

## **Diploma thesis project**

Advancing Space Security in the 21st Century - Private Actors and Governance of Space

**Keywords:** Space Security, Private Space Actors, Space Debris, Space Policy, Space Governance, Space Law, Public-Private-Partnerships, SpaceX, Blue Origin

### **Abstract:**

In an era of space commercialization, emerging private space companies are changing the scope and structure of space activities and space security. This study explores the implications of these actors on space security, focusing on an in-depth case study of two leading space companies, SpaceX and Blue Origin. The thesis uses the theoretical framework of the Copenhagen School to examine the role of private space actors in this complex landscape. Through the use of qualitative research methods, an analysis of the profiles and activities of SpaceX and Blue Origin and their potential implications for space security was conducted. The selection of these companies is based on their essential role in pioneering private space exploration and their significant impact on space security paradigms. The findings reveal a complex interaction between private space actors, space security, and space law. The rise of private space companies has revealed pressing space security issues, amplifying questions about space debris, dual-use technology, and the weaponization of space. At the same time, it has exposed gaps and challenges in existing international space law and national policies. Moreover, the public-private partnerships which have been observed in the private military industry for decades already, similarly develop in the space sector, adding an additional layer of complexity.

The emergence of private space actors has significant implications for space security and future research should focus intensely on this nexus. Researchers should aim to support developing legal and policy frameworks that can adequately address the new challenges posed by the commercial privatization of space. The implications of these developments are impacting actors far beyond the classic, military security environment, underscoring the need for continued academic inquiry and robust policy responses.