

# Architecture of TOI-561 planetary system

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## ABSTRACT

We present new observations from *CHEOPS* (*CHaracterising ExOPlanet Satellite*) and *TESS* (*Transiting Exoplanet Survey Satellite*) to clarify the architecture of the planetary system hosted by the old Galactic thick disc star TOI-561. Our global analysis, which also includes previously published photometric and radial velocity data, incontrovertibly proves that TOI-561 is hosting at least four transiting planets with periods of 0.44 d (TOI-561 b), 10.8 d (TOI-561 c), 25.7 d (TOI-561 d), and 77.1 d (TOI-561 e) and a fifth non-transiting candidate, TOI-561f with a period of 433 d. The precise characterization of TOI-561's orbital architecture is interesting since old and metal-poor thick disc stars are less likely to host ultrashort-period super-Earths like TOI-561 b. The new period of planet -e is consistent with the value obtained using radial velocity alone and is now known to be  $77.14399 \pm 0.00025$  d, thanks to the new *CHEOPS* and *TESS* transits. The new data allowed us to improve its radius ( $R_p = 2.517 \pm 0.045 R_\oplus$  from 5 per cent to 2 per cent precision) and mass ( $M_p = 12.4 \pm 1.4 M_\oplus$ ) estimates, implying a density of  $\rho_p = 0.778 \pm 0.097 \rho_\oplus$ . Thanks to recent *TESS* observations and the focused *CHEOPS* visit of the transit of TOI-561 e, a good candidate for exomoon searches, the planet's period is finally constrained, allowing us to predict transit times through 2030 with 20-min accuracy. We present an updated version of the internal structure of the four transiting planets. We finally performed a detailed stability analysis, which confirmed the long-term stability of the outer planet TOI-561 f.

**Key words:** techniques: photometric – techniques: radial velocities – ephemerides – planets and satellites: dynamical evolution and stability – planets and satellites: fundamental parameters – planets and satellites: interiors.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

The planetary system orbiting the old Galactic thick disc star TOI-561 is currently known to include an ultrashort-period (USP) planet and at least three mini-Neptunes. There has been controversy in the literature over the correct architecture of this system. It represents a

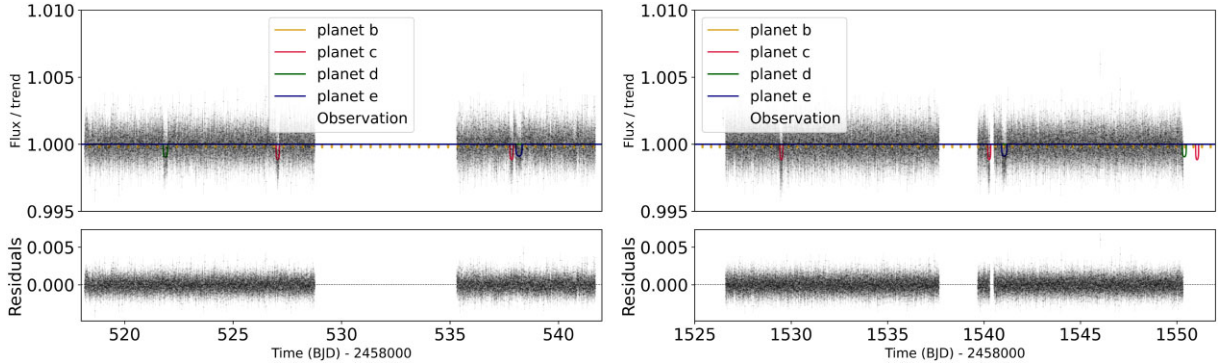
sort of unique situation in which the analysis of the same light curves and two radial velocity (RV) data sets led to two different solutions, in disagreement regarding the number of planets in the system, their masses, and even their periods (Lacedelli et al. 2021, 2022; Weiss et al. 2021).

More recently, Lacedelli et al. (2022) detected a further planet candidate with a period of about 400 d based on the High Accuracy Radial velocity Planet Searcher for the Northern hemisphere (HARPS-N) RV data. The existence of this fifth non-

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**Table 1.** *CHEOPS* observations of TOI-561 system. Each row provides the time window of the observation, with the starting and the end time of each visit, the *CHEOPS* data name, and the planets that fall into the specific visit.

Start [UTC]	End [UTC]	Duration [h]	Number of frames	Integration time [s]	File key	Planet
2022-02-06 23:54	2022-02-08 06:03	30.16	1179	60	CH_PR100031_TG049101_V0200	b,e
2021-04-12 23:52	2021-04-15 05:37	53.76	2057	60	CH_PR100031_TG039301_V0200	b,d
2021-03-29 10:19	2021-03-29 14:44	4.42	212	60	CH_PR100008_TG000811_V0200	b,c
2021-01-23 15:29	2021-01-24 07:09	15.67	617	60	CH_PR100031_TG037001_V0200	b,c

**Figure 1.** TOI-561 *TESS* observations. Different colours show the light curve of the different transiting planet models. Left: *TESS* Sector 8 with PYORBIT models. Right: *TESS* Sector 45 with the PYORBIT models.

transiting planet needs to be confirmed with future observational surveys.

In this work, based on additional *TESS* (Ricker et al. 2015) and *CHEOPS* (Benz et al. 2021; Fortier et al. 2024), data, we confirm that TOI-561 is a system made of five planets, four of which have been detected by transits. Its host star is one of the oldest objects in our Galaxy ( $t_* = 11.0_{-3.5}^{+2.8}$  Gyr, Lacedelli et al. 2022) with a detected planetary system. TOI-561 is one of the 78.<sup>1</sup> Planetary systems with at least four confirmed exoplanets and a USP planet. Refining the planetary structure and orbital configuration will open a window about the earlier planetary formation and evolution in our Galaxy. TOI-561 b stands out as a USP with extremely low density. TOI-561 b seems to have lost most of its atmosphere and might host water. For further details on the structure of TOI-561 b, see Patel et al. (2023). This planet was selected among the winning *JWST* Proposals in Cycle 2, ID no. 3860, PI: J. Teske.

Usually, young, slow, and metal-rich stars associated with the thin disc host averagely more exoplanets, especially close-in super-Earths (Bashi & Zucker 2021). It means that the TOI-561 exoplanetary system is very peculiar since it is unlikely for an old and metal-poor thick disc star to host a USP. Considering the properties of this system, the USP TOI-561 b is likely composed of high mean molecular weight species (Brinkman et al. 2022).

TOI-561 f is the only non-transiting candidate exoplanet in this system. RV data suggest an orbital period of over 400 d. Correct knowledge of the properties of this fifth planet are very important to constrain the dynamics and formation mechanisms of planets around old stars like TOI-561. Its existence also raises interesting questions about the possibility of other transiting and non-transiting planets in the system that could be identified with long-term follow-up and more advanced methods.

The fourth transiting planet, TOI-561 e was first inferred from HARPS-N RV. The ephemerides obtained from the RVs allowed

Lacedelli et al. (2021) to identify a corresponding transit of the  $\sim 77$  d period planet in *TESS* Sector 8. The values shown in Lacedelli et al. (2021) helped us detect a new transit in Sector 45, which was indeed observed and visible in the *TESS* Image CALibrator (TICA) full frame images (FFIs) of this sector. With the use of the new ephemerides, we scheduled an observation of the TOI-561 system using the *CHEOPS* telescope. In this work, we present the refined ephemerides and the new planetary architecture of the TOI-561 system using the newest *CHEOPS* + *TESS* observations. We confirm the presence of the fourth transiting planet, clarifying the architecture of the system, and we present new ephemerides and analysis of the structure of the planets orbiting TOI-561. Because of its long period, TOI-561 e is one of the few good candidates for the search for exomoons and, therefore, suited for follow-up.

In Section 2, we describe all the new observations. In Section 3, we show the final analysis performed for this system, highlighting the improvement of the ephemerides of all targets (Section 4). In Section 5, we perform a stability analysis of TOI-561 f's orbit, the outermost candidate exoplanet of this system. Finally, we show an improved internal structure model for all the transiting exoplanets (Section 6).

