

Ariane 5 sets new record on latest launch

October 25 2021



Ariane 5 on the launch pad with two telecom satellites, SES-17 and Syracuse-4A, stowed in the fairing in preparation for flight VA255 from Europe's Spaceport in French Guiana on 23 October 2021. Credit: ESA/CNES/Arianespace

Europe's Ariane 5 has delivered two telecom satellites, SES-17 and Syracuse-4A, into their planned orbits.

Arianespace announced liftoff at 03:10 BST (04:10 CEST, 23:10 local time on 23 October) from Europe's Spaceport in Kourou, French Guiana, for a mission lasting about 38 minutes.

"For this [launch](#), we increased the Ariane 5 fairing volume by attaching a 1.5 m raising cylinder to accommodate these two very large, stacked satellites. The development and qualification of this adaptation was funded by ESA. Today's launch of 11.2 t to geostationary transfer orbit is a record performance for Ariane 5," said Daniel de Chambure, ESA's Acting Head of Ariane 5 adaptation and future missions.

SES-17, with a launch mass of 6411 kg, in the upper berth of the fairing was released first.

Following a series of burns controlled by Ariane's computer, the Sylda structure encasing the 3853 kg Syracuse-4A payload was jettisoned. Syracuse-4A was released about two minutes later towards its own geostationary transfer orbit.

SES-17 is owned and operated by SES. It will deliver broadband coverage over the Americas, the Caribbean and over the Atlantic Ocean and is optimized for commercial aviation.



On 23 October 2021, Ariane 5 flight VA255 lifted off from Europe’s Spaceport in French Guiana to deliver two telecom satellites, SES-17 and Syracuse-4A to their planned orbits. With a launch performance of 11.2 t, and a combined payload mass of about 10 263 kg, this is Ariane 5’s heaviest payload to geostationary transfer orbit so far. Flight VA255 was the 111th Ariane 5 mission. Credit: ESA/CNES/Arianespace

Syracuse-4A, for France's DGA (Direction générale de l'armement) defense procurement agency, will provide secure communications between deployed [armed forces](#) and will also support NATO and European-led operations.

Both satellites have a design life of about 15 years.

The performance requested for this Ariane launch was 11 210 kg. The two satellites totalled about 10 264 kg, with payload adapters and carrying structures making up the rest.

"Ariane 5 demonstrates continuous improvement with each launch. The success today of launch VA255 and the success of VA254 last July were crucial to move towards Ariane 5's December launch carrying the James Webb Space Telescope," commented Daniel Neuenschwander, ESA Director of Space Transportation.

Flight VA255 was the 111th Ariane 5 mission.

Provided by European Space Agency

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