin America.

We work strategically to identify grant opportunities, develop strong proposals, and support the management of both national and international funding. With a highly qualified, multidisciplinary team, we guide our clients through every stage of the grant-seeking journey — from market intelligence to project implementation.

We are ready to collaborate with you to bring transformative initiatives to life.

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Summary

Abbreviations and acronyms	4
Introduction.....	5
Horizon Europe: EU's main R&I framework programme.....	6
Fostering cooperation across the EU and the world	7
Exception: EU exceptional funding for non-associated third countries	8
Historical overview: The evolution of the EU framework programme	9
Brazil and Mexico participation on the EU framework programme.....	11
Highlights of Brazil and Mexico's collaboration with Horizon Europe	14
Brazil & Horizon Europe	15
Mexico & Horizon Europe	16
Conclusion.....	17
Glossary.....	18

Abbreviations and acronyms

CNPQ

National Council for Scientific and Technological Development

CONFAP

Brazilian National Council of State Funding Agencies

CONAHCYT

National Council of Humanities, Science, and Technology

EIC

European Innovation Council

ERC

European Research Council

FINEP

Funding Agency for Studies and Projects

FP

Framework Programme

HE

Horizon Europe

H2020

Horizon 2020

LATAM

Latin America Countries

MSCA

Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions

R&D

Research and Development

SMES

Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises



Introduction

This report provides a thorough examination of Brazil and Mexico's engagement in the Horizon Europe program, offering valuable insights into the historical evolution of the EU Framework Programmes. With a targeted exploration of Brazil and Mexico's involvement, the analysis extends across the three pillars of Horizon Europe, uncovering collaboration mechanisms, participation trends, and unique funding opportunities designed for non-associated third countries, which both countries are classified. Recognizing the significance of understanding these trends, we believe this report serves as a valuable resource for organizations considering participation in Horizon Europe, offering strategic insights for informed decision-making in their application processes.

Horizon Europe: EU's main R&I framework programme

Horizon Europe is the latest iteration of the EU Framework Programme for R&I. Originally launched in 1984, this mechanism has emerged as a highly competitive, robust and dynamic force that actively responds to the ever-evolving societal needs across the world.

Horizon Europe is structured into three main pillars. Each pillar is dedicated to advancing scientific excellence through the support of world-class research and innovation across a range of disciplines. These encompass fundamental research, applied research, and innovative activities.

Pillar 1: Excellent Science

This pillar focuses on funding research projects and fostering scientific excellence. It includes programs such as the European Research Council (ERC), which supports individual researchers, the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA), which support training and mobility of researchers, as well as research infrastructures.

Pillar 2: Global Challenges and European Industrial Competitiveness

This pillar addresses societal challenges and aims to strengthen Europe's industrial competitiveness. It includes various thematic areas, such as health, digital, energy, climate, and more. It supports collaborative research and innovation projects.

Pillar 3: Innovative Europe

This pillar aims to boost innovation in Europe by supporting small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), enhancing the European Innovation Ecosystem, and fostering the market uptake of innovative solutions. It also includes the European Innovation Council (EIC) to support high-risk, high-reward innovation projects.

The most common recipients of funding initiatives across these pillars are secondary and higher education institutions (34.3%), followed by for-profit

Total Budget
€95.5 billion (2021 – 2027)

Investment
€52.38 billion (2021 – 2025)

Average of Total Cost
€3.5 million per project

Signed Grant
10.174 projects

Participation
98.667 institutions

Unique Participation
26.980 institutions

companies (30.2%) and research organizations (22.2%). By the end of 2025, Horizon Europe had engaged with more than 25 thousand entities in 15 thousand projects across 171 countries – representing a total investment of €52.38 billion.

Fostering cooperation across the EU and the world

Most Horizon Europe projects are implemented by consortia of partners from different countries. The framework program has a broad international outreach, offering numerous opportunities for researchers and organizations from across the world. There are more than 170 eligible countries engaged with Horizon Europe, including 27 EU Member States, 21 associated countries, and more than 120 non-associated third countries.

