

# **The European Space Agency** as mechanism and actor of international cooperation

ESA Legal Services Department

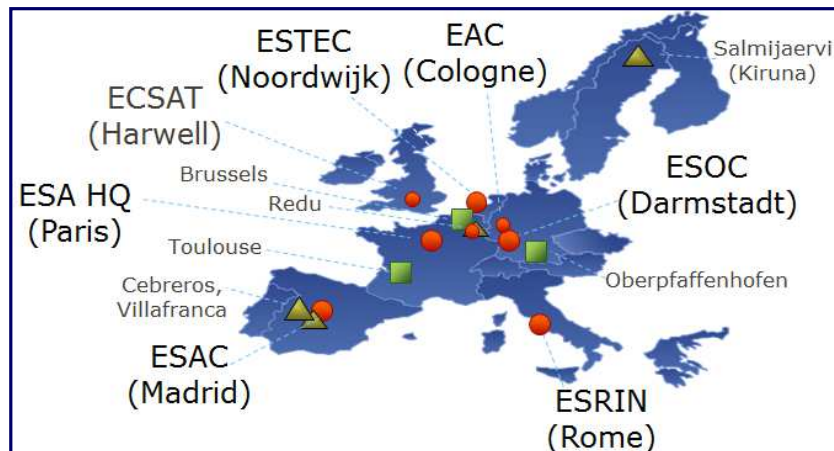
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- The European Space Agency (ESA) is
  - a **mechanism** of international space cooperation
  - an **actor** of international space cooperation

# 1. The mechanism



- an international intergovernmental organisation of 20 Member States
- Founded in 1975
- International legal personality
- 2200 staff, 4.1 Billion € budget



- **“Convention for the establishment of a European Space Agency”**
- opened for signature 30May1975
- entered into force 30Oct1980
- international treaty, 26 articles and five annexes
- ESA’s most important legal document

- a) purpose, activities and programmes
- b) industrial policy
- c) organs, financial and administrative set-up
- d) treaty-technical articles



## The purpose



- **“to provide for and to promote, for exclusively peaceful purposes, cooperation among European States in space research and technology and their space applications, whether for scientific purposes or operational space application systems.”**
- ESA mandate for:
  - a European space policy
  - space activities and programmes
  - coordination

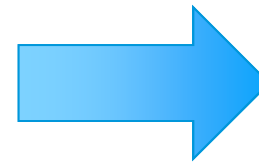


European Space Agency

# The organs



- The organs of ESA are the **Council** and the **Director General** assisted by a staff



## Director General

- chief executive officer and legal representative of ESA



## Council

- ESA's plenary organ
- Council at *ministerial* level
- Council at *delegate* level



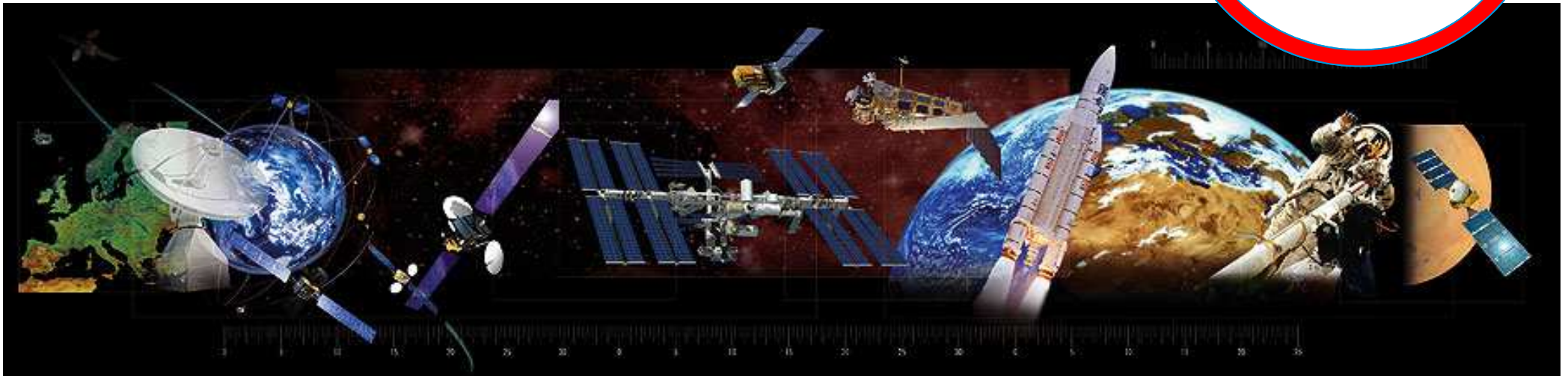
# The programmes



– One of few space agencies in the world with programmes in all areas of space activities:

- **Space science**
- **Human spaceflight**
- **Exploration**
- **Earth observation**
- **Launchers**
- **Navigation**
- **Telecommunications**
- **Technology**
- **Operations**

