



Artist rendition of KONNECT satellite (Credit: Thales Alenia Space)

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## Eutelsat's KONNECT satellite ready to ship to launch site

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- *A major contribution to reducing the digital divide in Africa and Europe*
- *A significant role in Eutelsat's return to growth strategy*
- *The first communications satellite based on Thales Alenia Space's all-electric Spacebus NEO platform*
- *An ambassador for the Neosat development programme supported by the European and French space agencies*

**Paris, Cannes, November 19, 2019** – The all-electric KONNECT

communications satellite built by Thales Alenia Space, the joint company between Thales (67%) and Leonardo (33%), for the international operator Eutelsat Communications (Euronext Paris: ETL) is now undergoing final preparation prior to being shipped to the Guiana Space Center in Kourou, French Guiana, for a launch planned mid-January 2020.

KONNECT will provide high-speed Internet services for markets in Africa and Western Europe. Offering total capacity of 75 Gbps, by next autumn this satellite will allow the operator to provide Internet access services for both companies and individuals at up to 100 Mbps. In Africa, it will also allow several users to share an Internet connection via public Wi-Fi hotspots; a service sold via coupons that can be paid on their mobile phones.

A pivotal part of Eutelsat's strategy to restore its growth, centered around connectivity, the KONNECT satellite will also play a lead role in bridging the digital divide in Africa and Europe. The next major step forward will come in 2022 with the introduction of the KONNECT VHTS (very high throughput satellite), also under construction by Thales Alenia Space.

The new KONNECT satellite features all-electric propulsion and operates in Ka-band. It is the first to use Thales Alenia Space's all-electric Spacebus NEO platform, developed under the Neosat Partnership Project conducted by the European and French space agencies (ESA and CNES).

Yohann Leroy, Deputy CEO and Chief Technical Officer of Eutelsat, said: *"KONNECT is a key to our strategy of developing large-scale satellite Internet services. It will soon be shipped to Europe's Spaceport for a launch early next year. I would like to thank our industrial partner, Thales Alenia Space, for their all-out commitment to this programme. They are involved in several of our programmes, supporting our goal of reducing the digital divide. These satellites will work with terrestrial networks by providing additional connectivity resources, at a time when access to high-speed Internet plays a major role in both national and regional economic and social development."*

Jean-Loïc Galle, President and Chief Executive Officer of Thales Alenia Space, added: *"We are very proud to present our first all-electric Spacebus NEO satellite today, alongside our legacy customer Eutelsat. KONNECT combines innovation and in-orbit heritage to offer a fully modular platform along with an innovative and intelligent payload to provide high throughput, highly agile services in Ka-band. This technological success has been possible thanks to the support from*

*the French and European space agencies, which helped us develop Spacebus NEO, and from the French Investment in the Future Plan, for high-throughput capabilities.”*

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## About Eutelsat Communications

Founded in 1977, Eutelsat Communications is one of the world's leading satellite operators. With a global fleet of satellites and associated ground infrastructure, Eutelsat enables clients across Video, Data, Government, Fixed and Mobile Broadband markets to communicate effectively to their customers, irrespective of their location. Around 7,000 television channels operated by leading media groups are broadcast by Eutelsat to one billion viewers equipped for DTH reception or connected to terrestrial networks. Headquartered in Paris, with offices and teleports around the globe, Eutelsat assembles 1,000 men and women from 46 countries who are dedicated to delivering the highest quality of service.

Eutelsat Communications is listed on the Euronext Paris Stock Exchange (ticker: ETL).

For more about Eutelsat go to [www.eutelsat.com](http://www.eutelsat.com)

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**About Thales Alenia Space**

Drawing on over 40 years of experience and a unique combination of skills, expertise and cultures, Thales Alenia Space delivers cost-effective solutions for telecommunications, navigation, Earth observation, environmental management, exploration, science and orbital infrastructures. Governments and private industry alike count on Thales Alenia Space to design satellite-based systems that provide anytime, anywhere connections and positioning, monitor our planet, enhance management of its resources, and explore our Solar System and beyond. Thales Alenia Space sees space as a new horizon, helping to build a better, more sustainable life on Earth. A joint venture between Thales (67%) and Leonardo (33%), Thales Alenia Space also teams up with Telespazio to form the parent companies' Space Alliance, which offers a complete range of services. Thales Alenia Space posted consolidated revenues of about 2.5 billion euros in 2018 and has around 8,000 employees in nine countries. [www.thalesaleniaspace.com](http://www.thalesaleniaspace.com)

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