**Mikołaj Kopernik**, łac. Nicolaus Copernicus, niem. Nikolaus Kopernikus (born February 19, 1473 in Toruń, died in May 1543 in Frombork) – a Polish polymath of German descent; a lawyer, official, diplomat, physician, and lower Catholic clergyman, with a doctorate in canon law, also engaged in astronomy and astrology, mathematics, economics, military strategy, cartography, and philology. He is also referred to as a physicist and philosopher.

Copernicus is best known as an astronomer – the creator of the heliocentric model of the Solar System and probably the first heliocentrist in Europe since ancient Greece. He authored the work "De revolutionibus orbium coelestium" (On the Revolutions of the Celestial Spheres), detailing his vision of the Universe. Copernicus's works, unlike earlier concepts by Aristarchus of Samos, marked a breakthrough and triggered one of the most important scientific revolutions since ancient times, known as the Copernican Revolution. For this reason, heliocentrism is sometimes called Copernicanism, and the cosmological-philosophical postulate of rejecting all geocentrism and anthropocentrism is called the Copernican principle.

Other achievements of the scholar include formulating the quantitative theory of money and Gresham's law in economics. In plane geometry, he popularized a theorem named after him, although he was not its first author. Copernicus also translated the works of the Byzantine writer Theophylact Simocatta into Latin, authored the Latin poem "Septem Sidera" (Seven Stars), and created maps of Warmia and other areas of Prussia. Copernicus's astronomical work was also linked to the revision of Aristotle's physics, which was part of his philosophical system. In this way, the scholar from Toruń paved the way for the modern scientific method and the classical mechanics and theory of gravity based on it by Newton.