

SOFIA  
UNIVERSITY



“ST. KLIMENT  
OHRIDSKI”  
EST. 1888

# SUSTAINABILITY REPORT

2019 - 2021





## About the report

This is the second Sustainability report of Sofia University "St Kliment Ohridski" in fulfilling its commitment to the international initiative UN Global Compact. In this document it will be referred to as The Report, as well as in its printed and electronic format. The report gives an overview of our performance, our goals and achievements, quantitative data and non-financial data for the period 1.01.2019 – 31.12.2021.

Sofia University completely follows the guidelines of the international initiative UN Principles of Responsible Management Education and applies the reporting standards for sustainable development and United Nations Global Compact communication on progress and UN Goals for sustainability 2030.

The data in this report is based on publicly available sources. The team does not guarantee that the described activities cover the complete work of all members of SU academic and non-academic teams in the three dimensions of the sustainable development. The public websites review ended on 23.12.2012.

The best practices collection process ended on 10.01.2022.

SU report is published on <https://www.uni-sofia.bg/>

With gratitude to all colleagues who assisted in gathering information during the preparation of the second Sustainability Report, Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" (2019-2021).

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WE SUPPORT



## Greeting by the Rector



Dear partners,

You are looking at the second sustainability report of Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", which summarizes our activities and initiatives in the period 2019 – 2021, and is special to us for two reasons. First, because we can confirm our categorical and ongoing contribution to the UN Global Compact in the four thematic areas – human rights, labor practices, environmental protection and anti-corruption. They are part of our vision and development strategy, organizational culture, educational and administrative activities.

Secondly, we are excited to share that it contains a comprehensive information for our activities, aimed at achieving The Global UN Sustainable Development Goals that in the last few years serve as inspiration and purpose for the work of our academic community – lecturers, researchers and students. These topics are visible in the curriculum content of

undergraduates and master's programs, the scientific ones and outside auditoriums events, initiatives and supporting activities.

As an active participant in the international sustainable development movement and representative of the academic community in platforms such as the UN Initiative for responsible management education, UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network, the UNGC Network Bulgaria and The Advisory Council on Business and Child Rights of UNICEF-Bulgaria, we have the opportunity to convert these values and principles in practical decisions in favor of Bulgarian citizens and business in order to build a more solidary and sustainable society.

We wish you a pleasant reading!

Prof. DSc. Anastas Gerdjikov

# Contents

Greeting by the Rector	1
Sofia University Profile	5
Responsible employer	15
Responsible educational and scientific institution	19
Responsible manager	34
Impact and contribution	39

## Authors



## Highlights of the period



## Achievements





## Chronology:

<b>IX century</b>	Beginning of the <a href="#">organized educational system in Bulgaria</a> .
<b>1880</b>	The Ministry of education submits to the Parliament a draft Fundamental law on schools in the Bulgarian principality. It provides that "after completion of the classical high schools course, a Bulgarian higher school (university) will be opened, which will comprise the legal, philosophical, natural, medical and technical sciences".
<b>1887</b>	The minister of education T. Ivanchev issues an ordinance for the opening of a pedagogical class at the First Men's High School in Sofia.
<b>1.10. 1888</b>	The classes of the Higher Pedagogical Course begin. There are 43 students, only men. The adopted Provisional Regulations provide only for the functioning of the Department of History and Philology with three main disciplines: history, Slavic philology, and philosophy with pedagogy. The academic year 1888/1889 has two semesters and three groups of subjects – general, special, and auxiliary.
<b>8.12. 1888</b>	The Parliament decides on the transformation of the Higher pedagogical course into Higher education school.
<b>31.01. 1889</b>	The first lecturers of the Higher School were appointed and they immediately raised the question about establishing a library and supplying it with periodicals, as well as creating regulations for the Higher Education School. They call for academic autonomy in the management and organization of the Higher School. Alexander Teodorov-Balan is the first elected Rector. He is a graduate of the Universities of Prague and Leipzig, Doctor of the University of Prague (1884), Professor of Linguistics, Dialectology and All-Slavic Ethnography.
<b>1925</b>	The University library "St. Kliment Ohridski" is the biggest and the first university science library in Bulgaria which receives free copy of each publication.

Kliment Ohridski is a Bulgarian from the southwestern parts of the country. He was the most prominent student of Cyril and Methodius, who arrived in Bulgaria in 886. He was ordained the first bishop of the Bulgarian language in southwestern Macedonia in 893 during the reign of Tsar Simeon. During a period of seven years he trained 3,500 students from all walks of life, trained a large number of priests, deacons and teachers. He died at an old age in 916. His students buried him in the "St. Panteleimon" monastery in Ohrid which was built by him.

The Preslav circle writers, along with the Ohrid school, which was founded by Kliment, laid the foundations of the old Bulgarian written culture, literature tradition and education, which soon became an example for the entire Slavic civilization.

Canonized in the tenth century Kliment was a part of the Bulgarian saints pantheon along with Cyril and Methodius. It is written in the Asemanian election gospel at the end of the 10th century that the memory of St. Kliment is celebrated by the Bulgarian Orthodox Church on July 27th – the day of his Ascension and the Holy Septuagenarians. Later, the date of November 25th was adopted – the day of St. Kliment, Pope of Rome, whose relics were found and moved to Rome during the mission of Cyril and Methodius to the Khazars, in which their student Kliment had participated.

## Sofia University Profile

### Vision

Sofia University aims at affirming its role as an educational, scientific and cultural center of European importance, at being a leader in education, science and the key projects for society development. It aims at working at best practices level in the development, management and implementation of science for vital society and individual purposes.

Sofia University educational programmes continuously meet the European quality standards and are aligning to the leading world models.

The University continues to improve its key role in developing and implementing projects, policies and strategies for the development of the country.

Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" is the first Bulgarian higher education school. It is the largest and most prestigious research center in the country and aims to affirm its role as an educational, scientific, and cultural center of European importance.

Since its foundation until nowadays the University's activity has been developing. From two or three faculties in the first decades of the twentieth century, by 2021 the University has 16 faculties, in which over 120 specialties, students in Bachelor's, Master's and PhD programmes are trained to graduate as specialists and researchers in the fields of medicine, physics, economics, pedagogy, language, legal, environment etc.

SU is among the most prestigious universities by 2021. It is an example of quality and high-profiled education. According to the Stanford University ranking 2021, thirteen SU scientists are among the 2% best in the world. The ranking positions all researchers in 22 scientific fields and 176 subfields.



In the ranking THE for 2022 which was announced mid-October Sofia University for the first time is holding a position 501+. In the Impact Rankings 2021 ranking of Times Higher Education (THE) SU is ranked at 601-800 position out of 1,115 universities globally by indicators: healthy living and promotion of prosperity and partnership for sustainable development, 401-600<sup>th</sup> place for quality education, 301-400<sup>th</sup> place in terms of gender equality, affordable and clean energy, good work and economic growth and sustainable cities and communities. It also ranks 201-300 by actions related to climate change indicator. In THE World University Rankings by Subject 2022 Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" takes 601-800 position in Computer Science.



## Structure of Sofia University

The following units are included in Sofia University:

There are several independent structures in SU:



- Faculty of geology and geography
- Faculty of history
- Faculty of medicine
- Faculty of economics and business administration
- Faculty of theology
- Faculty of journalism and mass communication
- Faculty of classical and modern philology
- Faculty of mathematics and informatics
- Faculty of educational studies and the arts
- Faculty of pedagogy
- Faculty of slavic studies
- Faculty of chemistry and pharmacy
- Faculty of biology
- Faculty of physics
- Faculty of philosophy
- Faculty of law

- Department for Information and In-Service Training of Teachers
- Department for Language Training
- Sports Department
- University library
- University press
- University Center for Information and Communication Technologies
- Scientific research Department
- University Botanic Gardens
- Rehabilitation centers
- Center for Polar Studies
- Alma Mater Radio and Television
- Theater – Laboratory @Ima @Iter
- Sofia University Museum
- Museum of Paleontology and Historical Geology
- Museum of Mineralogy, Petrology and Mineral Resources



## Goals 2019 – 2023



In fulfilling its mission, Sofia University aims at:

- ▶ High quality of educational, research, information and cultural activities.
- ▶ Meeting the quality criteria in accordance with the Bologna Process and the Lisbon Strategy in all activities and units.
- ▶ Leading position in higher education in Bulgaria and the region through appropriate response to the educational needs.
- ▶ Purposeful integration into the European research area and alignment with global scientific activity standards.
- ▶ Improving the participation in the design and development of national and regional strategies and policies.

Photo: Deensel, flickr



## Values. Partnerships

The University has an active role in the design and implementation of policies with national, regional and international significance such as the sustainable development policies in its role as higher education, R&D, cultural and information center with a high international recognition.

The University develops science and tutors students in all scientific areas, educates highly qualified and nationally responsible individuals. The modern social and economic development tendencies set the SU the task to prepare and educate students who understand and apply the sustainable development values in their future work.

UN Global compact values completely correspond to Sofia University mission to be an example for science, research and education work with wide cultural and social significance. The sustainable development values are in line with Sofia University goal to act at best practices level in the development, governance and implementation of science for the key purposes of society and individual.

Their understanding finds application in the academic activities, in the CSR/ESG courses, in the organizational practices which guarantees equality and respect for the rights of lecturers, employees and students, in partnering of SU with civil society organizations, institutions and business, as well as in activities related to the University's sustainability – energy efficiency, efficient management and saving resources, recycling practices etc.

Through its organizational practices, the university raises the awareness about the sustainable development values among students, lecturers and employees. A good example is the University library which is a depository library for the UN publications. In 2021 it provides an access to the latest digital platform of UN <http://www.un-ilibrary.org>. The UN iLibrary includes publications in international law, human rights, economics and social development, climate change, international peace and security, public health.

The SU Code of Ethics sets out rules and establishes permanent and specialized ethics committees to ensure health safety and ethical conduct in specific research such as human embryos, tissues and cells, animal or environmental research.

To ensure compliance with these principles and rules, the University applies an Anti-Corruption Policy in the activities of all units. It is applied by the Control Council, the Student Council and the University Ombudsman.

SU's commitment to employees and students rights is an ongoing priority. As an expression of this commitment, the University meets periodically with key partners involved in the dialogue on subsidies and income of the higher education employees. The University complies to:

- ▶ The Professionalism principle i.e. excellent knowledge, smooth and high quality performance by the University's lecturers, employees and associates;
- ▶ The principle of directed actions towards the stakeholders, clients and users of the University's educational services and activities;
- ▶ The principle of continuous improvement and striving towards development and high quality;
- ▶ The principle of prevention, on the bases of continuous monitoring, analysis, evaluation and forecast, through preventive actions to avoid the occurrence of negative events in the activities and educational services offered.

Sofia University works to attract the media interest in the results of its educational and scientific activities and their benefit to society. In this regard, SU is an initiator and permanent partner for the formation and real implementation of state policy in the field of higher education and science. It invests in building partnerships with businesses and closer links with employer organizations and staff users to obtain information about the realization of its



students, connect with its alumni, for community initiatives and to attract the public.

For the development of its international activities the International Relations Department is committed to completely renew the SU vision and to work for the promotion of the Erasmus Charter. The Erasmus+ Charter is awarded to the University, following submission of documents by the department, and it participates in the programme for the period 2022-2027. There are currently nearly 760 active contracts with 391 partner universities from 33 European countries under the Erasmus+ Programme. The Faculty of Economics continues to act as an intermediary organization for the Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs programme.

