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December 2025

Launch kit

VA266

Ariane 6

VA266

GALILEO L14

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MISSION DESCRIPTION

Arianespace's seventh launch of 2025 will place a pair of Galileo satellites in a Medium Earth Orbit (MEO), with Ariane 6.

The launcher will be carrying a total payload of approximately 1.6 tons.

The launch will be carried out from Europe's Spaceport in Kourou, French Guiana.

DATE AND TIME:

Liftoff is planned on December 17, 2025 at:
- 00:01 Washington D.C. time
- 02:01 Kourou time
- 05:01 Universal time (UTC)
- 06:01 Paris time
- 14:01 Tokyo time

MISSION DURATION:

The nominal duration of the mission (from liftoff to separation of the satellite) is: 3 hours and 55 minutes.

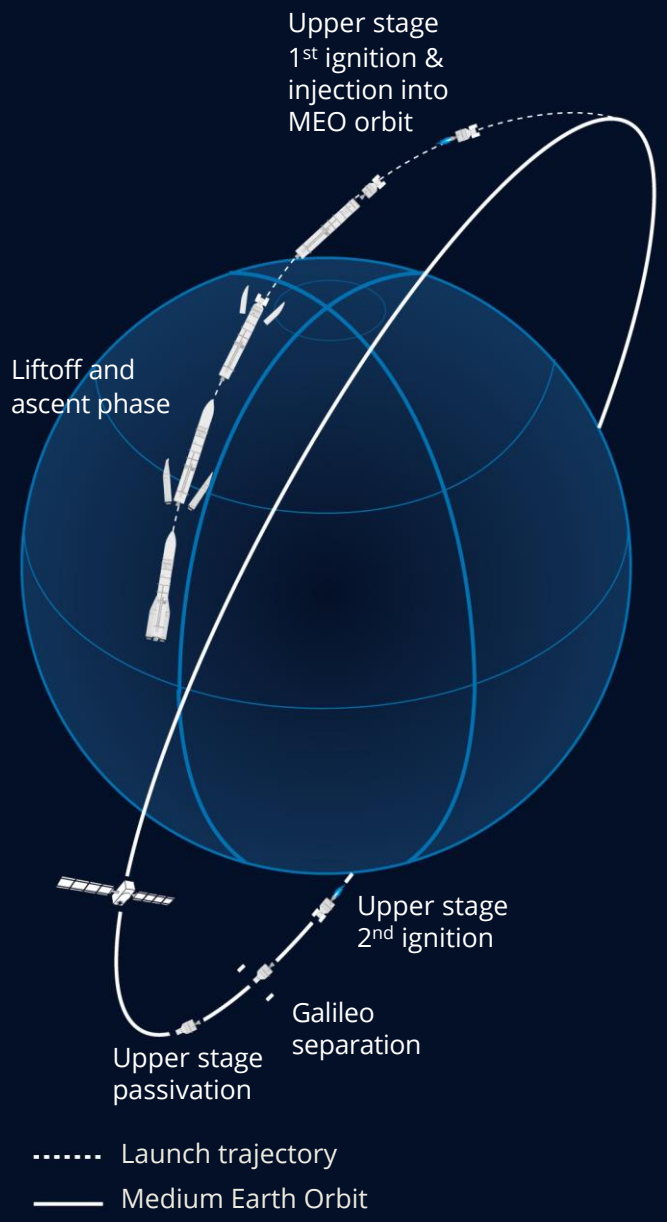
SATELLITES:

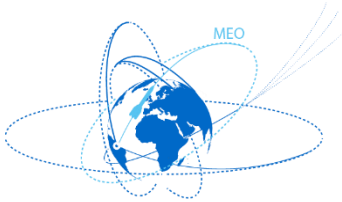
- **SAT 33 and SAT 34,** 14th operational launch for the Galileo programme (Galileo L14)
- Customer: European Commission & EU Agency for the Space Programme (EUSPA) within the scope of a contract signed with the European Space Agency (ESA)

TARGETED ORBIT:

Medium Earth Orbit at an altitude of approximately 22 922 km and 54° of inclination

ARIANE 6 MEDIUM EARTH ORBIT (MEO) MISSION PROFILE





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PRESS CONTACTS

Arianespace
Contacts available here:
newsroom.arianespace.com

ArianeGroup
Contacts available here:
press.ariane.group

WATCH THE LAUNCH LIVE

Link to the Road to Space launch show:
arianespace.com/road-to-space

GALILEO L14: BOOSTING THE EU'S GLOBAL NAVIGATION SATELLITE SYSTEM

DID YOU KNOW?

