

GALILEO: the procurement for the first constellation of the European navigation satellites will now start

Today the European Commission and the European Space Agency (ESA) have launched the procurement of the first complete constellation of the European satellite navigation system. A total of 30 dedicated navigation satellites will be put into space, monitored and controlled by a ground-based infrastructure which will be deployed around the world, with the main control centres in Europe.

European Commission Vice-President in charge of transport Antonio Tajani, declared: "By launching this procurement, we are preparing to launch Galileo into a new era where space age technology brings down-to-earth benefits for every citizen and business in Europe. With Galileo, the European Union will buy a state-of-the-art satellite navigation system which will increase economic efficiency and reduce congestion and energy consumption throughout the transport sector. That means boosting growth and jobs and helping to tackle climate change, while also making daily life safer and easier".

The overall programme objective for Galileo is the deployment, by 2013, of a European navigation system providing signals that offer a total of five main services, namely the Open Service, the Safety of Life Service, the Commercial Service, the Public Regulated Service, and the Search and Rescue Service.

The European Parliament and the Council have allocated a budget of € 3.4 billion for the European satellite navigation programmes EGNOS and Galileo for the period 2007-2013 and provided for an agreement on the governance structure of the programmes. This revised framework provides for the deployment of the full operational capability (FOC) of Galileo under a public procurement scheme, entirely financed out of the EU budget.

The scope of the present Contract Notice, published in the EU Official Journal today, consists of the procurement of the following six work packages: system support; ground mission segment; ground control segment; space segment (satellites); launch services; and operations. This procurement complements the In-Orbit-Validation contract placed by ESA for the first four satellites and associated ground control infrastructure.

The procurement of the Galileo infrastructure is particularly complex and will have to address many technical and highly sensitive issues. To this end, the European Commission and ESA have opted for the procurement procedure of "Competitive Dialogue" as set up in the EC Financial Regulation Implementing Rules. This procedure will be implemented in line with the political instructions of the Council and European Parliament, as set out in the GNSS Implementing Regulation that will enter into force shortly.

In the first phase of the procedure, interested entities may submit to ESA a "Request to Participate" and will be short-listed on the basis of pre-defined selection and exclusion criteria. The selected candidates will then be invited to the dialogue phase, representing the formal kick off of the second phase of the tendering process. The competitive dialogue procedure will be organised and managed by the European Space Agency as delegated procurement agent, in close coordination with the European Commission as contracting authority.

Organisations interested in participating in the Galileo procurement can find more details and an information pack on ESA's web site at: <http://emits.esa.int>

For more general information about GALILEO, please visit:

http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/energy_transport/galileo/index_en.htm

<http://www.esa.int/export/esaSA/navigation.html>