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NOTE

From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Delegations
Subject:	AOB for the meeting of the Competitiveness Council on 4 December 2026 Space Team Europe - Information from the Commission

BACKGROUND DOCUMENT

SPACE TEAM EUROPE – INFORMATION FROM THE COMMISSION

This note provides Ministers with a debrief of the preparatory work towards the first meeting of Space Team Europe.

Announced in the Commission Communication on a Vision for the European Space Economy of June 2025[1], "Space Team Europe" is a high-level forum bringing together key stakeholders from across the European space ecosystem, including Member States, the Commission, the EU Agency for the Space Programme, the European Space Agency, space industry, small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and research organisations. Through this initiative, the EU will lead efforts to bring together and leverage European space-related excellence and capabilities in a coherent and efficient manner.

[1] https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:52025DC0336

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Sherpas appointed by each Space Team Europe member organisation constitute the preparatory body of Space Team Europe. They contribute to the identification of common priorities, support the preparation of background documentation and of accurate and reliable information on which to base well-informed decisions agendas. These contributions support the preparation of strategic discussions and help build consensus ahead of the high-level meetings of Space Team Europe.

The preparatory work done until now by appointed Sherpas in three meetings has allowed to identify the following priorities:

1. **Scaling-up access to finance for European companies:** European space companies, particularly SMEs and scale-ups, face significant financing gaps that hinder their transition from technology development to industrialisation and commercialisation, alongside a deteriorating cash position across the sector. The problem is recognised by all members, with encouraging progress in the early growth stages – also thanks to the EU's CASSINI initiative with the European Investment Fund as implementing partner – but with significant gaps persisting at scaleup phase;

2. **Ensuring continued access to space for startups and SMEs:** Recent shifts in non-EU suppliers' commercial offerings threaten short-term access to space for European start-ups and SMEs. The problem is particularly acute for New Space actors, who face either the ned to advance payments to book slots, or to store satellites planned for launch in the next months or years. Quantification is ongoing, as well as the exploration of potential mitigating actions.

3. **Securing critical resources and ensuring supply-chain resilience:** European space companies face growing challenges in securing critical materials amid increasing supply chain constraints. The problem is recognised by all members, and the boundaries with existing processes (such as the Observatory of Critical Technologies) have been defined to avoid duplication.

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4. **AI, Cloud and High-Performance Computing (HPC) for Space:** The growing volume of space data is driving demand for greater processing capacity, intensifying competition for AI, cloud and High-Performance Computing resources across sectors.

   For this priority, the scope could not be defined in a sufficiently specific manner for Space Team Europe Sherpas to deep dive into a problem definition. Work was therefore paused, allowing Sherpas to focus on the other three areas.

The outcomes of these meetings will feed into other ongoing initiatives.

At the Competitiveness Council (Space) on 4 December, Commissioner Kubilius will provide an overview of Space Team Europe's objectives, a brief update about the main conclusions from the first three Sherpas meetings (notably which most urgent priorities should be addressed in the coming months) and outline the next steps towards the first ministerial meeting of Space Team Europe.

The first meeting of Space Team Europe at the level of Ministers and CEOs or Presidents of its member organisations will be chaired by Commissioner Kubilius and is scheduled for May 2027, most likely in the margins of the Competitiveness Council under Lithuanian Presidency.

The preparatory work by Sherpas will continue in the meantime, with the objective of consolidating a consensus about the problem definition for each priority and suggesting avenues to address them. After the first meeting of Space Team Europe, Sherpas will continue their work in ensuring the implementation of the agreed orientations and preparing discussions at the next meetings of Space Team Europe.

Space Team Europe operates by consensus and provides a platform for open exchange between public decision makers and stakeholders on the key strategic priorities facing the European space sector. Beyond the most urgent priorities mentioned above, Space Team Europe will contribute to the preparation of a European Space Master Plan, establishing a common roadmap for implementing the actions set out in the Vision for the European Space Economy. In addition, Space Team Europe is tasked to advise the Commission on the development of a methodology to monitor the contribution of the space sector to the EU's competitiveness, as well as the EU's share of the global space economy.

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