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THE FUTURE OF WORK: STEM & THE EUROPEAN SPACE SECTOR

**Abstract**

The 'Future of Work' was a socio-economic theme already at the fore of policy-makers' minds, before the COVID-19 pandemic accelerated its prominence. In Europe, the main opportunities and challenges for the labour market of the future are being driven by three Global Megatrends: Demographic Change, Globalisation and Technology. This is especially true for Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) industry jobs, which are often uniquely positioned as being amongst the most geared to the Global Megatrends; these jobs tend to have a greater share of the higher-skilled workforce that will be increasingly coveted in the future. The European Space Sector largely mirrors the position of the broader STEM industry when it comes to the Global Megatrends of the 'Future of Work': on Demographic Change, the upcoming retirement wave will drive an intense competition among the different actors for a limited pool of higher-skilled talent; Technology is changing manufacturing processes with 3D-Printing, Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Big Data, whilst teleworking is having an increasing impact upon jobs in both Manufacturing and Service sectors. There are also differences with regards to Demographic Change due to impending retirement waves, as well as with Globalisation owing to potential political considerations around international cooperation.