

Press release

European Space and Telecoms Players Sign Partnership Agreement to Bid for IRIS² Constellation

Luxembourg / Madrid / Munich / Paris, 02 May 2023 – A group of European space and telecommunications players have come together to form a partnership to respond to the European Commission's call for tender related to the future European satellite constellation IRIS² (Infrastructure for Resilience, Interconnectivity and Security by Satellite). IRIS² aims to bring a new secure and resilient connectivity infrastructure to European governments, businesses and citizens.

The open consortium will be governed by Airbus Defence and Space, Eutelsat, Hispasat, SES and Thales Alenia Space. The consortium will also rely on the core team of the following companies: Deutsche Telekom, OHB, Orange, Hisdesat, Telespazio, and Thales. Together, they will aim to create a state-of-the-art satellite constellation based on a multi-orbit architecture that would be interoperable with the terrestrial ecosystem.

This partnership will set up an integrated best-in-class European space and telecoms team across these companies to leverage the expertise and capabilities in the field of secure satellite communications solutions. The consortium will encourage start-ups, mid-Caps and SMEs to join the partnership, resulting in a more innovative and competitive European space sector where new business models will emerge.

The integrated team aims to foster collaboration among all European space players across the whole connectivity value chain with a view to enabling EU's strategic autonomy through the delivery of sovereign, secure and resilient government services to protect European citizens. The team will leverage synergies between government and commercial infrastructures. The teaming partners are also well positioned to provide commercial services to bridge the digital divide across European territories and to increase Europe's global outreach and competitiveness as a space and digital power on the global market.

IRIS² will deliver resilient and secure connectivity solutions to governments to protect European citizens and will provide commercial services in the interest of European economies and societies. It will also bolster the EU partnership policy by offering its infrastructure abroad. IRIS² is the EU's new flagship space programme for a digital, resilient and safer Europe.

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