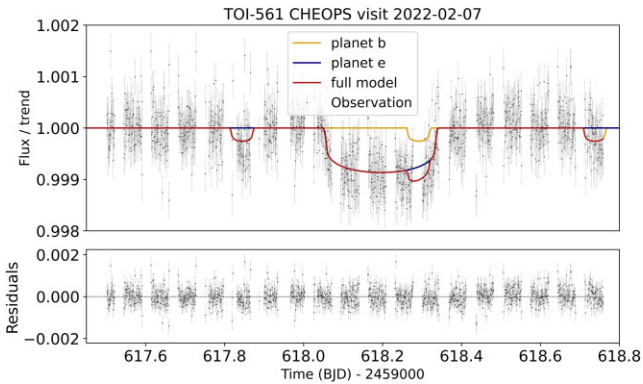
## 2 OBSERVATIONS

We extracted the light curve of TOI-561 from the TICA<sup>2</sup> (Fausnaugh et al. 2021) images collected during Sector 45 (from 2021 November 06 to December 02). For the light-curve extraction, we used the PATHOS pipeline developed by Nardiello et al. (2019) and Nardiello (2020) adapted to TICA images. Light curves were corrected by applying to them Cotrending Basis Vectors obtained as in Nardiello et al. (2020).

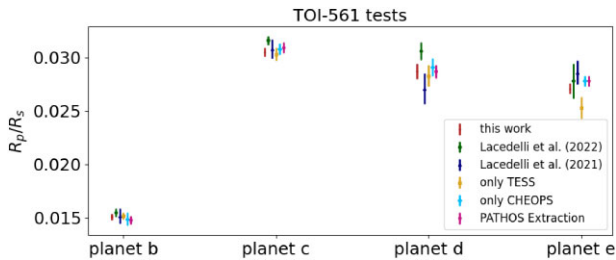
The TICA analysis of Sector 45 made it possible to refine the ephemerides and schedule a further transit of planet TOI-561 e with

<sup>1</sup><https://exoplanetarchive.ipac.caltech.edu/>

<sup>2</sup><https://archive.stsci.edu/hlsp/tica>



**Figure 2.** TOI-561 light curve from *CHEOPS* last visit of 2022 February 7.



**Figure 3.** Comparison in the  $R_p/R_*$  ratio for all the tests made in this letter. The figure illustrates the results obtained using only *TESS* data, only *CHEOPS* data, and from the independent analysis made by extracting *TESS* light curves with the *PATHOS* code.

*CHEOPS* on 2022 February 7. We used four *CHEOPS* observations of the TOI-561 system that cover the transits of planets b, c, d, and e, from 2021 January 23 to 2022 February 08 (see Table 1 for a chronology of the observations).

Additionally, we used *TESS* FFIs of Sectors 46 (from 2021 December 02 to 30) and 72 (from 2023 November 11 to December 07). We extracted the raw light curves from FFIs by using the *PYPATHOS* pipeline (see Nardiello et al. 2019, 2021) and we corrected them by applying the cotrending basis vectors obtained by Nardiello et al. (2020).

We used the published RVs of TOI-561, which have been obtained with HARPS-N at the Telescopio Nazionale Galileo (Cosentino et al. 2014), and HIRES (High Resolution Echelle Spectrometer) at Keck (Vogt & Keane 1993), for a total of 122 and 61 RV measurements, respectively. We refer to Lacedelli et al. (2021, 2022) and Weiss et al. (2021) for more details on spectroscopic data.

### 3 PHOTOMETRIC AND RV ANALYSIS

We used the light curves delivered by the *CHEOPS* Data Reduction Pipeline (DRP v13, Hoyer et al. (2020)). The *CHEOPS* DRP automatically calibrates and corrects the data and delivers the photometric light curves obtained with different aperture sizes. In this work, we used the DEFAULT ( $R = 25$ ) aperture which has the best light curve in terms of dispersion. *CHEOPS* observations have been detrended using *CHEOPE*,<sup>3</sup> a PYTHON tool which uses *PYCHEOPS* (Maxted et al. 2021) as a backend and optimized to extract the planetary signal from the *CHEOPS* data frames. *CHEOPE* uses *lmfit* (Newville et al.

2014) to select the best detrending models and the *EMCEE* (Foreman-Mackey et al. 2013) package for the Bayesian framework. All *CHEOPS* light curves from Lacedelli et al. (2021, 2022), including the one from the last *CHEOPS* visit of TOI-561 e, were re-analysed with *CHEOPE*.

We used the *PDCSAP* (Pre-search Data Conditioning Simple Aperture Photometry) *TESS* light curves (Fig. 1) from Sectors 8, 35, 45, 46, and 72 and flattened using *wotan* (Hippke et al. 2019), which allow to model the stellar flux with a Tukey’s biweight estimator (Mosteller & Tukey 1977).

The stellar radius was computed using the method described in Lacedelli et al. (2022). They used a Markov Chain Monte Carlo (MCMC) Infrared flux method (IRFM) method that compares broadband photometry to stellar spectral catalogues using the results of their spectral analysis, such as metallicity, as priors. Thanks to *Gaia* contribution with improved parallaxes and distances, we can now get down to 1 per cent (internal) stellar radius uncertainties. This can also be seen in independent works using the *ARIADNE* code.<sup>4,5</sup>

To obtain an updated architecture of the TOI-561 system, we performed a simultaneous modelling of all available photometric data from *CHEOPS* and *TESS*, and spectroscopic data from HARPS-N and HIRES. We used the code *PYORBIT* (Malavolta et al. 2016, 2018) with the *PYDE+EMCEE* sampling method (Foreman-Mackey et al. 2013; Parviainen 2016). To find the best starting point for the MCMC sampling, we used *PYDE* with 64 000 generators on our data sets. Then, we ran 100 chains for 150 000 steps, discarding the first 40 000 and applying a thinning factor of 100. We used the same priors and boundaries as reported in Lacedelli et al. (2022) unless otherwise specified in this section.

We assumed four transiting planets plus a fifth non-transiting Keplerian applying a uniform prior on the period between 2 and 1000 d. We used the same stellar parameters as described in Lacedelli et al. (2022). The limb darkening has been parametrized using the quadratic law, as described in Kipping (2013), using Gaussian priors on the  $u_1$  and  $u_2$  coefficients, computed for both *CHEOPS* and *TESS* passbands, adopting a bilinear interpolation of the limb-darkening profile as defined in Claret (2017, 2021). The RV data points in this analysis are the same used in Lacedelli et al. (2022), so we do not report any significant change in the RV semi-amplitude and, then, on the masses of the planets.

To exclude that our detrending was affecting the results, we also performed an independent global analysis with the *JULIET* package (Espinoza, Kossakowski & Brahm 2019) including all the available data sets and fitting all the planetary models simultaneously. The results from *PYORBIT* and *JULIET* were consistent with each other, indicating that our assumptions and detrending did not significantly affect the results of our analysis.

During the last visit with *CHEOPS*, also the USP planet TOI-561 b was transiting in front of the star. The simultaneous fit of *PYORBIT* allows us to distinguish the two components of this transit (Fig. 2).

The new analysis, using latest new photometric data, improves our knowledge of the orbital parameters of the four transiting planets, i.e. TOI-561 b ( $P = 0.4465697 \pm 0.0000003$  d and  $R_p = 1.397 \pm 0.027 R_{\oplus}$ ), c ( $P = 10.778838 \pm 0.000018$  d and  $R_p = 2.865 \pm 0.041 R_{\oplus}$ ), d ( $P = 25.71268 \pm 0.00012$  d and  $R_p = 2.615 \pm 0.059 R_{\oplus}$ ), and e ( $P = 77.14400 \pm 0.00027$  d and  $R_p = 2.517 \pm 0.045 R_{\oplus}$ ) and refutes the existence of the planet at  $P = 16.3$  d found in Weiss et al. (2021).

<sup>4</sup><https://arxiv.org/abs/2204.03769>.

