



Round Table Report

"Internationalisation of EU R&I co-funded partnerships: Challenges and Opportunities

13th March 2025

FIGURES

Figure 1: Invitation to the round table.....	4
Figure 2: Photo of Ruben van der Laan opening the round table	5
Figure 3: Chart highlighting the obstacles identified by the audience for the inclusion of third countries	7
Figure 4: Obstacles summarised by the panellists.....	8
Figure 5: Photo of the panellists for the round table	9
Figure 6: Chart illustrating the number of solutions grouped by main themes.....	10
Figure 7: List of solutions identified by the panellists	11

TABLES

Table 1: Sequence of the round table.....	5
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Table of Contents

Background	4
Summary	5
Keynote Presentation on EU Co-funded Partnerships	5
Obstacles for Inclusion of Third Strategic Countries.....	6
Solutions to Foster Inclusion	10
Conclusion and Next Steps.....	12
Annexes	13
Annex 1: Concept Note for the Round Table.....	13
Annex 2: Detailed Audience Contribution to the Identification of Obstacles	20
Annex 3: Detailed Contribution of Panellists to the Identification of Obstacles	21
Annex 4: Detailed Audience Contribution to the Identification of Solutions	22
Annex 5: Detailed Contribution of Panellists to the Identification of Solutions.....	23

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Background

A round table entitled “Internationalisation of EU R&I co-funded partnerships: Challenges and Opportunities” was organised as a satellite event of a conference held in Brussels (11th – 13th March 2025) by the European Commission (DG-INTPA, DG-AGRI and DG-RTD). This special session was organised by the Strategic Working Group of the Standing Committee on Agricultural Research dealing with “European Agricultural Research towards greater impact on global challenges”, known as SCAR ARCH:



Figure 1: Invitation to the round table

The concept of the round table can be retrieved in Annex 1:

It was hosted at the COMET-Louise Building as Session 13 of the three-day conference and the overall conference was attended by a total of 460 participants both online and in person. The sequence of the round table was as follows:

Introduction by facilitator on objectives and programme
Keynote by Hans-Joerg Lutzeyer
Introduction of the panellists by Ruben van der Laan: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Vincenzo Lorusso, RTD - Leonard Mizzi, INTPA - Mahaman Bachir Saley, African Union Commission - Claude Yven, ANR, Coordinator of the FutureFoods HE partnerships

Mentimeter question: listing of obstacles for including strategic third countries (LIMC) and voting by the audience on the biggest obstacles
Reaction from the panellists on the identified obstacles by the audience and their ranking: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What is your reaction to the ranking? - How can we think about new financial instruments to foster participation?
Mentimeter question: what solutions do you see? - let the audience give suggestions
Discussion with the panellists <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Which solutions do you like? - Which solutions do you think are feasible? - How can we learn from the Team Europe approach?
Round of conclusions and closing

Table 1: Sequence of the round table

Summary

Keynote Presentation on EU Co-funded Partnerships

The facilitator **Ruben van der Laan** briefly introduced the event and then invited **Hans-Joerg Lutzeyer** (DG RTD) to give his keynote lecture "Setting the scene for EU co-funded partnerships".



Figure 2: Photo of Ruben van der Laan opening the round table

The keynote speaker highlighted the benefits for both continents of the African Union-European Union (AU-EU) long-term priority on Food and Nutrition Security and Sustainable Agriculture (FNSSA). It has channelled a joint investment of €710 million for 300 projects thus far, on four priorities: sustainable intensification, agriculture and food systems for nutrition, expansion and improvement of agricultural trade and markets, as well as cross-cutting topics. It involves 27 EU Member States (MS) and Associated Countries (AC), along with 47 African Union countries..

However, Horizon Europe (HE) partnerships remain a challenge for participation from countries outside Europe. Across all thematic areas, 60 HE partnerships have been launched. In Cluster 6 “Food, Bioeconomy, Agriculture, Environment” he emphasised that, apart from the two institutionalised partnerships, Partnership for Research and Innovation in Mediterranean Area (PRIMA) and Circular Bio-Based Europe - Joint Undertaking (CBE-JU), there are seven additional co-funded by the EU and the MS and AC. Among these, the Biodiversa+ partnership is the most open to international cooperation and the inclusion of partners from low- and middle-income countries (LMICs), with a participation rate of 12%. In contrast, participation for LMICs in other partnerships is significantly lower: Water4All (6.7%), FutureFoodS (3.6%), Sustainable Blue Economy (2.7%), Animal Health and Welfare (2.2%) and Agroecology (1.4%).

The speaker also presented data from two Horizon 2020 ERA-NET Cofunds (LEAP-Agri and Food Systems and Climate) which were specifically designed to promote international cooperation. These achieved LMIC participation rates of 55.5% and 44.4%, respectively.

He concluded by focusing on the sustainable food systems partnership, “FutureFoodS”. Currently 29 MS and AC including Turkey are members. He emphasised that the Horizon Europe Work Programme 2025 will open the door for the partnership’s second instalment making this the right moment to join by contacting the FutureFoodS coordination team. He called on African countries to become members as well, noting that this would pave the way for specific calls focused on bi-continental cooperation. However, urgent action would be needed, as the call will close mid-September 2025.

