



DLR Web special: The High Resolution Stereo Camera has been on board Mars Express for 10 years

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Nobody would have believed it back then; when the European Space Agency (ESA) spacecraft Mars Express was launched on 2 June 2003 to investigate our neighbouring planet, its mission was intended to last one Mars year, which is equivalent to about two Earth years. This is now the tenth year that the Mars Express spacecraft has been orbiting Mars, enabling us to obtain a wealth of important information about its geological development.

This is also the reason why the mission has been extended three times by ESA, the last extension being until late 2014. It has been a scientific success, and the on-board experiments continue to function perfectly. One of the seven scientific experiments is the High Resolution Stereo Camera (HRSC), developed at DLR and built jointly with German industry. It is the most comprehensive German planetary research experiment ever. The HRSC acquires images of Mars in high resolution, in colour and in 3D. More than half the planet has already been imaged at a resolution of 20 metres per pixel, down to even 10 metres per pixel. The objective is to chart the complete Martian topography. After 10 years of operation, more than two thirds of the planet's surface has been recorded. The images provide a valuable basis for current and future research into Mars.

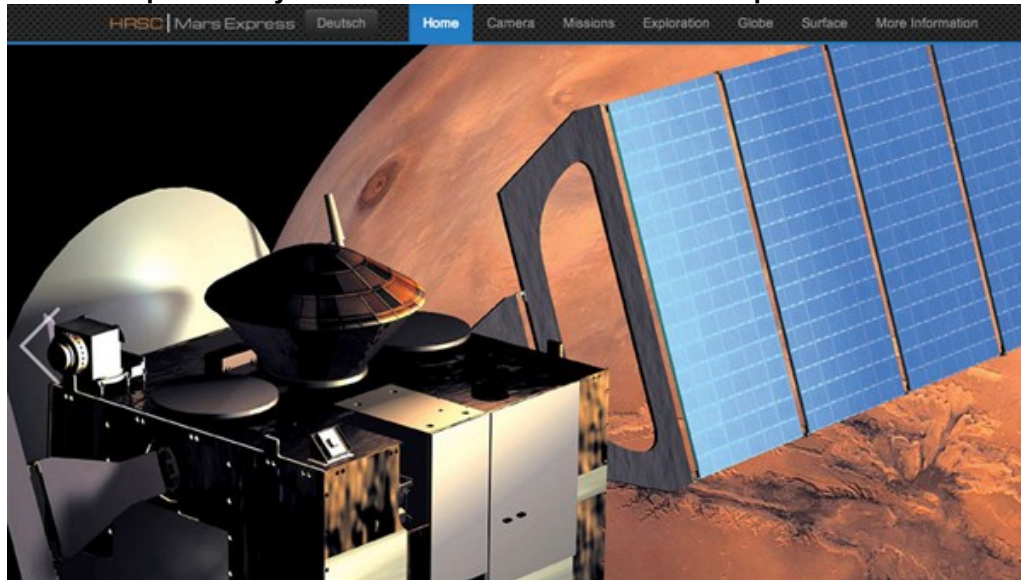
This, alone, is enough to produce a very special feature. On the tenth anniversary of the mission, the DLR Web special will take you on a trip to our planetary neighbour. See stunning images of its surface; find out more about its climatic history and moons, and about the history of its exploration. DLR scientists report on current research results and the previous, somewhat surprising information they have acquired based on HRSC data.

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