<sup>5</sup><https://github.com/jvines/astroARIADNE>

<sup>3</sup><https://github.com/tiziano1590/cheops.analysis-package>

**Table 2.** Parameters for the TOI-561 planetary system.

	Planetary parameters				
	TOI-561 b	TOI-561 c	TOI-561 d	TOI-561 e	5th Keplerian
$P$ [d]	$0.4465697 \pm 0.0000003$	$10.778838 \pm 0.000018$	$25.71268 \pm 0.00012$	$77.14400 \pm 0.00027$	$433^{+20}_{-18}$
$T_0$ [TBJD] <sup>a</sup>	$2317.75002 \pm 0.00041$	$2238.46284 \pm 0.00079$	$2318.9711 \pm 0.0021$	$1538.1803 \pm 0.0035$	–
$a/R_*$	$2.683 \pm 0.029$	$22.40 \pm 0.25$	$40.00 \pm 0.44$	$83.21 \pm 0.91$	$262.9^{+8.5}_{-7.9}$
$a$ [au]	$0.01064 \pm 0.00016$	$0.0889 \pm 0.0013$	$0.1587 \pm 0.0024$	$0.3300 \pm 0.0050$	$1.043 \pm 0.035$
$R_p/R_*$	$0.01519 \pm 0.00028$	$0.03115 \pm 0.00041$	$0.02842 \pm 0.00063$	$0.02736 \pm 0.00047$	–
$R_p$ [R <sub>⊕</sub> ]	$1.397 \pm 0.027$	$2.865 \pm 0.041$	$2.615 \pm 0.059$	$2.517 \pm 0.045$	–
$b$	$0.14^{+0.096}_{-0.094}$	$0.15^{+0.14}_{-0.10}$	$0.36^{+0.13}_{-0.19}$	$0.19^{+0.14}_{-0.13}$	–
$i$ [deg]	$87.0^{+2.0}_{-2.1}$	$89.61^{+0.27}_{-0.33}$	$89.51^{+0.25}_{-0.14}$	$89.864^{+0.095}_{-0.094}$	–
$T_{14}$ [d]	$0.05452 \pm 0.00066$	$0.1558^{+0.0022}_{-0.0042}$	$0.197 \pm 0.012$	$0.2974^{+0.0057}_{-0.01}$	–
$e$	0 (fixed)	$0.023^{+0.034}_{-0.017}$	$0.111^{+0.050}_{-0.039}$	$0.074^{+0.044}_{-0.039}$	$0.083^{+0.080}_{-0.058}$
$\omega$ [deg]	90 (fixed)	$219^{+87}_{-149}$	$-131^{+17}_{-26}$	$148^{+26}_{-39}$	$-66^{+66}_{-83}$
$K$ [m s <sup>-1</sup> ]	$1.95 \pm 0.21$	$1.98 \pm 0.21$	$3.36 \pm 0.22$	$2.16 \pm 0.23$	$1.88 \pm 0.25$
$M_p$ [M <sub>⊕</sub> ] <sup>b</sup>	$2.02 \pm 0.23$	$5.93 \pm 0.67$	$13.33 \pm 0.98$	$12.4 \pm 1.4$	$19.1 \pm 2.7$
$\rho_p$ [ρ <sub>⊕</sub> ]	$0.741 \pm 0.095$	$0.252 \pm 0.030$	$0.745 \pm 0.074$	$0.778 \pm 0.097$	–
$\rho_p$ [g cm <sup>-3</sup> ]	$4.1 \pm 0.5$	$1.3 \pm 0.2$	$4.1 \pm 0.4$	$4.3 \pm 0.5$	–
$T_{eq}$ [K] <sup>c</sup>	$2319 \pm 34$	$802 \pm 12$	$600 \pm 9$	$416 \pm 6234 \pm 5$	–
$S_p$ [S <sub>⊕</sub> ] <sup>d</sup>	$4709 \pm 153$	$67.5 \pm 2.2$	$21.2 \pm 0.7$	$4.89 \pm 0.16$	$0.49 \pm 0.03$
$g_p^e$ [m s <sup>-2</sup> ]	$10.1 \pm 1.2$	$7.1 \pm 0.8$	$19.1 \pm 1.6$	$19.2 \pm 2.3$	–
Common parameters					
$R_*^f$ [R <sub>⊙</sub> ]	$0.843 \pm 0.005$				
$M_*^f$ [M <sub>⊙</sub> ]	$0.806 \pm 0.036$				
$\rho_*$ [ρ <sub>⊙</sub> ]	$1.31 \pm 0.05$				
$u_{1,TESS}$	$0.33 \pm 0.08$				
$u_{2,TESS}$	$0.23 \pm 0.09$				
$u_{1,CHEOPS}$	$0.46 \pm 0.07$				
$u_{2,CHEOPS}$	$0.22 \pm 0.09$				
$\sigma_{HARPS-N}^g$ [m s <sup>-1</sup> ]	$1.35 \pm 0.16$				
$\sigma_{HIRES}^g$ [m s <sup>-1</sup> ]	$2.84 \pm 0.36$				
$\gamma_{HARPS-N}^h$ [m s <sup>-1</sup> ]	$79699.32 \pm 0.25$				
$\gamma_{HIRES}^h$ [m s <sup>-1</sup> ]	$-1.27 \pm 0.42$				

Notes. <sup>a</sup> *TESS* Barycentric Julian Date (BJD – 2457000). <sup>b</sup> Minimum mass in the hypothesis of a planetary origin. <sup>c</sup> Computed as  $T_{eq} = T_* \left( \frac{R_p}{2a} \right)^{1/2} [(1 - A_b)]^{1/4}$ , assuming null Bond albedo ( $A_b = 0$ ). <sup>d</sup> Stellar irradiation at the surface. <sup>e</sup> Planetary surface gravity. <sup>f</sup> As determined from the stellar analysis in Lacedelli et al. (2022). <sup>g</sup> RV jitter term. <sup>h</sup> RV offset.

Our analysis resulted in an improvement of the radius of TOI-561 e with an error reduced to 2 per cent, thanks to the new *TESS*+*CHEOPS* observations. For comparison, in Lacedelli et al. (2022), the precision on the radius was 5 per cent. Lacedelli et al. (2022) have a precision on  $P_e$  of about 6 h, while in this work we reached a precision of 21.6 s.

In order to resolve the discrepancies appearing in the values of  $R_p/R_*$  for TOI-561 c and d as reported by Lacedelli et al. (2022), we performed three different tests in an independent manner.

(i) A global fit using only *TESS* data to check for inconsistencies arising from the *CHEOPS* data set.

(ii) A global fit using only *CHEOPS* data to check for inconsistencies arising from the *TESS* data set.

(iii) An independent analysis using the *PATHOS* code on all four *TESS* sectors.

The results of these tests, as presented in Fig. 3, confirm the final values of this work within  $1\sigma$ .

Table 2 lists the most updated parameters for the TOI-561 planetary system.

