

EU Space Strategy

Safeguard competitiveness, safeguard jobs

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Introduction

The European space sector is a high-tech, high-value sector which produces thousands of high-quality jobs across Europe. The sector plays a key role in a variety of areas including search and rescue, climate change, agriculture, responding to natural disasters and connecting mobile phones. Europe should be proud of being a world leader in the sector, however fierce global competition is threatening European industry and European jobs.

EU Space Strategy (2018)

IndustriAll Europe welcomes the European Commission's Space Strategy (2018), which increases the budget for the sector and merges all the space programmes into one (Galileo, EGNOS, Copernicus, SSA and GOVSATCOM). More cohesion and more investment will no doubt benefit the sector.

The European Commission's aims to invest more in space, civil and military activities, adapt to new needs and technologies and to reinforce Europe's autonomous access to space, will hopefully go some way towards making the sector more competitive on a global scale. However, various challenges remain which must be tackled urgently if the European space sector, and the thousands of jobs linked to it, are to survive.

Challenges

The European space sector faces various challenges which must be tackled immediately if Europe is to remain a world leader in the sector. We must establish a level playing field to combat fierce competition from countries such as China, Russia and the USA, who receive huge amounts of support from the State and benefit from a strongly protected domestic market. Europe will also face competition from countries such as Brazil, India and Japan who are rapidly increasing their space activities.

Europe must secure its independent access to space, and its space infrastructures. The challenge of tackling increased traffic and debris in space will grow and Europe should lead in providing global technology to tackle this issue.

European policy makers must be more ambitious when it comes to the space sector and need to develop, and put into practice, a long-term roadmap for the future of the industry. We must ensure the uptake of European space data and European services, which could be further supported by private investments in the sector. We need a long-term vision, with both financial and political support, to ensure that the sector is profitable, encourages investment, further develops world leading technology in a variety of sectors and creates more high-quality jobs in Europe.

Changes in the world of work, such as digitalisation, will impact workers and social partners must work together to anticipate skills gaps and training needs to ensure that upskilling and retraining take place in time. The consolidation of work and projects should not lead to job losses, on the contrary, the space sector and its innovative technology should be used to find European solutions to global problems and should create high-quality jobs in this fast-developing sector.

Our demands

IndustriAll Europe calls for:

Industrial policy:

- A clear and strong commitment from EU policy makers in relation to **investment in the EU space sector**, including committing to using European launchers for European needs particularly for institutional launching, to ensure that it remains a world leader;
- EU policy makers to shape an **ambitious policy for the space sector**, guaranteeing European independence on many topics (e.g. environmental, technological, strategical and employment);
- Policy makers to consider the notion of **geographical return** as a factor of European cohesion, not as a restraint on profitability;
- EU policy makers to identify mechanisms to **level the global playing-field** in the space sector, which faces fierce competition from third countries who receive huge amounts of state aid, and to consider protecting the European industry by exclusively awarding Member States contracts for national satellite launchers;
- EU policy makers to **simplify and streamline the existing EU legal framework** on space policy and to work intelligently and effectively with ESA;
- EU policy makers to ensure that **small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)**, including suppliers, have the same market opportunities as large corporations;
- EU policy makers to significantly **reduce the administrative burden** for interested parties and beneficiaries receiving European support, which disadvantages SMEs who have less resources than large corporations;
- **Social partners** to be involved in the further development of a **European industrial policy** for the space sector;
- EU policy makers to have the right to **scrutinise the industrial strategy** for the sector, which is strategic for Europe.

Social issues:

- Employers to consider the space sector as a **strong potential source of job growth**, and therefore social cohesion;
- Employers to **respect European social legislation in their own countries**, including information and consultation rights, while noting that ArianeGroup is still to set up a European Works Council (at time of print);
- Employers to commit to respecting and upholding the **highest levels of social standards** for their workforce that goes beyond minimum requirements;
- Employers to uphold the principle that **savings from cut backs and restructuring should not be seen as profits for the company and its shareholders**, but should be reinvested in the company with the aim of securing jobs and improving working conditions;
- Social partners to jointly identify the opportunities and challenges in light of **digitalisation and automation** in the sector, to ensure that workers are informed and consulted on any changes;
- Social partners to work together to **identify skills gaps, deliver up-skilling, enable the transfer of knowledge** between employees and to encourage young people with the desired skills into the sector;
- A commitment from employers that the **consolidation of projects will not lead to job losses**, this includes **ending the current restructuring within the ArianeGroup and the potential 2300 job losses** (a quarter of its European workforce), which is of greatest urgency to the European space sector;
- To ensure that within the aforementioned consolidation process, the **SMEs in the supply chain of ArianeGroup are not disproportionately affected**, and due to their vulnerability in comparison to large corporations, for protective measures to be taken if needed.

Research and development:

- The competitiveness of the EU space sector to be strengthened via a **strong commitment for R&D** in the EU budget (MFF) and in Horizon Europe;
- A **joint technology initiative (JTI) and effective working structures**, similar to Clean Sky or SESAR in aeronautics, to be created for the space sector, to boost innovation by allowing industry to take more risks in R&D;
- The **advancement of manned spaceflight as well as autonomous "transporters"** in space and the **adaptation of existing space concepts** (e.g. stronger co-operation with the automotive industry);
- Member States to increase their cooperation in relation to the **European Defence Fund** to encourage development in R&D, via synergies in civil and defence programmes.

Logistical issues and solutions/opportunities:

- Manufacturers to develop a range of **complementary EU launchers** which are not country specific;
- EU policy makers to ensure that the EU has **independent access to space** and to further develop the European space strategy to grow and advance European resources;
- EU policy makers and manufacturers to work together to tackle the issue of **traffic and debris** in the space sector;
- EU policy makers and industry to **promote the use of space-based technology** (including **space data and services**) in other sectors;
- To **increase the utilisation of the International Space Station** as a research platform and to further **develop European logistics**, including transport to and from space;
- Manufacturers to **develop and provide re-usability**, if required by market needs.

Brexit:

- An **ambitious agreement** must be established immediately between the EU-27 and the UK government in light of Brexit, which benefits the European space industry on both sides of the channel. A bad Brexit deal would be detrimental to **all workers** through the supply chain.