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## **First Galileo satellites launch / The role of Telespazio (Finmeccanica/Thales) In the European satellite navigation and localisation programme**

The first two operational satellites of European satellite navigation system Galileo will be launched in the next few days using a Soyuz spacecraft, which will depart for the first time from the European spaceport at Kourou in French Guiana. Telespazio plays a leading role in Galileo, having built one of the two control centres that will manage the programme's constellation and mission, at Fucino.

Telespazio will be heavily involved in all the phases of the system's operational life through Spaceopal, its joint venture with DLR GfR. Spaceopal is responsible for the preparation of operations and the integrated logistics of the entire Galileo system, and will also manage the system's operations from the conclusion of the Launch and Early Orbit Phase (LEOP).

Spaceopal will manage and co-ordinate the services using the LEOP Operations Control Centres in Toulouse and Darmstadt, operated by CNES and ESOC respectively, which will provide constellation launch services, using the Galileo Control Centres at Fucino and Oberpfaffenhofen, operated by Telespazio and DLR GfR respectively for the in-orbit control of the satellites and the provision of navigation signals, and the In Orbit Test system at Redu during the validation phase for the satellites launched.

Telespazio France, through its teams in Toulouse and Kourou, will also play an important role in the launch of the first two Galileo satellites. The Telespazio subsidiary will support CNES and Arianespace in managing the launch centre in Guiana, and in the launch and early orbit phases of the Galileo satellites.

A few days after the launch of the first two satellites, the Galileo Control Centre (GCC) at Fucino will support the activities of the IOT (In-Orbit Test) phase, intended to test the functionality and performance of the payload following launch and separation from the launcher. It will then support the testing and validation activities of the IOV (In Orbit Validation) phase.

In the operational phase that follows completion of the system, the GCC will manage and control the activities of the Galileo mission. These involve creating and transmitting the on-board navigation message, supplying the resulting navigation services to users, monitoring the quality of service and managing the system's ground segment.

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**Telespazio**, a joint venture between Finmeccanica (67%) and Thales (33%), is one of the world's leading operators in satellite management services, Earth observation and satellite navigation, as well as in the field of integrated communications and scientific programmes. Telespazio plays a leading role in the reference markets harnessing technological experience acquired over the years and through its participation in major European space programmes such as: Galileo, EGNOS, GMES and COSMO-SkyMed. The company in 2010 generated sales of EUR 437 million, and employed around 2,500 staff.