Constraints on the formation and evolution of the largest main belt asteroids

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For two centuries, asteroids appeared as tiny, unresolved dots of light to Earth-based telescopes. Recently, technological progress allowed to reveal for the first time resolved images of tens of these bodies in unprecedented details, without the need for in-situ space missions. I will present results from a large program on the Very Large Telescope that imaged 42 of the largest main belt asteroids.