

Abstract

Cyber-attacks to various sectors have been on the rise over the past decade, and the EU space programme is not exempt to these. Due to many European industries and sectors relying heavily on space-enabled systems, maintaining the security and availability of EU space is key for the proper function and prosperity of the EU and its competitiveness. With the emergence of New Space, space-based systems are becoming more connected to the internet, creating more vulnerabilities which can be exploited by cyber-attackers. However, space-based objects are not the only segment of the EU space programme that are vulnerable to exploitation. Space cybersecurity has not been on the forefront of researcher's focus, until now. The past decade has shown a shift in attention towards the issue of space cybersecurity, but this mainly focuses outside of the EU. This research aims to find out how cyber threats to the EU space programme have evolved throughout the past decade and how they have been tackled within the EU. Regional and international cooperation on the matters of space cybersecurity of the EU space programme will be explored through the optic of identity building through shared threat. Research interviews with experts from the field of EU space programme cybersecurity shed light on the current situation, geopolitical significance, and possibilities for cooperation for a more secure EU space programme. Finally, this thesis will discuss key findings of the thematic analysis of research interviews and studied literature, which may help in the future development of cooperation in securing the EU space programme from cyber threats.