

Statement from the Chairs of ESPI Advisory Council



Genevieve Fioraso

ESPI Advisory Council Chair 2017 - 2023



Etienne Schneider

ESPI Advisory Council Chair from 2024

Dear friends of ESPI,

In parallel to the ongoing transformation of ESPI in 2023, ESPI's Advisory Council saw a similar evolution. Seven new members joined the Advisory Council in 2023 or will join by January 2024, coming from varied backgrounds (European astronaut Samantha Cristoforetti, Member of European Parliament Niklas Nienaß, renowned economic expert Sinead O'Sullivan, former deputy prime minister of Luxembourg Etienne Schneider, Financial Times journalist Peggy Hollinger, the Head of the German Space Agency at DLR Walther Pelzer and President of the IRT Saint Exupéry and Member of the Ministerial Space Steering Committee of France 2030 Magali Vaissièere).

Acting on the mandate of ESPI's Advisory Council to advise on the mid-term evolution of ESPI, the Advisory Council met three times in 2023 and we are thrilled to outline a few key themes, recommendations and observations raised by the group and its members.

The group very much appreciated the release of the *ESPI2040* policy vision for Europe in space and its bold and visionary character. The vision enshrined in the document shall reach a much wider audience and the Advisory Council recommended further active distribution across the European continent.

Looking at ESPI's future and its place and added value for the European space ecosystem, our group of ESPI advisors underlined a few overarching themes. When looking at ESPI's Research agenda, Security and Defence for Europe's future in space presents a particular challenge and the Advisory Council encourages ESPI to expand its activities in the field. Additionally, the Advisory Council also supported ESPI's ambition in further developing the role of space in addressing climate crisis and related challenges.

The Advisory Council also noted limited recognition of the socio-economic impact of space among the decision-makers outside the space field and hence has been encouraging ESPI to develop additional measures, included at a much needed communications level to convince politicians and citizens to be more aware of the importance of space at all levels.

Beyond the security & defence dimension and wider socio-economic benefits, the Advisory Council specifically raise several important questions for Europe's future, calling for ESPI to act within its perimeter of action. These questions include for instance:

- How can Europe foster deeper integration of financial markets to support the European Space sector?
- How to develop a synergetic approach for the pursuit of strategic autonomy with strategies for international cooperation and space for diplomacy.

As ESPI embarks on a new year to build on a resounding success of 2023, the leadership of the ESPI Advisory Council also evolves, with the hand-over of the chair from former French Minister Genevieve Fioraso to the former Deputy Prime Minister of Luxembourg.

In concluding, please let us underline what a diverse ensemble of varied expertise, experience and perspectives, coupled with energy and spirit to shape and improve things, is gathered in ESPI's Advisory Council. The group will continue to advice ESPI in its work and through this contribute to the growth of Europe's space sector and the role of space in European politics and globally.

