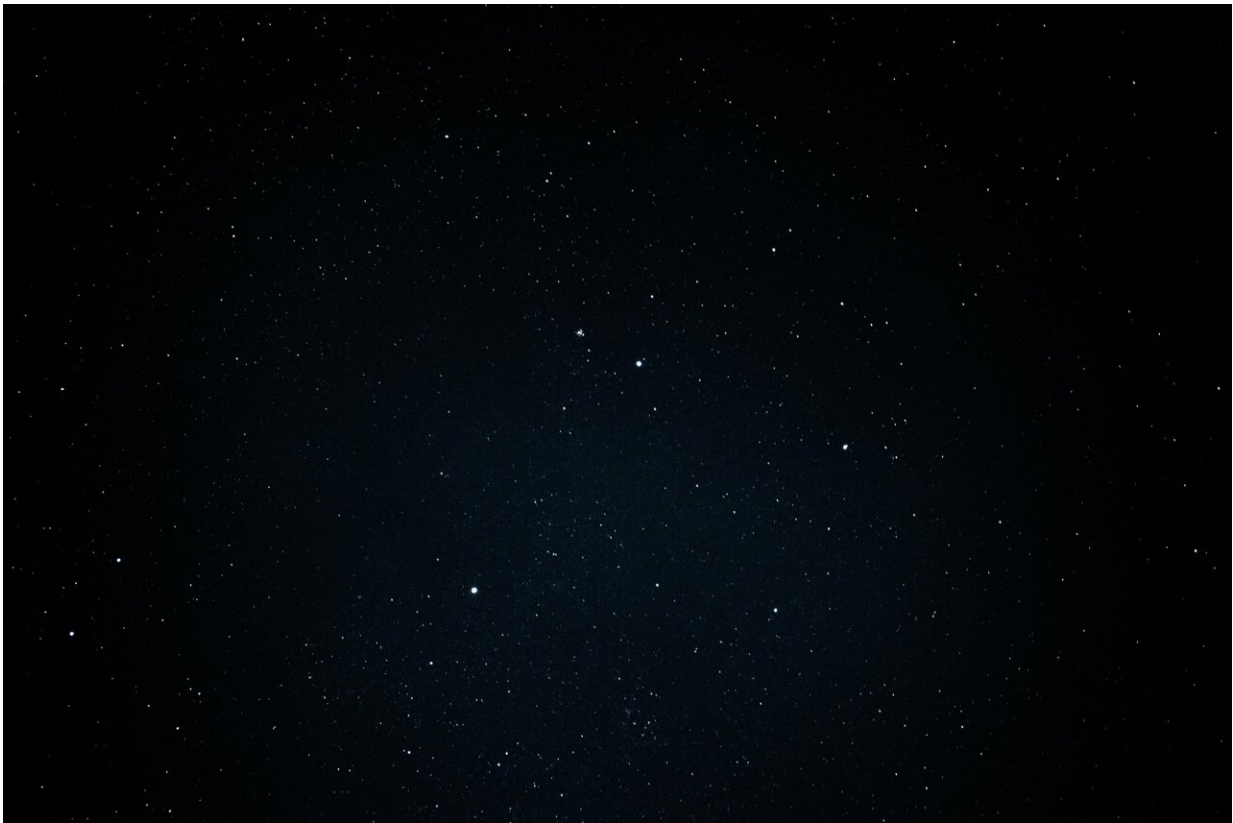


ESA to launch Arctic weather satellite in June

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Credit: Gabriel Lorca from Pexels

The European Space Agency said Thursday it will launch a satellite in June which will improve weather forecasting in the Arctic—a region highly exposed to the effects of global warming.

The Arctic Weather Satellite (AWS) was designed over three years by European aerospace company OHB.

The satellite, which is to be launched by a SpaceX rocket taking off from California, weighs 125 kilograms (275 pounds) and is 5.3 meters (16 feet) long with its wings deployed.

The mission is particularly important for research into global warming, said Swedish Education Minister Mats Persson.

"Mitigating [climate change](#) is a priority and space data is essential for analyzing the changes and identifying" the effective solutions," he said.

With a lifespan of approximately five years, the [satellite](#) will support others already in orbit "and provide accurate short-term [weather](#) forecasts for the Arctic region," the ESA said.

The Arctic is warming faster than the rest of the planet.

Its glaciers, forests and frozen carbon-rich soil are in danger of undergoing irreversible changes causing potential cascading repercussions across the globe.

The AWS mission is also proof of European cooperation, Persson added.

"This is a region that is becoming more difficult geopolitically, mainly because of the war in Ukraine. This is why Europe's independence in terms of space infrastructure must be guaranteed" through collaborations of this kind, he said.

Russia's territory covers almost half of the Arctic's landmass.

Since the war in Ukraine began in 2022, the lack of cooperation between

Moscow and Western countries has caused researchers to lose a considerable amount of data, they warned in January.

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