



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
IMPACT ASSESSMENT BOARD

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Opinion

Title **DG ENTR - Impact Assessment on: Commission Communication on the future involvement of the EU in space (draft version of 18 June 2010)**

(A) Context

The strategic mission of the European space policy was defined in the 2007 Communication prepared by the Commission and the European Space Agency. The resolutions adopted at subsequent "Space Council" meetings identified four priority areas for the development of space policy: climate change, global market opportunities, security and space exploration; and emphasised the contribution of space to innovation, competitiveness and economic recovery. The European Parliament endorsed the space policy in its 2008 conclusions and asked for concrete proposals in the four priority areas. This impact assessment accompanies a communication on the future involvement of the EU in space. It sets out different levels of ambition regarding the thematic and financial scope for an EU Space Programme from 2014-2020, and aims to be the basis for a discussion that may lead to a proposal for a Regulation establishing an EU space programme. Any such proposal would have a separate detailed impact assessment analysing all the options being put forward and their financial impact.

(B) Overall assessment

Given that the report will accompany a Communication which will be a basis for discussion on these issues, the level of analysis is in general appropriate. It should nevertheless provide a more complete picture of the current situation as regards space situational awareness and space exploration, strengthen the baseline scenario and demonstrate the value added of EU-level action in these areas. It should discuss the feasibility of the options with regard to available funding, including the potential impact on other existing programmes. The report should explore the feasibility of strengthening the mandate of the European Space Agency to allow it to address some of the issues discussed. The report should also clarify whether the policy options depend on Galileo and GMES. Finally, it should analyse in greater detail the impacts on the competitiveness of EU industry, illustrate clearly the possible spin-off effects and give more attention to possible cooperation with other countries active in space policy.

(C) Main recommendations for improvements

(1) Strengthen the baseline scenario and demonstrate the value added of EU action.

The report should provide a more complete picture of the current situation as regards space situational awareness and space exploration, and should elaborate on the magnitude of the problems and how urgent they are. It should in particular be clearer about the role of the European Space Agency (ESA) in these areas, explain why its role is considered to be insufficient, and clarify how the proposed EU-level action would differ from ESA activities. The report should explain the current involvement of Member States in space policy and be more specific about the explanations for differences in national approaches. Given that Member States have different interests and priorities in space policy, the report should demonstrate clearly the value added of EU-level action in this area. As part of this, the report should present the information on the practical relevance of space-based applications and services for all Member States in the problem definition section.

(2) Discuss the feasibility of the options with regard to available funding. The potential impact of the funding that would be needed to finance this proposal on other programmes such as Galileo and GMES should be assessed. The report should also explain whether there are lessons to be learned from Galileo, and address the potential risk of cost increases (e.g. through delays) for the various options and clarify whether some measures could be foreseen to avoid such risks. It should explain if there are any concrete indications about how willing Member States are to finance the European space programme.

(3) Explain whether strengthening of ESA is a feasible option. Explain potential links between policy options and Galileo and GMES. The report should explore whether the mandate of European Space Agency could be reinforced to address some of the problems identified. In addition, it should clarify whether the policy options depend or build on the successful operations of Galileo and GMES.

(4) Expand the assessment of options with regard to the competitiveness of EU industry, international aspects and spin-off effects. Given the apparent success of the European space industry to date (e.g. Ariane) the report should substantiate more fully the statements that the absence of EU action on space policy would have an impact on the competitiveness of the industry. As the enhancement of EU profile in space at world level is one of the general objectives of the proposal, the report should give more attention to possible cooperation and synergies with other countries active in space policy. It should indicate the current trends in investment in space activities in these countries. Finally, the potential spin-off effects of space exploration should be illustrated more clearly in the main document. In this respect, the impact on increased interest in science and research at all levels of education and training should also be discussed.

Some more technical comments have been transmitted directly to the author DG and are expected to be incorporated in the final version of the impact assessment report.

(D) Procedure and presentation

The report should clarify on which elements of the options the stakeholders were consulted, and explain the positions of the Member States on space situational awareness and space exploration.

(E) IAB scrutiny process	
Reference number	ENTR/2010/012 (CWP 2010 Annex II)
External expertise used	No
Date of Board Meeting	14 July 2010