

## The Basque Country is at the level of the group of 'strong innovator' countries in 2024, surpassing the EU-27 average

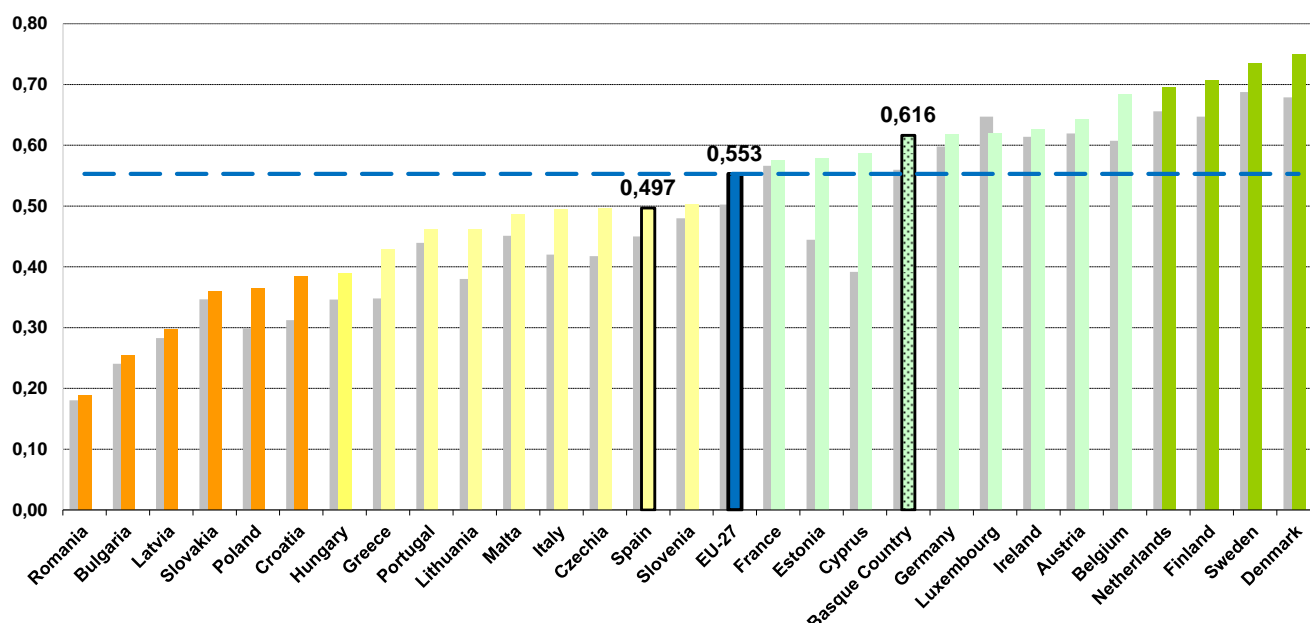
***The Basque Country leads Europe in population aged 25-34 with tertiary education and new doctorate graduates in the dimension of human resources***

The Basque Country scored 0.616 in the European Innovation Scoreboard EIS 2024, higher than the 0.553 obtained by the EU-27, thanks to its good scores in the 'Framework conditions' and 'Investments' blocks (0.711 and 0.670, respectively), according to data prepared by Eustat.

**The score obtained by the Basque Country represents 111.5% of the EU average, placing it at the level of the group of 'strong innovator' countries**, which are those that are between 100% and 125% of the average recorded by the EU-27. For its part, Spain was among the 'moderate innovator' countries, with a score of 0.497 (equivalent to 89.9% of the European average).

The EIS 2024 European Innovation Scoreboard attempts to measure the extent to which countries' economies have the capacity to develop innovation activities. It is divided into four main blocks of activity, which encompass 12 innovation dimensions for a total of 32 indicators. Based on the scores obtained and their ranking in relation to the European average, the EU-27 countries are placed in one of four categories: innovation leaders, strong innovators, moderate innovators, and emerging innovators.

