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EUROPEAN SPACE SME'S FINANCIAL VIABILITY

**Abstract**

The study will shed light on crucial insights into the economic landscape of European SMEs in the space industry. The purpose is to enhance our understanding of the evolution and current situation of these SMEs, their financial evolution, and their innovative performance. This will be done by providing a synthesis containing statistics and tables of aggregated/averaged economic and financial data regarding European SMEs in the space sector for the last decade.

From 2018 onwards, the target population consists of the SMEs that are active in space activities in the EU-28 countries, Norway and Switzerland, and that received funding from the European Space Agency (ESA) for research or technological development of space activities at least in one year during the prior five years (rolling window), and/or that received funding from the European Commission (only Framework Programme data was available) in the prior five years, or that are member of SME4Space (the representative organization of SMEs in Europe's space industry). For the years 2014-2018, information can be presented for the sample of 2018 only.

The financial data will be retrieved from Orbis and information on the firm's patent activity will be derived from the PATSTAT database. If necessary, data cleaning procedures, including methods for addressing unit- and item-non-response, will be implemented. The primary focus will be on evaluating various aspects of European space SMEs: their number of employees, their size (total assets), their turnover, and their financial position regarding liquidity, leverage, profitability, and financial viability. Additionally, an analysis of innovation performance will be conducted through an examination of the SMEs' patenting activity. We will further distinguish between micro-sized, small-sized, and medium-sized firms, as well as between young and more established companies within the SME landscape.