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# The Role of National Parliaments in European Space Policy



Parlamentsgruppe Luft- und Raumfahrt  
Aviation and Space Group in the Bundestag  
Groupe Aviation et Espace au Bundestag



# The Treaty of Lisbon and the discussion about the future organisation of space in Europe

- Lisbon Treaty in force since 1<sup>st</sup> December 2009
- New: attribution of competence for the space sector to the EU:

To promote scientific and technical progress, industrial competitiveness and the implementation of its policies, the Union shall draw up a European space policy. To this end, it may promote joint initiatives, support research and technological development and coordinate the efforts needed for the exploration and exploitation of space. (Art. 189 (1) TFEU)



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## The Lisbon Treaty introduces a “parallel” competence for the EU in the space sector

- In the area[s] of [...] space, the Union shall have competence to carry out activities [...]; however, [...] that competence shall not result in Member States being prevented from exercising theirs. (Art. 4 (3) TFEU)
- This is not a “shared” competence as in Art. 4 (2) TFEU, applicable in many other areas.
- “Parallel” competence for the EU in the space sector is not limiting the competence of the member states.
- Member states retain their ability to act through national or intergovernmental programmes, e.g. within ESA.



## The EU has a leading role in Galileo and GMES

- Years before the Lisbon Treaty, political decision to promote European capabilities in satellite-based navigation and Earth observation with EU support
- Decision strategically right, since ESA alone is not able to build up operational systems of such a scale
- Germany explicitly stands by this decision and supports the EU in the joint implementation of Galileo and GMES.
- However, both are now in a difficult phase, characterised by delays and cost increases, partly due to inappropriate EU instruments for space, particularly in the areas of procurement / industrial policy and financial management.



## A critical situation for European space programmes – programmatically, financially and politically!

- Despite the parallel competence stipulated in the treaties,
  - despite the obvious flaws in EU space management and procurement procedures and the resulting drawbacks for the joint EU and ESA programmes (Galileo and GMES) and
  - despite the issues related to the decisive preparation phase of the next financial framework (2014 – 2020),
- ➔ the European Commission is initiating a debate on assuming general leadership for space issues in Europe and even merging ESA into the EU.



## The pending important decisions have to be taken with a close involvement of national parliaments

- The Lisbon Treaty calls for a stronger role of national parliaments (Art. 12 TEU, Protocol (No 1) on the role of national parliaments in the European Union)
- Opportunities for improvement to be examined:
  - ➔ Establishing (further) space (sub)committees in national parliaments)
  - ➔ Possibly putting forth space issues through the Conference of Community and European Affairs Committees of Parliaments of the European Union (COSAC), according to Art. 10, Prot. No 1



**With a renewed charter and seizing the opportunities of the Lisbon Treaty, the EISC will shape European space policy more strongly in the future.**



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