In fulfillment of the commitments set out in the Erasmus Charter and the EC requirements for digitalization in the higher education sector and the European Student Card Initiative established by the EC, SU is the first Bulgarian university to join the global network for inter-federation services EduGain.

Sofia University takes part in the EC European Universities initiative. Those are transnational alliances which are planned to represent universities of the future, to promote European values and identity and to profoundly change the quality and competitiveness of the European higher education.

In 2021, the Transformation for Europe (T4E) alliance was approved as part of the alliances selected in the second call of the European Universities 2020 initiative. It brings together seven European universities from four regions of Europe. It is funded with €5 million for the launch of a joint strategy for consolidation of the European university ecosystem and building a European education space.

The Transform4Europe Research & Innovations (T4ERI) initiative was launched on 01 October 2021. T4ERI is part of Transform4Europe to help universities transform their excellence in research and innovation. T4ERI will develop new strategies to harness this potential, with a focal mission of digital and environmental transformation for smart, sustainable and inclusive regions.

The Bulgarian society, which has a traditional respect to education and science, supports the development of Sofia University with numerous acts of selfless support and donations. The great financier, merchant and banker Evlogi Georgiev from Karlovo, fulfilling the will of his brother Hristo Georgiev, donated and bequeathed a place of 10,200 square meters and 6,800,000 gold levs for the construction and the maintenance of University of Sofia building.



Photo: © Apostoloff, wikimedia.org

## Memberships

The University continues its activity as a member of prestigious university organizations like the European University association (EUA), the International association of the universities (IAU), The Francophone University Agency (AUF), Network of Universities from the Capitals of Europe (UNICA), Black Sea University Network (BSUN), Balkan University Association (BUA), European Public Relations Education and Research Association (EUPRERA) etc.

We confirm that we support the Ten Principles of UN Global Compact, and we participate in the Bulgarian network activities. The following are key memberships in the sustainable development area:



WE SUPPORT

### UNGC (UN Global Compact) and the Bulgarian Network of the UN Global Compact

The Global Compact is a platform for knowledge exchange and a dialogue along with the active participation and support by companies, specialized UN organizations, business associations, NGOs and trade unions to promote corporate social responsibility and ethical business standards.

Through their commitment to globally agreed goals and by minimizing the negative effects of their economic activities, the organizations can contribute to transforming the globalization into a positive force for achieving the UN's Sustainable Development Goals.

[UN Global Compact profile of the Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski](#)



an initiative of the United Nations Global Compact

### PRME – Principles of Responsible Management Education

The Principles of Responsible Management Education (PRME) is an UN-supported initiative launched in 2007 as a platform to raise the profile of sustainability of universities around the world and equips today's business students with the understanding and ability to deliver change tomorrow. With its over 650 signatories PRME has become the largest organized initiative of the United Nations and the universities teaching business disciplines.

[PRME profile of the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration, Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski"](#)



### United Nations Sustainable Development Solutions Network

The United Nations Sustainable Development Solutions Network is a global UN initiative which unites a diverse group of international leaders in science, business, policy and civil society. The SDSN Black Sea regional working group which includes Sofia University, motivate universities and research centers to get involved and to cooperate for the common benefit of the residents of the countries around the Black Sea.

[United Nations Sustainable Development Solutions Network](#)

## Contribution to achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals 2030

Among the 17 UN SDGs 2030 we defined the following eight as relevant to our activity. They are linked to our significant topics and our goals related to sustainability.

The achievements and progress towards the UN Global Goals have significantly improved during the period 2019-2021. The University's Faculties of Physics, Mathematics and Informatics, Economics and Business Administration, Chemistry, Geology and Geography, Philosophy, Pedagogy, Medicine, Librarianship and Journalism are involved in numerous projects and initiatives. It utilizes the existing laboratories for new researches and initiatives. The University received Sustainable Development Awards and contributed to the introduction of good practices related to the environmental impact and social responsibility into the society.

	Key topics	Global goal (UN SDGs 2030)	Stakeholders	Sub-goal	Indicators	THE 2021 position of SU
<b>ECONOMIC</b>	Complete and productive employability and decent work for all	 Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all	Students, PhD candidates, academic and management team members, employees	8.2 8.3 8.5	8.2.1 8.3.1 8.5.1 8.5.2	 301-400 place
<b>SOCIAL</b>	Implementation of healthy and safe working conditions	 Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all	Students, PhD candidates, academic and management team members, employees	3.8 3.b.	3.8.1 3.b.1 3.b.2	 601-800 place
	Quality education for all	 Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all	Students, PhD candidates, academic and management team members	4.3. 4.4 4.5 4.7 4.b	4.3.1 4.4.1 4.5.1 4.7.1 4.b.1	 401-600 place
	Gender equality in science research activities	 Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls	Students, PhD candidates, academic and management team members	5.1 5.5 5.c	5.1.1 5.5.2 5.c.1	 301-400 place
	Safe access to public spaces	 Make cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable	Students, PhD candidates, academic and management team members and visitors	11.7	11.7.1	 301-400 place
	Accessible and clean energy	 Clean energy	Students, PhD candidates, academic and management team members, employees, visitors	7.1 7.2 7.3	7.1.2 7.2.1 7.3.1	 301-400 place
<b>ECOLOGICAL</b>	Climate change	 Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impact	Students, PhD candidates, academic and management team members, employees, visitors	13.1 13.2 13.3	13.1.2 13.2.1 13.2.2 13.3.1 13.3.2	 201-300 place
	Global partnership	 Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development	Students, PhD candidates, academic and management team members	17.16	17.16.1	 601-800 place





Photo: © Lavrukova

# Responsible employer

## Goal



Sofia University attracts, retains and develops the research and teaching teams by creating opportunities for career development, ensuring a healthy lifestyle and promoting the well-being of lecturers and scientists, as well as attracting young people with teaching and research potential.

Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" has a significant scientific and teaching potential created and developed over the years. The University's educational and research achievements in all areas are the best in the country.

## Values



Sofia University's academic staff, students, PhD candidates, administrative and auxiliary employees belong to the largest, most reliable, and productive cultural community in the country. It includes everybody who has ever been a part of the academic community at a certain period of their life. This dedication creates pride and cultural belonging.

The University administrative team ensures the development of the SU academic culture and spirit and creates opportunities for every member of the academic community to demonstrate their belonging. It supports the development and prosperity of Alma Mater.

## Policies

The main policy related to the well-being of the teaching staff, the scientific and career growth and financial incentives linked to the performance is defined in the Mandate Program of the Rector's Office of the University (11.2019-11.2023) and provides:

- ▶ an evident increase of the remuneration of lecturers, researchers and employees, corresponding to the efficiency and quality of their performance;
- ▶ building a modern system for additional financial incentives;
- ▶ development of contemporary workload reporting indicators and digitalization;
- ▶ review and update of the internal rules for remuneration;
- ▶ partnership with lecturers' and employees' trade unions and stepping on their experience and expertise for analysis and joint problem solving solutions;
- ▶ signing a Collective Labor Agreement;
- ▶ opportunities for lecturers' continuous qualification;
- ▶ quality medical preventive services;
- ▶ effective use of educational and scientific bases for health and recreation;
- ▶ food vouchers;
- ▶ opportunities for sports



Sofia University functions in an international research and educational environment based on the values of democracy, transparency and equal opportunities. The University is reliable working place which strives at attracting the most talented students and employees regardless of their personal background. The University aims at creating culture of tolerance where everybody is equal and where diversity is power and not challenge.

The gender equality principle is a significant part of the national legislation and in the SU management and regulations.

During 2020-2021 SU budget management significantly improved. The financial accounting has an updated software systems and there is a connection between different units. The general e-system supports the data submission and facilitates the accounting processes.

For the purposes of improving the financial status, there is an optimization of the specific work positions in the University. The ratio between habilitated and non-habilitated lecturer is monitored. It strives at keeping a sustainable ratio of lecturers (Assistant professors, Chief assistants, Professors, PhD, Associate professors) and for the period 2020-2021 it has kept the good trend.

## Practices

At the beginning of the academic year 2021/2022 the science teaching team consists of 1587 members. The habilitated lecturers represent 53% of all lecturers.

### Collective bargaining

The Collective Labor Agreement between Sofia University and the two nationally represented trade unions includes the collective bargaining principles, scope and rules, additional payments, working hours, holidays, health and safety at work, health and safety working conditions and social protection for the academic and non-academic University staff.

### Remuneration

During the reporting period, the performance-based payment for the teaching staff marked an improvement. The academic staff payment has increase between 33% and 47%, and the average increase of payment for non-teaching staff for 2021 is 10%. There is also a new agreement for additional remuneration for scientific publications authorship.

### Health and safety working conditions

All necessary measures have been taken for accidents prevention. In 2021 there were no reported accidents at work. Periodic medical examinations are provided for staff working in ionizing radiation conditions. The years 2020 and 2021 are dedicated to taking care of staff health in relation to COVID-19 epidemic. Food vouchers are provided on an ongoing basis. The provided prophylactic checkups for staff are indicators of compliance with health and safety work conditions and access to education.

### Vaccination campaign

All university professors and employees were included in the second phase of vaccination against COVID-19 for protection of their life and health. 955 lecturers and 255 employees took the vaccination, which is 60% of lecturers and 20% of employees out of the total staff of Sofia University. In connection with the ongoing epidemic situation in the country, the contract for medical examinations includes an additional package for prevention of COVID-19 infection or diagnosis of following complications, for the employees' prevention and safety.

### Active living

SU provides opportunities for sports, fun and access to art for lecturers and students through its various sport centers, theater, museum and its programmes.

The Department of sport provides opportunity for all lecturers and employees to use the available (own and rented) compounds for sports and recreation according to the yearly schedule. Additionally, a Multisport contract is signed providing access cards to a large number of sport activities. In the pandemic conditions the training bases and leisure and recreation center Kiten continued functioning under strict control of epidemiologic measures.





## The attestation of the lecturers and employees

reflects the opinions of the students, the employees and the academic staff. The surveys are prepared taking into account the current trends in education, research, wishes and recommendations by the students. The research is done through surveys, recommendations and through university platforms. Both online and during different initiatives, competitions and awards in various fields of educational environment.

In 2018 The University Centre for Quality Management established the annual award "Quality Mark of Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski". The award promotes good practices and achievements of representatives of Sofia University academic community for their contribution for maintaining the high quality standards. Those are individual lecturers and employees in the administration, as well as entire teams, departments or other structural

units who have significantly contributed to the high-quality work in the University. In December 2021, the awards were presented for the second time in three categories:

- ▶ **Sustainable development** – for results for more than 3 years meeting and exceeding the quality standards according to the QMS of SU.
- ▶ **Successful change management** – for achievement of good practices introduced for more than one year in the last 3 years and leading to significant results for improving the quality of specific university activities, systems, processes etc.
- ▶ **Significant innovation** – for innovations in the last year which is a prerequisite for creating and developing new quality standards in the SU.



During the pandemic, Sofia University took a number of measures to ensure the health, safety and lives of its staff and students.

