

Media Release

Zurich, August 28, 2026

Central computer for new European weather satellite

Yesterday evening, on August 27, at 22:11 CEST, the second imaging satellite of the Meteosat Third Generation fleet has been successfully launched into space by Arianespace aboard an Ariane 62 launcher from Europe's Spaceport in French Guiana. Beyond Gravity delivered the central computer ("brain") and other key components for this satellite.

Economy and society rely on accurate weather data. A new European weather satellite will further improve weather forecasting. The third weather satellite of the Meteosat Third Generation (MTG) fleet will deliver images for weather forecasting in Europe "in unprecedented detail, especially suited to nowcasting of severe weather events such as thunderstorms", according to EUMETSAT and the European Space Agency. "We have supplied mission-critical components for both the weather satellite and the Ariane 6 launch vehicle. Accurate weather forecasting saves lives. This new satellite will help meteorologists detect severe weather events earlier and provide faster warnings to better protect people and critical infrastructure," says Dr. Barbara Frei-Spreiter, CEO of Beyond Gravity, a leading space company headquartered in Zurich, Switzerland.

Key components for weather satellite system from a geostationary orbit

A total of six MTG satellites will be launched, two of which are already operational in orbit (Meteosat-12 and MTG-S1). Beyond Gravity provides components to all six MTG weather satellites. Based on a satellite platform provided by OHB System AG and integrated by Thales Alenia Space, the prime contractor, MTG-I2 carries the most accurate and powerful flexible imaging instrument to be used in geostationary orbit. This orbit is sometimes compared to a "hawk's-eye" view because the satellite tracks the same point on Earth as the planet rotates. Once MTG-I2 enters operations, the MTG constellation will provide unprecedented rapid-update observations, including imagery over Europe every 2.5 minutes.

Central satellite computer

The central computers of the in total six Meteosat Third Generation satellites were developed and built at Beyond Gravity's site in Gothenburg, Sweden. The computer is implementing the satellite's vital functions such as attitude and orbit control or telecommands execution. Beyond Gravity also developed and produced the Data

Distribution Unit, which processes and sends down all the instrument data via Ka-band, and S-bands antennas for transmitting telecommands and telemetry.

Thermal insulation

The 3,800-kilogram heavy weather satellite is covered by thermal insulation from Beyond Gravity. The insulation protects the satellite from the high temperature fluctuations of plus/minus 200 degrees Celsius in space. The insulation consists of several layers of very thin metal-coated plastic and was developed and produced in Austria. The multilayer insulation maintains a uniform temperature inside the satellites. This ensures the smooth functioning of the onboard instruments.

Mechanisms align the solar arrays towards the sun

The precise alignment of the weather satellite's solar panels for optimum power supply to the satellite is achieved by a mechanism from Beyond Gravity's site in Zurich. Furthermore, Beyond Gravity delivered refocusing mechanisms from Vienna to ensure that the satellite's instruments regain an optimal, sharp sight after the high vibrations during the launch. The purpose of this refocusing mechanism is to ensure the overall optical quality of the system by correcting the defocus effects of image degradation due to bias effects. It is also used during alignment to correct any defocus error introduced by mirror manufacturing or telescope alignment.

Camera cover

Beyond Gravity delivered a high-tech "sun visor" cover for MTG. This camera cover, also known as the Solar Baffle Cover Assembly, has a diameter of about one meter and protects the satellite's instruments from contamination during launch. Once in orbit, the cover opens and locks in the open position. It was developed and produced at the company's Vienna, Austria, site.

MTG: Four imaging satellites, two sounder satellites

The Meteosat Third Generation (MTG) program comprises a total of six satellites, including four imaging satellites and two sounder satellites. One imaging satellite was launched in 2022, one sounder satellite was launched in 2025. The third satellite in the MTG mission, MTG-I2, will complete the first family of MTG satellites with no further launches planned before the early 2030s. The MTG satellites ensure the continuity of services previously provided by the four Meteosat Second Generation satellites, which were placed in orbit between 2002 and 2015.