It is important to note that not all non-associated third countries are automatically eligible for funding from Horizon Europe. Nations not classified as low-to-middle-income must establish an administrative arrangement, specifying their commitment to fostering collaborative initiatives with the EU. The arrangement outlines the details of funding, including providing their own funds to support their researchers and organizations in participating.

Being part of Horizon Europe extends opportunities to non-associated third countries, granting access to leading-edge research initiatives and fostering international collaboration. This engagement cultivates innovation, provides a platform for global networking, and enhances visibility for their researchers and institutions.

Another advantageous aspect is participants from these non-associated third countries that do not receive direct funding from HE, eliminating the need for them to sign a grant agreement. Instead, a straightforward bilateral agreement with the consortium suffices. This exemption from the grant agreement means that participants are not constrained by audit-related clauses, providing them with greater flexibility in the management of funds.



Eligible Latin American Countries

Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil*, Chile*, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Mexico*, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Suriname, Uruguay, and Venezuela.

*Countries that do not automatically receive EU funding.

Exception: EU exceptional funding for non-associated third countries

As previously stated, participants from countries that are neither EU Member States nor associated countries to Horizon Europe, and are not explicitly listed as eligible for funding, may not automatically receive funding, necessitating them to cover their own costs. To address this challenge, countries like Australia, Brazil, China, India, Japan, Mexico, Monaco, and Taiwan have instituted co-financing mechanisms to assist their participants in Horizon Europe projects. Nevertheless, in accordance with the official Horizon Europe regulation, non-associated third countries may be eligible for exceptional funding under specific circumstances:

Institutions applying for exceptional funding follow the standard submission process, aligning with other consortium members from EU member states and associated countries. The budget must be incorporated into the proposal, which is a standard requirement for EU countries. If the proposal is accepted but exceptional funding for participation is not approved, the entity may still participate as an Associated Partner without EU funds. In such instances, the requested amount from the exceptional funding will be deducted from the EU fund contribution.

According to the Horizon database, from Horizon 2020 to Horizon Europe until December 2023, over 123 organizations from non-associated third countries, classified as low-to-middle-income, have received funds from the EU under this exceptional circumstance. This financial support, provided under such exceptional circumstances, stands as an extra avenue for fostering global cooperation within the framework of Horizon Europe.

Contribuição Essencial Essential Contribution

When the granting authority deems their participation as a beneficiary essential for the successful implementation of the project. This is especially likely if they bring:

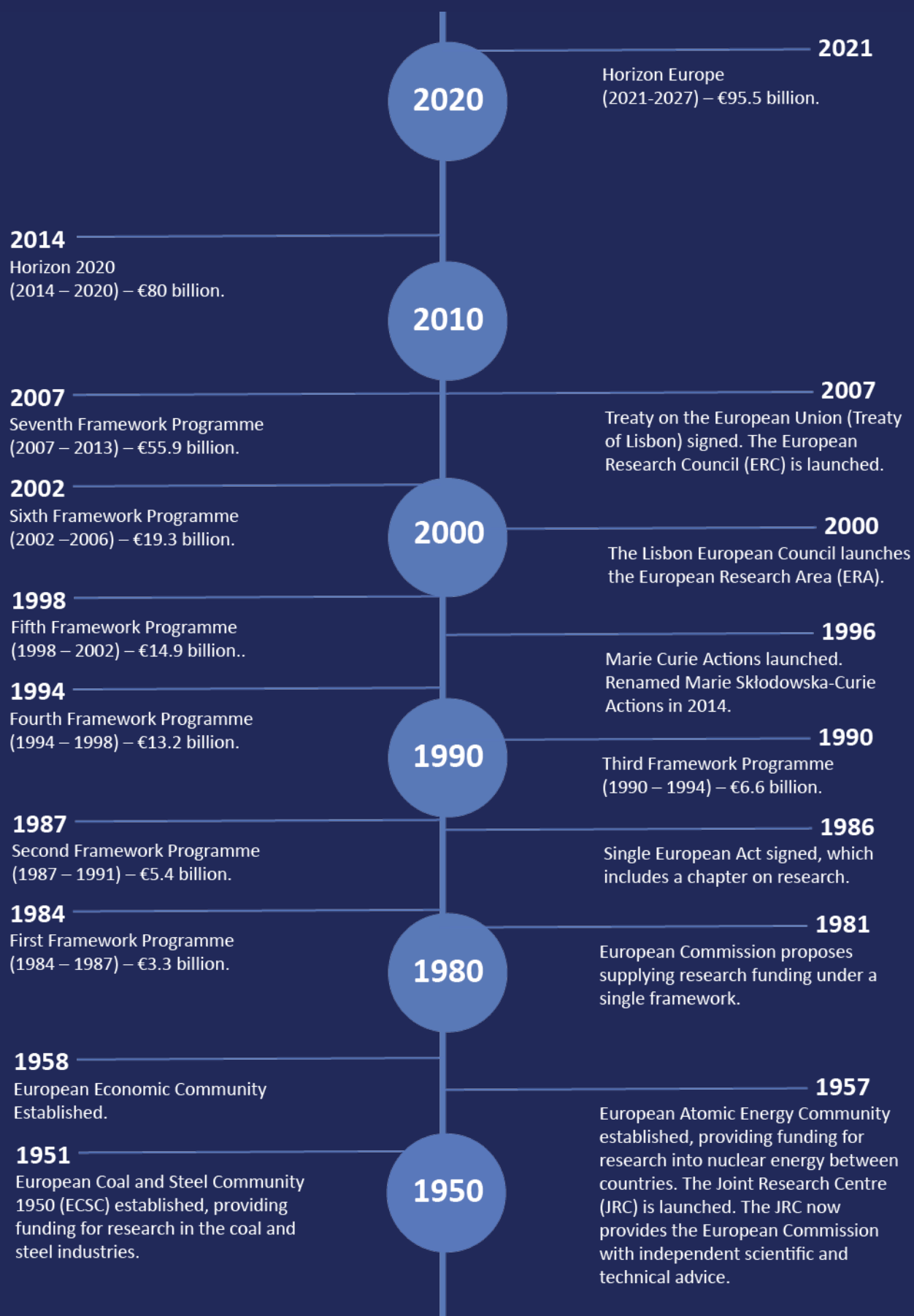
- Exceptional competence or expertise to the project.
- Access to specific research infrastructures crucial for the project.
- Access to unique geographical environments that are integral to the research.
- Access to specific data sets that are vital for the project's objectives.



Historical overview: The evolution of the EU framework programme

Research has a deep-rooted history in Europe, and the European Union's Framework Programmes for research and innovation have undergone a remarkable evolution, transforming from a few separate initiatives into a cornerstone of Europe's research landscape. Over the years, these programmes have not only grown substantially in size, scope, and ambition but have also become pivotal catalysts for research collaboration in Europe. Notably, the budget for these programs has seen a remarkable escalation, starting at €3.3 billion in FP1 (Framework Programme 1) and peaking in Horizon Europe with a substantial €95.5 billion allocation. Below (Figure 1), it can be observed the chronological overview of the program's key milestones.