Obstacles for Inclusion of Third Strategic Countries

The keynote presentation was followed by a Mentimeter poll which asked the audience “What are the obstacles for the inclusion of strategic third countries?”¹. The audience was highly engaged, contributing 72 responses and a total of 227 votes. As shown in the next figure (Figure 3), the main obstacle identified was funding for the participation of institutions from fragile LMICs which received over 40% of the votes. The next most cited obstacle was the limited capacity available in third countries to participate in the partnerships (16%), followed by the complexity of EU partnerships’ governance and administration (14%), the insufficient alignment in vision, prioritisation and trust among partners (12%) and divergent geographical interests (10%). Interestingly, issues such as the lack of communication and inclusion of farmers and the private sector, as well as instability and insecurity, were also raised, but received fewer votes.

¹ Detailed results can be found in Annex 2

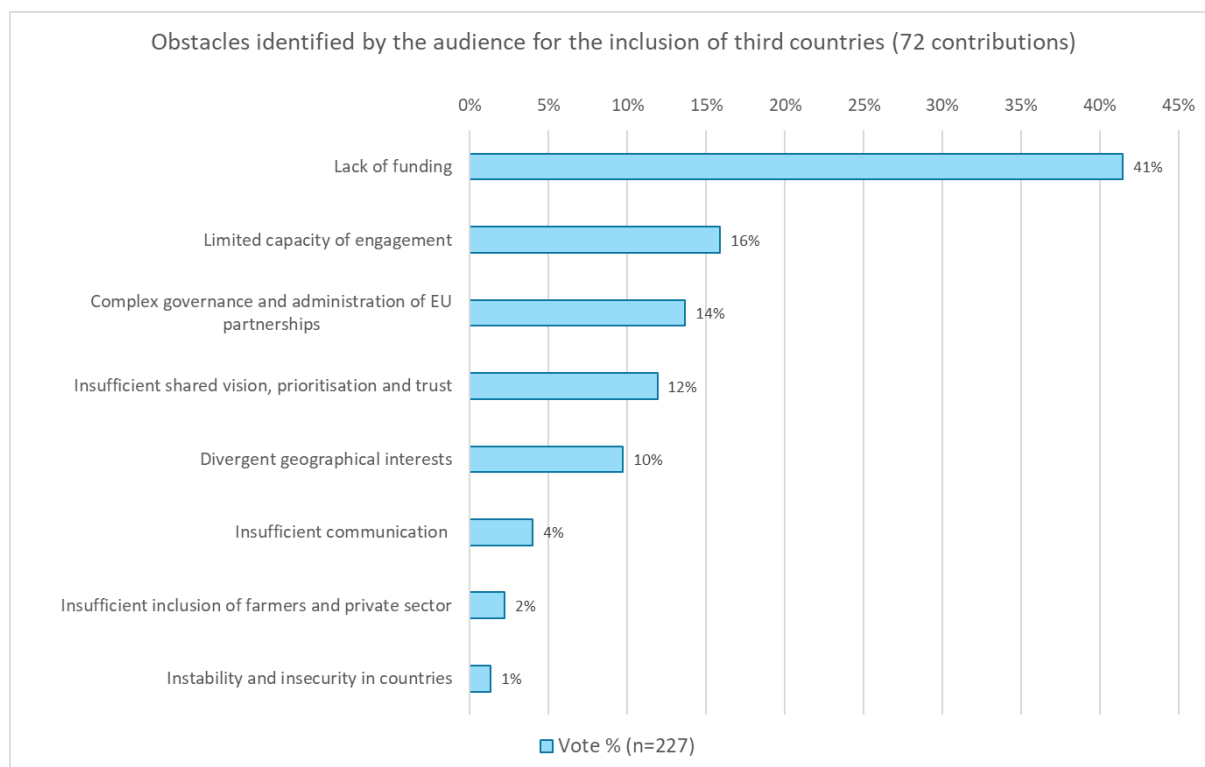


Figure 3: Chart highlighting the obstacles identified by the audience for the inclusion of third countries

In preparation for the round table, the panellists were asked in advance to identify obstacles that they see on the internationalisation of EU partnerships. These obstacles are summarised in the next figure (Figure 4) and detailed in Annex 3. Obstacles 1, 2 and 3 identified by the panellists overlap with obstacles 1, 4 and 3 identified by the audience. Obstacles 4 and 5 from the panellists correspond to audience obstacles 1 and 6 respectively. The final obstacle raised by the panellists was not mentioned by the audience.



