



SPACE FOR MARITIME SECURITY

Tackling challenges in the Baltic Sea & Overseas Territories

7-8 September 2026

Pestana Palace Lisboa Hotel, Lisbon, Portugal



On 7 and 8 September 2026, the European Space Agency (ESA), in collaboration with Eurisy, organised the ***Space for Maritime Security: Tackling Challenges in the Baltic Sea & Overseas Territories*** workshop in Lisbon, Portugal. The two half days workshop brought together space experts, maritime authorities and services, defence and security stakeholders, researchers, industry representatives, and user communities to discuss how space technologies can support maritime security and address the evolving needs of operational users. Through a series of thematic sessions and expert discussions, participants explored the role of space-based capabilities in maritime surveillance, situational awareness, search and rescue, crisis response, and the protection of critical maritime infrastructure, with a particular focus on the Baltic Sea and Overseas Territories.

Maritime security is becoming increasingly complex, with growing activity at sea, evolving security threats, and a rapidly changing geopolitical environment. The Baltic Sea, in particular, has become a critical area for European security, with increasing attention to the protection of maritime infrastructure, surveillance of vessels and activities at sea, and the resilience of essential services. At the same time, Overseas Territories face specific challenges linked to their vast maritime areas, remote locations, and limited availability of resources. Space capabilities can play a key role in addressing these challenges by providing persistent and wide-area coverage, supporting vessel detection and tracking, enhancing situational awareness, enabling secure communications, and contributing to faster and more effective responses to maritime incidents.

The workshop highlighted the importance of combining space-based information with other sources of data and operational capabilities. Satellite imagery, Earth observation, navigation, telecommunications, and space-based surveillance can provide valuable information to maritime authorities and security actors, but their full potential depends on their integration into operational workflows and decision-making processes. Bringing together space and maritime communities is

therefore essential to raise awareness, better understand user needs, identify gaps, and develop services that are reliable, accessible, and adapted to real-world operational environments.

Turning these exchanges into concrete action was another key focus of the discussions. While space cannot address maritime security challenges on its own, it can provide essential capabilities to support those working at sea and strengthen their ability to monitor and respond to evolving threats. In this context, ESA is working to translate emerging needs into practical space-based solutions, supporting the development of new capabilities and services that can respond to operational challenges and help make better use of the opportunities offered by space.

The discussions also emphasized the broader security and defence dimension of maritime security. Maritime threats can extend across national borders and involve actors with significant resources and capabilities, making cooperation at national, regional and international levels essential to maintaining a comprehensive understanding of the maritime environment and responding effectively to evolving threats. In this context, regional security and defence organisations play an important role in connecting national efforts and addressing challenges that cannot be tackled by individual countries alone.

Equally important is the need to understand the requirements of different users when developing and delivering space-based services for maritime security. Users can include national governments and maritime authorities, as well as European organisations such as Frontex, the European Fisheries Control Agency (EFCA), and the European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts (ECMWF), each with specific operational requirements and areas of focus. Ensuring that space-based information and services are adapted to these different users is therefore essential to making them relevant and effective in real-world operational contexts.

The workshop brought together around 100 participants from across the space, maritime, defence, security, research, and industry communities. By facilitating direct exchanges between technology providers and end-users, the event contributed to identifying common challenges, strengthening cooperation, and exploring how space can further support safer, more secure, and more resilient maritime environments.

Beyond the technical discussions, the workshop reinforced a shared ambition to strengthen maritime security through sustained cooperation, long-term investment, and the development of practical capabilities. Safeguarding critical maritime infrastructure, protecting citizens, ensuring freedom of navigation, and strengthening resilience against evolving threats require close cooperation across the maritime, security, defence, research, industry, and space communities. In this context, participants emphasised the importance of continuing to develop and deploy space-enabled services that respond to operational needs, contribute to Europe's strategic autonomy, and support a safer, more resilient and sustainable maritime domain. The workshop thus provided a common platform for moving from identifying challenges to building the capabilities and partnerships needed to address them.