



Space: Latest Copernicus launch will improve services for farmers, fishermen and other users of land and sea maps

Brussels, 7 March 2017

The latest addition to the Copernicus satellite Earth observation family will halve the time needed to provide precision land-use data to benefit farmers, builders, fishermen and anyone who needs rapid access to up-to-the-minute data on conditions on the ground.

Vice-President Maroš **Šefčovič** said: *"European citizens can be proud! After the presentation of the EU Space Strategy, the launch of four Galileo satellites with Ariane 5 and the initial services of Galileo – now comes a 'giant leap' for Copernicus. This is good news for agriculture, for our climate and environment, the detection of water pollution and our ability to cope with disasters."*

Elżbieta **Bieńkowska**, Commissioner for Internal market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs said: *"Today's successful launch of a new Copernicus satellite is another sign of the excellence of Europe in space. Copernicus is the most advanced Earth observation system in the world. With this launch more data will become available to develop new and innovative services and applications."*

Copernicus – Europe's Earth observation programme – can now build up an image covering the entire planet in just 5 days, cutting the time needed to image the globe by half. The latest Copernicus satellite (Sentinel-2B) was successfully launched on 7 March at 2:49 CET from Europe's Spaceport in French Guiana. It joins [Sentinel-2A](#), which has been in orbit since 23 June 2015. The Copernicus Sentinel 2 mission is now complete.

Together, the two Sentinels produce high resolution data that is already being used to create satellite-enabled products and services. This is providing new opportunities for businesses thanks to the fact that the European Union has provided free, full and open access to the data. In turn, these businesses are creating highly qualified jobs in Europe.

Faster and more precise provision of data will bring concrete benefits to citizens worldwide. These include reduced costs of precision farming services, increased productivity of fish farmers thanks to the monitoring of toxic algal blooms and savings for construction companies via a work progress monitoring application.

In line with its [Space Strategy for Europe](#), the Commission will continue to work on making access to space data easier, with the development of new industry-led platforms. It will develop an ambitious awareness campaign about Copernicus and foster the uptake of space data, notably by helping start-ups and supporting the emergence of European industrial space hubs and clusters in European regions.

Background

[Copernicus](#), a leading provider of Earth observation data across the globe, already helps save lives at sea, improves our response to natural disasters such as earthquakes, forest fires or floods, and allows farmers to better manage their crops, collects data from earth observation satellites and ground stations, airborne and sea-borne sensors.

For example, the European Commission's Emergency Response Coordination Centre activated the EU Copernicus Emergency mapping service for damage assessment grading maps for the most affected areas by the multiple earthquakes in central Italy since August 2016.

Copernicus processes data and provides users with reliable and up-to-date information through a set of services in six thematic areas: [land monitoring](#), [marine monitoring](#), [atmosphere monitoring](#), [climate change](#), [emergency management response](#) and [security](#).

Most of these services are already operational and have been enabled by the earth observation data from the first Copernicus Sentinel satellites, as well as a number of contribution missions from other operators.

With today's launch, five Copernicus satellites are now in orbit (Sentinel 1A, 1B, 2A, 2B and 3A).

More information available at:

[Copernicus web site](#)

[Space Strategy for Europe](#)

Stockshots

[Video: the Copernicus Programme](#)

[Stockshots: EU space programmes](#)

IP/17/446

Press contacts:

[Lucia CAUDET](#) (+32 2 295 61 82)

[Mirna TALKO](#) (+32 2 298 72 78)

[Maud NOYON](#) (+32 2 298 03 79)

General public inquiries: [Europe Direct](#) by phone [00 800 67 89 10 11](#) or by [email](#)