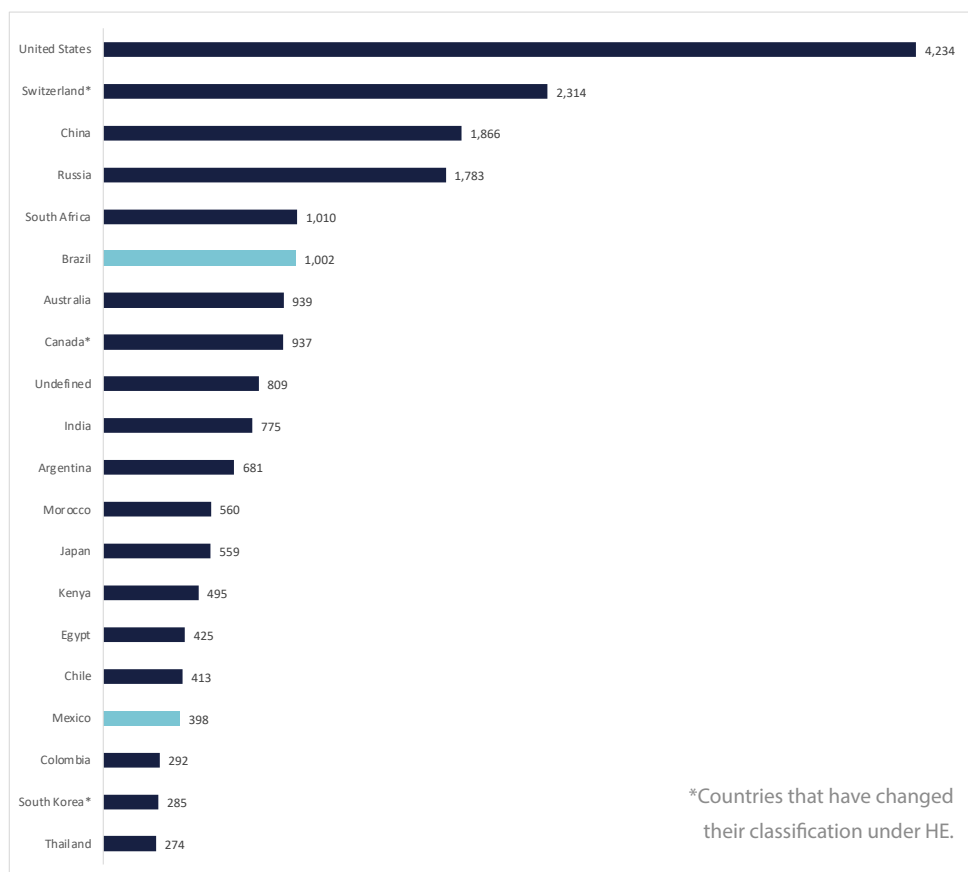
Figure 1: EU Framework Programmes Timeline.



Brazil and Mexico participation on the EU framework programme

Latin America countries (LATAM) and Europe share a long-standing relationship based on strong cultural, economic, historical, and linguistic ties. According to the Horizon database, Brazil and Mexico have actively participated in EU Framework Programme projects since FP2 (Framework Programme 2) in 1987. Brazil and Mexico have taken the lead among Latin American countries collaborating with the EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation. When analyzing the performance of all non-associated third countries, Brazil holds the 6th rank, while Mexico is ranked 17th. Below (Figure 2), it can be observed the top 20 non-associated third countries based on the number of projects they were involved in within the EU Framework Programme until 2025.

Figure 2: Top 20 Non-Associated Third Countries in EU Framework Programme Participation.
(Number of program collaborations by country since 1987)