European innovation scoreboard EIS 2024 Basque Country and EU-27



Source: Eustat. European innovation scoreboard -EIS- and European Commission

Note: The colored columns correspond to the 2024 values and the grey ones to 2017, calculated according to EIS 2024 methodology.

The EIS undergoes continuous revision, and each year there are variations in terms of both its component indicators and its calculation formula. These changes mean that comparisons cannot be made with the EISs published in previous years. Each EIS provides data for an eight-year period, 2017-2024 in the case of EIS 2024, using the latest available data.

The first category, **innovation leaders**, contains countries with a score over 125% of the European Union average. There are four such countries: Denmark (0.750), Sweden (0.734), Finland (0.706), and the Netherlands (0.695), although the country at the forefront of innovation in Europe was Switzerland (0.765).

In the second category, **strong innovators**, are those that achieved a score of between 100% and 125% of the average. There are eight of these countries: Belgium (0.683), Austria (0.642), Ireland (0.626), Luxembourg (0.619), Germany (0.617), Cyprus (0.587), Estonia (0.579) and France (0.575). The Basque Country, with a score of 0.616, would be placed between Cyprus and Germany in this group, reaching 111.5% of the EU-27 average.

The third category, **moderate innovators**, comprises countries that achieved between 70% and 100% of the average. There are nine of these countries, listed in descending order below: Slovenia, Spain, Czech Republic, Italy, Malta, Lithuania, Portugal, Greece and Hungary. Their scores range from 0.503 (Slovenia) to 0.390 (Hungary).

Lastly, the fourth category, **emerging innovators**, comprises six countries whose scores are less than 70% of the average. Croatia, Poland, Slovakia, Latvia, Bulgaria and Romania, whose scores ranged from 0.385 (Croatia) to 0.188 (Romania).

Of the four main blocks contained in the EIS, the Basque Country obtained outstanding scores with respect to the European average in two of them, 'FRAMEWORK CONDITIONS' and 'INVESTMENTS'.

The first block, 'FRAMEWORK CONDITIONS', reflects the main factors external to firms that have an impact on innovation results. In this block, the Basque Country obtained a score of 0.71 compared to 0.50 in the EU, while also achieving a better score than the European average in the block's three dimensions: 'Human resources', 'Attractive research systems' and 'Digitalisation'.

### ***The Basque Country leads Europe in population aged 25-34 with tertiary education and new doctorate graduates, in the dimension of human resources***

In 'Human resources', a dimension that measures the availability of a highly qualified and trained workforce as a key element for innovation, the Basque Country achieved a score of 0.78, exceeded only by Sweden and Luxembourg, while the European average stands at 0.49. The Basque Country stood out with respect to the European average in the three indicators included in this dimension. 'New doctorate graduates in science and technology aged 25-34' reached 1.31 per 1,000 in the Basque Country, while this represents 0.80 per 1,000 in the EU-27, which, at the EU-27 level was only surpassed by Luxembourg (1.40 per 1,000). Furthermore, the 66.0% obtained by the Basque Country in 'Percentage of the population aged 25-34 with tertiary education' places it in first place within the EU-27, where the proportion is 43.1%. In the third indicator of this dimension, 'Percentage of the population aged 25-64 involved in lifelong learning', the value obtained in the Basque Country, 13.5%, was also higher than that for the EU27, 12.8%.

## EIS European Innovation Indicators Panel (4 Blocks and 12 Dimensions). Composite indices. 2024

	EU-27	BASQUE COUNTRY	SPAIN
<b>Innovation Indicators Panel</b>	<b>0.55</b>	<b>0.62</b>	<b>0.50</b>
FRAMEWORK CONDITIONS	0.50	0.71	0.59
Human Resources	0.49	0.78	0.60
Attractive research systems	0.44	0.56	0.40
Digitalization	0.60	0.84	0.86
INVESTMENT	0.58	0.67	0.49
Finance and Support	0.61	0.63	0.63
Investment by companies	0.59	0.72	0.36
Use of information technologies	0.54	0.66	0.48
INNOVATION ACTIVITIES	0.47	0.46	0.36
Innovators	0.52	0.45	0.28
Collaborations	0.37	0.61	0.35
Knowledge assets	0.54	0.36	0.44
IMPACTS	0.66	0.61	0.54
Employment impacts	0.56	0.48	0.34
Sales impacts	0.74	0.56	0.59
Environmental sustainability	0.64	0.81	0.62