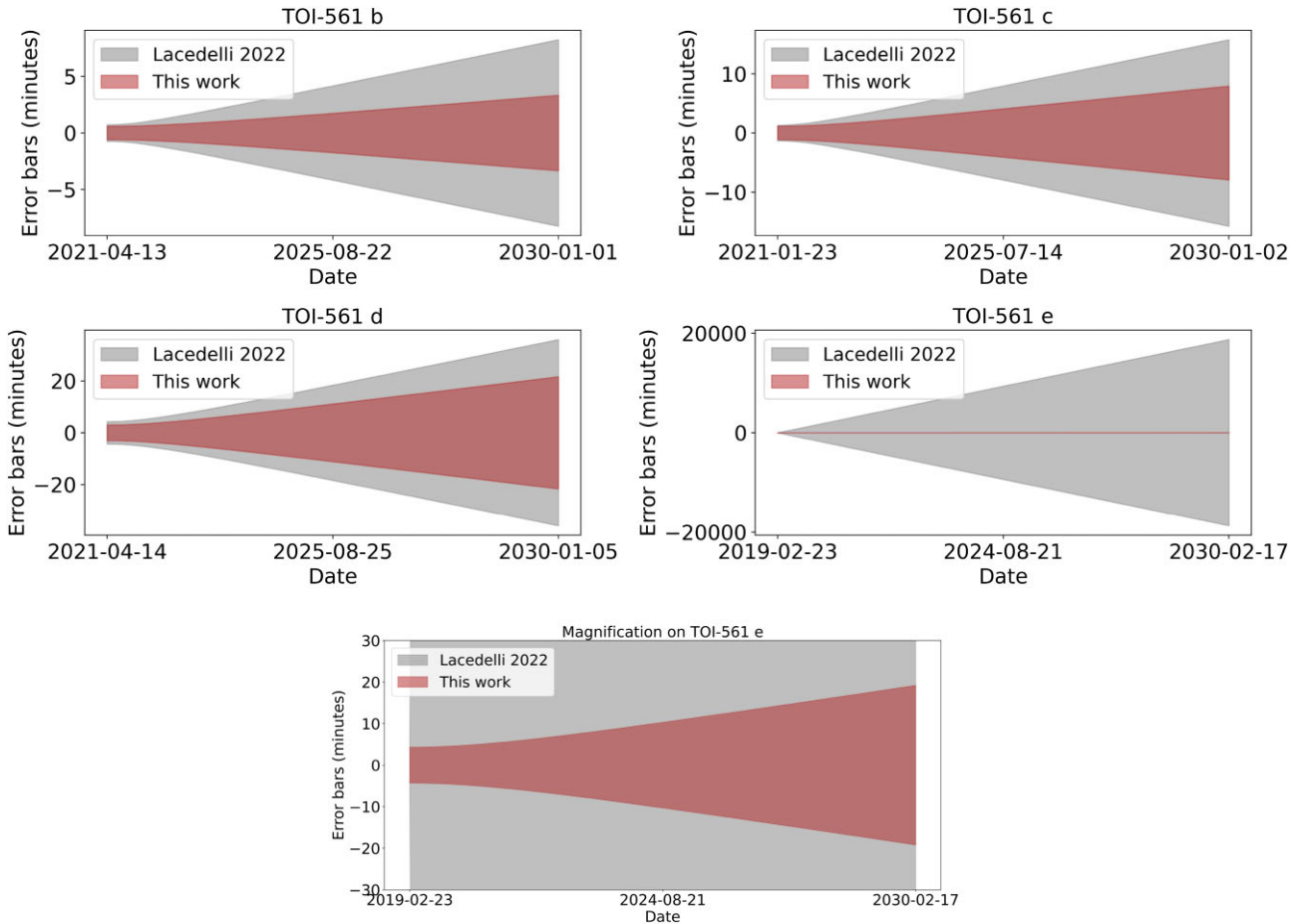
#### 4 IMPROVEMENT OF THE EPHEMERIDES

Thanks to the new data set above described, we improved the transit time precision and, the ephemerides of all four transiting planets. The most remarkable achievement has been to constrain the TOI-561 e period. In Fig. 4, we show the propagated error bar for the mid-transit time of each transiting planet orbiting TOI-561. We propagated the error bars until the first available transit after the date 2030 January 01 and compared our results with previous ephemerides from Lacedelli et al. (2022): TOI-561 b error bar at 2030 January 01 is 4.1 min (using Lacedelli et al. 2022 it would be 8.2 min), our propagated error is 50 per cent smaller; TOI-561 c error bar at 2030 January 01 is 13.2 min; TOI-561 d error bar at 2030 January 05 is 23.6 min; TOI-561 e error bar at 2030 February 17 is 19.2 min (in Lacedelli et al. 2022 it would be 13.0 d). The new uncertainty on transit time in 2030 is 974 times (99.9 per cent) smaller. This last improvement is fundamental for a future follow-up observation. With new *TESS* and *CHEOPS* data, the propagation of error bars for the mid-transit times has been significantly refined.

#### 5 STABILITY ANALYSIS

The TOI-561 system hosts four confirmed planets (Table 2). In addition, RV data from HARPS-N has reported a  $433 \pm 20$  d signal with





**Figure 4.** Upper part: error bars on the central transit time propagated until 2030 January 01. Note the improvement in mid-transit time for all planets. In particular, we present for the first time plausible ephemerides of planet TOI 561 e (with an error bar on mid-transit time 974 times lower than in Lacedelli et al. 2022, at 2030). This is important for possible follow-up of this planet, e.g. for TTV and TDV measurements. Bottom part: magnification of the planet TOI-561 e.

a semi-amplitude of about  $K = 1.88 \pm 0.25 \text{ m s}^{-1}$  (Lacedelli et al. 2021), that may belong to a fifth external companion, corresponding to a planet- $f$  with a mass around  $19 M_{\oplus}$ .

To check the reliability of this additional planet, we performed a stability analysis of the five-planet system in a similar way as for other exoplanetary systems (eg. Correia et al. 2005, 2010). In Fig. 5, we numerically explore the stability of the system on a grid of initial conditions around the best fit (Table 2), by varying the orbital period and the eccentricity of the tentative planet- $f$ , which is the most uncertain one. The whole figure covers the  $1\sigma$  uncertainty that we have for the semi-amplitude  $K$ , and also  $3\sigma$  for the orbital period. The black curve corresponds to  $K = 1.88 \text{ m s}^{-1}$  and the best-fitting solution is marked with a dot.

Each initial condition was integrated for 10 000 yr, using the symplectic integrator SABAC4 (Laskar & Robutel 2001), with a step size of  $2 \times 10^{-5}$  yr and general relativity corrections. We then performed a frequency analysis (Laskar 1990, 1993) of the mean longitude of planet- $f$  over two consecutive time intervals of 5000 yr, and determine the main frequency,  $n$  and  $n'$ , respectively. The stability is measured by  $\Delta = |1 - n'/n|$ , which estimates the chaotic diffusion of the orbits. The results are reported in colour: orange and red represent strongly chaotic unstable trajectories, while cyan and blue give extremely stable quasi-periodic orbits on Gyr time-scales.

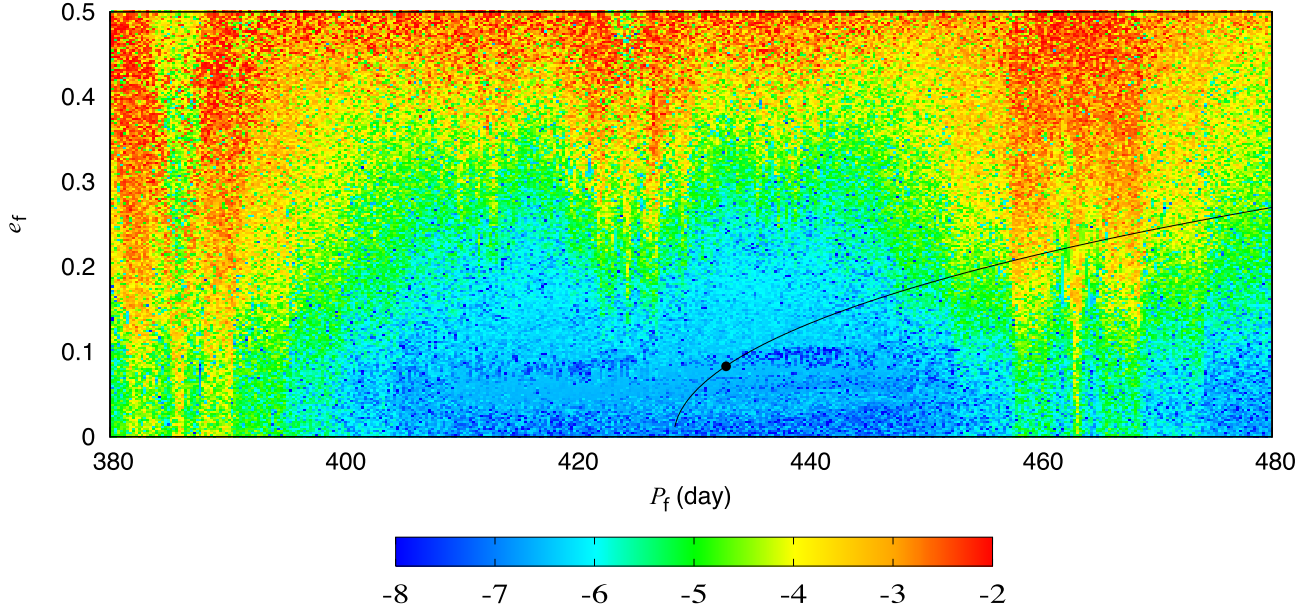
In Fig. 5, we observe that, despite we are analysing the outermost planet, several resonances are present that disturb the system.

