



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

PRESS RELEASE

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First steps of Galileo - European satellite navigation system achieves its first position fix

Today for the first time ever, engineers have been able to determine a position relying only on the signals emitted from four satellites of the European satellite navigation system Galileo. This achievement is a milestone towards offering initial satellite navigation services from 2014 onwards. Once fully deployed, Galileo will enable a wide range of new applications, including innovative personal services such as in-car navigation, high precision farming, transportation, emergency intervention and civil protection, with a signal enabling higher precision previously available.

European Commission Vice President Antonio Tajani, Commissioner for Industry and Entrepreneurship, said: *"I am thrilled by this successful test and I want to congratulate the teams involved. Even though we are still in the process of validating the system, we have demonstrated that all components of this complex system work in harmony. This is great news for the 2014 milestone when initial operations will commence and it is an encouragement for those preparing innovative services and products based on Galileo."*

Position fix relies on an entirely new European infrastructure

The position fix was obtained by ESA's navigation laboratory in the Netherlands by using the four Galileo satellites launched in October 2011 and 2012, and the Galileo programme's ground infrastructure, which includes the control centres in Italy and Germany and the global network of ground stations. A minimum of four satellites is required to make a position fix in three dimensions.

With four satellites, the Galileo constellation is visible at the same time for only a maximum two to three hours daily. This frequency will increase as more satellites are deployed and extra ground stations come online. By the end of 2014, a total of 18 satellites are expected to be in orbit, rising to 30 before 2020.

[More information on Galileo](#)

See also [MEMO/11/717 - Galileo will boost economy and make life of citizens easier](#)

Contacts :

[Carlo Corazza](#) (+32 2 295 17 52)

[Sara Tironi](#) (+32 2 299 04 03)

A European partnership

The definition phase and the development and In-Orbit Validation phase of the Galileo programme were carried out by the European Space Agency (ESA) and co-funded by ESA and the European Community.

The Full Operational Capability phase of the Galileo programme is managed and fully funded by the European Commission. The Commission and ESA have signed a delegation agreement by which ESA acts as design and procurement agent on behalf of the Commission.

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