

Universe in crisis as experts question Big Bang model

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The widely accepted idea that the universe began with a Big Bang could be wrong, according to astrophysicists who took part in a "Crisis in cosmology" meeting in Portugal and reported in this month's *Physics World* magazine.

According to the standard Big Bang theory, the universe began in a hot dense fireball about 13 billion years ago and has been expanding ever since. But despite plenty of evidence to support the theory, not everyone is convinced.

Eric Lerner of Lawrenceville Plasma Physics, who organized the Portuguese meeting, says that certain properties of the cosmic microwave background - the so-called "echo of the Big Bang" - do not match predictions from the theory.

Others are unhappy that cosmologists have had to introduce weird concepts like dark matter and dark energy to explain the universe. Mainstream scientists, however, have hit back, saying that we just need to tweak the Big Bang model and tie up "loose ends".

[Physics World](#) is the international monthly magazine published by the Institute of Physics.

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