

SIXTY YEARS OF INSTITUTE OF MATHEMATICS AND INFORMATICS

The Institute for Mathematics and Informatics (IMI) at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences (BAS) was created shortly after the end of WWII by the effort and high professionalism of a generation of Bulgarian mathematicians whom we now thankfully style the pivots of Bulgarian mathematics.

The date 27 October 1947 is rightly considered the birth date of the IMI. On this day the Executive Council (EC) of the BAS confirmed the plan of the scientific activity in 1947/1948. The section devoted to the mathematical sciences included the work of three committees:

- Committee for demographic studies (Acad. K. Popov),
- Committee for mathematical studies of the representative method in statistics (Acad. N. Obreshkov),
- Committee for financial mathematical research of state bonds and external bonds guaranteed by the state (Acad. K. Popov),

as well as detailed individual plans by the mathematicians Acad. Ivan Tzenov, Acad. Lyubomir Chakalov, Acad. Nikola Obreshkov and Acad. Kiril Popov. This was the beginning of the implementation of the idea, discussed by the EC of the BAS already in 1945 (Protocol #14/01.08.1945), to create a branch for Natural Sciences and Mathematics within the Academy and develop research institutes for individual areas of science, including an institute for mathematics.

Fully in line with the dynamics of the time and the development of research in mathematical sciences, the institution changed its name several times. In 1949 the Mathematical Institute (MI) was established at the Physical and Mathematical Branch of the Academy and Acad. L. Chakalov was appointed as its head (*Dnevnik* 490/24.03.1949). The MI was renamed Mathematical Institute with Computing Centre (MI with CC) in 1961, Institute of Mathematics and Mechanics with Computing Centre (IMM with CC) in 1972, and Institute of Mathematics (IM) in 1994. The current name, Institute of Mathematics and Informatics, goes back to 1995.

On 27 June 1951 the EC of the BAS confirmed the first Scientific Council of the MI, including

- Chairman: Acad. N. Obreshkov;
- Secretary: Prof. B. Petkanchin;
- Members: Acad. L. Chakalov, Acad. K. Popov, Acad. I. Tzenov, Prof. L. Iliev, Prof. Y. Tagamlitzki, Prof. G. Bradistilov, Prof. A. Stoyanov, Assoc. Prof. A. Mateev (the titles of the members of the Council refer to the time of its creation).

Here is a list of the directors of the IMI in the 60 years of its history:

1947–1950: Acad. L. Chakalov,
1951–1963: Acad. N. Obreshkov,
1964–1988: Acad. L. Iliev,
1988–1993: Acad. P. Kenderov,
1993–1999: Prof. N. Yanev,
1999– : Corresp. Member S. Dodunekov.

Since its creation in 1947 the IMI has been a leading Bulgarian centre for research and training of highly qualified specialists and exercising an efficient, long-range, consistent policy related to the fundamental trends in the development of mathematics, computer science and information technologies. Several facts of our history shall demonstrate the successful realisation of the IMI's mission:

- In 1961 the first computing centre in Bulgaria was created on the MI's premises.
- In the period 1962–1964 the first digital computer *Vitosha* was created.
- In 1965 the first electronic calculator *Elka 6521* was created.
- In 1966 the Central Institute for Computing Technology was set up as an offshoot of the MI with CC.
- In 1977 the Institute for Mechanics and Biomechanics was set up as an offshoot of the IMM with CC.
- Members of the IM with CC's staff formed the nucleus of the Coordinating Centre for Informatics and Computer Technology created in 1984 (currently the Institute for Parallel Processing).
- In 2000 the IMI set up the School Students' Institute for Mathematics and Informatics jointly with the *St Cyril and St Methodius Foundation*, the *Heureka* Foundation and the *Union of Bulgarian Mathematicians*.
- In 2006 the National Centre for Digitalisation of Scientific, Cultural and Historic Heritage was created on the IMI's premises.

A major part of the IMI's policy is participation in Bulgarian educational programmes on all levels, so that the stable development of the scientific potential in the areas of mathematics and computer science can be guaranteed. The activities in this domain are manifold: training MSc and PhD candidates, outstanding school students (including coaching of the national teams in mathematics, informatics and mathematical linguistics), re-qualification of school teachers, preparation of undergraduate and post-graduate students for scientific work by directly involving them in research.

How is scientific work organised in the IMI presently?

The IMI's research staff is divided into 20 separate departments and one temporary research team. Work is carried out on 115 themes, grouped into

- 25 projects funded by the BAS's budget,
- 19 projects sponsored by the National Research Fund,
- 71 projects within international programmes.

The Institute operates 22 permanent seminars.

Seven scientific and methodological journals are published by the IMI or with its cooperation.

A rich library is maintained, one among the best for mathematical sciences in Southeast Europe according to the opinion of the Institute's many foreign visitors.

Thanks to the high professionalism of its staff, the IMI is integrated into the global scientific community and enjoys well-deserved repute. Each year the Institute welcomes over 200 renowned foreign scholars, organises more than 10 scientific conferences, seminars and schools.

As we now summarise the IMI's 60 years of work, our staff appreciates highly the consent of Mr. Georgi Parvanov, President of the Republic of Bulgaria, that the grand session on occasion of the 60th anniversary should take place under his patronage. This overt recognition fills us with optimism for the Institute's future.