On 4 October 1957 the Soviet Union launched the world’s first artificial satellite, Sputnik 1. Approximately 63% of operational satellites are in low Earth orbit, 6% are in medium-Earth orbit (at 20,000 km), 29% are in geostationary orbit (at 36,000 km) and the remaining 2% are in elliptic orbit. Satellite subsystems attend many tasks, such as power generation, thermal control, telemetry, attitude control, scientific instrumentation, communication, etc. Common types include military and civilian Earth observation satellites, communications satellites, navigation satellites, weather satellites, and space telescopes. Well-known (overlapping) classes include low Earth orbit, polar orbit, and geostationary orbit. Over a dozen space probes have been placed into orbit around other bodies and become artificial satellites of the Moon, Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, a few asteroids, a comet and the Sun. In terms of countries with the most satellites the USA significantly leads the way with 859 satellites, China is second with 250, and Russia third with 146. Space stations and human spacecraft in orbit are also satellites. Since then, about 8,900 satellites from more than 40 countries have been launched.