

# Bird & Bird Satellite Bulletin

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## *The French “Open Space” Strategy*

### **The French government’s response to the current challenges in the national space sector.**

The potential of the space industry to stimulate economic growth, encourage innovation and attract investment is now recognised by governments globally. States are becoming more competitive in a bid to encourage companies to establish, grow and invest in their jurisdiction.

Earlier this year a decree of the French Prime Minister commissioned Genevieve Fioraso, former Minister in charge of space, to prepare a report highlighting areas likely to foster the competitiveness of the French Space Industry for the next 10 years. The report was published in July 2016.

The report proposes a new approach known as “Open Space”, which is compatible with the continuing cost reductions for accessing space, such as the development of reusable rockets, and the emergence of new markets and players for the use of space data collected by satellite.

It notably recommends: accelerating the opening-up of the French space industry to an applications-driven approach; engaging with the digital sector; facilitating access to data; and creating a capital fund to encourage innovation in the French space industry.

With regard to the digital use of satellite data (observation, positioning, telecommunications and science), the report identifies a number of domains where the new services using satellite data may be developed (e.g., precision farming, monitoring of sensible infrastructure) and encourages SMEs to develop new applications particularly through the government’s financing programs, such as Boosters

The report also highlights the importance of strengthening French independence of access to space, placing the development of rockets “Ariane 6” and “Vega-C” at the core of French strategy.

On the legal side, the report emphasizes the need to review French space legislation from a strategic perspective. The objective is to anticipate technological progress and ensure legal certainty for initiatives in various areas such as satellite and launcher miniaturisation, procedures for the registration of space objects, space data, space debris, space mining, space tourism and standardization.

This report will be taken into consideration by the French Government for the preparation of the ESA Ministerial Council which will take place this year. The Prime Minister has also asked the various ministers involved to draw on the report’s conclusions in conducting French space policy.

If you have any queries or would like to receive further information please contact:

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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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