Galileo is the world's most precise global navigation satellite system, currently serving 4.5 billion users around the world.

With **Ariane 6 flight VA266**, representing the **14th operational launch for the Galileo programme (Galileo L14)**, two more satellites (designated SAT 33 and 34) will join the first-generation of Galileo satellites.

This will bring the total number of satellites launched to 34, further improving the precision, availability and robustness of the Galileo system and services.

Billions of people around the globe use Galileo every day, and it is crucial for key sectors such as rail, maritime, agriculture and search and rescue operations. All smartphones sold in the European Single Market must be compatible with Galileo.

A flagship programme funded by the European Union (EU), Galileo is owned and managed by the European Commission. Since its inception, ESA leads the design, development and qualification of the space and ground systems, as well as procuring launches. ESA is also entrusted with research and development activities for the future of Galileo within the EU programme Horizon Europe. EUSPA manages the operations (deploying, maintaining, and upgrading the Galileo system) while acting as the service provider, overseeing market uptake and closing the loop with users.

SATELLITES	SAT 33 and 34 for the Galileo programme
CUSTOMER	European Commission & EU Agency for the Space Programme (EUSPA) within the scope of a contract signed with the European Space Agency (ESA)
MANUFACTURER	OHB System AG
MISSION	Global Navigation Satellite System (GNSS)
MASS AT LAUNCH	700 kg approximately for each satellite
COVERAGE AREA	Global
LIFETIME	Designed for 12 years

The Directorate General for Defence Industry and Space (DG DEFIS) leads the European Commission's activities in the European defence industry and European space sectors. The European Commission is the owner and programme manager of the EU Space Programme. Its activities include assessing current trends, identifying emerging challenges, and ensuring that the objectives of the Space Programme are aligned with broader EU priorities such as innovation, economic growth, and security.

The European Union Agency for the Space Programme (EUSPA) provides safe and secure European Union satellite navigation services, promotes the commercialization of Galileo, EGNOS, and Copernicus data and services and coordinates the EU's forthcoming governmental satellite communications programme GOVSATCOM and manages the EU SST Front Desk.

The ESA Navigation Directorate leads the design, development, qualification of EU programmes EGNOS and Galileo and is entrusted with R&D activities through Horizon Europe. ESA Navigation prepares the future of satellite navigation through its ESA programme Future NAV, with the Celeste, Genesis and Future PNT demonstrator missions, and fosters innovation and competitiveness through the NAVISP programme.

CONTACTS

DG DEFIS, European Commission
DEFIS COMM-SPP-DEFIS@ec.europa.eu
defence-industry-space.ec.europa.eu

European Space Agency (ESA)
media@esa.int
esa.int

EUSPA
com@euspa.europa.eu
euspa.europa.eu

ARIANE 6 LAUNCHER

Fairing (short version)

Height: 14 m
Diameter: 5.4 m

Galileo satellites (SAT 33 and 34)

Launch Vehicle Adapter

Upper stage

Height: 9 m

Cryogenic Vinci® engine

Thrust: 180 kN

Main stage

Height: 32 m

Booster

Height: 22 m
Diameter: 3.4 m

P120C solid rocket motor

Thrust: 3,700 kN

Cryogenic Vulcain 2.1® engine

Thrust: 1,370 kN

Liftoff weight: 500 tonnes
Liftoff thrust: 8,000 kN

DID YOU KNOW?

As lead contractor for Ariane 6 development and production, ArianeGroup orchestrates a huge European space industry chain in all aspects from management of launcher upgrades to supply of the flight software for each mission. This collaboration is the heart of Ariane 6's success.

This includes structures and equipment, propulsion systems, integration of the different stages and integration of the launcher at Europe's Spaceport in French Guiana. ArianeGroup coordinates more than 600 European companies in the Ariane 6 program, including around 350 SMEs.