There is only a narrow blue stable region in the middle of the stability map, for orbital periods  $P_f \approx 430 \pm 30$  d and eccentricities  $e_f \lesssim 0.2$ . Interestingly, this region is where the best-fitting solution from Table 2 lies. We conclude that the TOI-561 five-planet orbital solution is plausible from a dynamical point of view, and resilient to the uncertainties in the determination of the orbital period, eccentricity, and RV semi-amplitude of planet- $f$ . Therefore, this analysis gives us an additional hint that the signal around 433 d reported in the HARPS-N data does have a planetary origin.

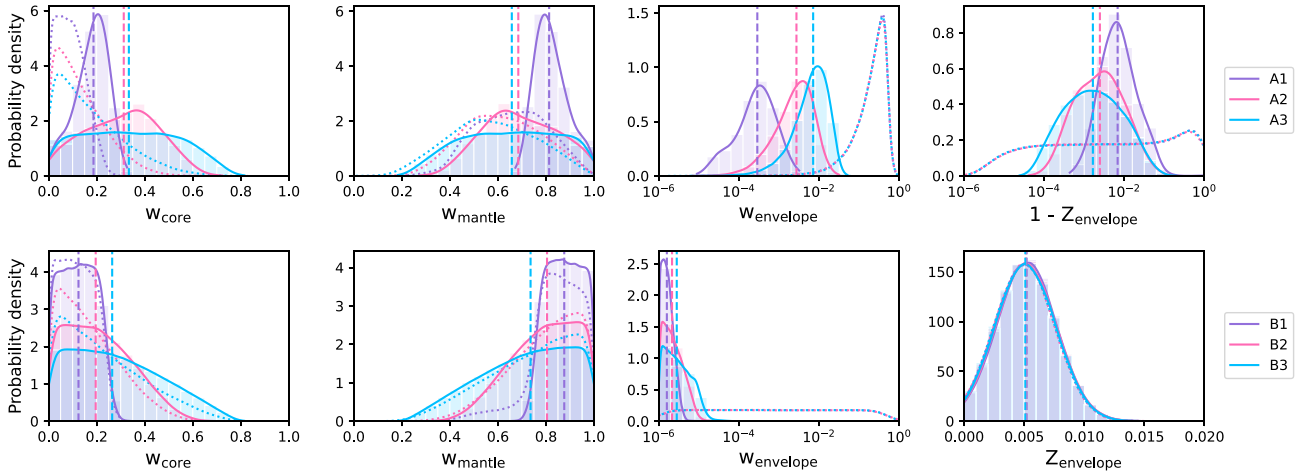
## 6 INTERNAL STRUCTURE MODELLING

As a next step, we applied the neural network-based internal structure modelling framework `planETic`<sup>6</sup> (Egger et al. 2024) to the four transiting planets in the TOI-561 system, using the updated planetary parameters listed in Table 2 as well as the stellar parameters from Lacedelli et al. (2022). `planETic` uses neural networks to replace the computationally intensive forward model in a Bayesian accept-reject sampling algorithm used to infer the internal structure of observed planets. The neural networks used in `planETic` were trained on the forward model of BICEPS (Bayesian Interior Characterization

<sup>6</sup><https://github.com/joannegger/planETic>



**Figure 5.** Stability analysis of the TOI-561 planetary system. For fixed initial conditions (Table 2), the parameter space of the system is explored by varying the orbital period and the eccentricity of planet-*f*. The step size is 0.25 d in the orbital period and 0.0025 in the eccentricity. For each initial condition, the system is integrated over 10 000 yr, and a stability indicator is calculated, which involved a frequency analysis of the mean longitude of the inner planet. The chaotic diffusion is measured by the variation in the main frequency. Red points correspond to highly unstable orbits, while blue points correspond to orbits that are likely to be stable on Gyr time-scales. The black curve corresponds to  $K = 1.88 \text{ m s}^{-1}$  and the black dot shows the values of the best-fitting solution (Table 2).



**Figure 6.** Results of the interior structure modelling for TOI-561 b using the `planETic` framework (Egger et al. 2024). The posterior distributions shown are for the mass fractions of an inner core ( $w_{\text{core}}$ ), mantle ( $w_{\text{mantle}}$ ), and envelope ( $w_{\text{envelope}}$ ) in the planet as well as the mass fraction of water in the envelope ( $Z_{\text{envelope}}$ ). We ran models assuming a formation scenario outside the iceline, leading to a water-rich composition (top row), as well as assuming a formation scenario inside the iceline and hence a water-poor composition (bottom row). For both water prior options, we ran three different models, once assuming the planet’s Si/Mg/Fe ratios to match the ones of the star exactly (purple, option 1), once assuming the planet to be more iron-enriched (pink, option 2), and once using a free uniform prior for the planet’s Si/Mg/Fe ratios (blue, option 3). The dotted lines depict the chosen priors, the dashed vertical lines the median values of the posterior distributions.

of `ExoPlanetS`, Haldemann et al. 2024) and include a much more physically accurate set of equations of state as well as an envelope of fully mixed H/He and water, in contrast to the interior models previously applied to these planets (Lacedelli et al. 2022; Patel et al. 2023), which used a condensed water layer with a separately modelled H/He envelope.

When inferring the internal structure of observed planets, the inherent degeneracy of the problem makes the resulting posteriors dependent on the chosen priors. To account for this effect, we ran a total of six different models per planet, with two different prior

options for the water content of each planet and three prior options for a planet’s Si/Mg/Fe ratios in relation to the stellar abundances measured for TOI-561 (see Lacedelli et al. 2022). For the water priors, we chose one option compatible with a scenario where the planet formed outside the iceline and is thus expected to be water-rich, as well as an option where the planet is expected to be water-poor. For the Si/Mg/Fe priors, we applied one prior assuming the planetary abundance ratios to match the stellar ones exactly (e.g. Thiabaud et al. 2015), one assuming the planet to be enriched in iron compared to the star (e.g. Adibekyan et al. 2021), and one modelling

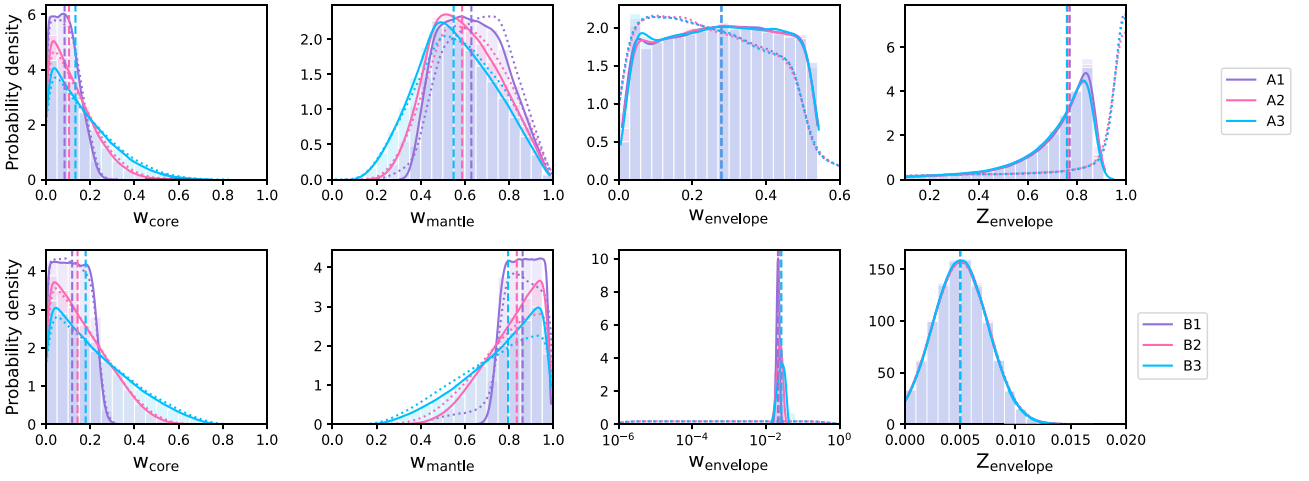


Figure 7. Same as Fig. 6, but for TOI-561 c.

