

SPACE MATTERS : THE SIGNIFICANCE OF EU SPACE ACTIVITIES FOR REGIONS AND THEIR CITIZENS

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SPACE INVESTMENTS MEAN SECURING OUR FUTURE

We are entering a **new era**.

Megatrends such as digitalisation, mobility, artificial intelligence, climate change and mega-cities are changing our economies and societies, which are facing a unique geopolitical situation linked with emerging threats in terms of safety and security. Thus, space applications are becoming more and more indispensable. Taking stock of these developments, NEREUS advocates for **an enhanced space budget, allowing more flexibility and strength** to respond to new technological evolutions and unexpected situations.

Investing in space infrastructures is Europe's ticket to the future:

- The high performance of Europe's satellites fleet ensures access to a wealth of space-based information and services, guaranteeing **Europe's independence and competitiveness** in the race with other global space actors.
- Space solutions **cross-fertilise the development and innovation capabilities of many industry sectors** ranging from agriculture, transport, health to manufacturing and thus play a key role for Europe's economies, high-skilled employment and competitiveness.
- The use of space is a significant **driver to modernise and reform the public sector**. Satellite imagery and services help public administrations make **better-informed decisions**, deploy resources **more cost-effectively and sustainably** and deliver higher quality public policies.
- Regions are increasingly a political, economic and societal reference for citizens. Space applications have a significant impact and value on territorial management and regional development. They are already **a pillar in the Smart Specialisation Strategies (S3-strategies)** of many regions.

Investing in Space is a common European investment in important information and knowledge, brains and skills as well as tools to make Europe fit for the challenges of the future.

In the current MFF-2014-2019, the Union invests 12 billion EUR in Space. With expanding commercial opportunities and increasing challenges the next MFF post-2020 should dedicate ambitious resources to the Space sector that **at least doubles the efforts** of the past decade. **Every Euro invested in space has a potential multiplying factor in Europe's economy, high-skilled employment and society.**

KEEPING EUROPE'S FLAGSHIPS AT THE FOREFRONT

The European Earth Observation System Copernicus and the European Global Navigation Satellite System (GNSS) Galileo/EGNOS, are bringing significant benefits for European citizens: they are a success story of European integration and testify cooperation and shared will among the Member States (MS). **No individual European country could have achieved this ambitious initiative on its own.** Both systems impact every day's life of Europe's citizens and play a significant role for territorial and regional concerns.

By a step by step implementation of its space policies, the Union invested considerably in these two flagship programmes. Meanwhile, both systems have grown **increasingly operational**, enabling Europeans to take first steps to start exploiting and commercialising space data and products. In fact, **more user-communities ranging from public authorities to businesses and citizens, have emerged as well as cultures of awareness and exploitation are evolving.** NEREUS asks for **continuity of the programmes, structures and efforts** in this domain. Furthermore, a **clear governance** as well as **securing the operational reliability** is needed to assure that Europe is optimally exploiting its space infrastructures.

Europe's space flagships should continue to be a top priority of European space policy. Efforts should be focused on consolidating, improving and expanding these systems, while content, necessity and budget of additional new programs should be accessed carefully. In the current MFF, 88,5% of the total space budget is allocated to Copernicus and Galileo/EGNOS. **NEREUS calls for continuing to set the budgetary focus of European space policy on its two flagship programmes as well as its applications and at least keep the budget at the same level.**

DATA: THE NEW GOLD, IF TRANSFORMED INTO USEFUL INFORMATION

The European Space Strategy puts the user at its core and recognises European space programs as user-driven. Thus, **user uptake and market development of Europe's flagships** should be an essential feature of the European space policy of the next decade. Although "data is the new gold", the reality is, however, that **translating data into useful information to be used by citizens, companies and administrations, is still a notable challenge.** Much needs to be done to facilitate data access, management and processing to overcome political barriers, governance difficulties, technical issues as well as a lack of skills and awareness.

NEREUS as a European network focuses on facilitating the uptake and deployment of space uses by public and commercial users and recognises the broad variety of initiatives, programs and toolboxes developed by the European Commission (DG Growth) and the European Space Agency to promote a more widespread uptake. However, to reach a critical mass and move from model cases to a systematic up-take and deployment in the public sector and broader commercial exploitation, these efforts need to be continued at a high-scale and broadly promoted across Europe.

Referring to the prominent role of the user within the joint European Space Strategy a future European space policy has to emphasise user uptake and market development while being financially equipped accordingly. **NEREUS calls for dedicating 5% of the total space budget for user uptake and market development, with a particular emphasis on the regional/local dimension of both the offer and demand side.**