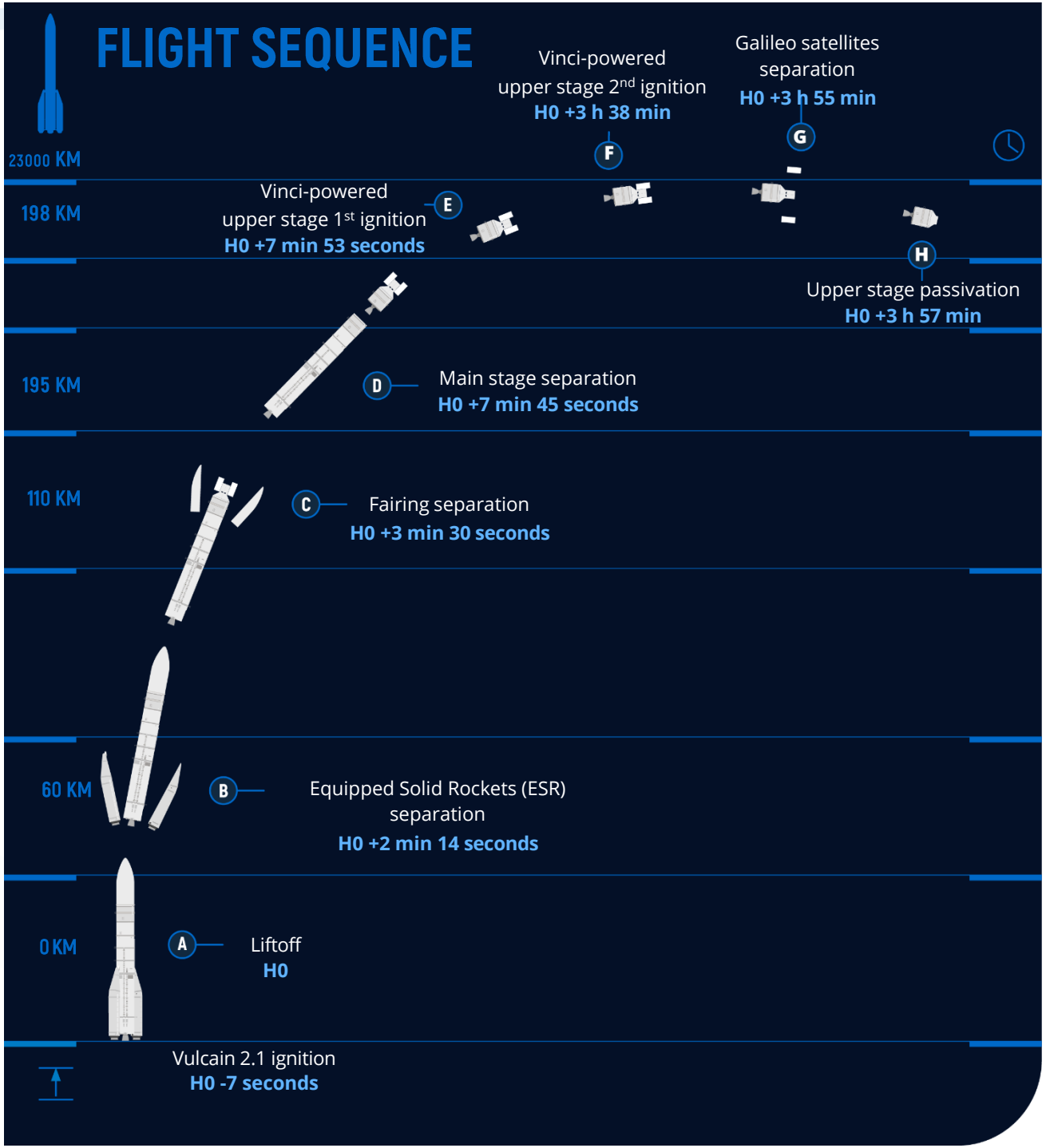
We are continuously improving the competitiveness of the Ariane 6 system, which is designed to be modular, versatile, and scalable.

