

Eurisy at the 77th International Astronautical Congress

Held under the theme "The World Needs More Space", IAC 2026 in Antalya brought together the global space community, reinforced space's strategic importance in addressing global challenges and supporting sustainable development and drove innovation while empowering the next generation of space leaders.



For Eurisy, IAC also provided an important opportunity to reconnect with members and partners. A key highlight was the Eurisy Members Forum, hosted at the ESA booth and opened by Eurisy President Eric Morel de Westgaver, who presented the Eurisy 2040 Strategy. This was followed by a keynote address from ESA Director General Josef Aschbacher, who highlighted Eurisy's unique role in

connecting the space sector with society and emphasised the need to engage communities beyond the traditional space ecosystem.

The Forum also welcomed Juan Carlos Cortés, Director of the Spanish Space Agency, who presented Barcelona's candidacy to host IAC 2029. Built around the theme of water, the bid reflects the growing recognition of space as a key enabler for addressing some of society's most pressing challenges. His intervention also highlighted the strengthening relationship between the Spanish Space Agency and Eurisy, building on the successful collaboration initiated at Space Debate Europe in Madrid. It further reflected the Agency's interest in deepening its engagement with the association, including its intention to join Eurisy as a member, opening new avenues for cooperation in the years ahead.



Eric Morel de Westgaver, President of Eurisy, with Juan Carlos Cortés, Director of the Spanish Space Agency, and Josef Aschbacher, Director General of ESA.

Bringing together representatives from across our membership and beyond, the Forum served as a



platform for strategic dialogue and collaboration. Among the participants present were: the upcoming ESA Director of Strategy, Legal and External Affairs, Jean-Luc Trullemans, and directors and delegations from ESA, EUMETSAT, CNES (France), ASI (Italy), DLR (Germany), the UK Space Agency, the Turkish Space Agency, BELSPO (Belgium), the Netherlands Space Agency (NLSA), POLSA (Poland), the Slovenian Space Office, Institute of Space Studies of Catalonia, the Portuguese Space Agency, the Slovak Space Office, as well as representatives from our partner ESPI.

Žaklin Butinar, Eurisy Deputy Secretary General, together with Heriberto Saldivar, Eurisy Vice President, Eric Morel de Westgaver, Eurisy President, and Josef Aschbacher, Director General of ESA.

Ahead of the Congress, Žaklin Butinar, Eurisy Deputy Secretary General, contributed to the 33rd UN/IAF Workshop on Space Economy Opportunities for Emerging Nations on October the 4th. In her contribution “Crossing the Valley of Death: From the Demand Side”, she argued that the main challenge facing many space ventures is not technology, but adoption. While startups often receive support to develop their solutions, long-term success depends on building a committed user base and responding to real societal and institutional needs.



Žaklin Butinar, Eurisy Deputy Secretary General, Philip Thomas (ESA, UK) and Nathalie Ricard (UNOOSA)

