

Key principles for the global space economy: EU Council adopts conclusions



The Council today adopted a set of conclusions entitled “Orientations on the European contribution in establishing key principles for the global space economy” in preparation of the tenth Space Council meeting, to be held by video conference on 20 November 2020. The text provides important orientations for future European space policy.

In these conclusions, the Council notes with satisfaction the emergence of a highly competitive European space industry and supply chains, which enables Europe to participate in (and contribute to) the global growth of the space economy. It calls upon all actors to work towards ensuring a global level-playing field and open economies, including free and fair trade, on the basis of multilateral solutions and reciprocity in the space sector.

With a view to fostering European space autonomy, security and resilience, the Council stresses the need for European technological non-dependence and recalls the importance of maintaining a secure, autonomous, reliable, cost-effective and affordable access to space. Particular attention is devoted to space traffic management, where the need for a coordinated European approach is highlighted, as well as to space cybersecurity.

In order to achieve these objectives, the Council stresses the importance of coordinated actions by the European Union, the European Space Agency and their respective member states, based on the parallel competences and respective tasks and responsibilities and fully respecting the institutional settings and operational frameworks, to strengthen the European Space Policy.

Background

The Space Council is a joint and concomitant meeting of the EU Council (Competitiveness – Space configuration) and of the ESA Council at Ministerial level. It is a forum enabling the EU and the European Space Agency (ESA) to coordinate cooperative activities on European space policy. ESA is composed of 22 member states: Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Spain, Sweden, the United Kingdom (which are also EU Member States) + Norway and Switzerland. Canada also sits in the Council and takes part in some projects under a Cooperation Agreement. Slovenia is an Associate Member. Seven other EU member states have Cooperation Agreements with ESA: Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta and Slovakia.