

## The 2024 Elections: Shaping the Future of Research Collaboration between the EU and UK

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The EU elections of 2024 took place between 6-9 June, carrying particular significance for EU citizens residing in the UK. Despite Brexit, these elections were a crucial moment for these residents to stay connected with the political processes of their home countries and the broader European Union. Their participation helps shape policies that affect not only the EU but also the relationship between the EU and the UK, impacting issues like trade, mobility, and citizens' rights. This election serves as a reminder of their enduring link to the EU and the importance of their voices in the democratic process.

The results of these elections have the potential to significantly influence the landscape for EU researchers, including those based in the UK. For EU researchers, the outcomes could determine the level of funding, collaboration opportunities, and access to research programmes such as Horizon Europe. Positive election results that favour strong EU-UK ties may facilitate continued collaboration and ease of mobility for researchers moving between the EU and the UK. This could include smoother processes for visas and work permits, as well as the continuation or renewal of bilateral agreements that support scientific cooperation.

The elections saw a notable shift towards right-wing and Eurosceptic parties, reflecting broader trends in European politics. This shift could lead to changes in priorities and funding allocations within the EU, potentially impacting research initiatives. However, the new EU Parliament will play a crucial role in ensuring that science and research remain key areas of focus, with ongoing support for collaborative projects and innovation.

Moreover, the new EU Parliament could work towards ensuring that EU researchers in the UK continue to receive support and are able to participate in EU-funded projects. Given the vital role of research and innovation in addressing global challenges, fostering strong EU-UK partnerships in these areas is crucial. Researchers in the UK who are EU citizens might also benefit from advocacy on their behalf, ensuring their rights and interests are protected amidst the ongoing negotiations and adjustments post-Brexit.

In summary, the 2024 EU elections are not just about political representation; they also have far-reaching implications for the scientific community and the future of research collaboration between the EU and the UK. The hope is that the newly elected EU Parliament will recognise and act upon the importance of maintaining and strengthening these bonds to ensure robust support and favourable conditions for researchers on both sides. With the UK elections coming up on 4 July, although many EU researchers in the UK cannot vote, the outcomes will be equally important for the science and research ecosystem to ensure it remains open, cooperative, and a beacon of innovation and progress.





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