

Video: BepiColombo mission to Mercury

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BepiColombo is scheduled for launch at 01:45 GMT (03:45 CEST) on 20 October on an Ariane 5 from Europe's Spaceport in Kourou.

Final assembly of the two orbiters and transfer module has taken place, ready for the spacecraft to be integrated into its Ariane 5 launcher.

BepiColombo is Europe's first mission to Mercury, the smallest and least explored planet in the inner Solar System. It is a joint endeavour between ESA and the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency, JAXA, and consists of two scientific orbiters: ESA's Mercury Planetary Orbiter (MPO) and JAXA's Mercury Magnetospheric Orbiter (MMO). The mission will study all aspects of Mercury, from the structure and dynamics of its magnetosphere and how it interacts with the solar wind, to its internal structure with its large iron core, and the origin of the planet's magnetic field.

Provided by European Space Agency

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