Date October 28, 2024

Source: Eustat, European Innovation Scoreboard (EIS) and European Commission

In the **‘Attractive research systems’** dimension, which evaluates the international competitiveness of the scientific base, the Basque Country scored higher than the EU-27 (0.56 compared to 0.44). It includes three indicators and, once again, the Basque Country stood out in all three. Thus, the number of ‘International scientific co-publications per million inhabitants’ stood at 1,984.1 in the Basque Country compared to 1,267.7 in Europe. In the percentage of ‘Scientific publications among the top-10% most cited’ (classified as excellent), the Basque Country scored 9.81% compared to 9.78% for the EU-27. Finally, in ‘Foreign doctorate students as a percentage of all doctorate students in the country’, the Basque Country obtained 31.13% compared to 22.66% in the EU-27.

The third and final dimension of this first block is **‘Digitalisation’**, which measures the level of digital technology, standing at 0.84 in the Basque Country and 0.60 in the EU-27. It includes two indicators and the Basque Country stood out in both. In ‘Broadband penetration’, it achieved a score of 81.3%, while the EU-27 average is 60.2%; and in ‘Individuals who have above basic overall digital skills’, the Basque Country’s score of 35.5% exceeded the EU average of 27.3%.

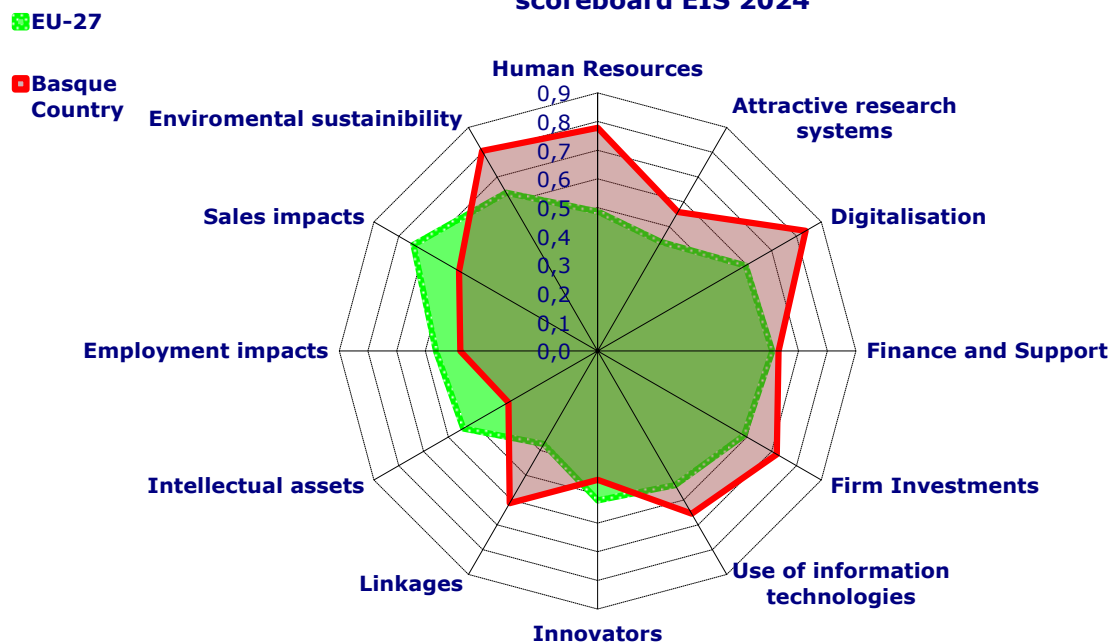
The second block, **‘INVESTMENTS’**, examines public and private investment in research and innovation. The Basque Country’s score of 0.67 was once again higher than the European average (0.58). It examines a further three dimensions, ‘Finance and support’, ‘Firm investments’ and ‘Use of information technologies’, and the Basque Country once again ranked higher than the EU in all three.