Obstacles:

1. Lack of long-term funding opportunities
2. Lack of joint priorities for action
3. Complex coordination and high level of administration
4. No “incentives” for inclusions of LMIC
5. Limited use of existing instruments by partners from outside Europe
6. Limited funding for scaling up

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Figure 4: Obstacles summarised by the panellists

The Mentimeter poll was followed by the first panel discussion. The panellists were asked to respond to the obstacles identified and the audience voting results:

- **Leonard Mizzi** elaborated on the role of EU foreign policy. He highlighted that participation is open to all countries, not just strategic ones. He stressed that the situation of LMICs varies significantly and should be addressed in a differentiated manner. Special attention should be given to fragile countries (e.g. Mali, Burkina Faso, Chad, Sudan etc.) and their capacities to join, in contrast to so-called “champions league” LMICs, such as South Africa, Turkey, Morocco or Ghana etc. Creating regional spill-over effects, when “champions league” countries join could be key, alongside developing new mechanisms to support fragile countries. These fragile countries could focus on concentrating efforts with national research priorities and involving the private sector. Nonetheless, they should avoid repetition of efforts at a regional level.
- **Mahaman Bachir Saley** emphasised that limited resources are not the only challenge; rather, the issue lies in the absorption capacity and the prioritisation of available national resources. The complex administration of these partnerships and the lack of shared goals can reduce motivation to invest national resources. Therefore, co-design and co-implementation of such joint programmes are essential to truly address common challenges and build momentum for international engagement and investment.
- In response to an audience question about establishing different allocation lots based on countries’ absorption capacities, **Leonard Mizzi** warned that such allocations should be proportional to the actual absorption capacity of each beneficiary country. There is a risk that already well-performing LMICs could absorb a disproportionate share of funding, at

the expense of more fragile countries. Instead, mechanisms should be established to create a more level playing field, fostering the spillover from “Champions League” countries to their more vulnerable neighbours.

- **Vincenzo Lorusso** proposed involving the private sector to diversify funding sources and stakeholders in LMICs, thereby improving overall absorption capacity and creating new opportunities for participation in EU partnerships. He also suggested promoting regional integration of value chains, which would naturally generate spillover effects across countries. The EU partnerships should also build on previous successful AU-EU co-funded projects, in the frame of the AU-EU long-term FNSSA partnership. A conducive policy environment is needed to encourage the private sector to scale up project outcomes.
- **Claude Yven** highlighted that joining a partnership is an investment. Any country that shares the same goals and objectives with a certain partnership should be able to join. Therefore, EU foreign policy may not be the limiting factor – rather, participation depends on political will. She further remarked that the current funding rules are strict and governed by precise contracts. Greater flexibility is needed to accommodate the specific needs of LMICs when forming consortia and applying to partnership calls. She proposed introducing an evaluation of proposals to reflect the effective participation of LMICs, such as awarding bonus points for strong LMIC engagement in the quality assessment of project consortia.
- **Leonard Mizzi** supported the idea of mapping funders (public & private), including EU services and MS, alongside the absorption capacities of target countries. This mapping could serve as the basis for engagement and co-design in LMICs. However, it would require de-risking private sector investments in R&I consortia. He also emphasised that upscaling remains a major challenge.



Figure 5: Photo of the panellists for the round table

Solutions to Foster Inclusion

The second part of the round table was dedicated to the identification of solutions to improve the participation of third countries in EU R&I partnerships. It began with a Mentimeter poll with the audience. 27 contributions were received, detailed in Annex 4 and grouped into six main themes, as illustrated in the next figure (Figure 6). There was no audience vote on these solutions and the results were not shown nor discussed.