- ▶ Live classes were suspended from 9 March 2020.
- ▶ The educational process was supported by distance learning in the Moodle platform, as well as through other online channels.
- ▶ All live events in Sofia University have been suspended, including conferences, discussions, public lectures, performances, concerts and other cultural events, sports events, departmental and faculty councils and meetings, etc.
- ▶ The urgent decisions of the departmental and faculty councils are voted electronically.
- ▶ All business trips and trips of the academic staff, administration employees and students abroad are limited as much as possible, apart from exceptional cases in which they cannot be postponed or canceled.
- ▶ A quarantine period is required for all returning academics, administration staff and students, as well as on foreign professors, researchers and students arriving from abroad.
- ▶ Disinfection and hygiene materials are provided, as well as permanent disinfection in the buildings of Sofia University.
- ▶ The management of Sofia University sends up-to-date information to its employees and students on how to act most adequately during the pandemic.
- ▶ The University provides vaccination available for everyone.

# Responsible educational and scientific institution

## Goal



Sofia University provides training of highly qualified specialists in the field of fundamental, humanities, natural sciences, mathematics, social and technical sciences on the basis and in accordance with the achievements of science, culture and good practices.

## Values



Regardless of their different roles in the learning process, lecturers and students build their relationships on the basis of mutual respect and respect for personal and professional dignity.

The teaching process is morally and intellectually independent of government, political parties and economic interests and influences. Members of the academic community do not participate directly or indirectly in any activities that are incompatible with their position, responsibilities and duties in the University. Lecturers ensure high quality teaching by being fair and impartial in evaluating learners and motivating the expression of personal opinions. In the process of learning, and especially in the preparation of written works, students strive to follow rules for copywrite and authorship, foreign contributions and correct citation, valid for all scientific papers.

Research expands the boundaries of scientific knowledge. Every scientist enjoys freedom of thought and expression and is free to choose the methods by which to solve scientific problems in accordance with established ethical standards, without violating the dignity or privacy of others.

Sofia University researchers ensure that their research process is productive and does not replicate a research work already done elsewhere. Deliberately announcing false research results is unacceptable. Plagiarism is unacceptable.

Researchers need to know the strategic goals in their field of research and the funding mechanisms for research projects. They should receive the necessary approval before starting their implementation or using the resources provided.

The University administrative management provides the most favorable environment for researchers, including appropriate equipment, premises and facilities, incl. for the needs of cooperation in the scientific network and for the implementation of mobility related to research.





## Policies

The main policy for attracting students is defined in the Mandate Program of the Rector's Management of the University (11.2019-11.2023) and provides:

- ▶ optimizing the student application campaign, new application forms and expanding the admission with grades from the state matriculation exams;
- ▶ opening new specialties and programmes and increasing the capacity of the existing ones, incl. the programmes in a foreign language;
- ▶ development of distance e-learning;
- ▶ development of career centers;
- ▶ introducing internships in the curricula.

Sofia University priority is conducting leading research and development, satisfying the requirements and needs of society and the economy, which includes:

- ▶ fair distribution of research funds according to the results;
- ▶ providing institutional mechanisms for stimulating research with public impact, international significance and visibility;
- ▶ promoting students' research activities;
- ▶ maintaining the successful publishing activity of the University Publishing House "St. Kliment Ohridski".