**+80  
programmes  
in parallel**



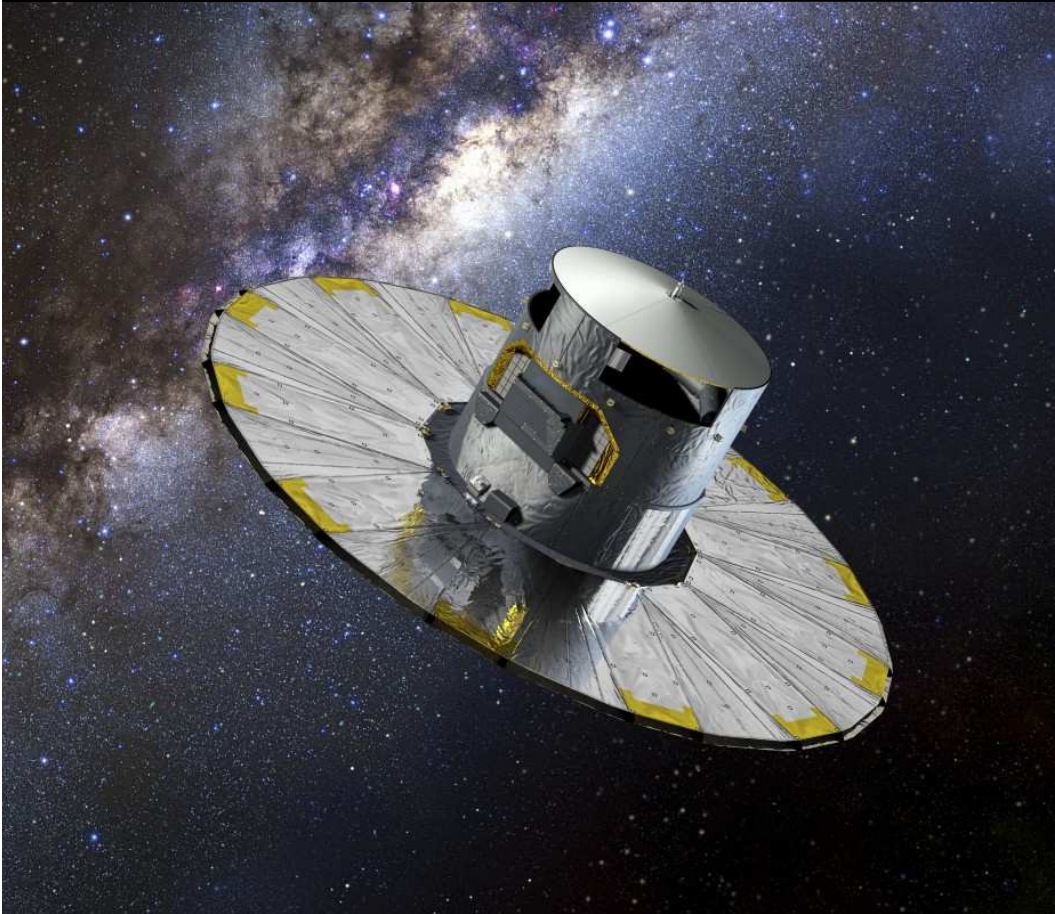
- Mandatory activities: defined activities to which all Member States are obliged to contribute
- Optional activities: decided by some or all Member States based on their interests

**Legal difference:**

- a) mandatory activities: ESA as IGO
- b) optional activities: Member States on inter-governmental basis



# Mandatory / optional (2)



**GAIA**



**Sentinel-1**

European Space Agency

## 2. ESA as actor of int. cooperation



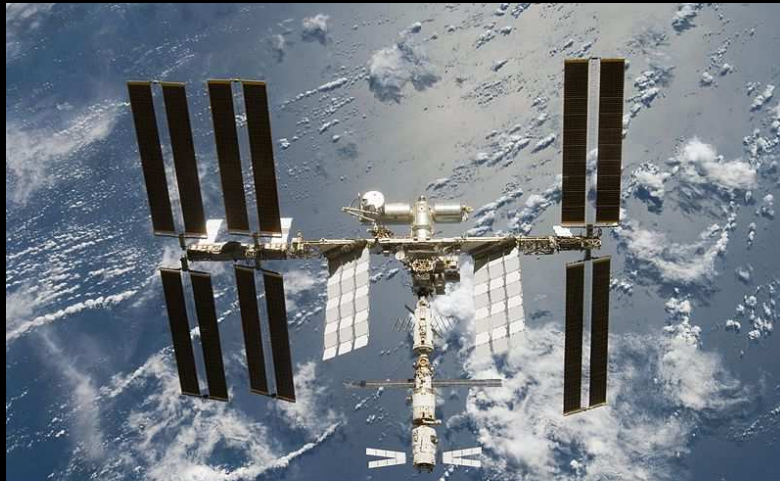
- **International cooperation** is central for ESA!
- ESA cooperates with
  - a) other international organisations and institutions
  - b) Governments, organisations and institutions of non-member States

- **~ 400 international agreements** with States, IGOs and others
  - European Union as important partner
  - Long-standing cooperation with USA, Russia, Japan, India, China, Canada
  - South American, African, Asian-Pacific states

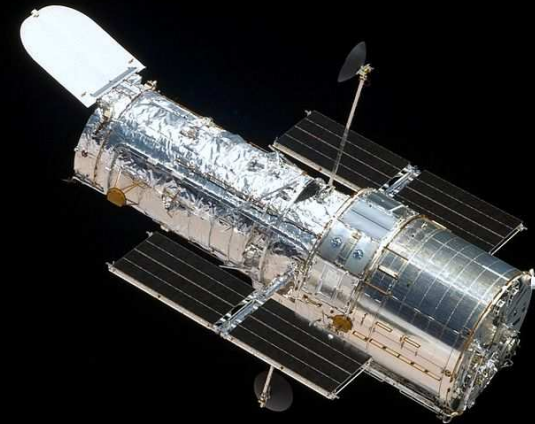




# Examples of ESA space cooperation



**International Space Station**



**Hubble Space Telescope**



**Soyuz from Kourou**



**Exomars**

- ESA as active promoter of space law
- ESA accepted rights & obligations of 3 UN treaties: ARRA, LIAB and REG
- ESA policies for:
  - a) Launching State Liability
  - b) Space Debris Mitigation
  - c) Space Object Registration
  - d) Frequency Management



→ SERVING EUROPEAN  
COOPERATION  
AND INNOVATION

See CRP "ESA as mechanism and actor of international cooperation"  
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European Space Agency