

1- What is the Horizon Europe programme?

The UK is quickly recovering a prime position in the EU's £80bn science research programme 18 months after becoming a participating member following the resolution of Brexit problems, data shows.

The country was frozen out of Horizon Europe for three years in a tit-for-tat row with the then prime minister, Boris Johnson, over the Northern Ireland trading arrangements.

While the UK has to play catch-up, entering three years into the seven-year 2020-27 funding programme, data shows British scientists are punching above their weight with €735m (£635m) in grants in 2024.

That ranks the UK as the fifth most successful country in the programme, which is open to 47 nations: the 27 EU member states and 20 non-EU associate members also including New Zealand, Canada and Norway.

Germany, the top participant in Horizon in 2024, won €1.4bn (£1.21bn) in grants and Spain, which came second, got €900m (£777m).

Scientists have said previously they were "over the moon" to be back working with EU colleagues. They said they knew it would take time to return to the top three because of the time it took to build multinational consortiums to apply for funds.

But in terms of grants for proposals by individual scientists, which are easier to assemble, the UK now ranks as the second-most successful participating country after Germany, with €242m (£209m) in funds. The UK is the single most successful applicant country when it comes to Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions, one of the most prestigious grant programmes for doctoral and post-doctoral research in the world.

UK scientists have said repeatedly the Brexit lockout damaged Britain's reputation on the world stage and made it difficult for universities to recruit researchers from the EU.

In terms of recipients, the universities of Oxford and Cambridge are neck and neck, with awards of over €65m each, followed by University College London and Imperial College.

With projects ranging from the research to develop brain catheters inspired by wasps to efforts to create aviation fuel from yeast and greenhouse gases, the UK has been catapulted to the top of the league of non-EU beneficiaries by number of grants.

The UK was one of the leading beneficiaries of Horizon, earning more in grants than it contributed in funds before Brexit.

2- Describe the UK's level of involvement with the Horizon Europe programme over the past few years.

The country was frozen out of Horizon Europe for three years.

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Le pays est resté à l'écart du programme Horizon Europe pendant trois ans.

**KEY DATES**

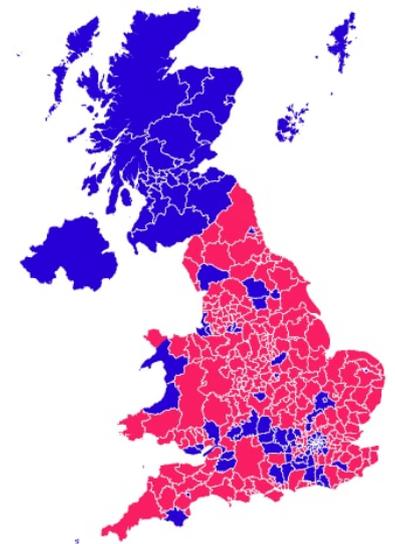
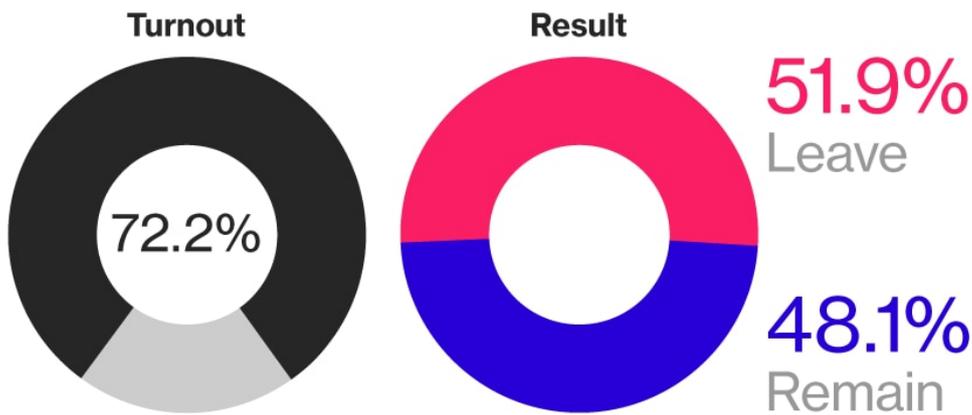
The Brexit referendum took place on **June 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2016**

This year marks the **tenth anniversary** of the Brexit vote.

Brexit was formally **implemented on January 31<sup>st</sup>, 2020.**

## Britain Votes to Leave

U.K. votes to quit European Union after more than four decades



- **2013** : PM David Cameron (Conservative) promises a referendum

THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY (aka \_\_\_\_\_)

=

LE PARTI CONSERVATEUR

≠

THE LABOUR PARTY (aka Ø LABOUR) /'leɪbə/

=

LE PARTI \_\_\_\_\_

THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY (aka THE TORIES / THE TORY PARTY)

=

LE PARTI CONSERVATEUR

≠

THE LABOUR PARTY (aka Ø LABOUR) /'leɪbə/

=

LE PARTI TRAVAILLISTE

- **June 2016** : The UK votes to Leave the EU

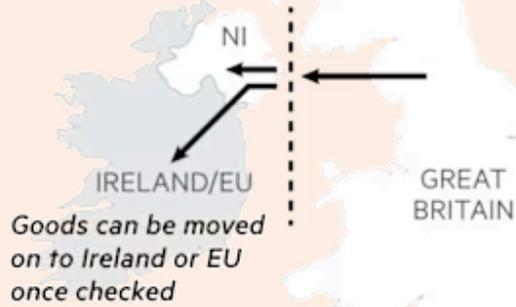
→ D Cameron resigns

- **December 2019**: PM Boris Johnson (Conservative/Tory) signs a last-minute "Hard Brexit" deal, creating new trade borders.
- **January 31<sup>st</sup>, 2020**: the UK officially leaves the EU

