

Space Policy

What do I need to know before I start?

While the Community has only recently acquired official competences in the area of space policy, the first steps towards a common space policy in Europe and the involvement of the Community in this context dates further back. In the 1960s, A European Preparatory Commission for Space Research (COPERS) was set up and two European space research organizations were established – the European Space Research Organization (ESRO) and European Launcher Development Organization (ELDO) – dedicated respectively to scientific missions and to the development of heavy launchers. A European Space Conference (ESC) was then created in order to coordinate the activities of both space research organizations and to ensure the implementation of a necessary coordinated European space policy. Indeed, in the 1960s and 1970s, only the US and the USSR were really capable of launching satellites, and launches by third parties were subject to the whims of these states, under a cooperative scheme or an international agreement. Europe's awareness of the situation during the 1970s spurred it to develop its own launch capability, Ariane, to meet the requirements of its application programmes after the failure of the Europa launcher in the 1960s. Problems within ELDO led to a substantial reorganization of the whole field, centered on the fusion of the two organizations, ELDO and ESRO, in a single international body. In 1975, the European Space Agency (ESA) was formed, and took over the rights and obligations of these two earlier organizations. It is however only since the Lisbon Treaty that the EU has acquired formal competences to initiate, develop, and run space programmes - competences it shares with EU member states.

Languages: Please be aware that although most documents available in our Archives are in French, English or German, some may be in other EU languages. In order to check the languages used in a fonds, please refer to our holdings page. Additionally, some fonds may contain a few files in a language other than those listed in the description.

What can I find at the HAEU?

Pertaining specifically to European space polity-building and policy-making, the fonds available at the HAEU are:

1) EU institutions

[Council of Ministers](#)

In the HAEU inventory, space policy matters are assembled in the section titled 'Activités de la CEE: Recherche et enseignement', or 'Activités de la CEE: Recherche et coopération nucléaire' or simply 'Sciences et Technologies', which includes files related to the development of common research policies including in the field of space science. Since the fonds of the Council of

Ministers is organized by year, you need to browse the fonds of each year separately to access the specific section on research (example for the year [1960](#), [1964](#), [1974](#)).

[Commission](#)

In the Commission's fonds, you will find a specific section for the [DGXII Science, Research and Development](#), which includes the archives of the EURATOM Commission, whose competences were transferred to the DGXII following the fusion of the Community's executive bodies in 1967. You might also want to look into the sections related to the [Secretariat-General](#) and the [Cabinets](#).

[European Parliament](#)

Concerning the early years of the Parliament, the fonds include the proceedings and reports of several parliamentary commissions concerned with research and technology, whose work is related to the development of research co-operation in the field of space science ([1](#), [2](#), [3](#), [4](#)). For the Parliament's first legislature, you may look into the proceedings and reports of the parliamentary commission for [energy and research](#) as well as that for [energy, research and technology](#). As for the [second](#) and [third](#) legislature, the fonds includes the proceedings and reports of the parliamentary commission for energy, research and technology.

[European Court of Auditors](#)

You might find it interesting to consult the ECA's [annual reports](#) (1977-1997), [special reports](#) (1978-1991) and [opinions](#) (1977-1997) as well as [internal documents](#), including [information documents](#) (1977-1994) and [working documents](#) (1977-1994).

[Economic and Social Committee](#)

The inventory does not include a special section on space policy but the section 'Avis' comprises various documents (reports, articles, and position papers) related to scientific cooperation in Europe, including in the field of space science (example [1](#), [2](#), [3](#)). Similarly to the Council of Ministers, the inventory of the Committee is organized by year, each including a special section 'Avis' (example for [1975](#)).

2) *Corporate bodies*

[European Space Agency \(ESA\)](#)

