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SPIN-IN AND PROCUREMENT SUPPORT AS KEY COMPONENTS FOR INDUSTRY
DEVELOPMENT IN EMERGING SPACE COUNTRIES

Abstract

The 21st century is an era of new dynamic growth and disruptive trends in the space sector. Firstly, there is the growing pragmatic focus based mostly on a wide range of new possibilities of space data utilization, creating new markets within the space economy. Just as significant is the trend of a growing number of companies involved, including SMEs and even startups. And last but not least, seeing the sector as a good socio-economic investment, there is the growing number of countries getting interested in direct involvement in space activities.

Slovakia is one of these emerging space countries“. Despite having several decades of experience in space research, it only now enters this new era, putting significant emphasis on topics of space legislation and support of the space industry. Slovakia needs to overcome the challenges of a relatively small and young space business environment and even smaller international awareness of its existing capabilities. In order to do so, the country needs to unlock the full potential of both its RD institutions and universities (with strong history and current competences, e.g. involvement in various international missions such as Rosetta, BepiColombo, JUICE, and JEM-EUSO), and its companies with spin-in capabilities – working in related sectors (e.g. precise machinery, electronics, ICT).

In summer 2019, the Slovak Investment and Trade Development Agency (working under the Ministry of Economy of the Slovak Republic) launched an initiative aimed at providing comprehensive support to the Slovak space industry, primarily focused on helping new companies to enter the sector and growing their partnership network. This presentation outlines a quantitative and qualitative study of this process, mapping it from the early stage of analyzing the existing space industry environment and identifying its strengths as well as weak points to introducing specific measures helping the companies efficiently enter new international projects and value chains by creating procurement opportunities. At the same time, it follows the exploration of related fields and searching for companies possessing relevant technology and experience and subsequently helping them to utilize those in the space sector.

The purpose of this presentation is to share the experience gathered over the past year with other emerging space countries currently going through similar industry development processes as well as with countries that will be dealing with these issues in the future. It also provides a generally valuable insight into Slovakia’s space industry potential and core areas for prospective international cooperation.