## Red and green lanes for trade

### CURRENT PROCESS

All goods checked



### THE WINDSOR FRAMEWORK

Goods split into two different classes



Source: FT research  
© FT



- **July 2024:** Keir Starmer (Labour) becomes Prime Minister and begins "Reset" talks with the EU.
- **May 2025:** The UK-EU Summit in London marks the official start of a new, closer partnership.

**FINANCIAL TIMES**

Brussels is pressing the UK to pay into the EU budget for the first time since leaving the bloc in a demand that has engulfed the post-Brexit "reset" in a fresh round of diplomatic recrimination.

EU diplomats say London is dragging its feet over the issue of youth mobility, which is a key demand from Brussels but has been contentious for the UK government as it tries to reduce net migration.

BBC

**NEWS IN BRIEF 5**November 7th-November 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2025

**The Financial Times** /fai'nænʃl/ is a British daily newspaper that focuses on business and economic affairs. It favours free markets and on social issues it tends to be centrist to center-left.

**To press sb into sth**= to push sb to do sth

**A de'mand**= une exigence, une requête insistante ▲ *noter que « une demande » se dit en anglais « a request »*

**To en'gulf in** /ɪn'gʌlf/= engloutir, submerger

**A round of** = a series of ▲ *noter que « series » est toujours utilisé au pluriel, même lorsqu'il est suivi d'un verbe au singulier*

**A recrimi'nation**= un reproche, une plainte

**To drag one's feet**= to delay on purpose

**Con'tentious** /kən'tenʃəs/= controversé, conflictuel

They're over the moon

They're on cloud nine / They're overjoyed

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To get bang for the buck = to get great value for the money you spent

1 – What is Orbex and what does it do?

## UK space start-up Orbex collapses as takeover talks break down

Peggy Hollinger *Financial Times*, FEB 11 2026

**Scottish rocket maker** Orbex has collapsed after takeover talks with European space start-up The Exploration Company ended in failure.

The takeover talks with TEC collapsed after the European group failed to win UK government funding for its high-thrust rocket engine programme, according to two people close to the situation.

Orbex's demise with debts of £49m deals a blow to the UK's **ambitions to see a British rocket launch from a domestic spaceport.**

The company, valued at \$220m in a 2022 fundraising, was one of just two rocket makers that had been backed by the UK government in recent years as part of its aim to be the **first country to launch a commercial satellite into orbit from western Europe.**

However, years of delays in the development of its launcher left a growing gap in Orbex's finances, despite two injections totalling £26m by the UK last year.

Phil Chambers, Orbex chief executive, said the company's demise after more than a decade of development was devastating. "Disappointing doesn't come close to describing how we feel about this moment," he said. Orbex, whose top shareholders include the Scottish National Investment Bank and the Danish government, had been "**on the cusp of our first test flights later this year**", he said.

The deal with TEC would have salvaged some jobs and shifted Orbex's focus from small rockets to a much larger reusable launcher, better able to compete with Elon Musk's Falcon vehicles. However, the real attraction for TEC appears to have been the prospect of winning the UK as a stakeholder alongside France and Germany, where the European company's facilities are located.

Keeping Orbex in business was not reason enough to convince the government, whose support for the company appears to have waned, to support the plan.

Orbex had been chosen to be the UK's entry to the European Space Agency's "Launcher Challenge", which promises a contract of €169m to companies able to **fly a smaller orbital rocket by 2027.**

But the UK pledged just €34m to Orbex, out of a total of €144m it had dedicated to the programme. That was a fraction of the sums allocated by France, Germany and Spain to their rocket companies.

The UK is now expected to allocate the remaining funding later this year. The Department for Science, Innovation and Technology said the government remained committed to supporting the space sector but suggested the TEC/Orbex proposal had not met its criteria for delivering value to taxpayers.

**2 – What is TEC and what did it want to do? Why?**

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3 – What was the UK government’s final decision and how did it change the fate of the company?

**V37****Stop to + V****≠ Stop + V -ING****Le sens de certains verbes change selon leur construction :**

- *remember to + V* : penser à  
*remember + V -ING* : se souvenir d'avoir...
- *stop to + V* : s'arrêter pour  
*stop + V -ING* : s'arrêter de
- *try to + V* : essayer de  
*try + V -ING* : essayer (de résoudre un problème) en...

*Don't worry, I remembered to post the letter on my way to work.*

*I clearly remember pocketing my keys, I can't have lost them.*

*I stopped smoking cigarettes years ago.*

*I stopped (working) to smoke for 5 minutes before resuming my work.*

*I tried to open the door but it was locked.*

*She wasn't feeling well so I tried opening the window.*

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**Write one key question based on the two articles. Pay attention to syntax !  
(i.e. the order of words in a question)**

How closely linked are science and the political landscape in the UK?

To what degree / In what ways do political priorities shape scientific research in the UK?