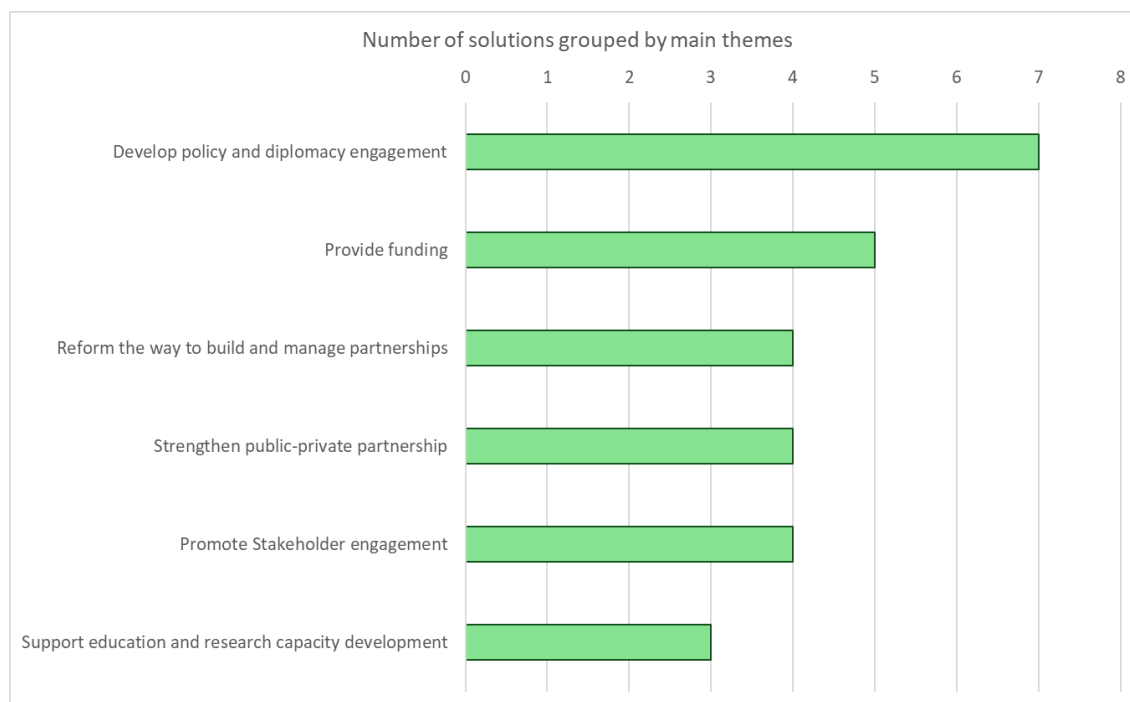


Figure 6: Chart illustrating the number of solutions grouped by main themes

The panellists were also asked before the round table to identify solutions. Their inputs are summarised in the next picture (Figure 7), with detailed contributions in Annex 5. Panellist solutions 3, 4, 5, 6 and 8 correspond to audience solutions 1, 6, 3, 2 and 5, respectively. Solutions 1, 2 and 7 are somewhat complementary to the audience proposals.



Solutions:

1. Concentration of funding on successful initiatives
2. Foster scaling up processes
3. Establish a structure (e.g. working group) to identify and agree on priorities
4. Foster participatory approaches
5. Simplify administration
6. Provide “incentives” for participation of LMIC
7. Leveraging synergies
8. Enhance outreach and communication

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Figure 7: List of solutions identified by the panellists

The discussion between the panellists and the audience led to the following proposals:

- The **next multiannual financial framework (MFF 2027-34)** should find new ways to integrate new players, particularly from the private sector.
- **New policies should be developed to encourage private sector contributions.**
 - Prominent companies could play a role in supporting fragile countries through their investment capacities – for example, firms involved in electric cables, infrastructure, water management, or the OCP Group in Morocco in relation to fertiliser issues. These companies could also act as co-funders of EU partnerships.
 - However, safeguards must be put in place to ensure that increased private sector involvement does not lead to greater exclusion or bias against fragile countries.
 - EU partnerships should support the development of public goods that can eventually transition to market-based solutions.
 - Efforts should be made to engage Africa’s 20 wealthiest billionaires to support the agrifood systems transformation in fragile countries. In addition, global foundations and philanthropists should be mobilised. The EU should further reinforce investment de-risking mechanisms to support food systems transformations in these contexts.
 - Banks must be involved and should become key actors in changing private sector behaviour by encouraging greater investment in R&I. Guarantees must be provided for de-risking the investment.

- Solutions for de-risking local entrepreneurs must be tailor-made and blended finance mechanisms should be further developed. De-risking must be based on clear business cases.
- Green and innovative finance: efforts should go beyond greenwashing and carbon credits, tapping into genuine green finance opportunities.
- o **The public sector, including public banks, must be involved in national strategic plans.**
- o **Research valorisation and intellectual property rights** for entrepreneurs engaged in public-private partnerships must be protected.
- o **Partnerships should be increasingly co-designed and co-implemented with strategic third countries** to enhance inclusiveness:
 - Within EU partnerships, the contributions of different partners should be more balanced according to their available resources. Complementary instruments and incentives should be designed accordingly.
 - Targeted international cooperation - both South-North and South-South collaborations - should be promoted to support sustainability and the green transition.
 - A case-by-case, tailor-made approach should be adopted when including partners from LMICs.

Conclusion and Next Steps

This report, together with the [ARCH argument](#) published in May 2024, will contribute to the development of a concept note aimed at R&I policymakers and funders within the European Commission and national ministries. The objective of the concept note - expected to be published by the end of 2025 - is to provide recommendations for strengthening the EU's strategic R&I partnerships with LMICs, in line with emerging EU policies and strategies (including, but not limited to, the "Agriculture and Food Vision" and the "Strategy for EU Competitiveness").

Annexes

Annex 1: Concept Note for the Round Table

"Internationalisation of EU R&I co-funded partnerships: Challenges and Opportunities"

Rationale

Agri-food systems in Europe and globally are not operating within the planetary boundaries and the transformation of agri-food systems is of utmost importance for a prosperous future for the planet and the people. To achieve this, substantial investment in research and innovation (R&I) and capacity development is necessary.

A general shift to sustainable production practices, value chains and diets transcends national and regional boundaries, since many challenges are global, like the adaptation to climate change, the fight against biodiversity loss, and the restoration and protection of soils and forests. To successfully address these urgent challenges, the EC has developed and implemented programmes/instruments to strengthen collaborative work between the EU and its strategic partners in various fields, including research, innovation, education, capacity and socio-economic development.