It is of utmost importance to consult the fonds of the ESA to understand the history of space science in Europe and the development of a common space policy at the European level. It is also relevant to researchers studying space debris, which was widely debated internationally, the peaceful use of outer space (especially with regard to CETS), as well as the Living Planet, which pertains to the relation between space and the global environment and between space and

livability. You may consult the [ESA archives](#), which are composed of several fonds concerning space research organizations that preceded and/or worked together with the ESA. These include, in addition to the [ESA's fonds](#), the fonds of the [European Conference on Satellite Telecommunications \(CETS\)](#), the [European Preparatory Commission on Space Research \(COPERS\)](#), the [European Launchers and Development Organisation \(ELDO\)](#), the [European Space Conference \(ESC\)](#) and the [European Space Research Organisation \(ESRO\)](#). The ESA fonds offers invaluable information on its [origins](#), its [decisional](#) and [operational](#) structure, as well as on its Technical Directorate [ESTEC](#) and its Operations Centre [ESOC](#). Furthermore, the available material can provide insightful information on ESA's international relations (with Canada, Japan, the Soviet Union, and Russia), bilateral relations with member states and third countries, on earth observation and robotic exploration programs, on the development of a European astronautic body, as well as on ESA's various [scientific programs](#).

[European Spatial Data Research \(EuroSDR\)](#)

It can be useful to consult the fonds of the EuroSDR and its predecessor OEEPE, which were established to carry out [common research programmes](#) in Europe, also in the field of space science.

[European Science Foundation \(ESF\)](#)

To understand the development of a common space policy, it can also be useful to consult the fonds of the ESF, [founded in 1974](#) as a non-governmental association of [research organizations](#). It can be useful to consult the sub-fonds devoted to the ESF Standing Committees to study the history and development of research in various fields including [Physical and Engineering Sciences](#). The work of the ESF's [Standing Committee on Astronomy](#) and in particular its [Space Science Committee](#) is particularly relevant to understand research cooperation in space science in Europe, ESA-ESF [relations](#) with US research institutions including NASA and the US National Science Foundation (NSF) in the development of common space research programmes, as well as European involvement in the Space Shuttle project.

3) *Individuals*

[Pierre Auger](#)

Auger worked in the field of space science at the French national level in the Centre National d'Études Spatiales and in the [development of a common space policy](#) at the European level through ESRO, which he helped to establish. You may consult his private fonds, which includes several files related to the [European Preparatory Commission on Space Research \(COPERS\)](#) and to the [European Space Research Organization \(ESRO\)](#). The fonds also includes Auger's handwritten notes, which complement nicely the other documents in the collection.

It can be useful to consult Lock's private archives to gain additional information on [the internal workings of ESRO](#), on the work of the [Banner-Group](#) and on their [mutual relationship](#).

[Jean Mussard](#)

Mussard was Executive Secretary of COPERS, the European Preparatory Commission for Space Research (whose [fonds](#) are also available at the HAEU as mentioned above). His private fonds includes notes, memoranda and proceedings of meetings he organized during his time in this preparatory commission, as well as [reports and notes](#) pertaining to the development and organizational activity of the European Space Research Organization ([ESRO](#)). The fonds also includes Mussard's handwritten notes.

[Jules Guéron](#)

Several files from Guéron's private fonds relate to his work in [EURATOM](#), to the use of nuclear power in space, and to the development of a [common space and atomic program](#).

[Hendrik de Bruijn](#)

De Bruijn participated to the European [Dragon Project](#), launched in 1959 to to examine the most practical and fruitful methods of collaboration in the field of an experimental and prototype reactor. You may consult De Bruijn's private fonds which includes [reports](#) of the project and [scientific studies](#) including files relating to [EURATOM](#).

4) *Oral History*

In addition, take a look at the [oral history holdings](#), which comprise numerous interviews of European politicians and officials, including important figures and officials active in the development of a common space policy at the European level. Below, you can find a (non-exhaustive) list of individuals interviewed who addressed the topic of space science cooperation and the development of a common space policy in the Community.

[Fredrik Engström](#)

[Jörg Feustel-Büechl](#)

[Walter Kröll](#)

[Joachim Trümper](#)

[David Ashford](#)

[Horst Uwe Keller](#)

[Klaus Pseiner](#)

[Heinz Riesenhuber](#)

[Otto Zellhofer](#)

[Michael Heseltine](#)

[Michel Bignier](#)

[Hanspeter Schneiter](#)

[Yves Sillard](#)
[Manfred Fuchs](#)
[Helmut Ulke](#)
[Peter Jankowitsch](#)
[Wolfgang Finke](#)
[Willibald Riedler](#)
[Horst Rauck](#)
[Peter Creola](#)
[Hubert Curien](#)
[Daniel Sacotte](#)
[Hermann Strub](#)
[Jean-Pierre Causse](#)
[Frédéric D'Allest](#)
[Herbert Allgeier](#)