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One of the deadliest forces on Earth is waking up. Are we prepared?

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ASTRONOMY

LOOK BEYOND INTERSTELLAR DUST WITH EUCLID'S LATEST IMAGES

The space telescope's infrared 'eyes' can penetrate dark clouds of dust and gas to reveal new stars

In its second batch of images since its 2023 launch, ESA space telescope Euclid offers new views of the Universe.

In just 24 hours, Euclid produced a treasure trove of images – revealing over 11 million objects in visible light and 5 million more in infrared (like the image pictured here of stellar nursery Messier 78 in the constellation Orion).

These early images targeted 17 astronomical objects, from nearby dust clouds to distant galaxies – but during the next six years, Euclid will map over a third of the whole sky.

Even just the first few batches of images have provided astronomers with masses amounts of data to identify new findings about astronomical objects.

In fact, these images (and those still to come) will allow scientists to hunt for rogue planets, study dark matter, and learn about the evolution of the Universe.

"This space telescope intends to tackle the biggest open questions in cosmology," said Valeria Pettorino, ESA's Euclid project scientist. "And these early observations clearly demonstrate that Euclid is more than up to the task."

As well as Messier 78, Euclid has captured the cluster of galaxies surrounding a halo of dark matter known as Abell 2390, the Dorado group of galaxies and one of the largest spiral galaxies, NGC 6744.

ESA/EUCLID

Euclid captured stellar nursery Messier 78 in infrared light, revealing hidden regions of star formation for the first time. Astronomers also discovered newly formed planets thanks to this image