



SPACE

awareness

WHO IS A SPACE LAWYER?

Field Law

Type Industry, government

Level of study Bachelor, Masters



What is the field about?

A legal system is generally created in order to regulate certain activities. In the case of 'space law' the aim is to agree on certain rules that apply to human activities in outer space. The field can be divided into: international space law and domestic and commercial space law. The international part is a branch of 'public international law' since it is made and applied by states in relation to other states. The domestic part, or 'national space law' is made by the state but applies to non-governmental entities, such as private commercial companies. This means that a lawyer who practices space law should have a good understanding of international law and domestic space and commercial laws.

What would I do every day?

A space lawyer is a lawyer first. This means supporting governmental or commercial space activities by attending meetings and negotiations, drafting and reviewing documents and basically thinking a lot on the law and the space activity in question.

How much and what do I need to study?

Firstly, you will need a bachelor's degree in law (LLB) in order to know the basics of the legal system. At this stage, you will learn many interesting things but you will not be trained as a 'space lawyer'. Depending on your home country, you may need to be licensed as a lawyer in order to practice any kind of law before becoming a space lawyer. If that is not the case, you can find related work as a jurist or advisor rather than a lawyer. In any case, in order to be

specifically educated to deal with space activities you will need to continue and obtain a master's degree (LLM). There are several universities which offer a specific master in air and space law or space and telecommunication law. If you want to become an expert, it is a good idea to write a doctoral thesis on a space law topic which means having a PhD. All of these degrees plus training time to become a lawyer seem like a lot, but remember that it will be very interesting!

Where can I work?

You can work at a ministry or a space agency if you wish to work for the government. You can also work with the space industry in a commercial space company or at a law firm which specializes in space law. If you prefer academia, working at a university or a research institute is also a good option.

This is the job for me, if...

You like the idea of being a lawyer and solve complex problems relating to space activities and innovation.

A space lawyer should be:

Opiniated and not afraid to lead others towards accepting new ideas.

Highly motivated but able to do things in a calm and well-thought-out manner.

Adaptive to changing regulation and market needs as well as exciting new space activities.

Great with people!

Learn more about a space lawyer's work by:

- Reading this article "Space Law 101: An Introduction to Space Law"
- Listening to "Songs for Space (Law): The Fabulous Forty"
- Visiting the page of European Centre for Space Law (ECSL)

This article is written by Dr. Neta Palkovitz, Space Lawyer at Innovative Solutions In Space B.V. (ISIS).

Image: Ariane 5 lift off

Credit: ESA/CNES/ARIANESPACE-Service Optique CSG



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