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The space economy: what are the socio-economic impacts? (3)

Author: Ms. Grazia Maria Fiore
EURISY, France

Dr. Stefaan De Mey
EURISY, France

SATELLITES FOR SOCIETY: REPORTING ON THE OPERATIONAL USES OF SATELLITE-BASED
SERVICES AMONG PUBLIC ADMINISTRATIONS IN EUROPE

Abstract

Many satellite-based applications have reached the downstream market and are available for public authorities and private users. In consideration of their documented and potential benefits, governments are consistently investing in the development of innovative and user-friendly satellite-based services. The European Union alone allocated around 6.3 billion euros to Galileo, the European satellite navigation system, and 4.3 billion euros to the European Earth observation system Copernicus for the period 2014-2020. Meanwhile, the European Space Agency is investing 309.2 million euros, i.e. 7

The economic return of the investments made in satellite infrastructure and services has been qualified and quantified in terms of revenues, employment and economic growth. However, few analyses exist on the operational uses of satellite-based services made by public administrations at local, regional and national levels, and on the benefits resulting from the use of these services.

Since 2014, Eurisy, a non-for-profit European association of space agencies, has worked on establishing a mechanism to periodically report on the uses of satellite-based services within the European public sector. The purpose of this initiative is to get an insight into the mechanisms and drivers leading public authorities to adopt satellite-based services, the challenges encountered and the benefits experienced.

To collect relevant information on how satellite-based services are being used within the public sector, Eurisy has launched an online survey targeting public managers themselves. As of 2015, the survey is being implemented on an annual basis, to monitor selected variables and parameters in time. This paper discusses the results obtained from the first rollout of the survey during the first semester of 2015.

The feedback provided by public managers on their experiences of use of satellite-based services will offer evidence-based information on the means and resources needed to adopt these solutions and on their potential benefits. This information will be useful to other public administrations and will support European decision-makers in better targeting future programmes to transfer the potential benefits of space to society.