LAUNCH CAMPAIGN

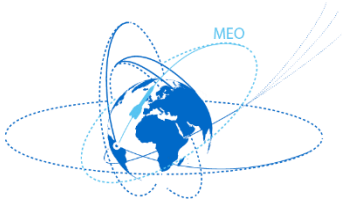
17/12/2025	Final launch countdown. Liftoff.
16/12/2025	SSHEL (Liquid helium subsystem) filling
15/12/2025	Launch Readiness Review (LRR)
12/12/2025	Satellite Wet Dress Rehearsal (WDR)
11/12/2025	Transfer of satellites under fairing to launch zone (ZL4) and assembly on launcher
09/12/2025	Satellites placed under fairing – encapsulation
02/12/2025	Start of satellites strapping operations
26/11/2025 - 27/11/2025	Transfer of central core to launch zone (ZL4) and verticalization Transfer of boosters to ZL4
26/11/2025	Start of satellite fillings
06/11/2025	Galileo satellites arrive in French Guiana
22/08/2025	Beginning of Launcher Assembly Building phase NB: central core activities for previous Ariane 6 flight VA265 were performed in parallel of the VA266 launcher assembly activities
21/08/2025	Canopée ship arrives in French Guiana with the Ariane 6 stages

— Satellite operations — Launcher operations

FLIGHT SEQUENCE



LAUNCH STAKEHOLDERS



ARIANESPACE

From Earth to orbit, Arianespace serves its customers and their ambitions, whether they involve scientific missions to study our planet, facilitate communication and navigation, or support many other applications.

Arianespace designs and deploys space transportation services for all types of satellites, to all orbits, with the capacity to transport any mass, at any time. Arianespace operates the new-generation Ariane 6 launcher, developed by ESA, with ArianeGroup as prime industrial contractor. With over 45 years of experience, Arianespace has launched more than 1,100 satellites, for over 150 institutional and commercial customers worldwide.

Arianespace is headquartered in Les Mureaux, France. Our launch base is at the Guiana Space Center in Kourou, French Guiana, and we have offices in Tokyo, Singapore and Washington, D.C. Arianespace is a subsidiary of ArianeGroup, which holds 78.2% of its share capital, with the balance held by other shareholders from the Ariane and Vega European rocket industry.

Press contact:
newsroom.arianespace.com

ARIANEGROUP

ArianeGroup is an industrial company delivering critical missions for the space and defence sectors. With 8,300 highly qualified employees in France and Germany, ArianeGroup has unique expertise in access to space, covering the full spectrum of civil and military launch systems, including design, development, manufacturing, integration, flight preparation, operational readiness and end-of-life decommissioning. ArianeGroup is lead contractor for the Ariane 6 European launcher for the European Space Agency (ESA).

ArianeGroup also offers a broad range of space, defence and industrial equipment and services, both individually and together with its subsidiaries Sodern, Pyroalliance, Nuclétudes and APP

In the field of space launchers, ArianeGroup's subsidiary Arianespace markets and operates Ariane 6, and its subsidiary MaiaSpace develops and markets the reusable launcher Maia.

ArianeGroup, equally owned by Airbus and Safran, posted consolidated revenues of €2.5 billion in 2024.

Press contact:
press.ariane.group

ESA

ESA guides the development of Europe's space capabilities and makes sure that space contributes to a safer, more prosperous and sustainable future for its citizens. As an international organisation with 23 Member States, ESA coordinates its members' financial and intellectual resources to undertake ambitious programmes and initiatives that largely surpass the scope of action of a single European state.

ESA oversees the development of Europe's current and future space transportation services and solutions, including Ariane 6, Vega-C, Vega-E, Space Rider, and of technologies for transport in-, to-, and from-space, notably through the Future Launchers Preparatory Programme. On Ariane and Vega, ESA manages the overall programmes while European industry builds the launch vehicles with ArianeGroup (Ariane 6) and Avio (Vega-C and -E) as prime contractors and design authorities. ESA also fosters commercial space transportation services under private lead through initiatives like Boost! and the European Launcher Challenge. ESA Member States fund about two-thirds of the total cost of running and maintaining Europe's Spaceport in French Guiana.

Press contact:
media@esa.int

CNES

CNES (Centre National d'Études Spatiales) is the government agency responsible for shaping France's space policy and implementing it in Europe. Its task is to conceive and orbit satellites, invent the space systems of the future and nurture new services to aid us in our daily lives. Founded in 1961, it is the initiator of major space projects, launch vehicles and satellites, and the partner of choice for industry fuelling innovation. CNES comprises some 2,400 men and women with a passion for space working to open up new and infinite fields of applications in five core areas of focus: Ariane, science, Earth observation, telecommunications and defence.

The agency is a key player driving technology innovation, economic development and industrial policy for the nation. It also fosters scientific collaborations and has forged numerous international partnerships. France, represented by CNES, is one of the leading contributors to the European Space Agency (ESA).

Press contact:
cnes-presse@cnes.fr