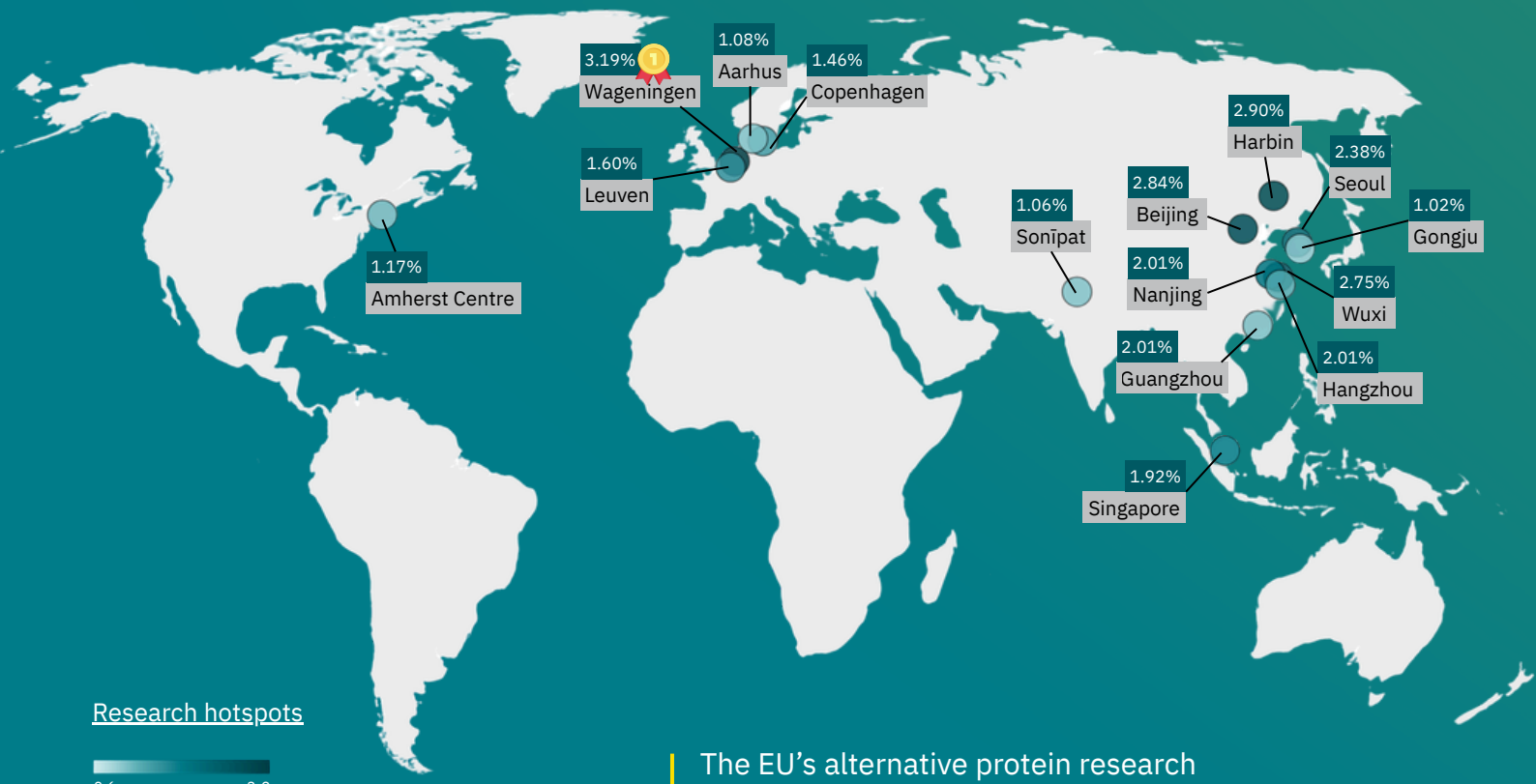
Plant-based Fermentation Cultivated

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The EU is a global leader in alternative protein R&I, but risks losing its early advantage



