

The premises of Ariane

Europe's journey into space

Establishment of the
European Space Agency

1975

Satellites, which initially were military, became a necessity as from the 1960s, for numerous innovative civil application purposes in areas such as meteorology and telecommunications. In order to have an autonomous means of launching and putting their satellites into orbit, European states decided in 1973 to join forces to develop a European rocket launcher.
The "Ariane" programme was born.



April 12, 1961

First human in space: on the orbital flight mission of Russian cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin in the Vostok 1 spacecraft.



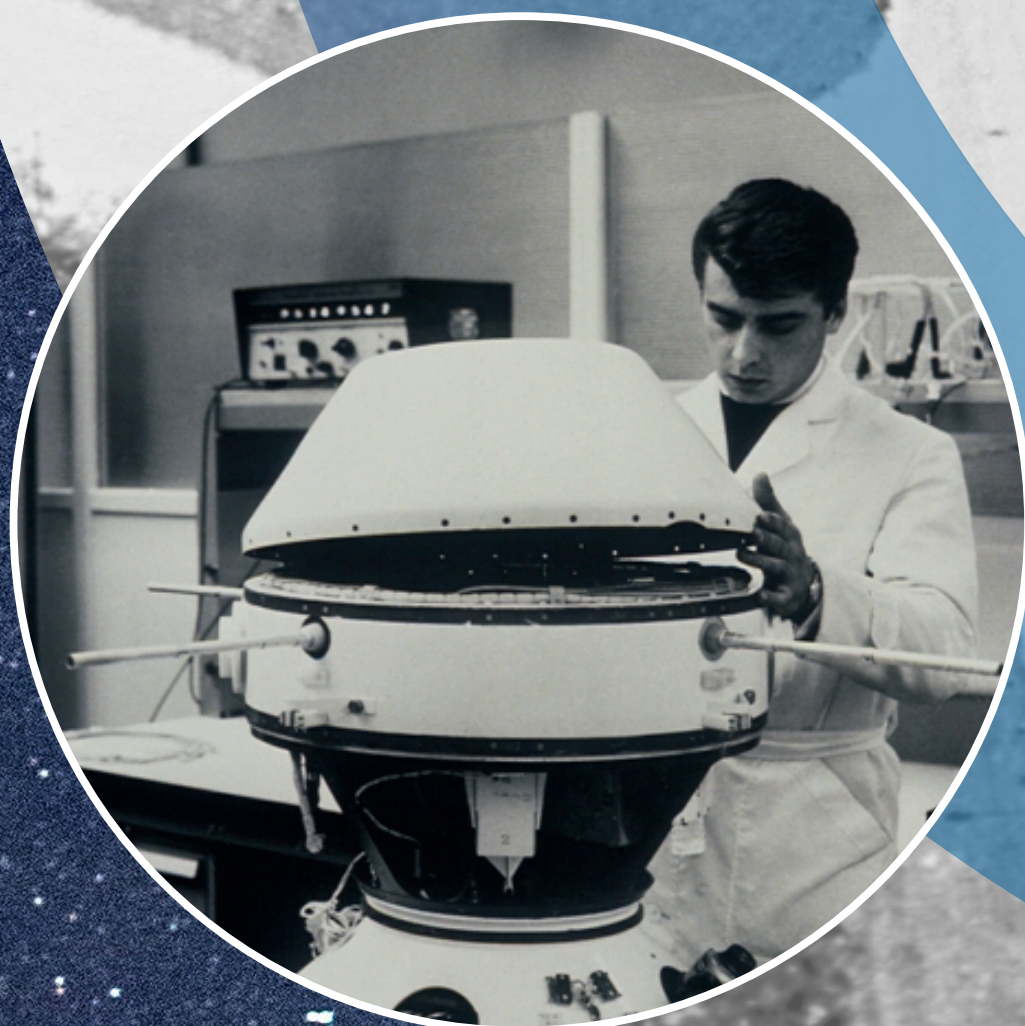
October 4, 1957

Sputnik 1, first artificial satellite put into orbit around the Earth.