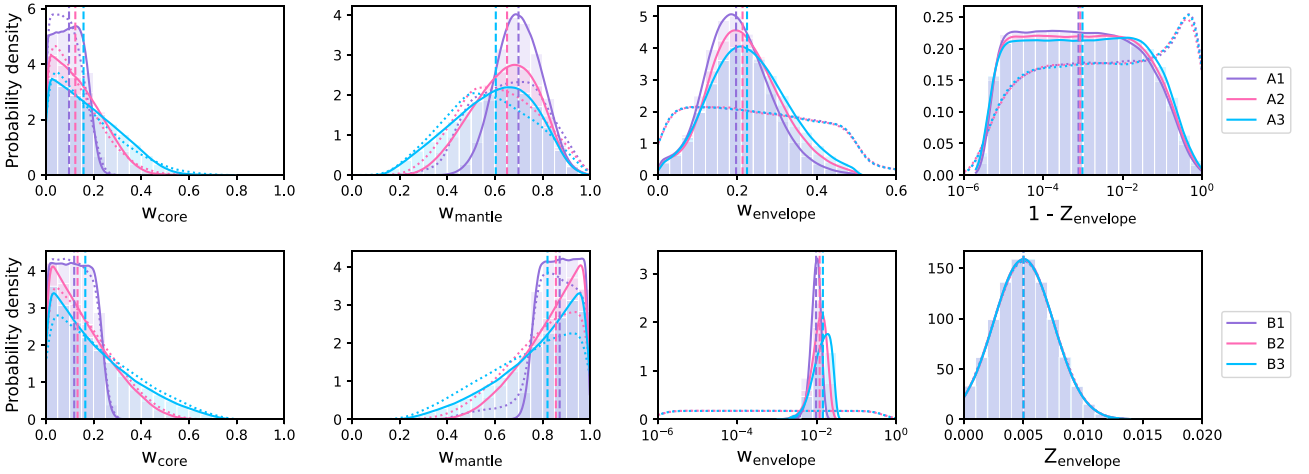


Figure 8. Same as Fig. 6, but for TOI-561 d.

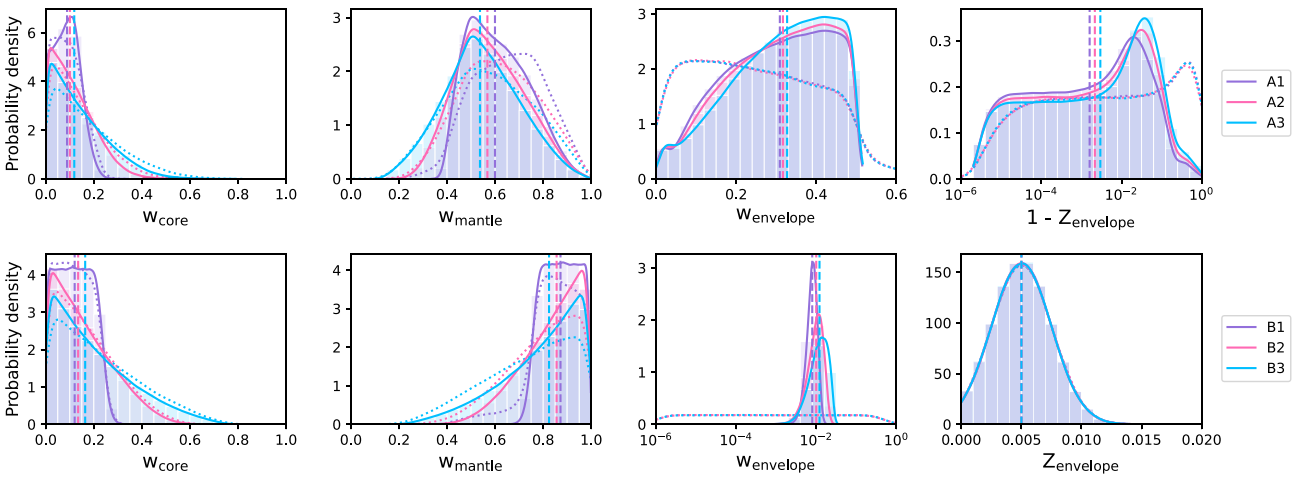


Figure 9. Same as Fig. 6, but for TOI-561 e.

the planet independently of the stellar Si/Mg/Fe ratios, with a uniform prior with an upper limit of 0.75 for iron. A more detailed description of these used priors and `planet1c` in general can be found in Egger et al. (2024).

The most important resulting posteriors for TOI-561 b to e are visualized in Figs 6–9. Tables 3–6 summarize the median values and  $1\sigma$  error intervals for all modelled internal structure parameters. For planet b, we find that the inferred envelope mass fractions are very

**Table 3.** Median and  $1\sigma$  errors for the posterior distributions of the internal structure modelling for TOI-561 b.

Water prior Si/Mg/Fe prior [per cent]	Formation outside iceline (water-rich)			Formation inside iceline (water-poor)		
	Stellar (A1)	Iron-enriched (A2)	Free (A3)	Stellar (B1)	Iron-enriched (B2)	Free (B3)
$w_{\text{core}}$	$18.7^{+5.6}_{-8.2}$	$31.3^{+14.4}_{-18.1}$	$33.4^{+22.6}_{-22.0}$	$12.4^{+8.2}_{-8.3}$	$19.6^{+16.4}_{-13.3}$	$26.4^{+23.2}_{-18.1}$
$w_{\text{mantle}}$	$81.3^{+8.2}_{-5.7}$	$68.5^{+18.0}_{-14.6}$	$65.8^{+21.9}_{-22.6}$	$87.6^{+8.3}_{-8.2}$	$80.4^{+13.3}_{-16.4}$	$73.6^{+18.1}_{-23.2}$
$w_{\text{envelope}}$	$0.03^{+0.05}_{-0.02}$	$0.27^{+0.38}_{-0.20}$	$0.71^{+0.85}_{-0.48}$	$(1.6^{+0.8}_{-0.4}) 10^{-4}$	$(2.1^{+2.2}_{-0.9}) 10^{-4}$	$(2.8^{+4.4}_{-1.4}) 10^{-4}$
$Z_{\text{envelope}}$	$99.3^{+0.4}_{-1.3}$	$99.8^{+0.2}_{-0.8}$	$99.8^{+0.1}_{-0.8}$	$0.5^{+0.2}_{-0.2}$	$0.5^{+0.2}_{-0.2}$	$0.5^{+0.2}_{-0.2}$
$X_{\text{Fe,core}}$	$90.2^{+6.9}_{-6.2}$	$90.6^{+6.7}_{-6.7}$	$90.3^{+6.6}_{-6.3}$	$90.8^{+6.4}_{-6.6}$	$90.7^{+6.4}_{-6.6}$	$90.6^{+6.5}_{-6.6}$
$X_{\text{S,core}}$	$9.8^{+6.2}_{-6.9}$	$9.4^{+6.7}_{-6.7}$	$9.7^{+6.3}_{-6.6}$	$9.2^{+6.6}_{-6.4}$	$9.3^{+6.6}_{-6.4}$	$9.4^{+6.6}_{-6.5}$
$X_{\text{Si,mantle}}$	$44.7^{+6.5}_{-6.8}$	$32.4^{+9.4}_{-8.5}$	$21.1^{+19.8}_{-13.6}$	$40.5^{+6.0}_{-5.6}$	$36.8^{+7.7}_{-7.9}$	$27.7^{+28.0}_{-19.2}$
$X_{\text{Mg,mantle}}$	$46.8^{+6.7}_{-6.9}$	$38.6^{+10.0}_{-9.3}$	$30.7^{+19.5}_{-16.0}$	$47.9^{+6.5}_{-6.2}$	$43.1^{+8.8}_{-9.3}$	$34.0^{+27.2}_{-22.1}$
$X_{\text{Fe,mantle}}$	$7.7^{+7.5}_{-5.3}$	$28.3^{+16.5}_{-17.2}$	$46.2^{+16.8}_{-25.4}$	$11.5^{+6.8}_{-7.5}$	$18.7^{+15.7}_{-12.5}$	$30.9^{+23.8}_{-20.5}$

**Table 4.** Median and  $1\sigma$  errors for the posterior distributions of the internal structure modelling for TOI-561 c.

