



GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE **EU SPACE** NETWORKS **2026**



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From Orbit to Understanding: Engaging Schools, Society, and the Public Sector

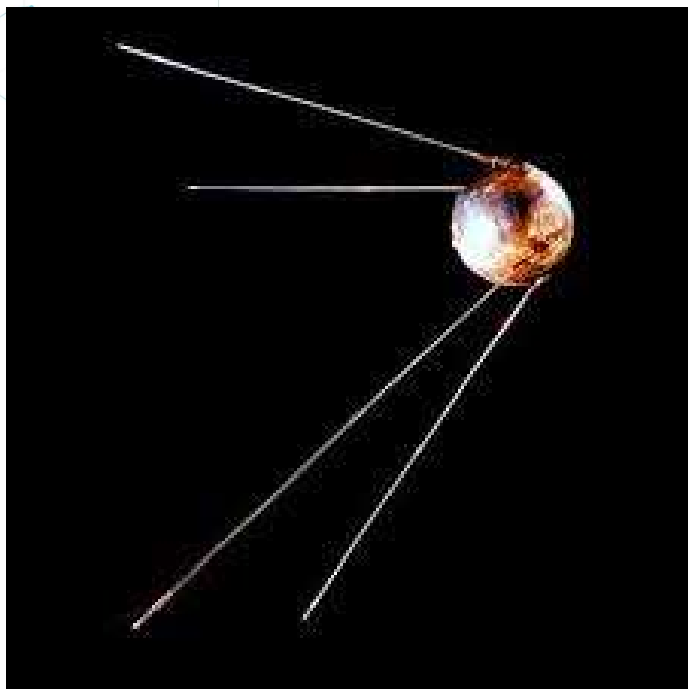
Despina Makri, ERATOSTHENES Centre of
Excellence



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About Earth Observation



From the launch of Sputnik 1 in 1957 to the futuristic visions of the early 2000s, satellites have influenced humanity's perception of the future. Today, we are living in that future through the Copernicus Programme.

When we think of Earth Observation, we often associate it with satellites, advanced technology, and science. But today, I would like to focus on something just as important: people.

Through education, outreach, and public engagement, Earth Observation has the power to inspire curiosity, create opportunities, and help young people imagine futures they may never have considered before.



The Copernicus Revolution

We now possess a superpower: Earth Observation.
Through the Copernicus program, high-quality
satellite data is accessible to everyone, everywhere,
for free.

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Our Strategic Goals



INSPIRE

Igniting Curiosity About The Cosmos And Its Practical Applications On Earth.



ENCOURAGE

Supporting Stakeholders To Leverage Spatial Data For Informed Decision-making.



NEW HORIZONS

Defining New Scientific Pathways And Career Opportunities For The Next Generation.

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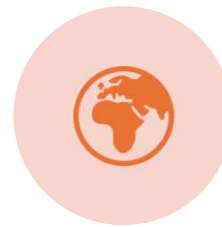
Why Earth Observation Matters



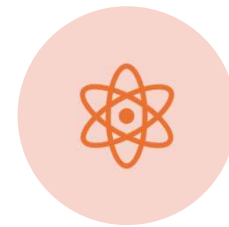
Understanding Climate
And Environmental
Change



Supporting
Sustainability And
Informed Decisions



Helping Societies
Better Understand Our
Planet



Connecting Science
With Everyday Life

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The Gap Between Science and Society



- Many young people are unfamiliar with Earth Observation
- STEM fields can feel distant or inaccessible
- Students often lack exposure to role models in science
- Young girls especially, may struggle to see themselves in these fields



Bringing EO into Schools, stakeholders and society





Bringing EO into Schools



Interactive school visits and presentations
Introducing students to satellite technologies
Discussing climate, sustainability, and environmental awareness
Encouraging curiosity and participation
Making science more approachable and relatable