The **‘Finance and support’** dimension measures the availability of finance for innovation projects and the support of governments for research and innovation activities. The Basque Country achieved a score of 0.63, compared to 0.61 in the EU-27. It includes three indicators. In one of them, ‘Direct government funding and government tax support for business R&D’, the Basque Country’s score of 0.33 was higher than the EU average of 0.19. However, in the other two indicators, ‘R&D expenditure in the public sector (percentage of GDP)’ and ‘Venture capital expenditures (percentage of GDP)’, it was the EU that surpassed the Basque Country, with 0.73% compared to 0.48% and 0.17% compared to 0.12%, respectively.

In the **‘Firm investments’** dimension, the Basque Country scored 0.72 points compared to 0.59 in the EU, placing it ahead of the EU-27, behind only Germany, Belgium and Sweden. This dimension includes three indicators of both R&D and non-R&D investments that firms make to generate innovations. For two of these indicators, namely ‘R&D expenditure in the business sector as a percentage of GDP’ and ‘Innovation expenditures per employee in innovative enterprises’, the Basque Country surpassed the EU, with a score of 1.60% and €12,170 compared to 1.48% and €7,505. However, in ‘Non-R&D innovation expenditures as a percentage of turnover’, the European Union, with 0.78%, was ahead of the Basque Country, with 0.69%.

In the **‘Use of information technologies’** dimension, the Basque Country surpassed the EU-27, with a score of 0.66 compared to the latter’s 0.54. This dimension captures the use of information technologies through two indicators. In the first, ‘Enterprises providing ICT training’, the Basque Country ranked higher than the EU with 31.5% compared to 22.4%, while in the second, ‘Employed ICT specialists’, it was the EU with a rating of 4.8 that outperformed the Basque Country, which scored 4.5.

#### Dimensions of Innovation in the Basque Country and the EU-27. European innovation scoreboard EIS 2024



Source: Eustat. European innovation scoreboard -EIS- and European Commission

In the third and fourth blocks that comprise the EIS, namely **‘INNOVATION ACTIVITIES’** (which examines innovation efforts at the company level) and **‘IMPACTS’** (which considers the effects of firms’ innovation activities), the Basque Country obtained a score below the European average, i.e. 0.46 and 0.61 compared to 0.47 and 0.66, respectively. Even so, in these blocks it is worth noting that there were two dimensions in which the Basque Country outperformed the EU.

In **'Linkages'**, a dimension that measures the collaborative efforts between innovative enterprises and also with the public sector, the Basque Country achieved a better score (0.61) than the EU-27 average (0.37) thanks to two indicators, 'Innovative SMEs collaborating with others' and 'Public-private co-publications per million inhabitants', where the Basque Country achieved scores of 19.87 and 341.77 compared to 12.38 and 136.94 for the EU-27.

Lastly, in the **'Environmental sustainability'** dimension, which assesses improvements to reduce the negative impact on the environment, the Basque Country also surpassed the EU-27 with a score of 0.81 compared to the latter's 0.64. This score placed the Basque Country joint first in the EU-27 ranking. This high placing of the Basque Country compared to the EU-27 is thanks to the 'Resource productivity' indicator, with a score of 3.13 compared to 2.27, and 'Air emissions by fine particulates PM2.5 in industry' (the only indicator where a lower score is better), where the Basque Country scored 0.059 compared to the EU average of 0.062.

The four remaining dimensions were **'Innovators'**, which measures the proportion of SMEs that have introduced innovations into the market or within their organisations; **'Intellectual assets'**, which captures the different forms of intellectual property rights generated as returns on innovation processes; **'Employment impacts'**, which records the economic success of innovation on employment; and **'Sales impacts'**, which evaluates the economic success in sales as a result of innovation activities. For all of these indicators, the European Union's scores surpassed those of the Basque Country.

[European Innovation Scoreboard \(EIS\) 2024](#)

[European Innovation Scoreboard \(EIS\) 2024.Basque Country](#)

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**For further information:**

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