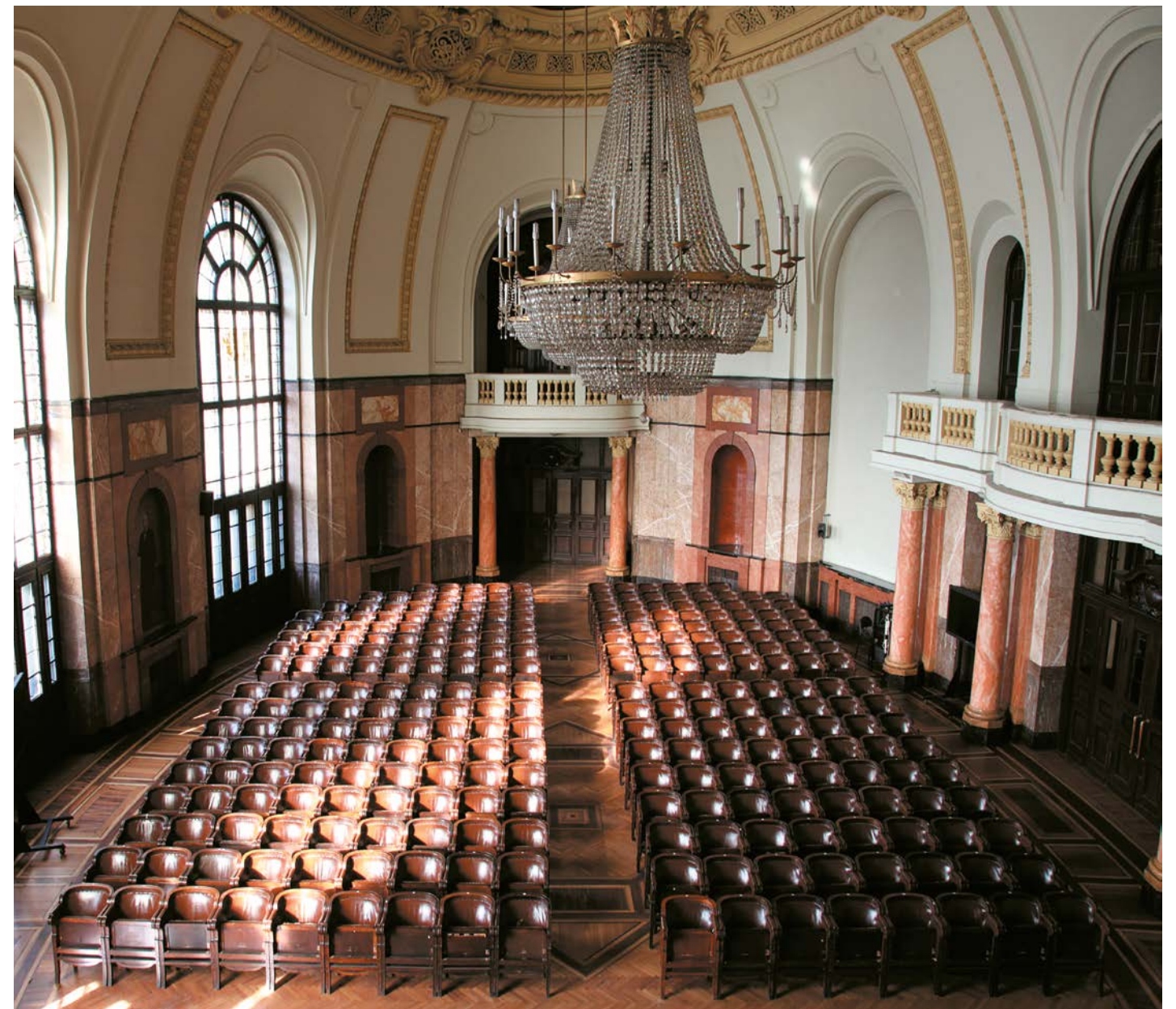
Photo: © Antoine Taveneaux

## SU Ethics commission

It is a permanent consultative body, constituted with the adoption of the Code of Ethics of Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski". The Ethics Committee offers consultation and advice on ethical issues related to research; supports the understanding of ethical issues arising in the field of research by organizing educational and information initiatives; acts on signals for violation of the rules of research ethics, regulated in the Code of Ethics. With the adoption of the Code of Ethics, the academic community of Sofia University shows its will to ensure good scientific practices and readiness to adhere to the European scientific community standards. The Code of Ethics formulates basic ethical principles and rules for research and teaching.

## SU Academic ombudsman

It is an institution which is called upon to resolve conflicts as an impartial arbiter and to provide confidential and informal support to students and faculty. As a mediator, the Ombudsman advocates for the fair resolution of disputes and upholds the rights of members of the academic community. As an advisor, he/she informs and strives to respond to individual inquiries when the individual concerned or affected does not know how to act in a particular situation. In this sense, the academic ombudsman can also be seen as a catalyst for change, because by resolving internal conflicts, he/she contributes to a better work of the administration.



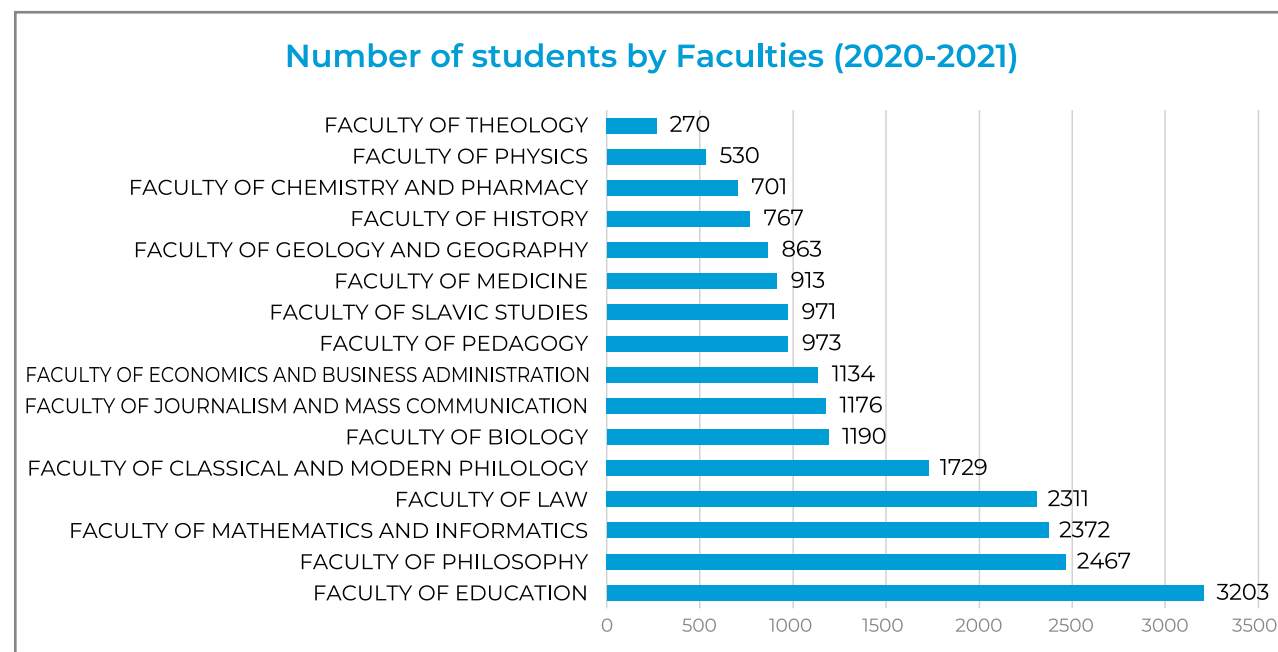


## Educational activities. Disciplines. Partnerships

### Students

21 698 students have studied in SU in 2020-2021 (1574 – 7,25% foreign students) – 14005 in bachelor's degree. Master's degree students are 7698, PhD degree – 650, of which 108 are foreign students. More Bulgarian and foreign students get access to SU education. The aim is to increase the foreign students from 5% to 10% in 2022.

Number of students by Faculties:



A key part of the University's mission is to develop science and to educate students in all scientific areas, produce highly qualified nationally responsible individuals who lead the Bulgarian nation to spiritual development and wellbeing. To fulfill this important task, a guarantee for a true and equal participation of students and PhD candidates in all aspects of university life as partners in the educational process and as creators is necessary. It is important to improve students' participation in decision making in all areas and especially related to study activities.

