



5 December 2021

PRESS
RELEASE

PR114-2021

NEW LAUNCH SUCCESS FOR SOYUZ GALILEO FOC 23 AND FOC 24 SATELLITES IN ORBIT

During the night of Saturday 4 to Sunday 5 December, Soyuz accomplished a flawless first launch of the year from the Guiana Space Centre (CSG), placing the 27th and 28th satellites in the Galileo constellation into orbit. The flight was the sixth of the year from the CSG and Soyuz's 26th from French Guiana.

With a launch mass of 1,645 kg, the two new satellites take the total number of Galileo satellites in orbit to 28. Galileo satellites are built by prime contractor OHB System and the payloads supplied by Surrey Satellite Technology Ltd (SSTL), a subsidiary of Airbus Defence and Space.

Galileo is the European satellite navigation system, delivering ultra-precise positioning, navigation and timing services to more than 2.3 billion users all over the world. With its standard dual-frequency capability, Galileo affords real-time positioning accuracy on the order of one metre. This system—the largest infrastructure initiative ever undertaken by the European Union—guarantees strategic independence and sovereignty for member states and their citizens. Funded and wholly owned by the EU, designed by ESA and operated by the EU Agency for the Space Programme (EUSPA), it is built around innovative technologies developed by Europe's industry for the benefit of citizens everywhere.

Commenting on the launch, CNES Chairman & CEO Philippe Baptiste said: "This new launch success takes us a little closer to full deployment of the first generation of Galileo satellites. I would like to thank the teams contributing to this fine European mission at ESA, the European Commission, Arianespace, OHB and across Europe's space industry, and of course CNES's teams in Kourou, Paris and Toulouse."

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