

Europe Space Agency sets 10-bln-euro space budget

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Members of European Space Agency (ESA) on Wednesday approved a multi-year budget of 10 billion euros (\$12.3 billion), ESA director general Jean-Jacques Dordain said, hailing this as a "big success."

Spending levels are largely unchanged compared with the outgoing budget, but "it's a big success in spite of the [economic situation](#)," Dordain said after a two-day strategy meeting of the 20-nation agency.

Dordain had proposed three-year spending of 12 billion euros (\$15 billion) but had said last week he would be satisfied with "something around 10 billion euros," meaning that current levels would be maintained.

In the event, spending will be just over 10 billion euros, he said.

Many of ESA's members are struggling with constrained budgets, and many proposed space projects have been sidelined in the light of close scrutiny.

The meeting was the first at ministerial level in four years.

The budget is averaged out over three years, but many programmes can be longer or shorter than this.

The budget includes funding for a new launcher, called [Ariane 5](#) ME, which would start to fly in 2017, and work towards a successor, Ariane

6, whose maiden flight would be in 2021 or 2022.

It also funds ESA's continuing participation in the [International Space Station](#) to 2020.

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