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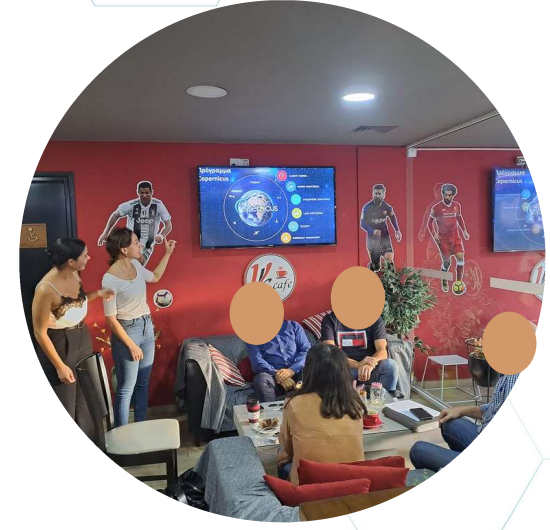


Bringing EO into stakeholders



Connecting Earth Observation with real public sector needs
Collaborating with ministries, departments, and local authorities
Supporting smarter environmental and operational decision-making
Exploring EO applications for safety, sustainability, and emergency management
Building stronger links between science, technology, and public services **#EUSpace**

Bringing EO into the Society



Making Earth Observation accessible and understandable to the public
Raising awareness about climate, environment, and sustainability
Connecting science with everyday life and real societal challenges
Inspiring communities and future generations through education and engagement



Building the Future

Engaging Stakeholders through Collaboration

- Bringing together ministries, departments, and organizations
- Creating spaces for dialogue, workshops, and knowledge exchange
- Identifying operational needs and shared priorities

Turning EO into Practical Action

- Supporting environmental and operational decision-making
- Exploring EO applications for safety, emergency, and sustainability
- Connecting Earth Observation capabilities with real-world challenges

Building a More Informed Society

- Raising awareness about climate and environmental challenges
- Strengthening the connection between science and society
- Making Earth Observation more accessible and understandable to the public



Beyond the meeting room



Connecting science with society



Connecting Earth Observation with public sector needs



Encouraging collaboration between ministries, organizations, and society



Supporting informed and data-driven decision-making



Making Earth Observation more accessible and understandable to everyone



Creating Real Impact

More Than a Presentation

- Encouraging students to ask questions
- Helping young people discover new career paths
- Building confidence through exposure to science and technology
- Showing students that STEM is accessible to everyone

Inspiring Young Girls in STEM

- Visibility creates possibility
- Female role models help break stereotypes
- Girls need to see that science and technology are spaces where they belong
- Encouragement can shape confidence and ambition

Earth Observation Opens Horizons

- Earth Observation connects: Science- Technology -Environment
- Innovation- Education -Society- Future careers



Beyond the Classroom



Raising environmental awareness



Promoting scientific literacy



Encouraging critical thinking



Building a more informed society



Strengthening the connection between science and the public



The Future Starts with Today's Students



Pancyprrian Gymnasium

A Machine Learning-Driven System for Football Field Irrigation using Satellite Analysis and Low Cost IoT Electronics



Laniteio Lyceum

FromSea2Soil", an innovative effort around the circular economy, sustainable development and the reuse of natural resources.

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The challenges

- Limited accessibility to STEM opportunities
- Gender imbalance in science and technology
- Communication barriers between science and society
- Lack of awareness about Earth Observation fields



Vision for the Future



**MORE INCLUSIVE STEM
EDUCATION**



**STRONGER LINKS
BETWEEN SCHOOLS AND
SCIENTIFIC COMMUNITIES**



**ACCESSIBLE EARTH
OBSERVATION FOR
EVERYONE**



**MORE VISIBILITY FOR
WOMEN IN SCIENCE**



**INSPIRING THE NEXT
GENERATION TO EXPLORE
NEW POSSIBILITIES**

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Earth Observation is not
only about observing our
planet. It is about
empowering people to
shape its future.



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