



**COUNCIL OF  
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

**Brussels, 18 May 2009**

**9888/09**

**RECH 151  
COMPET 276  
IND 60  
TRANS 198  
POLARM 9  
ECOFIN 368  
TELECOM 109  
ENER 184**

**NOTE**

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from : General Secretariat of the Council  
to: Permanent Representative Committee (Part I)

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No. prev. doc. : 9887/09 RECH 150 COMPET 275 IND 59 TRANS 197 POLARM 8  
ECOFIN 367 TELECOM 108 ENER 183

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Subject : European Space Policy  
– Preparation of the Sixth Space Council meeting

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**I. INTRODUCTION**

On 29 May 2009 the 6th Space Council meeting will be held during the morning, in the margins of the Competitiveness Council.

This joint and concomitant meeting of the Council of the European Union and of the ESA Council at ministerial level is based on Article 8 of the Framework Agreement between the European Community (EC) and the European Space Agency (ESA). This agreement offers a common basis for the coherent and progressive development of an overall European Space Policy.

The draft agenda is set out in [Annex I](#).

## II. STRUCTURE OF THE "SPACE COUNCIL"

After the adoption of the agenda (agenda item 1), the "Space Council" will focus on a Ministerial discussion under the title "Space and Innovation" (agenda item 2).

Because of the severe existing time constraints (the "Space Council" has to be completed by 11h00), both the Commission and ESA have agreed to deliver their presentations concerning GMES foreseen under agenda item 3 as part of their intervention introducing the Ministerial discussion under agenda item 2.

Ministers will be invited to limit themselves to a single intervention of no more than 3 minutes duration. This is scheduled to take place under point 2, addressing any item under points 2, 3 and 4.

The Ministerial discussion will be conducted on the basis of a discussion note which has been discussed by the High Level Space Policy Group on 6 May 2009 (see Annex II).

The Presidency has also prepared two background papers which have been submitted to the High Level Space Policy Group on 6 May 2009<sup>1</sup>. These are reproduced in docs. 9851/09 and 9886/09.

Of course, Ministers are free to also address other space-policy related issues according to their priorities.

Concerning agenda item 3, the Commission proposal for a European Parliament and Council Regulation on the funding of GMES initial operations will be submitted in good time for the "Space Council" as a separate document. ESA has submitted an information document concerning the GMES space component-operational programme to the High Level Space Policy Group on 6 May 2009<sup>2</sup>, which is going to be submitted to the ESA Council on 19 May 2009.

Because of the existing time constraints, agenda item 3 will in practice been taken together with agenda item 2, but the two have been set out separately in the agenda for reasons of transparency.

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<sup>1</sup> Joint Secretariat documents HSPG/12-2009 and HSPG/13-2009.

<sup>2</sup> Joint Secretariat document HSPG/5-2009.

The Ministerial discussion will be followed by agenda item 4, the adoption of orientations (doc. 9849/1/09). After their endorsement by the "Space Council", these will be formally adopted by the "Competitiveness Council" in the form of a Resolution.

The draft orientations were submitted to the delegations by the Czech Presidency and by the Italian ESA Presidency and distributed by the Joint Secretariat<sup>3</sup>. They were debated and amended by the High Level Space Policy Group at its meeting on 6 May 2009, and by an "open Quadriga" meeting in Paris on 12 May 2009 inviting the Quadriga and any EU or ESA delegation interested in participating in it.

It should be recalled that the Council of the EU and the ESA Ministerial Council will be invited to adopt these orientations in accordance with their own rules and procedures. In accordance with established practice, it is suggested for the EU to adopt them in the form of a Resolution.

Delegations should take note that the draft orientations have been finalised by the joint Preparatory Bodies as set up by the EC-ESA Framework Agreement and any changes to them require the consent of both EC and ESA.

On 18 May 2009 the Research Working Party validated the preparation for the "Space Council" with a view to its endorsement by the Permanent Representatives Committee. The resulting agreed text is set out in doc. 9849/1/09.

While delegations raised several issues on the Research Working Party meeting on 18 May 2009, the Presidency has decided not to reflect them in the document for COREPER as the text discussed by this body should be an agreed text between EC and ESA. As the ESA Council is taking place only on 19 May 2009, the Presidency will inform delegations orally about the resulting amendments, if any.

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<sup>3</sup> Joint Secretariat document HSPG/7-2009.

### III. CONCLUSION

The Permanent Representatives Committee is thus invited to give its endorsement and to recommend that, at its meeting on 28 and 29 May 2009, the Competitiveness Council should:

on 28 May:

- approve the draft agenda for the Space Council (Annex I) to be held in the margins of the Competitiveness Council in the morning of 29 May 2009,
  
- approve the draft Community position for the Space Council on 29 May 2009,

on 29 May:

- adopt the Resolution on "The Contribution of space to innovation and competitiveness in the context of the European Economic Recovery Plan, and further steps" (in form of "orientations" set out in doc. 9849/1/09) in the form approved by the Space Council.

