



Infrastructure for Resilience, Interconnectivity and Security by Satellite (IRIS²)

High-level procurement plan

The SpaceRISE consortium, consisting of Eutelsat S.A., Hispasat S.A., and SES Astra, signed two important agreements in December 2024: the Concession Agreement with the European Commission and the Partnership Project Contract (PP Contract) with the European Space Agency (ESA). The consortium will be responsible to design, deliver, and operate the Infrastructure for Resilience, Interconnectivity, and Security by Satellite (IRIS²) over the next twelve years.

The IRIS² Satellite Constellation is the European Union's third flagship, addressing long-term challenges of EU's security, safety and resilience by offering enhanced connectivity services to governmental users.

The new multi-orbital constellation will combine the benefits offered by Medium Earth Orbit (MEO) and Low Earth Orbit (LEO) satellites. It is set to provide secure connectivity services to the European Union and its Member States as well as broadband connectivity for governmental authorities, private companies and European citizens, while ensuring high-speed internet broadband to cope with connectivity dead zones.

The SpaceRISE consortium is supported by its Core Team of European subcontractors from the satcom and telecom ecosystem, including Deutsche Telekom / T-Systems (DT) for the Ground Segment.

To select the Ground Segment prime subcontractors, SpaceRISE has initiated a dialogue with DT.

DT is one of the key partners in SpaceRISE Core Team and DT is considered as of today a potential Prime for IT-INFRA and 5G Core Network.

The IRIS² programme will be managed in DT by T-Systems International, a 100% subsidiary of Deutsche Telekom and one of the leading service providers for ICT and digitalisation solutions in Europe. T-Systems contributes many years of experience as contractor in the Galileo, Copernicus, and TESTA programmes of the EU. T-Systems has locations in 26 countries and over 26,000 employees.

In line with the IRIS² Regulation,¹ at least 30 % of the value of the Concession Agreement shall be subcontracted by competitive tendering at various levels of subcontracting to companies outside the group of the prime tenderer, in particular in order to enable the cross-border participation of SMEs in the space ecosystem.

¹ Regulation (EU) 2023/588 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 March 2023 establishing the Union Secure Connectivity Programme for the period 2023-2027, OJ L 79, 17.3.2023, p. 1.

In order to ensure the widest participation from the European industry to the Programme, the section below is intended to provide transparency on the anticipated procurements to be launched by DT for the Ground Segment elements in scope.

For the overall overview of the procurement actions, reference is made to the SpaceRISE High-Level Procurement Plan for the Ground Segment published on esa-star news: <https://esastar-publication-ext.sso.esa.int/news/details/11172>

The table below provides an overview of the procurements lots to be released by DT. This list will evolve depending on the needs of the programme; dates are indicative only.

Scope	High level Description	RFI / RFP issue date
IT-INFRA	<p>DT intends to issue an RFI to down select providers for the RFP phase.</p> <p>The IT-INFRA will provide the common IT infrastructure for the ground segment, the data centres and associated virtualised infrastructure, the network to interface sites and equipment, as well as the supporting functions.</p> <p>IT industry standards define modern methods for developing complex ground systems, which are now layered and leverage Infrastructure-as-a-Service (IaaS) and Platform/Container-as-a-Service (PaaS/CaaS), and Software-Defined-Network (SDN) concepts. This approach relies on industrial suppliers specialising in IT and network infrastructure, offering off-the-shelf commercial products, including but not limited to servers, storage systems, switches, routers, and software components.</p> <p>For the RFI, derisking includes all the design and evaluation activities including those for support functions and sustainability aspects.</p>	January/February 2026 (RFI)

Scope	High level Description	RFI / RFP issue date
5G Core Network	<p>DT, considering the well-defined 5G Core supply chain, intends to issue an RFP for the 5G Core Network.</p> <p>IRIS² satellites will use a 5G Core Network. The 5G Core Network will manage user terminal connections and mobility, establish and manage data sessions, facilitate secure authentication and user data management, and control traffic via user plane functions and network slicing.</p>	January/February 2026 (RFP)

DT will publish the RFI / RFP announcements for the above-mentioned procurements on esa-star news to ensure the widest participation of the European industry to the Programme. Interested economic operators will be required to formally express their interest to DT to receive the RFI / RFP documentation (contact details will be included in the announcements themselves).

As part of the RFI process, interested economic operators will be invited to submit short proposals, which will be evaluated in accordance with the evaluation criteria outlined in the RFI. DT will only invite those interested economic operators whose short proposal received the best marking to participate in the subsequent stages of the procurement process.

As part of the RFP process, interested economic operators will be invited to submit proposals, which will be evaluated in accordance with the evaluation criteria outlined in the RFP. As a result of the RFP procurement process, DT intends to award (a) contract(s).

At this stage, this list is indicative only and subject to changes. Procurement actions will be published in due time. DT will not answer requests in areas not specifically identified in published RFIs/RFPs.