

European Space Start-Up Companies

ESA Member States commit to largest contributions at Ministerial Conference (11/27/2025)
The largest contributions in the history of the European Space Agency, €22.3 bn, have been approved at its Council meeting at Ministerial level in Bremen, Germany. [1]*

The ESA record budget for 2026 shows the growing importance and demand for space activities because of political, strategic and science aspects in Europe.

Germany reacted accordingly by placing high emphasis on space activities and raised its space contributions significantly: Germany is investing 5.4 billion euros in the future of European space activities. [2]

Special fund of the German Armed Forces: Defense companies also benefit: At Airbus Defence and Space, a division of the Airbus Group for aerospace technology, revenue increased by 5.1 percent from 2023 to 2024, reaching 12.1 billion euros. [3]

Germany's space budget 2026: €21.82 billion approved for research, technology and other space activities. [4]

Bavaria's Minister-President Dr. Markus Söder declared at the Space Summit 2025:

“Space is the final frontier: We are building a lunar control center in Bavaria. Bavaria, Germany, and Europe must be part of the space race. New technologies will be developed there, and the future will be shaped. Bavaria is providing €33 million for the lunar control center – so far. We are prepared to nearly double this sum with an additional €30 million for its rapid expansion. We are thinking big: Space exploration is the next crucial step for humanity and a giant leap for the Free State of Bavaria. Space travel inspires and creates jobs. That is why the new federal government is also investing heavily in this sector. It's not just about science fiction, ethics, and spirituality, but about the economy and prosperity,” explains [5]

The following summary table with potential European space start-up companies reflects the reaction of space entrepreneurs in Europe to this new market. The table includes a brief description of the companies' products, and their web-pages. The table was compiled by ChatGPT.

European Start-Up Companies (Status December 2025).

Company	Country	Summary	Image / Logo Link
Isar Aerospace	Germany	Small-launcher developer (Spectrum launcher).	https://isaraerospace.com/
Rocket Factory Augsburg (RFA)	Germany	Modular small-sat launcher (RFA One).	https://www.rfa.space/
The Exploration Company (TEC)	Germany	LEO orbit capsules for resupply and astronauts	https://www.exploration.space/
PLD Space	Spain	Miura-1 suborbital & Miura-5 orbital launcher.	https://pldspace.com/
D-Orbit	Italy	In-orbit logistics & transportation (ION Carrier).	https://www.dorbit.space/

Company	Country	Summary	Image / Logo Link
ICEYE	Finland	SAR small-satellite constellation & imagery.	https://www.iceye.com/
Open Cosmos	UK/Spain	End-to-end small satellite mission services.	https://open.cosmos/
Exotrail	France	Electric propulsion & in-orbit mobility services.	https://www.exotrail.com/
Hiber	Netherlands	Low-bandwidth global IoT satellite network.	https://www.hiber.global/
Skyrora	UK	Launcher developer (Skyrora XL, Skylark).	https://skyrora.com/
Orbex	UK	Microlauncher developer (Prime) using green fuels.	https://orbex.space/
GomSpace	Denmark	Nanosatellite manufacturer.	https://gomspace.com/
EnduroSat	Bulgaria	Modular satellites & mission-as-a-service.	https://www.endurosat.com/
Alba Orbital	UK	PocketQube satellite manufacturer.	https://albaorbital.com/
Satlantis	Spain	High-resolution optical payloads.	https://www.satlantis.com/
ThrustMe	France	Electric & chemical propulsion technologies.	https://www.thrustme.fr/
Space Forge	UK	In-space manufacturing & returnable satellites.	https://www.spaceforge.com/
Mynaric	Germany	Laser communication terminals for space.	https://mynaric.com/
Sateliot	Spain	5G NB-IoT satellite constellation.	https://sateliot.es/

References

- [1] Ministerial Conference ESA https://www.esa.int/About_Us/Corporate_news/ESA_Member_States_commit_to_largest_contributions_at_Ministeria
- [2] <https://www.dlr.de/de/aktuelles/nachrichten/2025/deutschland-investiert-5-4-milliarden-euro-in-die-zukunft-der-europaeischen-raumfahrt>
- [3] <https://www.tagesschau.de/wirtschaft/unternehmen/aufreuestung-bundeswehr-boom-100.html>
- [4] <https://www.bundestag.de/dokumente/textarchiv/2025/kw48-de-forschung-1126102>
- [5] <https://www.dlr.de/de/aktuelles/nachrichten/2025/gipfeltreffen-am-raumfahrt-standort-bayern>