

Russian Proton Rocket Launches

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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A Russian Proton-M rocket took off early Sunday morning from Kazakhstan's Baikonur space center carrying two Russian telecommunications satellites, the Russian space agency said.

The rocket's payload, the Express-AT1 and Express-AT2 satellites, were successfully inserted into a geosynchronous transfer orbit nine hours after the launch by the Proton's upper stage, the Briz-M.

The two satellites will gradually move into geostationary orbits using onboard engines, where they will broadcast radio and television signals across Russia, Kazakhstan and parts of Europe.

The satellites, manufactured by Russia's Reshetnev company in cooperation with France's Thales Alenia Space, each weigh more than 1,400 kilograms and have a lifespan of 15 years, according to Reshetnev.

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