Water prior Si/Mg/Fe prior [per cent]	Formation outside iceline (water-rich)			Formation inside iceline (water-poor)		
	Stellar (A1)	Iron-enriched (A2)	Free (A3)	Stellar (B1)	Iron-enriched (B2)	Free (B3)
$w_{\text{core}}$	$8.4^{+6.5}_{-5.7}$	$10.4^{+11.8}_{-7.4}$	$13.3^{+16.5}_{-9.7}$	$11.8^{+8.1}_{-8.0}$	$14.2^{+15.5}_{-10.2}$	$17.9^{+21.3}_{-13.0}$
$w_{\text{mantle}}$	$62.9^{+16.0}_{-14.9}$	$58.7^{+18.1}_{-14.7}$	$54.0^{+19.7}_{-16.5}$	$86.1^{+8.1}_{-8.2}$	$83.4^{+10.3}_{-15.8}$	$79.5^{+13.2}_{-21.7}$
$w_{\text{envelope}}$	$27.8^{+17.1}_{-17.6}$	$27.9^{+17.1}_{-17.5}$	$27.9^{+17.1}_{-17.6}$	$2.1^{+0.2}_{-0.2}$	$2.4^{+0.4}_{-0.4}$	$2.6^{+0.7}_{-0.6}$
$Z_{\text{envelope}}$	$77.1^{+7.8}_{-19.6}$	$76.3^{+8.2}_{-20.1}$	$75.9^{+8.2}_{-20.5}$	$0.5^{+0.2}_{-0.2}$	$0.5^{+0.2}_{-0.3}$	$0.5^{+0.2}_{-0.2}$
$X_{\text{Fe,core}}$	$90.3^{+6.6}_{-6.4}$	$90.3^{+6.5}_{-6.4}$	$90.3^{+6.5}_{-6.3}$	$90.3^{+6.6}_{-6.4}$	$90.3^{+6.6}_{-6.4}$	$90.3^{+6.6}_{-6.3}$
$X_{\text{S,core}}$	$9.7^{+6.4}_{-6.6}$	$9.7^{+6.4}_{-6.5}$	$9.7^{+6.3}_{-6.5}$	$9.7^{+6.4}_{-6.6}$	$9.7^{+6.4}_{-6.6}$	$9.7^{+6.3}_{-6.6}$
$X_{\text{Si,mantle}}$	$40.5^{+6.0}_{-5.7}$	$38.1^{+7.6}_{-7.8}$	$33.2^{+29.4}_{-22.8}$	$40.5^{+6.0}_{-5.7}$	$38.3^{+7.5}_{-7.8}$	$33.9^{+29.2}_{-23.3}$
$X_{\text{Mg,mantle}}$	$47.9^{+6.4}_{-6.1}$	$44.8^{+8.1}_{-9.1}$	$36.7^{+30.1}_{-24.6}$	$47.9^{+6.4}_{-6.1}$	$45.0^{+8.2}_{-9.0}$	$36.4^{+30.0}_{-24.7}$
$X_{\text{Fe,mantle}}$	$11.5^{+6.7}_{-7.6}$	$15.5^{+15.4}_{-10.8}$	$22.0^{+24.0}_{-15.9}$	$11.6^{+6.7}_{-7.6}$	$15.1^{+15.2}_{-10.6}$	$21.3^{+23.6}_{-15.4}$

**Table 5.** Median and  $1\sigma$  errors for the posterior distributions of the internal structure modelling for TOI-561 d.

Water prior Si/Mg/Fe prior [per cent]	Formation outside iceline (water-rich)			Formation inside iceline (water-poor)		
	Stellar (A1)	Iron-enriched (A2)	Free (A3)	Stellar (B1)	Iron-enriched (B2)	Free (B3)
$w_{\text{core}}$	$9.7^{+6.5}_{-6.6}$	$12.4^{+12.0}_{-8.7}$	$15.8^{+16.4}_{-11.2}$	$11.9^{+8.2}_{-8.1}$	$13.3^{+15.4}_{-9.6}$	$16.6^{+21.4}_{-12.1}$
$w_{\text{mantle}}$	$69.9^{+9.9}_{-9.5}$	$65.1^{+13.0}_{-15.3}$	$60.4^{+16.1}_{-19.8}$	$87.1^{+8.1}_{-8.2}$	$85.5^{+9.7}_{-15.7}$	$82.0^{+12.4}_{-21.8}$
$w_{\text{envelope}}$	$19.7^{+8.6}_{-7.4}$	$21.3^{+9.7}_{-8.1}$	$22.4^{+10.5}_{-9.2}$	$1.0^{+0.3}_{-0.3}$	$1.2^{+0.5}_{-0.5}$	$1.4^{+0.8}_{-0.6}$
$Z_{\text{envelope}}$	$99.9^{+0.1}_{-2.7}$	$99.9^{+0.1}_{-3.0}$	$99.9^{+0.1}_{-3.6}$	$0.5^{+0.2}_{-0.2}$	$0.5^{+0.2}_{-0.2}$	$0.5^{+0.2}_{-0.2}$
$X_{\text{Fe,core}}$	$90.3^{+6.5}_{-6.4}$	$90.4^{+6.5}_{-6.4}$	$90.4^{+6.5}_{-6.4}$	$90.3^{+6.5}_{-6.4}$	$90.4^{+6.5}_{-6.4}$	$90.3^{+6.5}_{-6.4}$
$X_{\text{S,core}}$	$9.7^{+6.4}_{-6.5}$	$9.6^{+6.4}_{-6.5}$	$9.6^{+6.4}_{-6.5}$	$9.7^{+6.4}_{-6.5}$	$9.6^{+6.4}_{-6.5}$	$9.7^{+6.4}_{-6.5}$
$X_{\text{Si,mantle}}$	$40.6^{+6.0}_{-5.7}$	$38.1^{+7.5}_{-7.8}$	$32.9^{+30.1}_{-22.8}$	$40.6^{+6.0}_{-5.6}$	$38.8^{+7.4}_{-7.8}$	$35.9^{+29.4}_{-24.4}$
$X_{\text{Mg,mantle}}$	$47.9^{+6.4}_{-6.2}$	$44.7^{+8.3}_{-8.9}$	$37.8^{+28.3}_{-24.8}$	$47.8^{+6.3}_{-6.1}$	$45.5^{+8.0}_{-9.0}$	$36.4^{+30.0}_{-24.8}$
$X_{\text{Fe,mantle}}$	$11.4^{+6.8}_{-7.5}$	$15.7^{+15.0}_{-11.0}$	$21.4^{+22.5}_{-15.2}$	$11.6^{+6.7}_{-7.6}$	$13.9^{+15.2}_{-10.0}$	$19.3^{+23.7}_{-14.2}$

small for all chosen priors. If we assume a formation outside the iceline (case A), we end up with almost pure steam envelopes of  $<1$  per cent. Conversely, for a formation scenario inside the iceline (case B), we infer largely H/He-dominated envelopes with mass fractions of the order of  $10^{-6}$ , which would most likely have been evaporated. This is in agreement with the computations made in Patel et al. (2023).

If we assume that planets c, d, and e formed inside the iceline, we expect them to host almost pure H/He envelopes with mass fractions of around 2 per cent–3 per cent (c) and 1 per cent–2 per cent (d and e). If they formed inside the iceline, we expect their envelopes to be water-rich, with water mass fractions in the envelope of around  $77^{+8}_{-20}$  per cent for planet c and almost pure water envelopes for planets d and e. The mass fractions of these water-dominated

envelopes are expected to be around  $28^{+17}_{-18}$  per cent for planet c,  $21^{+10}_{-8}$  per cent for planet d, and  $32^{+13}_{-15}$  per cent for planet e.

