

European Space Agency (ESA)

History. Established in 1975, replacing the European Space Research Organization (ESRO) and the European Launcher Development Organization (ELDO).

Members. Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom. Canada takes part in some projects under a co-operation agreement.

Activities. ESA is the intergovernmental agency in Europe responsible for the exploitation of space science, research and technology for exclusively peaceful purposes. Its aim is to define and put into effect a long-term European space policy that allows Europe to remain competitive in the field of space technology. It has a policy of co-operation with various partners on the basis that pooling resources and sharing work will boost the effectiveness of its programmes. Its space plan covers the fields of science, Earth observation, telecommunications, navigation, space segment technologies, ground infrastructures, space transport systems and microgravity research.

Headquarters: 8–10 rue Mario Nikis, 75738 Paris Cedex 15, France.

Website: <http://www.esa.int>

Director-General: Jean-Jacques Dordain (France).

CERN – The European Organization for Nuclear Research

Founded in 1954, CERN is the world's leading particle physics research centre. By studying the behaviour of nature's fundamental particles, CERN aims to find out what our Universe is made of and how it works. CERN's biggest accelerator, the Large Hadron Collider (LHC), became operational in Sept. 2008. One of the beneficial byproducts of CERN activity is the Worldwide Web, developed at CERN to give particle physicists easy access to shared data. One of Europe's first joint ventures, CERN now has a membership of 20 member states: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovak Republic, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom. Some 6,500 scientists, half of the world's particle physicists, use CERN's facilities. They represent 500 institutions and 85 nationalities.

Address: CH-1211 Geneva 23, Switzerland.

Website: <http://www.cern.ch>

Director-General: Rolf-Dieter Heuer (Germany).

Central European Initiative (CEI)

In Nov. 1989 Austria, Hungary, Italy and Yugoslavia met on Italy's initiative to form an economic and political co-operation group in the region.

Members. Albania, Austria, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Italy, Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Ukraine.

Address: Executive Secretariat, Via Genova 9, 34132 Trieste, Italy.

Website: <http://www.ceinet.org>

Email: cei-es@cei-es.org

Nordic Council

Founded in 1952 as a co-operative link between the parliaments and governments of the Nordic states. The co-operation focuses on Intra-Nordic co-operation, co-operation with Europe/EU/EEA and co-operation with the adjacent areas. The Council consists of 87 elected MPs and the committees meet several times a year, as required. Every year the Nordic Council grants prizes for literature, music, nature and environment.

Members. Denmark (including the Faroe Islands and Greenland), Finland (including Åland), Iceland, Norway, Sweden.

Address: Store Strandstræde 18, DK-1255 Copenhagen K, Denmark.

Website: <http://www.norden.org>

Email: nordisk-rad@norden.org

President: Erkki Tuomioja (Finland).

Nordic Development Fund (NDF)

Established in 1989, the NDF is a development aid organization of the five Nordic countries, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden. NDF capital totals SDR 515m. and €330m. Credits are offered to developing countries, with poorer African, Asian and Latin American countries taking priority.

Address: Fabianinkatu 34, PO Box 185, FIN-00171 Helsinki, Finland.

Website: <http://www.ndf.fi>

Email: info.ndf@ndf.fi

Managing Director: Helge Semb (Norway).

Nordic Investment Bank (NIB)

The Nordic Investment Bank, which commenced operations in Aug. 1976, is a multilateral financial institution owned by Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway and Sweden. It finances public and private projects both within and outside the Nordic area. Priority is given to projects furthering economic co-operation between the member countries or improving the environment. Focal points include the neighbouring areas of the member countries.

Address: Fabianinkatu 34, PO Box 249, FI-00171 Helsinki, Finland.

Website: <http://www.nib.int>

Email: info@nib.int

President: Johnny Åkerholm (Finland).

Council of the Baltic Sea States

Established in 1992 in Copenhagen following a conference of ministers of foreign affairs.

Members. Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, Russia, Sweden and the European Commission.