One of these instruments is the Horizon Europe co-funded R&I partnerships (EU + Member States & Associated Countries) which are long-lasting (above seven years) and large cooperation instruments. These partnerships are powerful instruments that bind together the European Commission, Member States and Associated Countries to pool resources to address Europe's key challenges. International cooperation beyond Europe is encouraged for better and faster achievement of the targets, as part of the EU Global approach to R&I cooperation. Horizon Europe R&I partnerships could be regarded to some extent as the Team Europe Initiatives implemented under the EU Global Gateway strategy with the aim to support the green & digital transition in partner countries or regions through coordinated efforts by the EU, Member States, and other stakeholders.

Several of the EU co-funded R&I partnerships have been recently launched, covering thematic areas that need to tackle problems both at European and global scale, like "Sustainable Food Systems", "Agroecology", and "Biodiversity". Many of them are addressing the transformation towards sustainable agri-food systems and strong connections and synergies between them will be essential to achieve the necessary transformations.

Since agri-food systems are globally highly interconnected, research and innovation to support their transformation cannot be implemented using only a European perspective. In addition, international R&I cooperation can create new trade opportunities and emerging markets and strengthen the global outreach of the EU through science diplomacy. For these reasons, co-funded R&I partnerships could benefit from cooperation with strategic third country partners. However, the integration of strategic third country partners with limited budget resources (mainly

from low and middle-income countries, LMIC) appears to be challenging. To move forward, lessons learned from previous Horizon 2020 co-funded European Research Area Networks (ERA-NETs) with an international dimension, such as the Long-term European-African Partnership, LEAP-AGRI or the Food Systems and Climate (FOSC) network, need to be considered.

As an illustration, LEAP-AGRI recommended that future partnerships particularly strengthen the inclusion of underrepresented EU and third country partners from LMIC. Moreover, while doing so, their potential difficulties and limitations to contribute funding need to be acknowledged and alternative funding sources (donors, banks, civil society or others such as research tax credit, banks, etc.) have to be encouraged to step in for partners that suffer insufficient public financing. In addition, in-kind contributions from those partners have to be acknowledged.

Besides the financial constraints, other shortcomings can be experienced with the implementation of EU co-funded R&I partnerships. The regulatory framework of EU R&I partnerships is strongly adapted to the EU standards and often not flexible enough to accommodate the administrative realities and capacities in some other regions, especially in LMIC. Along with the restricted financial capacities and abilities for long-term financial commitment, the participation of third country partners from LMIC has been limited to date. Even though, co-funding from individual Member States compensated for some of the challenges in the past, this has only been a short-term resolution as only a limited number of Member States allow financial support of project partners from other countries within their national funding regulations. To fully exploit the potential of international R&I cooperation for agri-food systems transformation in Europe and beyond, long-term and structurally viable possibilities need to be elaborated.

Objective of the event

The main objective of the event is to bring together EC representatives, co-funded partnership leaders and national funders in order to discuss and expand ideas on pathways for a better alignment of EU co-funded R&I partnerships with the need to integrate global perspectives for successful agri-food system transformations. Thus, the international dimension of these partnerships and particularly the connection with LMIC partners will be the principal focus of the panel discussion, with the objective to come up with tangible recommendations for future partnerships. The discussion will also address funding issues (budget, financial models, etc...), since the current budget model of Horizon Europe partnerships may restrain the participation of EU strategic partners from LMIC.

For a revisited international dimension of EU co-funded R&I partnerships, the panel will discuss the following three topics and dedicated questions:

- EU co-funded R&I partnerships addressing challenges with a global dimension by nature (e.g. Biodiversity, Food systems...):
 - ➔ What would be the mutual benefits of increasing international cooperation within these R&I partnerships? Challenges? Ways to progress?

- ➔ What operational framework adjustments within these partnerships and which synergies with other EU programmes/instruments could be considered to improve the inclusion of strategic third country partners from LMIC to effectively address the need to transform agri-food systems in Europe and beyond? (An example of such possible adjustments should be given at the beginning to clarify the area under discussion)
- Inclusion of strategic third country partners with limited budget resources in R&I projects funded from partnership joint calls:
 - ➔ What are the obstacles for participation? (should consider the issues regarding funding, information availability, eligibility criteria, etc...)
 - ➔ How can we think about new financial mechanisms to foster their participation? (for instance, to make LMIC partners automatically eligible for (EU) funding as in other classical R&I actions under Horizon Europe: should be considered here that for the thematic covered by the partnerships, the classical R&I actions in the general Work Programme are generally reduced or removed, thus resulting in the loss of opportunities for the participation of LMIC partners)
- Would the Team Europe approach be a good example for co-funded partnerships? (Team Europe approach should be shortly introduced by the moderator and then the question assigned to the representative of DG-INTPA. Related question: can “Team Europe Initiatives” developed under the EU’s Global Gateway Strategy be a source of inspiration for a better inclusion of strategic third country partners?)
 - ➔ What can we learn from the Team Europe Approach?
 - ➔ How could EU co-funded R&I partnerships benefit from a Team Europe Approach and also contribute in implementing the EU-AU High Level Policy Dialogue (HLPD) on Science, Technology and Innovation roadmap and specific strategic R&I agendas of selected third countries/regions?

