



University of Warsaw – Research

The University of Warsaw is not only the largest university in Poland, but also the country's leading research centre. In addition to its 25 faculties and four doctoral schools, the University operates approximately 30 academic and teaching centres. Over 4,000 researchers are employed at the University, and more than 1,700 doctoral candidates pursue their education there. Since 2016, the University of Warsaw has held the "HR Excellence in Research" award granted by the European Commission, confirming compliance with the principles of the European Charter for Researchers. On 22nd November 2022, the University retained the right to use this distinction. This obliges the institution to continuously improve its human resources policy in line with the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers. In November 2025, in order to renew the right to use the "HR Excellence in Research" award, the University submitted to the European Commission its *Periodic Assessment* together with a report on the implementation of the *Action Plan for 2022–2027* and the *Open, Transparent and Merit-based Recruitment (OTM-R) Questionnaire*, comparing university practices with the Charter's recommendations.

According to international rankings such as Times Higher Education, QS World University Rankings and the Academic Ranking of World Universities, the University of Warsaw ranks among the top 3% of universities worldwide. In the Shanghai Global Ranking of Academic Subjects 2025, nine disciplines taught at the University of Warsaw were included, with physics ranked highest in the 151–200 band.

Funding for research activities comes from subsidies from the ministry responsible for science and higher education, as well as from grants obtained in national and European competitions. In 2024, University staff carried out 1,280 research projects and topics financed from domestic sources, including:

- 261 projects funded by the Ministry of Science and Higher Education;
- 957 projects funded by the National Science Centre;
- eight projects funded by the National Centre for Research and Development;
- 48 projects funded by other domestic sources, including commissions from PKN Orlen, Accenture Sp. z o.o., the Chancellery of the Prime Minister, the Oil and Gas Institute – National Research Institute, the General Directorate of State Forests and Energopomiar Sp. z o.o.;
- two projects funded by the Łukasiewicz Research Network PORT – Virtual Research Institute;
- two projects funded by the Medical Research Agency;

- two projects funded by the Foundation for Polish Science.

In terms of international research projects, in 2024 University of Warsaw researchers participated in:

- 43 projects funded under the EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation “Horizon 2020”;
- 88 projects funded under “Horizon Europe”;
- one project under the Single Market Programme, Enterprise Europe Network;
- five projects co-financed under “Horizon 2020” and “Horizon Europe”;
- 29 other international projects implemented under various international programmes or funded by foreign research institutions, including DeepMind Technologies Limited, the European Molecular Biology Organization (EMBO), the Visegrad Fund, the Polish-German Foundation for Science, the Volkswagen Foundation, the Getty Foundation, and EU programmes announced by the European Commission’s Directorates-General;
- 90 international projects funded or co-funded by the National Science Centre;
- 11 international projects funded or co-funded by the National Centre for Research and Development;
- 11 projects funded by the ministry responsible for science and higher education to support the participation of Polish research teams in international research infrastructure projects.

The most prestigious European research competitions are organised by the European Research Council (ERC). By the end of 2025, ERC grants had been awarded 40 times to researchers from the University of Warsaw and once to an international researcher implementing their grant at the University. ERC grant holders conduct research in diverse fields, including computer science, astronomy and archaeology—disciplines in which University teams have already established a strong international position. Among them is Prof. Piotr Sankowski from the Faculty of Mathematics, Informatics and Mechanics, who has received an ERC grant three times, a remarkable achievement on a European scale.

In 2019, the University of Warsaw took first place in the Ministry of Science and Higher Education’s “Excellence Initiative – Research University” (IDUB) competition, obtaining research university status for the years 2020–2026. The University receives additional funding under the IDUB programme, which supports initiatives within five priority research areas and 70 actions, including programmes fostering the development of academic staff, doctoral candidates and students.

In 2026, activities under the “Excellence Initiative – Research University” programme will focus on ensuring the sustainability of the results achieved so far. The most important outcomes are particularly

visible in increasing the University's global research impact, developing relationships with renowned international institutions, supporting early-career researchers, including doctoral candidates, providing training, and developing career pathways. The effects of IDUB are also evident in the University's administration, which played a key role in coordinating horizontal activities between 2020 and 2025.

To ensure continuity of research activities under the IDUB programme, the Institute of Advanced Studies was established. Its mission is to enhance the global impact of the University's research by supporting innovative, high-potential projects, initiating and coordinating interdisciplinary research, and building long-term partnerships with leading research centres worldwide.

The University's strategic objective is to strengthen its position among Europe's leading research universities and enhance its international visibility. This requires continuous development of cooperation with the world's best institutions. The University collaborates with over 1,000 domestic and international partners, is a member of numerous Polish and international research networks, and participates in many consortia established to carry out specific research projects.

The University of Warsaw is a member of the 4EU+ Alliance of European Research Universities, which was awarded European University status in June 2019 under the European Commission's "European Universities" initiative financed by the Erasmus+ programme. The 4EU+ Alliance is one of the University's strategic initiatives and brings together eight European research universities: the University of Warsaw, Sorbonne University, Heidelberg University, Charles University in Prague, the University of Copenhagen, the University of Milan, the University of Geneva and Paris Panthéon-Assas University. Cooperation covers joint world-class research, joint degree programmes and educational offers, doctoral training, and initiatives related to innovation, technology transfer and social responsibility. Work is also underway to integrate digital systems and solutions in order to create a single international campus. The Alliance's mission emphasises universities' responsibility to address global challenges such as social inequalities, climate change and the spread of fake news.

In July 2022, the 4EU+ Alliance project received funding in another edition of the European Commission's "European Universities" call under the Erasmus+ programme. The project, One Comprehensive Research-Intensive European University (1CORE), aims to further deepen cooperation among Alliance members, increase virtual and physical mobility of students and staff, promote innovative education, and develop a shared digital infrastructure.

The University of Warsaw also participates in three Knowledge and Innovation Communities of the European Institute of Innovation and Technology – an EU body supporting innovation and

entrepreneurship in Europe – under the “Horizon 2020” and “Horizon Europe” programmes: EIT Food, EIT Climate-KIC and EIT Health, as well as in the EIT HEI Initiative (Innovation Capacity Building for Higher Education).

The University of Warsaw is also a member of the Central European Universities group (CE7), together with universities from Belgrade, Budapest (Eötvös Loránd University), Ljubljana, Prague, Tartu and Zagreb. CE7 cooperates with universities of the League of European Research Universities (LERU), working to create optimal conditions for the development of European science, influenced in part by the shape of EU framework programmes supporting education, research and innovation.

Over the past decade, thanks to EU funding, researchers in the exact and natural sciences have gained access to excellently equipped laboratories enabling research at the highest global level. In 2016, the University launched a long-term development programme (2016–2027) aimed at strengthening the humanities and social sciences, enhancing cooperation between faculties, facilitating engagement with the social and economic environment, and promoting international academic exchange.

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