

Russia Launches New Batch of U.K. Telecom Satellites Into Space

By [AFP](#)

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Images released by Roscosmos showed the Soyuz rocket taking off against hazy skies. **Roscosmos**

A Soyuz rocket blasted off from the Vostochny cosmodrome in Russia's Far East on Monday carrying 36 U.K. telecommunications and internet satellites, the Roscosmos space agency said.

OneWeb, a London-headquartered company, is working to complete the construction of a constellation of low earth orbit satellites providing enhanced broadband and other services to countries around the world.

The company is competing against billionaires Elon Musk and Jeff Bezos in the race to provide fast internet via satellites for the world's remote areas.

Images released by Russia's space agency Roscosmos showed the Soyuz rocket taking off against hazy skies Monday morning at 7:14 am local time.

Embed:

We have some pics for you from today's launch of the Soyuz-2.1b with 36 [@OneWeb](#) satellites. What a magic of fire and space, what a triumph of the human mind over chaos! pic.twitter.com/l3y7edOyyA

— GLAVKOSMOS (@glavkosmosJSC) [April 26, 2021](#)

"All satellites have been successfully placed in target orbits and have been taken under customer control," Roscosmos said in a statement.

"Mission success!" OneWeb wrote on Twitter.

The U.K. company plans for its global commercial internet service to be operational by next year, supported by some 650 satellites.

Monday's launch was the third batch of its satellites placed into orbit from Russia, with earlier launches from the Vostochny cosmodrome of 36 satellites each taking place last month and in December.

Related article: [Russia Puts 38 Foreign Satellites Into Orbit](#)

OneWeb's first six satellites were also launched by a Russian-made Soyuz rocket, taking off from the space center in Kourou in French Guiana in February 2019.

The company launched 68 more from the Baikonur launch site in Kazakhstan last year.

The Vostochny launch site is one of Russia's most important space projects, designed to reduce reliance on the Baikonur space center Moscow currently rents from Kazakhstan.

The project has been consistently behind schedule, with its construction marred for years by multiple controversies including corruption.

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