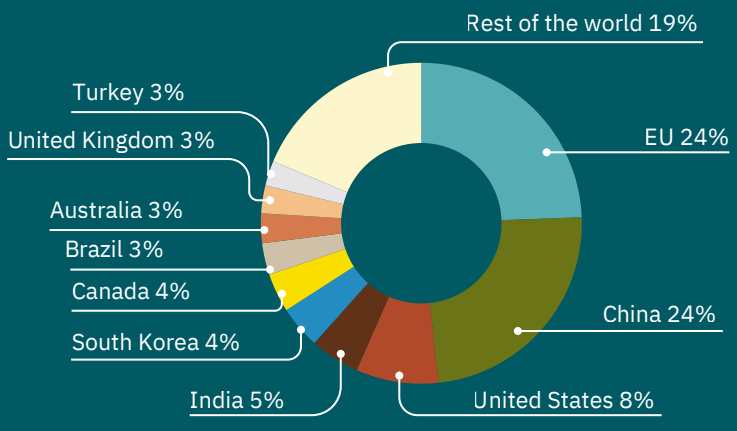
Research hotspots

0.6 3.2

Contribution to global output

The EU's alternative protein research community is comparable to China's in both size and productivity.

Contribution to total publication output, 2023-2025



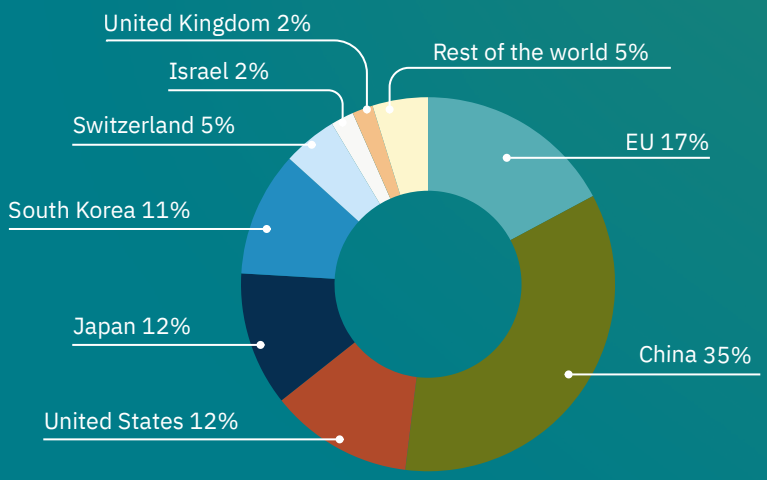
25%

of the world's alternative protein researchers were based in the European Union between 2023 and 2025, tied with China (25%) and ahead of the United States (7%).

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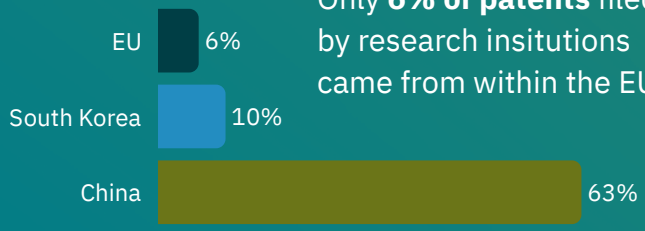
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Contribution to total patent family output, 2023-2025



The EU is globally competitive in patent output but lags in connecting academic research to innovation

The European Union trails behind China in patent families, but can still catch up by making better use of its scientific expertise, particularly by getting more patents from nonprofit organisations like universities and research institutes.



Only **6% of patents** filed by research insitutions came from within the EU.

The EU funds less technological research, with more resources going to societal impact studies

Research from the EU covers every stage of making alternative proteins with a strong emphasis on societal research and impact assessment (▲), while Chinese research focuses more on technical categories (■) that more often leads to patents.

Note: The EU's research publication output is set to 1 on each axis.



The EU should align its investment in protein diversification research with its industrial strategy, focusing on developing its technological strengths and stronger public-private collaboration.

Read the full report

