

Bird & Bird Satellite Bulletin

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A New Era for Finnish Space Activities

Finland is planning three launches of small satellites in 2016, with the focus on specialist technology and satellite applications.

The Finnish Space Industry

Since 1995 Finland has been a member of the European Union and has received full European Space Agency (ESA) membership. Space activities in Finland are coordinated by the Finnish Funding Agency for Technology and Innovation (Tekes), which also represents Finland at ESA.

Finland has not however enacted any national space legislation or regulation, but has ratified three of the UN Space Treaties: the Outer Space Treaty 1967; the Liability Convention 1972; and the Return and Rescue Agreement 1968.

The core of the Finnish space activity is currently formed by ESA programmes. Finnish companies have participated in the manufacturing of twenty satellites through some thirty active companies contracted to European space projects.

Space Policy

The tenth Finnish Space Policy was drawn up for the years 2013-2020 by the Finnish Space Committee, working under the auspices of the Ministry of Employment and the Economy.

The Space Policy formulates the strategy and goals for Finnish space activities funded by the public sector in four main areas: scientific exploration of space and Earth; Earth observation satellites; satellite positioning; and the commercial space industry. Subject to these aims, Finland

participates in EU, ESA and EUMETSAT (Galileo, Copernicus, Horizon 2020) space programmes and in the funding of the European Southern Observatory (ESO).

In accordance with the Space Policy, Finnish space activities focus on supporting undertakings in the Arctic region by means of space technology, on open positioning of data, and on scientific research. Additionally, the Space Policy recognises that the Finnish space industry's answer to increasing international competition lies in specialisation and applications.

A new era

Finland will become a true spacefaring country in 2016 with three launches of small satellites planned by both academic institutions and commercial companies. There has been much speculation as to the disruption that these small satellites will have on the Finnish space market. It will be interesting to see what the effect will be in practice and how soon regulations may be put in place to govern them.

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Bird & Bird's Satellite Group

Bird & Bird's satellite group are international specialists with a unique reputation and track record in the industry. Through many years of experience working in-house, at regulators, in international institutions (EC, ESA, ITU, UN) and in private practice, we have built an extensive footprint of expertise and knowledge. Possessing a genuine interest in the sector, our team assist clients in many areas including: regulatory advice, industry specific commercial contacts, competition, corporate, finance, dispute resolution, employment, and insurance.

Get in touch



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Our international team offers clients a one-stop shop to address the issues they face, with expert lawyers across Europe, the Middle East, Asia, and strong experience in Africa.

Our satellite group fits neatly within Bird & Bird's world leading Tech & Comms sector group, which offers advice in related sectors such as: energy and utilities, life sciences, transport and maritime, aerospace, defence and security, aviation, financial services, and healthcare. Bird & Bird also house a team focused on SMEs and the needs of start-ups.



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