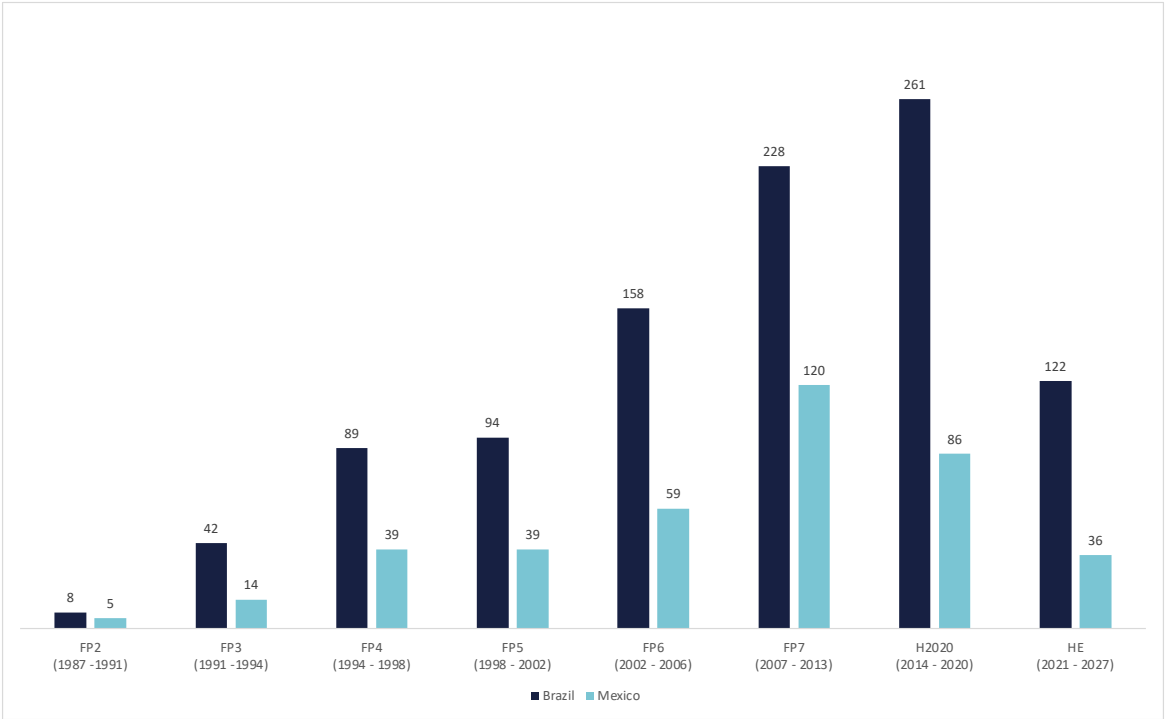


Data Source: [Horizon Dashboard](#) accessed by March 2025.

As the EU Framework Programmes have evolved, international collaboration between non-EU countries and the EU has also gradually increased. From 1987 to 2020, Brazil and Mexico increased their collaboration with the EU on R&I efforts by an average of 112% and 82%, respectively. This growth

can be attributed to various factors, one of the most significant being the expansion of international cooperation. Below (Figure 3) shows the evolution of Brazil’s and Mexico’s participation in EU Framework Programme projects.

Figure 3: Brazil and Mexico Participation on EU Framework Programme.
(Number of collaborations between Brazilian and Mexican institutions and EU FPs since 1987)



Data Source: [Horizon Dashboard](#) accessed by March 2025.

In 2014, with the launch of Horizon 2020, there was a noticeable decline in collaborative projects involving several non-associated third countries, including Mexico. This drop can be attributed to the removal of specific international cooperation schemes present under FP7 and adjustments to the eligibility criteria for funding participants. Brazil's participation during this period remained steady, experiencing only a decrease in the share of EU-contributed grants, which refers to the amount of funding provided by the EU. It remains to be seen whether similar trends will continue under HE.

When analyzing the organizations most actively involved in these collaborative efforts, the University of São Paulo and the National Autonomous University of Mexico stand out. Each has played a key role in their respective countries' cooperation in EU Framework Programme R&I projects over the years. Below (Figures 4 and 5), you can see the top five institutions most actively involved in the EU FPs.

Figure 4: Top 5 Brazilian Organizations in EU FP Participation.
(Number of collaborations between Brazilian institutions and EU Framework Programmes since 1987)

