

**Question for written answer E-005465/2021
to the Commission**

Rule 138

Dominique Bilde (ID)

Subject: Difficulties faced by ArianeGroup and European institutional launches

In my written question to the Commission of 10 July 2019¹, I highlighted the difficulties faced by the ArianeGroup, which the French daily newspaper *Les Echos* puts down to 'the apparent reluctance of European countries to deliver on their commitments to the prospective Ariane 6 launch vehicle, the successor to Ariane 5 as from 2020'².

ArianeGroup is dependent on institutional launches, which, according to the French magazine *Challenges*³, account for 57% of launches in the US, 79% in Russia and 89% in China, compared with 27% in Europe⁴.

On 26 July 2021, *Les Echos* reported that France and Germany had signed a provisional agreement to protect the future of Ariane 6 by granting an additional EUR 140 per year in funding⁵.

However, the agreement would also involve transferring the production of Vinci's re-ignitable liquid propulsion engine from the French site in Vernon to the German site in Lampoldshausen⁶. 'This transfer would represent 40 000 hours of work, or 30 full-time jobs', explained a unionist quoted by *Les Echos*.

In the context of the 2021-2027 EU Space Programme⁷, what will the Commission do to foster a sufficient number of institutional launches, without compromising French industrial sovereignty?

¹ https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/E-9-2019-002213_EN.html

² 'The slowdown of the satellite market is compounded by the apparent reluctance of European countries to deliver on their commitments to the prospective Ariane 6 launch vehicle'; <https://www.lesechos.fr/industrie-services/air-defense/arianegroup-voudrait-supprimer-2300-postes-sur-5-ans-146868>

³ https://www.challenges.fr/entreprise/aeronautique/pourquoi-l-immobilisme-europeen-menace-ariane-6_620543

⁴ '57 % of launches in the US, 79 % in Russia and 89 % in China, compared with only 27 % in Europe'.

⁵ 'L'Agence spatiale européenne se penche sur le sort d'Ariane 6', Anne Bauer, *Les Echos*, 26 July 2021.

⁶ 'However, in return, Germany is asking for the production of the Vinci engine to be moved from the French site in Vernon to the German site in Lampoldshausen.'

⁷ <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/fr/policies/eu-space-programme/>