

The Space Economy: Freedom and Fairness above the Skies

Octavian-Dragomir Jora

The Bucharest University of Economic Studies

Abstract

The space economy encompasses the totality of activities resulting from and in the presence of humankind in space and, in addition to its governmental and research components, it also features a critical and crescent business and market-oriented segment. The number of space systems, especially those in Earth orbit, has augmented significantly, leading to a surge in satellite services that has strikingly outstripped global economic growth. The huge demand for communications, data gathering, navigation, positioning and timing services grows exponentially with the development of new applications with terrestrial débouché and encouraged by state actors seeing this field as a strategic force multiplier and area for competition/competitiveness. This research observes that even if costs continue to fall (on the technological “supply-side”) and reliance on circum-terrestrial space-based facilities continues to rise (on the “demand-side”), there are international institutional hurdles against the unleash of space quest for fear that uneven chances to accede in space will ignite old terrestrial conflicts. Special attention will be drawn on the reasons for the potential prolongation of the image of cosmic space as a “museum” rather than a “laboratory”, and a “laboratory” rather than an “workshop”, discussing whether the just / efficient paradigm in the outer space governance / ownership / sovereignty is “entrepreneurial liberal capitalism”, “egalitarian social democracy” or “reactionary conservatism”.

Keywords: cosmic space; entrepreneurial capitalism; social conservatism; social-democracy; technological progress