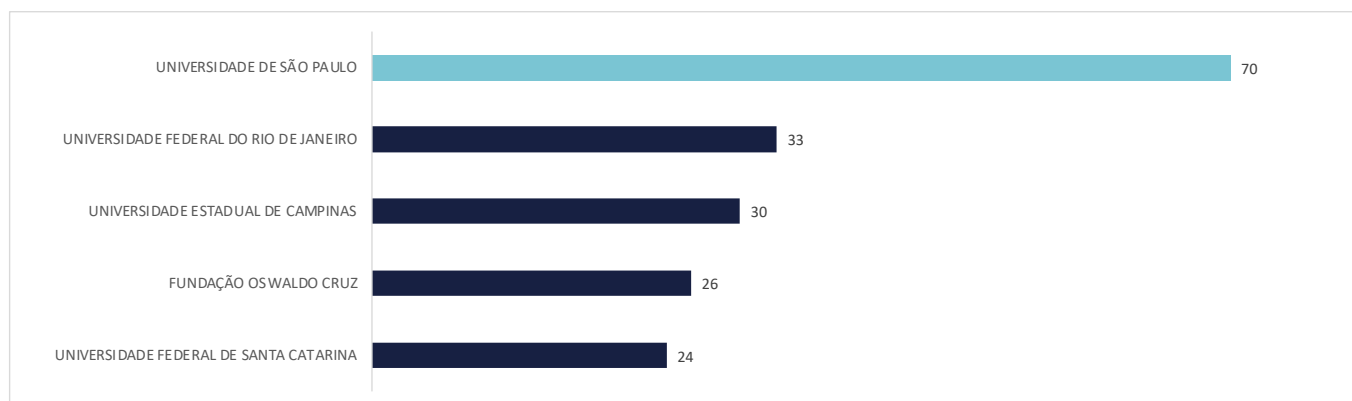
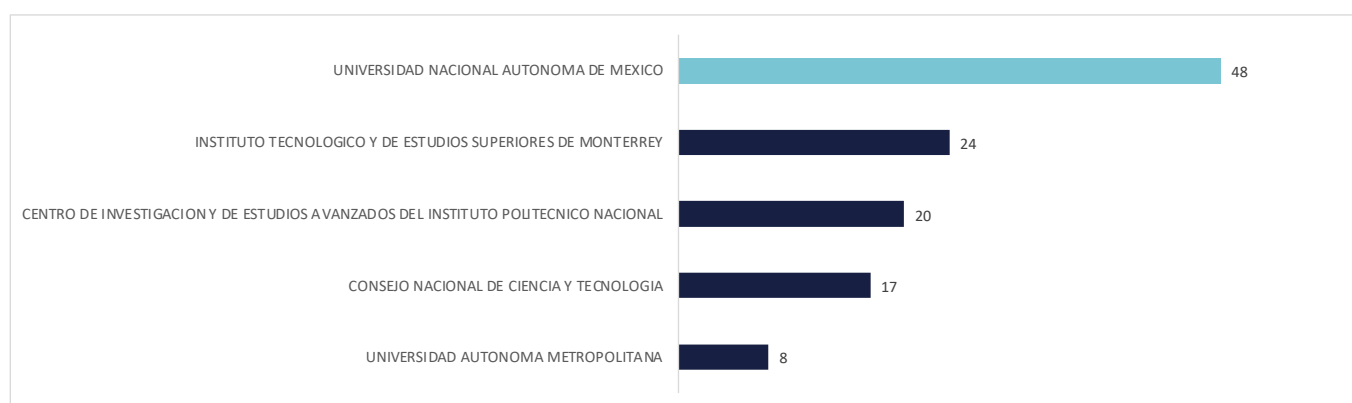


Figure 5: Top 5 Mexican Organizations in EU FP Participation.
(Number of collaborations between Mexican institutions and EU Framework Programmes since 1987)



Data Source: [Horizon Dashboard](#) accessed by March 2025.

Highlights of Brazil and Mexico's collaboration with Horizon Europe

Horizon Europe, launched in 2021, offers significant opportunities for international researchers. By 2025, Brazil had secured 93 signed funding agreements, while Mexico reached 33. The database reveals an overall success rate of 16.05% for Horizon Europe applications, with Brazil achieving a success rate of 25% and Mexico 22.43%. These figures highlight the successful engagement of both countries in Horizon Europe initiatives.

'Excellent Science' (Pillar 1), which includes the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions, has been the main focus of participation for both Brazil and Mexico in Horizon Europe, followed by 'Global Challenges' (Pillar 2), as shown in the figures below (Figures 6 and 7).

Analyzing the distribution of funded projects by scientific area reveals that Brazil's participation in Horizon Europe is concentrated as follows: 32% in Natural Sciences, 30% in Social Sciences, and 17% in Engineering and Technology. Similarly, Mexico's participation shows strong representation, with 27% in Natural Sciences, 25% in Social Sciences, 17% in Engineering and Technology, and 12% in Medical and Health Sciences.

Brazil has performed well in Pillar 2 – 'Global Challenges and European Industrial Competitiveness', securing 52 projects. The distribution of these projects across different clusters reveals a strategic focus on priority areas. Around 38% of the initiatives are concentrated in the cluster 'Food, Bioeconomy, Natural Resources, Agriculture and Environment', signaling a strong commitment to sustainability. Additionally, 27% are within the cluster 'Climate, Energy and Mobility', while 15% focus on the area of 'Health'.

