

**155th Anniversary of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences (BAS)
Celebrated at the Romanian Academy (RA)**

Enlightenment and Science – a Bridge across the Ages

History of BAS

The Bulgarian Academy of Sciences (BAS) is the leading scientific, spiritual and expert centre of Bulgaria with 155 years of tradition. The history of the oldest institution dates back nine years before the restoration of the Bulgarian statehood when the Bulgarian Learned Society (BLS) was founded on 29th September 1869 in Brăila, Romania, embodying the aspirations of Bulgarian Revival patriots such as Marin Drinov (Professor at Kharkiv University), Vasil Drumev (Prime Minister of the Principality of Bulgaria and Metropolitan bishop of Tarnovo), Gavril Krustevich (Governor of Eastern Rumelia) to align Bulgarians with developed European nations. The first Chairman of the Society was the university scientist historian Marin Drinov. After the Liberation of Bulgaria (1878), the Bulgarian Learned Society moved its activities to Sofia and established itself as an authoritative scientific centre with a rich social, cultural and political activity. The prominent figures of Evlogi and Hristo Georgievi, Dobri Voynikov, Rayko Zhinzifov, Vasil Levski, Lyuben Karavelov, Hristo Botev, Todor Ikonomov, Nesho Bonchev, Nayden Gerov, Dimitar Shishmanov, Vassil Stoyanov and many others have remained forever in the national memory as builders of the largest scientific institution of Bulgaria.

BAS nowadays

The Bulgarian Academy of Sciences is an autonomous organisation governed in accordance with democratic principles, universal values, and national traditions and interests. It participates in the development of world science and contributes to multiplying the material and intangible cultural and historical heritage of the nation.

BAS is the biggest research organisation in Bulgaria comprising 44 research institutes and several specialised units, including four museums. The Academy has regional academic centres all over the country. At present, it employs about 2,400 scientists, representing about 15% of the academic staff in Bulgaria and producing more than 40% of the country's scientific output.

Problem-oriented divisions of BAS: Fundamental and applied research is conducted at the Academy's units distributed over nine problem-oriented divisions: Information and Communication Sciences and Technologies; Energy Resources and Energy Efficiency; Nanoscience, New Materials and Technologies; Biomedicine and Quality of Life; Biodiversity, Bioresources and Ecology; Climate Changes, Risks and Natural Resources; Astronomy, Space Research and Technologies; Cultural and Historical Heritage and National Identity; Man and Society.

Support to state, society and business: The expert potential of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences is intensively involved in carrying out specific nationwide and operational activities serving the state and society. BAS scientists are highly-qualified experts which makes them a sought-after partner in solving national tasks of high importance, elaborating strategies and expert opinions on key state priorities. The Academy maintains close contacts with business to develop innovative products, technologies and services. The *Science for Business Forum* is a joint initiative of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences and the Bulgarian Small and Medium Enterprises Promotion Agency (BSMEPA) with the support of the Ministry of Education and Science and the Ministry of Innovation and Growth. The Forum's main goal is to present good practices and successful examples for

partnership between business and BAS scientists. Over the last 20 years, the Academy has been a leader among the Bulgarian organisations by number of registered patents and utility models.

Education and Training: BAS scientists are highly acknowledged lecturers who lead bachelor's and master's courses in universities both at home and abroad, as well as co-supervise bachelor's and master's theses developed at the Academy institutes. The research units of BAS are accredited for training of PhD students (*PhD Training Centre with Career Centre*). The Academy is a leading centre for enhancing teacher qualifications. *The High-School-Students' Institute of BAS* aims at providing opportunities for the expression and development of lower and upper secondary pupils willing to take part in scientific research. BAS has been participating in the Erasmus+ programme since the 2009-2010 academic year. The Academy has more than 150 Erasmus agreements with universities abroad, and their number has been growing as well as the number of doctoral mobilities.

International cooperation: The Bulgarian Academy of Sciences contributes greatly to the international scientific cooperation of the country. BAS is in scientific partnership with over 45 foreign academies of sciences and other national scientific institutions in more than 40 countries around the world. The Department of International Relations, established in 1957, possesses rich experience in management and supports scientific teams in the exchange of research visits under the bilateral agreements of BAS and for participation in the EU framework programmes. The Academy, directly or through its units, is a representative of Bulgaria in intergovernmental organisations which bring together politicians, researchers and public figures working to solve global problems. The Academy is a member of a number of international non-governmental organisations such as, but not limited to, *the International Science Council (ISC)*, *All European Academies (ALLEA)*, *European Academies Science Advisory Council (EASAC)*, *the European Science Foundation (ESF-Science Connect)*.

Publishing and information activities: The Bulgarian Academy of Sciences has its own publishing house - „Prof. Marin Drinov“ *Publishing House* for the dissemination of scientific papers, journals, collections of articles, scientific catalogues, bibliographies, dictionaries, encyclopaedias, albums, etc. of the research units. The *Central Library of BAS* is a multi-branch scientific library that has become one of the most successfully functioning libraries in the country by introducing a modern automated library information system to build and manage a network of 48 specialised libraries in 35 scientific units of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences. *The Scientific Archive of BAS (SA-BAS)* provides methodological assistance to the management of the institutes regarding the processing, preservation and transfer of documents from their archives to SA-BAS. The *Bulgarian Encyclopaedia Scientific Information Centre* is a unique centre, the only one in the country specialised in the preparation of encyclopaedias at a high academic level. The Centre successfully carries out the enlightenment mission of BAS: to present in popular form the latest research findings by Bulgarian scientists to the public.