### Infrastructure

The extra curriculum activities labs for physics, chemistry, biology, math and informatics, philosophy help the students to understand and to apply innovative practices, products, business development models, science and technology in the new digital economy.

Sofia University provides the opportunity for further education of new students or those who come back to study Masters and PhD degrees, as well as open online training in the Coursera platform. The University

develops and offers more study courses and programmes focusing on responsible and sustainable business concepts which will support the organizations in their transformation and will help professionals to remain competitive in all stages of their career path. SU Coursera programmes reach the global public of tens of thousands participants each year. They focus on leadership in all forms from inspirational leadership, women leaders, coaching and leading to change.



### Methods

Studying opportunities are created for the SU students through mutual study activities, through the study centers and virtual programmes. The University actively follows the alternative study approaches with online and hybrid study, practices and programmes. It strives to create conditions for development supporting the students and alumni by providing lifelong learning and global goals commitment.

Study through experience and experiment is a significant part of SU processes. The University is a partner in different European and global educational programmes, through

which it provides short terms opportunities for the students for practical training in different disciplines related to sustainable development and responsibility.

At the end of each semester there is a quality survey for lecturers and courses in Moodle system ([elearn.uni-sofia.bg](http://elearn.uni-sofia.bg)) which measures the students' satisfaction according to the Quality Management System at Sofia University. In 2021 based on the empirical data collected from 4659 survey replies, 73 lecturers who were subject to attestation had their profiles created through direct group survey.





### Bachelors' programme Eco-chemistry and Masters' programme Eco-chemistry, Faculty of Chemistry and Pharmacy

The Eco chemistry programmes annually teach 25 highly qualified specialists with skills and knowledge in environment protection, econometrics, toxic chemistry, agro chemistry, hydrochemistry, atmospheric chemistry, geochemistry, green chemical technologies. The aim of the programme is in line with the country's needs focusing on active tourism industry requiring the correct environment assessment of the state of nature but at the same time it has a certain industrial potential creating the inevitable conditions for anthropogenic pollution. Eco chemistry-specialists can actively participate in resolving some of the significant challenges of the country like: organizing monitoring networks for the purposes of the Min-

istry of environment or local monitoring organizations. Other possible areas are: econometric monitoring data processing for classification, interpretation, modeling and forecast of the quality of water, air, soil, working environment and domestic conditions, creating and managing of control systems for purifying of polluted environment units, introduction of diagnostics and prophylactics of environmental units, expert assessment of environmental quality and risk assessment of the impact of anthropogenic (industrial) factors. The programmes are practical as they consider nature from the point of view of chemistry and focus on the monitoring and analytical control, considering the econometry.

### Specialized ESG education

Sofia University has long years' tradition for sustainable development education in its three directions. The educational products created in the last years differ in their content, length and format, apart from the specialized programmes and academics, they include separate disciplines, courses and extra curriculum activities. The new specialties are related to ecology and environmental protection, social responsibility, sustainable development and other values which aim at meeting the Global goals. Some of the most active Faculties in this area are the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration, Faculty of Biology, Faculty of Pedagogy etc.

### Bachelors' programme Bio management and Sustainable development, Faculty of Biology

65 Bachelors study in 2021/2022. The Bachelor's programme's goal is to prepare specialists in sustainable environmental and economic development, biotechnology and bioresource management following the circular economy traditions. Knowledge and problem solving skills in bioresources, hydro resources, waste as resource, green and renewable energy in natural and production conditions, as well as their practical use is provided in the programme. Sustainable development concepts and opportunities for global resources management have been presented for the benefit of the economy and humanity. The programme is further developed in the Masters' programme Bio business and Bio entrepreneurship", Envi-

ronmental management, Ecological biotechnology:: and PhD's programmes "Biotechnology of purification processes" and "Hydrobiology". The students develop their technological, entrepreneurial and business skills for developing technologies with high TRL, business plans, creating start-ups and spin-offs, studying the channels for technology transfers. The programmes have continuous business partners. They participate in the education process with financial, technical and expert support: Center of competence Clean&Circle, Sofia Water AD, Municipal Enterprise for Waste Treatment, Sofia Municipality etc. The students take part in science and R&D project together with business, EU, under Horizon 2020.





## Master's programme "Responsible and sustainable governance", Faculty of Economics and Business Administration

72 students study in the programme in 2021/2022. The programme aims at preparing entirely new type of specialists in sustainable development, corporate social responsibility and their implementation for the Bulgarian policy and administration, industry and civil services. Its design ensures involvement of all major directions of sustainable development in practice – business modeling, corporate compliance, management of natural and human capital, investment and reporting on social progress. Some of the key courses are dedicated to sustainable leadership, social and environmental entrepreneurship, responsible financing. Disciplines with a strong practical orientation such as corporate compliance and public-private partnership, responsible communications, CSR management systems and standards are also available.

Several agreements for partnerships are signed with WikiRate and the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy of Bulgaria related to the Master's programme and the CSR topics. They are implemented with the active support and leading experts as guest lecturers from the members of the Bulgarian Network of UN Global compact, The Bulgarian association of CRS professionals, The Bulgarian stock exchange and the Association of Bulgarian Investor Relations Directors. It is also supported by responsible enterprises from all industries. Unicredit Bulbank is the official partner.

The students' interest towards courses related to various aspects of the corporate social responsibility and ESG grows steadily. The Faculty adds new specialized courses to the programme and introduces modern forms of

education including virtual based and hybrid training. CSR and ESG courses enrich the university's portfolio and have their places in the study curricula in different faculties, as well as in specialized courses from the postgraduate qualifications in various forms of training – such as clubs and many more. There are over 230 specialized courses in the curricula.