Facts and figures about the Horizon Europe co-funded partnerships (Source = ERA-LEARN & Horizon Dashboard)



PERFORMANCE OF EUROPEAN PARTNERSHIPS BIENNIAL MONITORING REPORT 2024 ON PARTNERSHIPS IN HORIZON EUROPE

FIGURE 2. Overview of the 50 European Partnerships in the structure of Horizon Europe prior to the second strategic plan



* Partnership not yet launched

** Direct continuation of a H2020 partnership

Source: European Commission

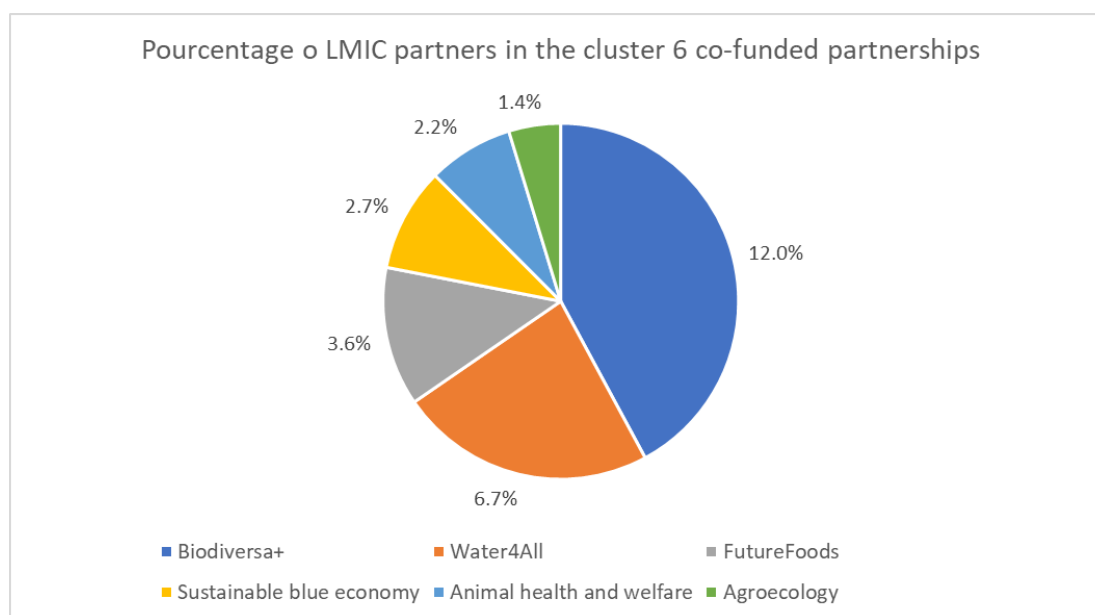
In 2024, 50 partnerships, €24.9b commitment from Horizon Europe (39.8% of Pillar II budget), €38.6b commitment from partners other than the EU.²

HE co-funded partnerships account for 12% of Horizon Europe partnership budget (€3b)

Cluster 6 food, bioeconomy, natural resources, agriculture and environment hosts two institutionalised and seven co-funded partnerships.

List of LMIC countries collaborating in EU co-funded partnerships:

- Biodiversa+: 83 partners, 10 LMIC (the partnership has been able to involve several LMICs in its calls, such as Brazil, Moldova, Morocco, South Africa, Tunisia, Ivory Coast and Georgia. However, all of them except Ivory Coast are members of the partnership (by their ministry or funding agency). Biodiversa+ has also Albania, Kosovo, Montenegro and Türkiye as LMIC partners.
- Sustainable blue economy: two LMIC out of 74 partners (Tunisia, Türkiye)
- Water4All: 90 partners, six LMIC (Brazil, Moldova, South Africa, Tunisia, Türkiye and Georgia)
- Animal health and welfare: 90 partners, 2 LMIC (Georgia, Türkiye)
- Agroecology: 74 partners, one LMIC (Türkiye)
- FutureFoodS: 83 partners, three LMIC (Türkiye, North Macedonia, Georgia)
- EJP SOIL: 26 partners, one LMIC (Türkiye)
- LeapAGRI: 29 partners, 10 LMIC (Algeria, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Egypt, Ghana, Kenya, Senegal, South Africa, Türkiye)
- FOSC: 29 partners, eight LMIC (Algeria, Burkina Faso, Kenya, Morocco, Senegal, South Africa, Türkiye)



² PERFORMANCE OF EUROPEAN PARTNERSHIPS: BIENNIAL MONITORING REPORT 2024 ON PARTNERSHIPS IN HORIZON EUROPE

Across the six launched co-funded partnership of Cluster 6, only 11 different LMICs are participating (Albania, Brazil, Georgia, Kosovo, Moldova, Montenegro, Morocco, North Macedonia, South Africa, Tunisia and Türkiye).

