

29th IAA SYMPOSIUM ON SPACE AND SOCIETY (E5)
Is Space R&D Truly Fostering A Better World For Our Future? (2)

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A SURVEY ON THE CAPACITIES OF THE ITALIAN SPACE SECTOR TO PRODUCE
TECHNOLOGY TRANSFERS INTO SPACE-RELATED AND SPACE-ENABLED BUSINESS

Abstract

This paper describes a study (2013-16 period) on economic and technological data from the Panel firms registered in ASI's (Italian Space Agency) web DBs, aimed at the sector's capacity to transfer space technology into business, in both the so called "space related" and "space enabled" areas. The Panel hereabove is estimated to cover 90

The mainstay definition applied to these activities is their being connected to space but not crucially, at a level where "they could also exist without". In this, differentiating from the so called general space "downstream" whereas the rule appears the opposite or . . . "they could not exist without". The definition firstly applies to a closer (to space) layer of activities (space related) where space technologies are ongoing but their integration is not absolutely necessary, as with communication and localization services in urban areas. It is the case for instance of Sat tv and Car sharing (that could also rely on different terrestrial technologies), or smartphones or insurance services assisted by satellite positioning. But there is also another, for us more interesting, layer of activities (space enabled) where space technologies are only the "trigger" of their terrestrial development, which ensues independently.

A list of cases of this latter "layer" is offered covering supermaterials (fashion brand accessories, car bodies, semiconductors, refrigerators), aeronautics hardware (radars, emergency floaters devices), medical scanning devices and applications, industrial monitoring services, telemetric systems for sport events. It appears hence that space has a wide innovative industrial potential due to its top quality and performance standards, or, in other terms, that the extreme space challenge, enhances competitiveness for terrestrial uses. It finally appears that the firms having these capacities are also better performing by space standards, in production and employment terms, and therefore provide leverage for public strategies.