

“EU Space Programme: key contribution to sustainability and growth”

27 September from 16.00 to 19.00 at the Prague House (Avenue Palmerston 16, 1000 Brussels)

Panel Discussion 1: Greener Transport for Europe

Gard Ueland’s Speech, Space Y

Let me begin by talking about some of the emerging technologies around us:

- **Autonomous transport** represents the next leap in mobility. We have heard a lot about autonomous cars, drones. My company, Kongsberg Seatex, is developing ship control systems for Maritime Autonomous ships. CityAirbus is a project aimed at developing a future air taxi to avoid congestion. It is intended to start with a pilot and to eventually become self-piloted.
- **Robots** that are being used for law enforcement or to assist you at home.
- **Virtual reality** is being used in a variety of domains, such as education, architectural and urban design, digital marketing, engineering and robotics, entertainment, healthcare and clinical therapies, and so on and so forth.
- **Precision agriculture**, the application of different technologies and solutions to manage the variability of agricultural production to improve crop yield and reduce environmental impact.

You might wonder what all of these examples have in common. Well, what they have in common is that they use space-enabled technologies, technologies that make use of EO data, satellite navigation services and satellite-enabled communications for the benefits of all of us on Earth.

And by benefits, I mean more energy-efficient and safer transportation, environmental sustainability, food security, better response to disasters - be they natural or man-made. On a lighter foot, they are also changing the way we entertain. And last but not least, the industry that develops these services – the industry that Space Y - and before it GS - has represented for 20 years – offers an astonishing number of attractive jobs and carries with it fantastic prospects for EU economic growth and prosperity.

And the addition of EU space-based secure connectivity programme will boost even further the economic and societal growth of the EU.

To sum it up the EU industry developing the user equipment and value-added services, the so-called "downstream industry" is great for Europe since we are creating value.

The question is now: what can the EU do to achieve such promising benefits enabled by the downstream side of the EU Space Programme?

Some public funds have been made available to support the development of an innovative and competitive downstream industry in Europe. To name some of them, there are EU grant funding and investment via Horizon Europe and the Fundamental Elements programmes. We have also very much welcomed the CASSINI initiative to support start-ups and SMEs at different stages of their growth.

Space Y has also supported an initiative launched by the European Investment Bank and EUSPA last year to assess the investment needs and funding gaps for downstream satellite navigation companies. The GNSS Investment Report, that is the result of this initiative, has set a series of conclusions that are very enlightening.

Let me cite just a couple of these conclusions:

- Staying competitive requires significant investment. The total investment need over the next 10 years will amount between EUR34.1bn and EUR 42.7bn. And this is just the recommended budget for GNSS. It does not include the downstream sides of EO and SATCOM...
- Europe need higher-risk funding. EU companies need a robust pipeline of support interconnecting the different stages and grooming the companies to make the next steps.

There is still challenge for EU downstream if it is to compete with its counterparts in the US, China, and Japan but there are initiatives. And they need to be pursued.

If Europe is to grasp the opportunities associated with increased focus on digitalisation and green innovation, it needs **more funds, increased risk-taking and bigger ambitions.**

I would like to conclude by saying the following. To paraphrase a famous President, we are still standing today on “the edge of a new Frontier”. Of course, we have all heard or read about the initiatives to the Moon and then on to Mars. But just like in 1960, we should not forget that there is also a New Frontier of opportunities (and challenges) here on Earth and the European space downstream industry has a huge role to play in it.

Thank you.