As of the date of analysis, Mexico had signed three funded projects under Pillar 2 – 'Global Challenges and European Industrial Competitiveness'. Of these, two belong to the 'Food, Bioeconomy, Natural Resources, Agriculture and Environment' cluster, and one to the 'Climate, Energy and Mobility' cluster.

Figure 6: Brazil's participation in Horizon Europe by Thematic.

(Percentage of participating institutions in Horizon Europe by theme)

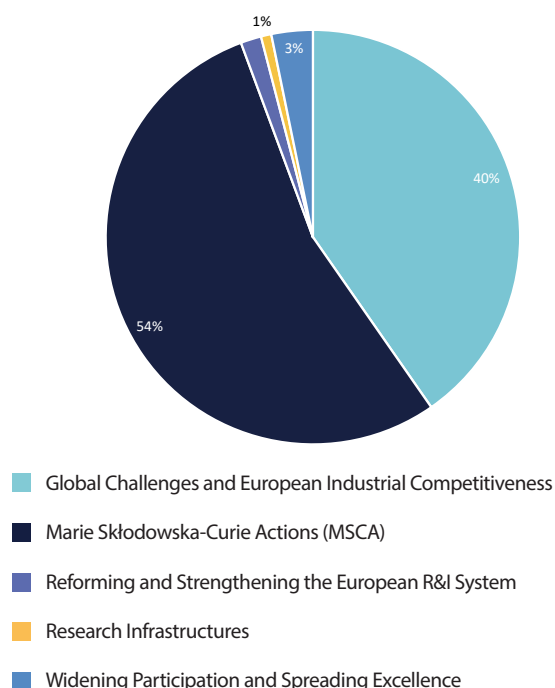
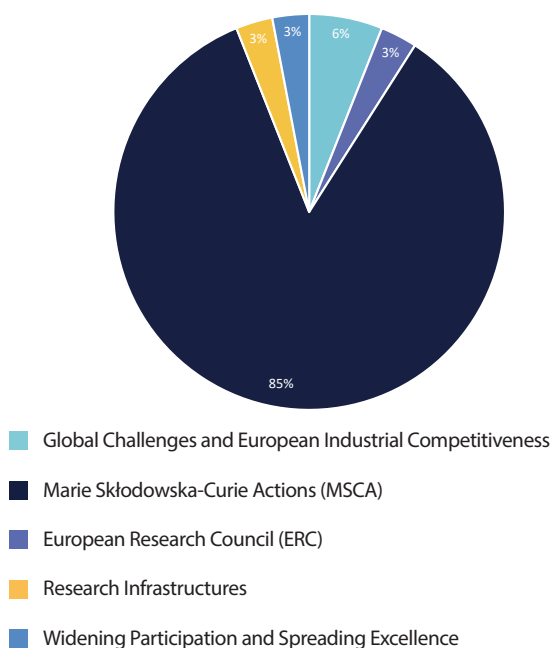


Figure 7: Mexico's participation in Horizon Europe by Thematic.

(Percentage of participating institutions in Horizon Europe by theme)



Data Source: [Horizon Dashboard](#) accessed by March 2025.

Brazil & Horizon Europe

As mentioned, Brazil is not automatically eligible for Horizon Europe. Therefore, Brazilian entities can receive funding from the European Commission if specified in a specific call or under exceptional circumstances. In all other situations, the Brazilian institution must secure co-financing from the Brazilian funding agency or participate with its own resources.

In this context, National Council for Scientific and Technological Development (CNPq), the Funding Agency for Studies and Projects (FINEP) and the Brazilian National Council of State Funding Agencies (CONFAP) play a crucial role in facilitating Brazilian participation in Horizon Europe. These institutions have established an administrative agreement valid until December 31, 2027, streamlining the implementation of co-financing mechanisms to support Brazilian researchers and entities in projects approved under Horizon Europe. This agreement serves as a comprehensive framework enabling specific actions to boost Brazilian involvement in the program, encompassing its diverse opportunities and themes.

