

Question for written answer E-003750/2023
to the Commission
Rule 138
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Subject: EU satellite fleet: technologically obsolete?

The EU has decided to create its own 170-strong satellite fleet called IRIS², at a cost of EUR 6 billion. The aim of this whole venture is to provide communication services to different areas of EU Member States which, for a variety of reasons, lack modern telecommunication infrastructure. The launch of the 170 satellites is scheduled to begin in 2025 and the plan is for the whole fleet to be in orbit by 2027. However, telecommunication industry analysts have said that judging by the specifications in the IRIS² call for tender, the satellite fleet in question is technologically obsolete before it has even 'got off the ground' because AI technology does not feature in the satellites' technical specifications. Given the EU's lengthy bureaucratic processes, it is unlikely that the relevant changes can be made to the technical specifications in time for the scheduled launch of the satellites in 2025, if not impossible.

In view of this:

Does the Commission intend to act quickly to change the technical specifications of the tender in order to avoid wasting valuable EU resources and prevent the venture from turning into a complete fiasco?

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