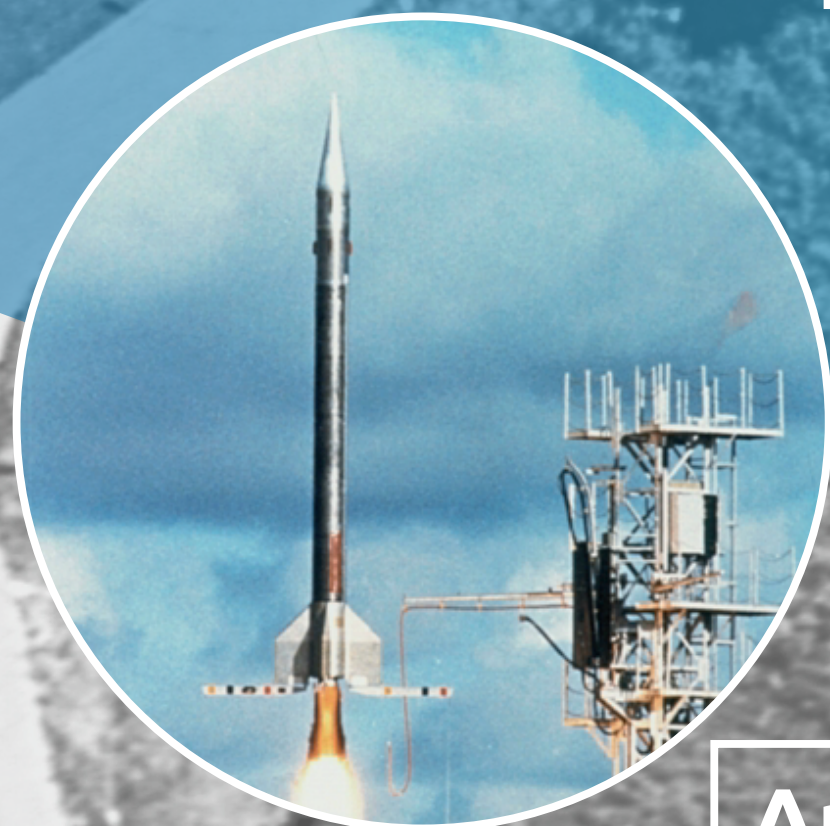
June 5, 1964

Attempt to launch the first stage of the European rocket Europa1; this unsuccessful programme was scrapped in 1973.



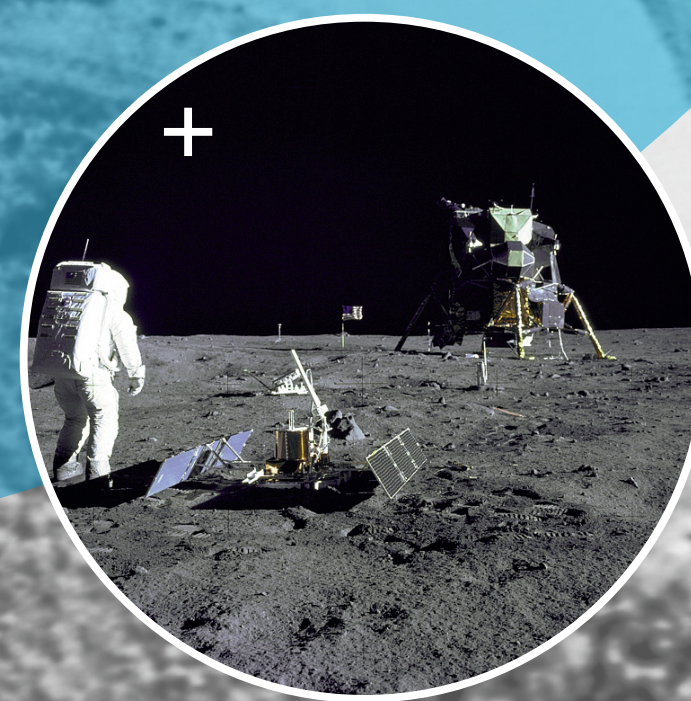
November 26, 1965

First successful lift-off of Diamant by the French space agency CNES: a European first.



April 9, 1968

First rocket, a Véronique, launched from the Guiana Space Centre (CSG), Kourou.



July 21, 1969

First footsteps on the Moon: Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin on the Apollo 11 mission.

Aerial view of the Guiana Space Centre (CSG) in 1975.

March 26, 1980

Setting-up of Arianespace, the first commercial launch services company.



May 30, 1975

Establishment by 10 member countries of the European Space Agency (ESA), two years after launching the "Ariane" project.

