

Colonizing other planets could be the key to humanity's long-term survival

Our species will face no shortage of existential risks in the coming decades, whether it be from nuclear war, climate change, a bioengineered [pandemic](#), artificial superintelligence, molecular nanotechnology, or threats we have yet to conceive. Despair, cynicism, and misanthropy will get us nowhere, and we need to start thinking of practical ways to ensure the ongoing survival of our species.

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Creating powerful safeguards, accountable governments and institutions, and effective, enforceable global-scale policies are all important if our civilization is to survive into the 22nd century and beyond, but there's a sad fact we have to consider: Our current state of technology is forcing us to keep all our eggs in one basket. Accordingly, we need to become an interplanetary species.

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Assuming we'll find ways to live off the planet, a state of Distributed Humanity would help us to avoid collective mass destruction, whether through natural or self-inflicted causes. Spreading ourselves across the Milky Way would prevent all of us from getting killed in a self-inflicted apocalypse, for example, or prevent the widespread proliferation of existentially dangerous pathogens. Also, if one group were to be destroyed, either by some natural calamity (such as a nearby star going supernova or by its own hands), other groups would live on.

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