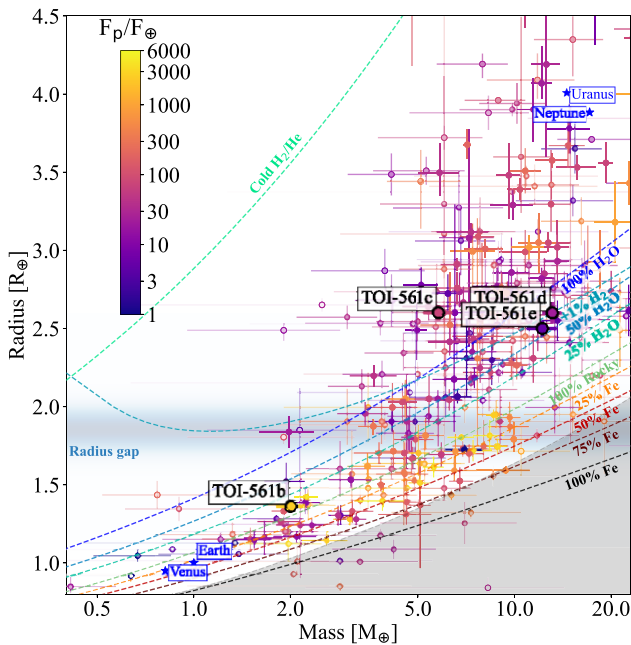
## 7 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

With an age of  $t_* = 11.0^{+2.8}_{-3.5}$  Gyr (Lacedelli et al. 2022), TOI-561 is one of the oldest Milky Way disc stars known to have four confirmed planets, plus an additional fifth non-transiting candidate. TOI-561 system architecture has been controversial since its discovery. Weiss et al. (2021) interpreted the transit of TOI-561 e in *TESS* data as the transit of a planet with  $\sim 16$  d period. On the other hand, Lacedelli et al. (2021) suggested that the architecture of the TOI-561 system can be explained without the planet with a 16-d period. Later on, Lacedelli et al. (2022) found a 433 d signal in the HARPS-N RV data



**Table 6.** Median and  $1\sigma$  errors for the posterior distributions of the internal structure modelling for TOI-561 e.

Water prior Si/Mg/Fe prior [per cent]	Formation outside iceline (water-rich)			Formation inside iceline (water-poor)		
	Stellar (A1)	Iron-enriched (A2)	Free (A3)	Stellar (B1)	Iron-enriched (B2)	Free (B3)
$w_{\text{core}}$	$8.8^{+5.5}_{-5.8}$	$10.0^{+10.6}_{-7.1}$	$11.8^{+14.5}_{-8.6}$	$12.0^{+8.2}_{-8.2}$	$13.5^{+15.3}_{-9.7}$	$16.4^{+21.0}_{-12.0}$
$w_{\text{mantle}}$	$59.9^{+15.2}_{-11.9}$	$56.8^{+16.4}_{-13.2}$	$53.7^{+17.0}_{-15.2}$	$87.2^{+8.2}_{-8.2}$	$85.6^{+9.8}_{-15.6}$	$82.4^{+12.2}_{-21.4}$
$w_{\text{envelope}}$	$30.9^{+13.0}_{-15.4}$	$31.7^{+12.5}_{-15.4}$	$32.7^{+11.8}_{-15.2}$	$0.8^{+0.2}_{-0.2}$	$1.0^{+0.5}_{-0.4}$	$1.2^{+0.7}_{-0.6}$
$Z_{\text{envelope}}$	$99.8^{+0.2}_{-3.2}$	$99.8^{+0.2}_{-4.3}$	$99.7^{+0.3}_{-5.2}$	$0.5^{+0.2}_{-0.2}$	$0.5^{+0.2}_{-0.2}$	$0.5^{+0.2}_{-0.2}$
$x_{\text{Fe,core}}$	$90.1^{+6.7}_{-6.3}$	$90.2^{+6.7}_{-6.3}$	$90.3^{+6.6}_{-6.4}$	$90.3^{+6.5}_{-6.4}$	$90.4^{+6.5}_{-6.4}$	$90.3^{+6.5}_{-6.4}$
$x_{\text{S,core}}$	$9.9^{+6.3}_{-6.7}$	$9.8^{+6.3}_{-6.7}$	$9.7^{+6.4}_{-6.6}$	$9.7^{+6.4}_{-6.5}$	$9.6^{+6.4}_{-6.5}$	$9.7^{+6.4}_{-6.5}$
$x_{\text{Si,mantle}}$	$40.8^{+6.1}_{-5.7}$	$38.8^{+7.3}_{-7.8}$	$33.7^{+30.6}_{-23.5}$	$40.7^{+6.0}_{-5.7}$	$38.8^{+7.3}_{-7.8}$	$36.2^{+29.3}_{-24.5}$
$x_{\text{Mg,mantle}}$	$48.2^{+6.3}_{-6.2}$	$45.8^{+8.0}_{-9.2}$	$37.1^{+31.4}_{-25.2}$	$47.8^{+6.3}_{-6.1}$	$45.5^{+8.0}_{-8.9}$	$36.6^{+30.0}_{-24.9}$
$x_{\text{Fe,mantle}}$	$10.7^{+7.1}_{-7.1}$	$13.4^{+15.7}_{-9.6}$	$18.9^{+25.9}_{-14.0}$	$11.5^{+6.7}_{-7.5}$	$13.9^{+15.1}_{-10.0}$	$19.0^{+23.3}_{-13.9}$



**Figure 10.** M–R diagram for TOI-561 system. The data are taken from the Extrasolar Planets Encyclopaedia catalogue (<http://exoplanet.eu/catalog/>) as of 2024 May. The TOI-561 planets are labelled and updated with the analysis in the current work. The theoretical M–R relationship as a function of the chemical composition (Zeng et al. 2019) are shown in dashed coloured lines. The shaded grey region represents the forbidden region predicted by collisional stripping (Marcus et al. 2010).

that could be planetary in nature. TOI-561 e, originally inferred from *TESS* Sector 8 and HARPS-N RV data, has now been confirmed with new *TESS*+*CHEOPS* light curves, definitely fixing the architecture of the planetary system. The masses of all planets have been measured at  $\sim 10$  per cent precision, while the radii have been determined with  $\sim 2$  per cent precision.

New *CHEOPS* and *TESS* data allowed us to estimate the density of the planets, including TOI-561 e, with unprecedented precision, and to properly place all the planets in the mass–radius (M–R) diagram (Fig. 10). The system includes one of the lowest density USP super-Earth TOI-561 b with a density  $\rho_p = 4.3 \pm 0.6 \text{ g cm}^{-3}$ . Our analysis refined the radius and the period of the outer transiting planet TOI-561 e, which is confirmed to be a mini-Neptune with a radius of  $R_p = 2.49 \pm 0.05 R_\oplus$  and a mass of  $M_p = 12.4 \pm 1.4 M_\oplus$ , with

stellar irradiation of  $4.89 \pm 0.16 S_\oplus$  and an equilibrium temperature of  $414 \pm 3 \text{ K}$ , assuming a bond albedo  $A_B = 0$ .

The new observational data allowed us to improve the ephemerides of all planets, in particular we obtained a 99.9 per cent reduction of the uncertainty on TOI-561 e ephemerides. TOI-561 e is one of a few good candidates for exomoon search. With a period of about 77 d, it is above the period threshold of 60 d, suggested by Alvarado-Montes, Zuluaga & Sucerquia (2017), below which the exomoon would collide with the planet. As described in Ehrenreich et al. (2023), the observation aimed to search for exomoon should be centred on the transit of the planet, and should span the time equivalent of the Hill radius of the planet, because a stable exomoon is expected to lie within the planet Hill sphere (Domingos, Winter & Yokoyama 2006). For this reason, the improvement we obtained on the linear ephemerides of planet e has a crucial importance for the planning and scheduling of future observations.

Finally, the stability analysis performed in this paper demonstrated the long-term stability of the outer candidate TOI-561 f, validating even further its existence. This paper presents a definitive characterization of the exoplanet system of TOI-561, with confirmation of the five planets and improvement of ephemerides, orbital, and physical parameters, thanks to the new data from *CHEOPS* and *TESS*. Specifically, the great improvement in transit-timing precision and the fine-tuning of internal structure models underlines the relevance of TOI-561 for ongoing and future studies.

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## DATA AVAILABILITY

HARPS-N observations and data products are available through the Data and Analysis Center for Exoplanets (DACE) at <https://dace.unige.ch/>. TESS data products can be accessed through the official NASA website <https://heasarc.gsfc.nasa.gov/docs/tess/data-access.html>. All underlying data are available either in the appendix/online supporting information or will be available via VizieR at CDS.

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