

Europe postpones launch of Herschel, Planck telescopes

March 13 2009

The launch next month of two large European telescopes designed to probe the formation of galaxies and the "Big Bang" scientists say created the universe has been postponed by several weeks, it was announced here on Friday.

The [Herschel](#) and [Planck](#) telescopes were to have been taken aloft on April 16 in a dual [launch](#) from the European Space Agency's base in Kourou, French Guiana.

The launch has been postponed to carry out additional ground checks, ESA and launch operator [Arianespace](#) said in separate press releases.

"The decision to postpone the launch by several weeks was needed to finalise the validation of the [spacecraft](#) operations procedures following recent software updates," ESA said.

A new launch date will be announced at the end of March.

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