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FLEDGLING POLISH SPACE INDUSTRY READY FOR LIFT -OFF

Abstract

The paper presents an overview of recent developments in Poland from a regulatory and institutional point of view, as well as on programme level. Though Poles played an active part in setting out the foundations of the international space law, largely through the pioneer of space law, Polish Professor Manfred Lachs, for many years the Polish space industry barely existed, consisting only of the activities of a few engineers brave enough to set up start-ups and cooperate with big international players. The situation changed in 2012, when Poland joined ESA as a full member. Joining ESA and opening up the space industry to small players can be perceived as a significant trigger for the boost of Polish space projects. The first results came quickly. The number of Polish companies active in the sector is growing rapidly, already reaching 300 firms, forming a consistent, consolidated group of large, medium and small enterprises. Over the last five years, 100The attitude of the government is also changing. The Polish Prime Minister recently confirmed his plan to ‘saturate the Polish economy with outer space elements’, which goes together with the adoption of the Polish Space Strategy in 2017, covering the period 2017- 2030, providing for public funding aimed at accelerating projects of national satellite infrastructure. Among the goals set until 2030 is the benchmark of 3Concerning regulatory challenges, Poland has still not adopted comprehensive space legislation, though in July 2017, a draft law on space activity was published by the government. The legal concept adopted in the national space law, especially about risk management, may influence the development of the whole national space activity, which still suffers from insufficient capital to bear the high level of risk related to ultra-hazardous activity such as space activity. Discussions on the final shape thereof are pending.