About MTG: Latest generation of European weather satellites

Meteosat Third Generation is a cooperation between the European Space Agency (ESA) and the European Organization for the Exploitation of Meteorological Satellites (EUMETSAT). ESA is responsible for the definition and implementation of the MTG satellites, while EUMETSAT gathers the requirements from the users, develops the ground segment, is in charge of operating the satellites and procures the launch service to place the satellite in orbit. Thales Alenia Space is the prime contractor of the MTG program and responsible for the imaging satellites, OHB System AG in Germany is the prime for the MTG sounder satellites and responsible for all six platforms of the overall MTG system.

Payload fairing to protect the weather satellite

The top of the Ariane 6 launcher consists of the payload fairing from Beyond Gravity. This protective fairing, or 'nose cone', shielded the weather satellite during liftoff and its journey through the atmosphere. The fairing is conical in shape and consists of two half shells made of carbon-covered aluminum honeycomb panels. The fairing has a diameter of 5.4 meters and was produced in Emmen, Switzerland. Once the launcher left Earth's atmosphere, approximately three minutes after liftoff, the fairing was jettisoned.

Payload adapter for Ariane 6

Beyond Gravity's site in Linköping (Sweden) provided the payload adapter system for Europe's heavy-lift launcher Ariane 6. The payload adapter system connected satellite and launcher during liftoff, then precisely released the satellite into orbit once the proper altitude was reached.

High-temperature insulation and gimbal mechanism for Ariane 6

In Austria, Beyond Gravity developed and produced the high-temperature insulation for the Ariane 6 launcher's main engine and for the upper stage of the Ariane 6 launcher (near the Vinci re-startable engine). The company also supplied a gimbal mechanism for the upper stage of the launcher. The mechanism serves as a joint to align the engine for the thrust vector control of the Ariane 6 upper stage.

To learn more about Meteosat Third Generation, visit:

<https://www.eumetsat.int/meteosat-third-generation>

Mission kit from the European Space Agency:

https://esamultimedia.esa.int/docs/EarthObservation/MTG-I_mission_kit_260706.pdf

More about the launch with Ariane 6:

<https://newsroom.arianespace.com/arianespace-to-launch-weather-satellite-mtg-i2-on-ariane-6s-first-mission-to-geostationary-orbit-on-august-27-2026>

Images

[Image 1](#): The weather satellite Meteosat Third Generation is controlled by a central computer from Beyond Gravity. Copyright: ESA/MLabspace.

[Image 2](#): Beyond Gravity produced a high-tech camera cover for Meteosat Third Generation. Copyright: Beyond Gravity, Anna Rauchenberger.

[Image 3](#): The satellite was placed into space with a payload adapter system from Beyond Gravity. © Beyond Gravity. Download:

[Image 4](#): Meteosat Third Generation Imager-2 launched aboard the European launcher Ariane 6. © ESA - S. Corvaja. Download:

Videos

[Animation of the weather satellite](#) © Eumetsat

[Video](#): Learn how Beyond Gravity is pushing boundaries of what is technically feasible for the benefit of humankind.

The media release is also available online at www.beyondgravity.com/news

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Beyond Gravity, headquartered in Zurich, Switzerland, is the first space company to combine a startup mindset, agility, speed and innovation with decades of experience and proven quality. Approximately 1900 employees at 12 locations in six countries (Switzerland, Sweden, Austria, USA, Finland and Portugal) develop and produce solutions for satellites and launch vehicles with the goal of advancing humankind and enabling the exploration of the world and beyond. Beyond Gravity is the preferred supplier of structures for all types of launch vehicles and a leading provider of selected

satellite products and constellation solutions in the New Space sector. In 2025, the company generated a revenue of around CHF 402 million. More information at: www.beyondgravity.com

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