Over the four first years of the Cluster 6 of Horizon Europe (source Horizon Dashboard):

- Two LMIC-Non-Associated-Third Countries³ (NATCs) received €1.2m from the EU through six co-funded partnerships (0.33% of the EU net contribution to the Cluster 6 co-funded partnerships)
- 52 LMIC-NATCs received €74m from the EU through all kind of actions (1.75% of the EU net contribution to the Cluster 6)
- Within the previously concerned actions, 19 actions tagged in the “African Initiative” under Horizon Europe, 41 LMIC-NATCs received €55m (27% of the EU-net contribution on these 19 actions)

Under H2020 (2014-2020) and across all thematics, 32 out of 41 non-European funding organisations participating in ERA-net co-funded partnerships were from LMIC-NATCs (Algeria, Argentina, Belarus, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Cameroun, Chile, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Egypt, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Honduras, India, Jordan, Kenya, Lebanon, Mali, Mexico, Morocco, Mozambique, Niger, Peru, Russia, Senegal, South Africa, Syria, Tanzania, Tunisia, Uganda, Zambia)

Over the seven years of the societal challenge two (SC2) of H2020:

- 12 LMIC-NATCs⁴ received €3.4n from the EU through 15 ERA-Net co-funded partnerships (3.94% of the EU net contribution to the SC2 co-funded partnerships)
- One out of the 15 ERA-net co-funded partnerships was LEAP-AGRI (29 partners of which nine LMIC-NATCs): LEAP-AGRI provided €2.13m to eight LMIC-NATCs
- Out of the 15 other ERA-Net co-funded partnerships, only three provided a EU net contribution of €1.26m to nine LMIC-NATCs (1.47% of the EU net contribution to the SC2 co-funded partnerships except LEAP-AGRI)
- 58 LMIC-NATCs received €76m from the EU through all kind of actions (2.2% of the EU net contribution to the SC2 and 2.14% with the exclusion of LEAP-AGRI))

In conclusion, under H2020-SC2, except for LEAP-AGRI (a dedicated EU-Africa partnership), the co-funded partnerships were less financially inclusive for LMIC-NATCs than the other instruments (1.47% versus 2.14 % of the EU net contribution to these countries).

Under Horizon Europe, it is still too early to conclude since the partnerships are recent and some of them have only launched their first joint call. However, the participation of LMIC-NATCs should be monitored vigilantly throughout the execution of Horizon Europe since the EU net contribution to LMIC-NATCs within EU co-funded partnerships is already significantly lower than in other EU-funding instruments (0.33% versus 1.75%).

³ Morocco and South Africa

⁴ Source Horizon Dashboard (<https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/opportunities/horizon-dashboard>)

Lessons learned from LEAP-AGRI : “Encourage alternative funders (donors, banks, civil society or others such as research tax credit, banks...) mainly for African partners which suffer insufficient public financing”:

1. Inclusion of underrepresented EU and third countries in the partnerships with full acknowledgment of their potential difficulties in self-funding
2. Limitation of the funding partitioning in the partnership. Each partner being funded by its own national funding organisation according to national rules: this has led in Leap-AGRI project to management and administrative bottlenecks, unwanted fragmentation of collaborations within consortiums, unbalanced access to resources, major difficulties in case of failure of a particular funding organisation and disjointed progresses between partners owing to delays in fund release
3. Conference/workshop for the co-creation with interested parties (national, European and international funding organisations, investment banks, foundations, NGO, business actors...) and future beneficiaries, of innovative funding models (e.g. Funder-Alliance, blend mixing funding/investment models...), having harmonised transparent rules and shared aims aligned to a joint definition of priorities
4. The DeSIRA initiative was referred to as having interesting characteristics such as the fact of being co-constructed with national authorities, of promoting systemic and context-specific approaches instead of mono-disciplinary approaches, of encouraging innovation through research at all levels (technical, social, institutional) and of strengthening capacities of local research organizations through a strong and lasting partnership with their European counterparts.

The future “One health antimicrobial resistance” co-funded partnership is developing an interesting vision⁵: “Moreover, in cooperation with development aid agencies, research funding has been extended to researchers from LMICs who have been partners of the research consortia, resulting in international cooperation, capacity strengthening and linkages without dependencies. The OHAMR Partnership will thus seek further cooperation with international organisations, as well as third Country participation.”

⁵ PERFORMANCE OF EUROPEAN PARTNERSHIPS: BIENNIAL MONITORING REPORT 2024 ON PARTNERSHIPS IN HORIZON EUROPE

Annex 2: Detailed Audience Contribution to the Identification of Obstacles

General items	Vote	Details	Vote
Lack of funding	94	Co-funding by third countries	40
		Limited resources	39
		Imbalanced financial and human resources	6
		Funding going to international organisations	4
		In-kind contribution not enough considered	4
		Mobilisation of donors and foundations	1
Limited capacity of engagement	36	Long term commitments and engagement at the right level	13
		Lack of expertise	11
		Lack of institutional capacity to collate and apply	7
		Personnel rotation	5
Complex governance and administration of EU partnerships	31	Complexity and rigidity of EU regulations and procedures	17
		Challenge in synchronising procedures and funding at national and European levels	12
		Governance	2
Insufficient shared vision, prioritisation and trust	27	Lack of prioritisation and trust	19
		Shared vision and cocreation	5
		Divergent interests	3
Divergent geographical interests	22	EU foreign policy	8
		North-South oriented solutions (no South-North and South-South sharing of experience)	8
		Asia and Latin America less considered	3
		Nationalism	3
Insufficient communication	9	Lack of information on opportunities	4
		Limited communication of innovation and impact by researchers	4
		Added value	1
Insufficient inclusion of farmers and private sector	5	Limited inclusion of farmer organisations and extensions	3
		Research not oriented to market	2
Instability and insecurity in	3	Political instability and general security	3
		Total	227

