

Crew from Germany, US, Russia board ISS

June 8 2018



Russia's Soyuz rocket successfully carried NASA's Serena Aunon-Chancellor, Sergey Prokopyev of Russia and German Alexander Gerst to the International Space Station Friday

Two astronauts and a cosmonaut docked with the International Space Station on Friday and joined the current crew after blasting off two days

earlier, Russia's space agency Roscosmos said.

German Alexander Gerst of the European Space Agency, NASA's Serena Aunon-Chancellor and Russian Sergei Prokopyev, a relatively inexperienced crew, successfully docked with the ISS at 13:01 GMT and then entered the orbiting space laboratory, Roscosmos said.

They were welcomed by the station's current residents: US astronauts Drew Feustel and Richard Arnold, and Russian Oleg Artemyev.

The new arrivals only have a total of one mission between them—42-year-old Gerst's debut aboard the ISS was in 2014—making this one of the less experienced crews to join the space station in recent times.

Aunon-Chancellor, a doctor, was only confirmed by NASA this year for the mission, which will last five months.

The [crew](#) blasted off from Russia's rented Baikonur base in Kazakhstan on Wednesday.

The astronauts will miss the World Cup, hosted by Russia from June 14, but they are all set to play a football match on the day of the final on July 15.

The Soyuz rocket that carried the trio into space was emblazoned with the tournament's emblem.

The most recent team to leave the ISS—Russian Anton Shkaplerov, Scott Tingle of the United States and Norishige Kanai of Japan—landed back on Earth on Sunday, bringing back a football kicked around the ISS that may be used in the World Cup opening game in Moscow.

The [space](#) laboratory has been orbiting Earth at about 28,000 kilometres per hour (17,000 miles per hour) since 1998.

Space research has been one of the few areas of international cooperation between Russia and the West that has not been wrecked by the Ukraine crisis.

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