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COMPARISON OF THE SPACE GOVERNANCE IN TWO FEDERAL COUNTRIES: BELGIUM AND
GERMANY. HIGHLIGHTING THE RELEVANCE OF THE REGIONS FOR THE FUTURE OF
EUROPEAN SPACE ACTIVITIES.

Abstract

In Germany and Belgium, government competences in the field of science, technology and innovation (STI) in general, and space in particular, are divided between the federal and the regional level. Germany's and Belgium's current space funding is primarily based on a federal space strategy, programme and budget. By analysing the STI governance on the federal and regional level in the envisaged countries, it becomes clear that the regions have an increasing relevance for the future European space activities.

The main premise is that, in addition to the existing federal space activities, the regions could do more to invest in the space sector in support of their competences and policy objectives, and in synergy with the federal efforts. Regional governments can increase their socio-economic benefits from space by directly supporting the development and utilisation of downstream space applications and services. Also, space is a high-tech sector that reinforces the country's or region's industrial base; investing in the upstream space manufacturing industry is a clear choice for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth.

The structure of the paper is twofold. The first part entails a comparison of Germany and Belgium with regards to: STI and space competence, federal space governance including the competent Ministries (primarily the Federal Ministry of Economy and Technology in Germany and the Ministry for Publicly Owned Undertakings, Science Policy and Development Cooperation in Belgium) and the responsible government implementing bodies or agencies (DLR for Germany and BELSPO for Belgium), and governance at the regional level (Bünderlander for Germany and the Communities and Regions for Belgium). The second part focuses on demonstrating why it is in the common interest of the national and regional governments to increase cooperation in space activities. A deeper involvement of regional entities in the national space efforts could be highly beneficial as the synergies created by a closer partnership in space activities would serve a wide range of policy objectives, both at the national and regional level.