Annex 3: Detailed Contribution of Panellists to the Identification of Obstacles

1. **Uncertainty of future funding:** new EU priorities for next MultiFinancial Framework (e.g. defence spendings), cuts of some key donors
(→ impact on SDGs incl. SDG2 (Zero hunger) and Least Developed Countries in particular: will we create more inequity in the global food systems?)
2. **Lack of focus and priorities for action** and fragmentation & suboptimal collaboration in the EU27 and with like-minded countries (Switzerland, Norway, UK...)
3. **Identification of Priorities:** customized solutions do not necessarily match the needs and co-construction not systematically implemented with relevant institutions / organizations and agreement on National/regional or Continental priorities
4. **Complex coordination of the action** under international cooperation between many countries and partners (*risk of effort duplication*)
5. **Higher level of administrative constraints under Horizon Europe** (*compared to H2020 ERA-Net cofund*)
6. **Difficulties to promote collaboration with LMIC via the calls for proposals** launched by the co-funded partnership (*Partnerships must use the Horizon Europe RIA award criteria*)
7. **Unstable eligibility criteria of costs** during and after the implementation of the partnership due to geopolitical context
8. **Limited use of existing EU-instruments by African stakeholders** (*funding and capacity building opportunities in instruments already in place*)
9. **Limited funding opportunities (beyond Horizon Europe) for later stage (TRL > 6) innovative projects** (start-ups/SMEs or research institutions, focusing on African markets, enabling scale up and product delivery: how can we help further scale up the most promising Horizon Europe projects once they reach completion and yet still need support to the reach the marketplace and consumers?)

Annex 4: Detailed Audience Contribution to the Identification of Solutions

General items	Occurrences	Details	Occurrence
Develop policy and diplomacy engagement	7	Make research funding to support agri-food systems transformation becoming a national priority (EU diplomacy supports)	3
		Include third country representative in relevant EU DGs	1
		Align the interventions to national or regional priorities	1
		Increase support for infrastructures, feeder roads, irrigation, seed sector and agro-processing capacities	2
Provide funding	5	Create Incentives for engagement	2
		Promote public-private blended finance to derisk investments in fragile settings	2
		Reduce the co-funding engagement of fragile countries (1€ given while 10€ for non fragile countries) and enhance the absorption capacity	1
Reform the way to build and manage partnerships	4	Enhance flexibility in eligibility criteria to include less performant organisations	1
		allow co-construction of programmes, funding mechanism and eligibility criteria	1
		Develop activities targeting international cooperation within EU partnerships	1
		Simplify application procedure and project management to allow small settings to participate	1
Strengthen public-private partnership	4	Empower local SMEs	1
		Reinforce public-private cooperation to turn knowledge production into products and services	1
		Clarify the contribution of private versus public sectors (production of private goods and protection of public goods)	1
		Increase the support to market-linked projects	1
Promote Stakeholder engagement	4	Increase engagement between stakeholders	1
		Promote participation to decentralised organisations	1
		Improve trust between scientists and private sector	1
		Increase resources on outreach and extensions	1
Support education and research capacity development	3	Diversify education programmes (upstream high level academic graduations)	1
		Facilitate north-south and south-south exchange of researchers and cooperation to enhance capacities	2
		Total	27

Annex 5: Detailed Contribution of Panellists to the Identification of Solutions

- 1. Need for rationalization of new initiatives** that still mushroom in different fora.
- 2. Focus on demonstrating and -where possible- scaling up success stories** with the funding there is
- 3. Frequent meetings, communication and establishment of a “task force/working group”** for a better progress follow up and alignment with regional or continental priorities
- 4. Inclusive participatory approaches involving all actors**
(International partners to work closely with AUC, REC's, Countries, ...)
- 5. Simplification of reporting procedure**
(a 10-year partnership with 30% EU cofunding should not be managed like a 3-year research project with 100% funding)
- 6. Bonus to proposals involving LMIC:** allow the co-funded partnership to adapt the award criteria
- 7. Secure the eligibility criteria of costs** at the grant signature by the EC services
- 8. Leveraging synergies** between Horizon Europe and Global Gateway Africa-Europe Investment Package at country level / Engaging private sector and Development Banks
- 9. Enhanced outreach and communication activities**
(e.g. on Horizon Europe “Africa Initiatives”; EURAXESS Africa, etc.) / Capacity enhancement programmes with local Horizon Europe National Contact Points' (NCPs) networks (e.g. ongoing programme at EU Delegation to Nigeria and ECOWAS) / Promoting intra-African collaboration (at country, regional and continental level)