

UK SPACE SECTOR

FACTSHEET



CRITICAL TO UK ECONOMY AND SECURITY

18% of UK GDP
(£454 billion)
reliant on satellite services.

Space is a Critical National Infrastructure sector.



UK SPACE AGENCY IMPACT

Catalysed
£2.2bn

in investment and revenue for the UK space sector in 2024/25.

Secured
£7.49

in direct economic return for every £1 of UK investment in the European Space Agency.

Delivered
13m
participant hours across 35 funded education and future workforce projects.



UK SPACE INDUSTRY

1,907
Organisations

55,550
People employed

£18.6bn
Income generated



A GLOBAL OPPORTUNITY

The UK **#1** in Europe for private investment (2014-2024),
spending **1%** of global civil
space funding for **5%** of the market.

UK SPACE AGENCY ACTIVITY

Space science

- More than 20 missions to put **UK science** at the heart of global action to better understand our Universe, from NASA's James Webb Space Telescope to ESA's Ariel spacecraft, which will help the search for life beyond Earth.
- UK ranked **#2 globally** within the top 10% of most cited publications in astronomy and space science.

Exploration

- **Dr Rosemary Coogan** completed astronaut basic training and is certified for spaceflight assignments. Astronaut reserves **John McFall** and **Dr Meganne Christian** undergoing training.
- First successful commercial lunar landing by FireFly powered by **UK engine** developed by Namma.
- Mars Rover built by **Airbus in the UK** on track for launch in 2028.

International partnerships

- 30 projects supported through the International Bilateral Fund, with nations including **Australia, Canada, Japan, South Korea** and the **US**.

European Space Agency

- **Major improvement** in the UK's geo-return, securing additional contracts of €134 million for UK industry.
- Secured **£7.49** in direct economic return for every £1 of UK investment in the European Space Agency.

Position, navigation and timing (PNT)

- First open competition to develop a government **time transfer capability** across UK strategic locations.

Earth Observation

- **UK leadership** on the science and industry contributions to ESA's Biomass mission, the first P-band radar to map the world's forests.
- First dedicated European carbon dioxide monitoring satellite (MicroCarb) launched, thanks to **UK-France partnership**.
- **UK EO data hub** to improve access and ease of use for a wide range of organisations that can benefit from satellite observations.

Telecommunications

- Up to **£160 million** available for Connectivity in low Earth Orbit.
- First dedicated direct-to device mobile network in the UK with Viasat under development.
- **UK-built Lunar Pathfinder** communications and navigation satellite set to launch to the Moon in 2026.

Innovation, investment and commercialisation

- **108 projects** (since 2020) delivered through the National Space Innovation Programme, boosting bold UK ideas.
- Space Clusters Infrastructure Fund projected to catalyse **£700 million** of private investment.
- First space investments made through the UKIS fund.

Space sustainability

- First Space Sustainability Standards published by BSI.
- **UK Chair** of the Inter-Agency Space Debris Coordination Committee.

Launch

- **First licensed vertical launch spaceport in Europe**, with launches expected in 2025/26.
- UK company Orbex pre-selected for ESA's European Launcher Challenge.

In-orbit Servicing Assembly and Manufacturing (ISAM)

- Procurement underway with up to **£75.6 million** for the UK's first mission to remove defunct satellites from orbit.
- First UK satellite launched from Space Forge for in-space manufacturing.

Space resilience

- First full year of operations for the National Space Operations Centre, provided around **30,000 collision alerts** to over 90% of UK-licensed satellite operators, and monitoring **870 uncontrolled re-entries**.
- UK industry designing and building ESA's Vigil space weather mission, supporting **150 jobs**.

Skills and future workforce

- Five new training courses, with **4,500 people** receiving continuing professional development.