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**DRAFT AGENDA  
SIXTH "SPACE COUNCIL"**

- 1. Adoption of the agenda**
- 2. Space and Innovation**
  - *discussion on the basis of a Discussion Note*
- 3. GMES :**
  - a) Commission proposal for a European Parliament and Council Regulation on the funding of GMES initial operations**
    - *presentation by the Commission*
  - b) GMES space component - operational programme**
    - *presentation by the Commission*
    - *presentation by ESA*
- 4. The Contribution of space to innovation and competitiveness in the context of the European Economic Recovery Plan, and further steps**
  - *adoption of orientations*
- 5. Any other business**

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**Immediately following the "Space Council":**

**Formal adoption by the Competitiveness Council**

**Formal adoption by the ESA Council at Ministerial level**

**SPACE COUNCIL MEETING 2009**

**DISCUSSION NOTE ON SPACE AND INNOVATION**

**The space sector offers major contributions and innovative solutions to a wide range of key European challenges and policies, such as environment, security, transport and energy.**

Innovation – not only innovation in technologies and products but also in services, business models and organisations, is a main enabling element of the European space industry’s competitiveness in the worldwide context, and a key to the European overall competitiveness. Major technological and scientific breakthroughs achieved in the space industry boost the competitiveness of the European economy as a whole, nurture the creation of a highly-skilled workforce, and generate highly innovative small and medium size businesses, particularly in the space services sector.

**Time to act: Integrating space in the European plan for innovation**

In December 2008 the European Council<sup>4</sup> recognised space as an element of the European Plan for Innovation it called for, while clearly linking space to innovation and economic recovery. This link is quite apparent in two major areas: (i) **space technology** and (ii) the vast area of **space-based services**.

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<sup>4</sup> *Point 18 of the Presidency Conclusions of the European Council of 11-12 December 2008*

(i) **Space technology:** three areas have a high innovative potential:

- **Space science and exploration:** Ambitious targets set by the European space science and exploration endeavours could encourage European companies to innovate in order to meet the required mission objectives. Putting first significant robotic payloads and then also humans on the surface of the Moon and Mars will require major technology breakthroughs in miniaturization, autonomous intelligent systems, environment control, energy efficiency, health, etc. Solutions to the challenges faced by space missions will contribute to innovation by providing new ways of addressing societal needs in many sectors, such as energy and environment.
- **Critical technologies for strategic non-dependence:** Due to the strategic nature of space, it is essential to achieve the European development of critical technologies required for the autonomous deployment of activities and infrastructure in space. This process needs to be accelerated, resulting in an improved position for Europe as a strong and reliable partner in international space endeavours. Decisions to invest in such technologies should aim for a balanced combination of innovative technology leaps and product development to achieve a competitive advantage for European industry.
- **Space and Security:** the EU is developing its own identity in security and defence. Both sectors increasingly rely on space infrastructure and space applications for achieving the EU's political objectives. To this end, continuous innovation is needed to improve the capabilities for space observation, navigation and telecommunication. This and the need to protect the related assets will lead to technology developments driving innovation in areas that go beyond the traditional space domain.

The inherently high mission risks and the minimal opportunities for error correction or maintenance have necessarily created a risk assessment culture which often closes to outside innovation. **The space sector requirements stimulate knowledge, ideas and talent in other sectors or leading universities and research laboratories.** A better and more prominent presence of the space industry in trans-sectoral innovation clusters and networks would, on one hand, increase its own innovation potential and, on the other, establish synergies with other sectors, identifying common needs and common technologies to address these needs. This could prove a strong cross-fertiliser between the space and non-space sectors. As an additional benefit, it could spur the interest of more young people to engage in scientific and technical careers.

- (ii) **Space-based services:** The European flagship projects **Galileo and GMES**, which constitute the first priorities identified for the implementation of the European Space Programme, will create significant opportunities for the development of new, highly innovative downstream services and markets<sup>5</sup>. Their economic benefits will also depend largely on the **innovative integration of satellite navigation, communications and Earth observation** systems with terrestrial infrastructures. The development of downstream services includes a host of technological and non-technological innovation, for instance through the introduction of **new organisational methods**.

Actions to be undertaken, possibly in the context of a European plan for innovation, in support of the **development of downstream services linked to Galileo and GMES** should aim at improving the conditions for innovation in services at two levels by: (i) **supporting the creation of a sustainable market**, and (ii) **providing adequate framework conditions**.

The *European Space Policy* identifies space as a clear example of a lead market. **GMES and Galileo downstream services could be considered for inclusion into** the European Commission's Lead Market Initiative.

**Improving the governance of space activities should be encouraged** at the European, national and regional levels **in order to generate better coordination and pool resources**, achieve coherence within common long-term roadmaps, shared commitments and efficiency, and accelerate growth of the sector. Better coordinating actions between the European Commission, the European GNSS Supervisory Authority, the European Space Agency and all the other stakeholders are necessary in order to avoid fragmentation of efforts and accelerate innovation for downstream space applications.

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<sup>5</sup> As recognised by the *5th Space Council Resolution "Taking forward the European Space Policy" (26 September 2008)*

## Questions for discussion

- 1) *What can public policy do to evaluate, benchmark and steer the process, thus ensuring that Europe moves towards the forefront of innovation in space activities?*
- 2) *What instruments need to be used or developed to encourage the long-term involvement of all European Member States in the European Space Policy, and to create innovation platforms in order to optimize the practical benefits for the EU citizens?*
- 3) *Apart from satellite-based telecommunications, which other space applications lend themselves to at least partial commercialisation in the near future?*
- 4) *Is there scope to enhance innovation aspects of space investment in the future through:  
the introduction of targeted and limited prizes (as for example the commercially inspired X-Prize has achieved in human spaceflight);  
the dedication of a given proportion of R&D budgets to small, high-innovation but high-risk missions?*
- 5) *How can challenging long-term target-setting in space activities create incentives for innovation in the European space sector and thereby significantly boost innovation-based and sustainable economic growth?*

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