

EDITORIAL

Dear Reader,

The view of the night sky has always given us a sense of wonder; since ancient times, we have also used it as a way to tell time and as a navigational aid. Above all, however, it determines our view of the world and of ourselves. Thanks to astronomical discoveries, the location of humankind in the cosmos has increasingly shifted from the center to the edge. It is now evident that even our solar system only has a peripheral existence within the Milky Way: there are countless planets like ours in the universe – indeed, there are countless galaxies.

Among these, even our solar system still poses many unanswered questions. For instance, scientists are looking into the specifics of how the Earth and nearby planets were created. Where did the building material come from? Why did they form at different rates? And why did the Earth, in particular, have the conditions necessary to support the development of life?

While these questions can be investigated in our immediate vicinity (on a cosmic scale) many other targets of astronomical research are located in far-off galaxies; they astound with their barely conceivable dimensions and characteristics, such as black holes with millions of times the mass of the Sun. Sometimes, two black holes can even be found orbiting each other in a single galaxy. Modern telescopes make it possible to get a picture of these systems and the processes that take place within them.

Even in places where you might assume more existential issues prevail – such as Madagascar, a country with one of the lowest gross domestic products in the world – fascination with the cosmos still takes hold. Since the prospect of serving as the location for the antennas of a large international telescope has arisen, many locals have developed a passion for astronomy. This passion could encourage young people to study science or technology, which in turn could contribute to the country's development.

It seems then that astronomy holds many surprises, and not just in space. In the spirit of this, we wish you an exciting read!

Your editorial team