Preferential cooperation mechanisms will be conducted through existing channels or regular calls, aiming to support collaborative projects, twinning initiatives, joint or coordinated calls, mutual knowledge enhancement, and the promotion of cooperative opportunities.

A concrete example of this participation is the collaboration between CONFAP and CNPq in European partnerships, initiatives where the European Union, alongside national authorities and/or the private sector, commits to jointly supporting the development and execution of research and innovation programs across various cooperation areas. Currently, these institutions actively engage in partnerships such as Biodiversa+, Water4all, and Sustainable Blue Economy, launching joint or multilateral calls annually.

Total Investment to Date

€1.77 million

EU Contribution to Date

€1.57 million (2021 – 2025)

Average Award Value

€19.06 thousand per project

Signed Grant

93 projects

Participation

126 institutions

Unique Participation

69 institutions

Mexico & Horizon Europe

The National Council of Humanities, Science and Technology (Conahcyt) plays a similar role to that of the three Brazilian entities in Horizon Europe. Conahcyt has introduced the “Puerta Horizonte Europa-Mexico” co-funding mechanism, with the goal of promoting the involvement of Mexican organizations in program. This initiative presents two distinct options:

Modality 1

In this mode, institutions that possess their own resources are eligible to apply. This offers them the flexibility to explore opportunities across all domains within the Horizon Europe program.

Modality 2

Conahcyt is committed to financing projects aligned with areas of priority, including health, energy, and human security.

Mexican organizations keen on participating in a European consortium can apply to Conahcyt once they have been approved by the European Commission. However, it's important to note that only projects that align with the priority themes and requirements will receive complementary funds.

This co-funding mechanism provides Mexican entities with a valuable opportunity to engage with Horizon Europe, fostering collaboration and innovation in crucial areas of research and development. Conahcyt has allocated 1 million euros to support a maximum of 8 projects within the timeframe spanning from 2022 to May 2024.

Total Investment to Date

€332.8 thousand

EU Contribution to Date

€332.8 thousand (2021 – 2025)

Average Award Value

€10.9 thousand per project

Signed Grant

33 projects

Participation

36 institutions

Unique Participation

22 institutions



Conclusion

As pivotal contributors to Latin America's research landscape, Brazil and Mexico have undergone a transformative journey within the EU Framework Programmes, showcasing their commitment to global collaboration in research and innovation.

Strategic partnerships with esteemed funding agencies such as CNPq, FINEP, CONFAP, and Conahcyt have been instrumental in facilitating and amplifying the participation of Brazil and Mexico. These collaborations not only streamline administrative processes but also lay the groundwork

for impactful joint initiatives, extending the influence of their contributions beyond the realms of Horizon Europe.

Looking ahead, as Brazil and Mexico continue their active involvement in Horizon Europe until 2027, there is a clear anticipation of furthering global cooperation, promoting scientific excellence, and making lasting societal impacts. The distinctive treatment of non-associated third countries, coupled with the unwavering dedication of both nations to collaborative initiatives, exemplifies the program's potential to spearhead meaningful advancements in research and innovation on an international scale.

Glossary

SIGNED AGREEMENTS

The number of grant agreements signed, including suspended, terminated, and closed grants.

EU CONTRIBUTION TO DATE

The total EU funding awarded to participants in the selected projects up to the current date.

FRAMEWORK PROGRAMME (FP)

The term used to describe the European Union's research funding programmes.

TOTAL BUDGET

The total amount allocated by the EU for Horizon Europe.

PARTICIPATION

The number of organizations involved in the selected projects. An organization participating in N projects is counted N times.

UNIQUE PARTICIPATION

The number of distinct organizations involved in the selected projects. An organization participating in N projects is counted only once.

TOTAL INVESTMENT TO DATE

The cumulative cost of the selected projects up to the current date, which may be partially covered by EU contributions and other sources of funding.

AVERAGE AWARD VALUE

The average total cost of the selected projects.

*The definitions and data used in this report are based on the Horizon Dashboard. For precise and up-to-date information, please refer directly to the [Horizon Dashboard](#) as the authoritative source.

