

Russia Launches Its Most Powerful Telecom Satellite

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SC "Yuzhny" / Roscosmos

Russia has launched a powerful European-made communications satellite for the state energy giant Gazprom from Kazakhstan.

Gazprom's space subsidiary, Gazprom Space Systems, runs Yamal satellites to broadcast to customers in Russia, western and central Europe, the Middle East and North Africa. France's Thales Alenia Space company [manufactures](#) the satellites for Gazprom.

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The Yamal-601 satellite launched from Baikonur Cosmodrome in Kazakhstan and was [sent](#) into orbit after a nine-hour flight, Russia's space agency Roscosmos [said](#) on Thursday.

Yamal-601 replaces the Yamal-202 satellite, [providing](#) new capabilities including satellite broadband and expanded coverage. The satellite is the most powerful communications

satellite in Russia's orbital fleet and has a shelf life of 15 years, Interfax [reported](#).

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Five additional Proton-M rocket launches are [planned](#) in 2019. Dogged by a string of failures and quality control concerns in 2006-2015, Protons will be phased out and [replaced](#) by Angara rockets over the next decade.

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