SPACE POLICY EXPERT GROUP:
ACTIVITY REPORT 2016

The Space Policy Expert Group has been active since July 2010. Its main purpose is to provide expert advice to the European Commission/DG GROW in the early phase of developing its policy initiatives in the area of EU space policy.

During the period from January to December 2016, the group held two meetings, linked primarily to the preparation of the Commission's Communication on a "Space Strategy for Europe" included in CWP2016.

1. MEETING ON 3rd MARCH 2016

The Commission presented its work programme for 2016, including the roadmap, consultation process and approach for preparing the space strategy. It explained the different steps in the consultation process, emphasising that it should lead to discussions among stakeholders with the aim of collecting new ideas and proposals. COM informed that the consultation procedure would include dedicated meetings with the European Space Agency (ESA) and that a wide range of aspects would be looked at, including upstream elements, space and security, access to space and international cooperation, among others. ESA, who participated in the meeting as observer, confirmed its intention to work with the Commission and the EU towards a shared strategy, and its readiness to participate in COM's consultation process.

COM presented initial ideas on actions to promote European industry competitiveness in the face of challenges in a new space context. Delegations stressed the importance of striking the right balance between public and private investments in the space sector. It was emphasised that commercial investment should be encouraged, for instance through new business models aiming at decreasing dependency on public resources, but at the same time, the specificities of the space sector must be taken into account and public support in strategic investments should continue to be encouraged.

COM invited delegations to submit written comments and share relevant national studies and other elements that could contribute to this discussion. COM further encouraged delegations to present their respective national space strategies and the UK, DE and IT presented theirs. Following this COM presented the results of an internal study on space law.
2. **MEETING ON 11\textsuperscript{TH} MAY 2016**

In this meeting the COM reported on the consultation process for the Space strategy, updating delegations on the ongoing public consultations, the online survey launched on 19 April, discussions with stakeholders and ESA, and the calendar of relevant meetings. COM reassured delegations that the definition of the strategy would follow a holistic approach involving all relevant space actors, aligned with observed paradigm changes and having in consideration that space has become part of a global value-chain.

The agenda of the meeting included a discussion on three topics linked to the preparation of the strategy, namely space research, access to space and international cooperation.

On space research, the discussion emphasised the need for space to remain an integral part of the EU framework programme and promote synergies and multidisciplinary approach; the fact that activities have to be implemented in conjunction with ESA and Member States; to reinforce partnerships with industry and relevant organisations; to stimulate interactions among different types of stakeholders; to improve the feedback loops between policy and research; to promote space innovation (by promoting skills, entrepreneurship and SMEs; innovation procurement; access to finance; spin-in/off opportunities) and to reinforce international cooperation.

On access to space, the discussion touched on the international context, the role of the key actors in Europe (incl. ESA, the European launcher industry and key institutional customers), the strategic aspect of the domain, the European institutional launcher market, future developments of the European launcher family, major decision milestones expected on the ESA side and the necessity to use European developed launchers.

On international cooperation, COM underlined the importance, given the changes in the space sector and global space markets. It outlined current international cooperation activities in the framework of Copernicus, EGNSS and Horizon 2020, as well as bilateral and multilateral strategic space policy dialogues. It was pointed out that since European markets alone are not sufficient to sustain European space industry there is a need to increase the opportunities for the European space industry in export markets while also attracting foreign investment in Europe. Among the proposed solutions COM outlined development of economic space diplomacy; promoting market uptake of applications and services derived from EU space programmes in third countries and develop a targeted approach for establishing strategic partnerships.

The exchange on national space strategies continued with a presentation by FR.

Representatives of the European Space Agency (ESA), NO and CH participated in this meeting as observers.

For further details:

Secretariat
Space Policy and Research Unit (GROW.I1)
Directorate-General for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs
European Commission
Email address: GROW-SPACEPOLICY-EXPERT-GROUP@ec.europa.eu