The Faculty of Philosophy offers courses in CSR – Regional Policy, Fundamental Human Rights, Corruption and Anti-Corruption, Regional and National Project Management, Innovation and Entrepreneurship in Public Services, Human Rights, Brand and Social Responsibility, EU's Energy Policy, Regional Policy of the EU, The Contemporary Debate on Social Justice, Green Economy, Energy and Good Governance in Bulgaria, Green Policy.

All courses described above are included in the curricula of Bachelor's or Master's programmes.

In addition to the specialized courses included in the curricula, the Faculty of Law offers additional educational forms including the Human rights subjects: Club for International Public Law – including the following topics: Relationship between Human Rights and Refugee Law, International Legal Protection of the Mental health, International Health Sector Protection (the interaction between international humanitarian law and human rights law to counteract attacks against health and research institutions); and the Constitutional Law Club, the connection between human rights and country's sovereignty.

## Specialized Academies

Apart from the traditional academic education, The Center for Educational Services offers short-term and intensive practical specializations in Sustainable management of finances.

ESG academies, as part of the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration in partnership with business, represent a modern and effective form of education. The academies contain five main modules: ESG Management and Accountability, Environmental Pillar of Sustainability, Social Pillar of Sustainability, Sustainable Finances, Adaptation and Resilience to Climate Change. ESG specialists have the opportunity to receive full professional qualification in the specifically created Academy for social, environmental and organizational management of companies in November-December 2021, which functions in partnership with the Bulgarian Association of CSR Specialists. The training is beneficial specifically for representatives of the government and regional administration, regulatory bodies, business, civic organizations, scientists and researchers during the transition towards green

and social economy, as well as for all interested parties in the European Green Deal.

During this reporting period two issues of the Academy for business and the children's rights are organized by UNICEF and the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration. The Academy programme includes overview of the main challenges related to business impact on children, analysis of the social investment and the companies' contribution towards the UN Sustainability Goals. Experienced specialists present practical tools and guidelines to improve the companies' positive impact on children's wellbeing and the integration of children's rights into the corporate policies, business process and non-financial reporting.

The sixth weekly combined course offered by TotalEnergies EP Bulgaria and the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration is a part of the TotalEnergies Professeurs Associés (TPA) programme and is dedicated to "States and Corporations: Sustainable development, CSR and Ethics".





## Coursera Courses

Sofia University started a partnership with Coursera aiming at improving the training opportunities for the students as well as for the lecturers and employees. Coursera is an electronic educational interactive platform offering free online training courses. Together with universities from around the world, it offers courses

## Hackathons

Participation in hackathons is becoming increasingly popular among young people and students. SU takes part in organizing and promoting students' participation in events related to society sustainable development and solving pressing social problems. In 2021, the Association for Development of Sofia and AI Bulgaria organized a hackathon dedicated

## Awards

Lecturers and students of SU are honored for their success in a lot of science areas. Thirteen scientists from the University are among the best 2% in the world according to the Stanford University 2021 ranking.

**Women in science** is a pioneer programme of L'Oréal and UNESCO for promoting women in science who contribute to solving future challenges. Each year, the programme recognizes excellence in the natural sciences and promotes talent from around the world. The goal of the programme is to achieve gender equality in science. Dr. Iskra Koleva, Chief assistant at the Faculty of Chemistry and Pharmacy has a scholarship for the period 2019-2021 for studying the properties of catalysts and the reduction of harmful emissions in the environment. Lyubov Marinkova is another scholarship holder for 2020. She is an astrophysicist and a member of the only Stars' formation group in Bulgaria at the Department of Astronomy.

es in different areas – engineering, humanities, medicine, biology, social studies, computer studies etc. This partnership provides access for all students, lecturers, and employees to SU online courses in Coursera as an addition to all study resources of the University.

to **"InnoAirChallenge: Making urban mobility smarter!"**. The teams offered solutions for environmentally sustainable urban transport in Sofia. The Bulgarian Fintech Association (BFA) and the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration, supported by Paysafe, organized a Fintech hackathon "From Zero To Fintech".

Her project focuses on studying the origin and evolution of stars and aims to answer the question "Why and how are stars born?." Next one to mention is Dr. Julia Romanova who is a scholarship holder for 2019. She is a Chief assistant at Faculty of Chemistry and Pharmacy and her project is focused on creating new organic materials to be used for increasing solar cells efficiency.

**European Human Rights Moot Court Competition 2020** is an international competition in law. In 2020 SU law students participated in the quarterfinals and won two unprecedented awards for written defense – both plaintiff and defendant.

## Career centers

Career development Department functions as a mediator between the different career centers in the University, the employers organizations and the students. The department activities fall in several main areas:

1. Supports the Faculties' career centers and their activities,
2. Provides services for career development in the Faculties with no career development centers,
3. Provides services of a qualified career consultant in the Faculties where one is not available,

## Alumni organization

Since the beginning of 2021 SU has been actively introducing data on Alumni students in its system. As a result, in 2021 there are 1056 graduating students registered in the tracking system for students' progress which makes a total of above 2000 users. Several of the Sofia University faculties have well-functioning

4. Supports the students on the labor market,

5. Acts as central administrative contact unit for career services in Sofia University.

There are 12 career centers at faculty level which efficiently and operationally provide the students with career services. Faculty career centers work actively in FMI, FEBA, FCP, Faculty of Physics, FE, FJMC, FESA, FB, FCML and FGG, and provide access to career services for students depending on their professional development needs.

Alumni Clubs and working mechanisms for monitoring the graduating students' progress. A meeting between the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration and the Faculty of Mathematics and Informatics was organized to promote the exchange of good practices and experience in this area.





## Scholarship programs

43 are the general education scholarships provided by Sofia University as of the time of the report. 3 of them are social and 3 are scholarships related to corporate social responsibility.

The National Scholarship Program “For Women in Science” is a unique competition for Bulgaria and globally. It has been held for 11 years in partnership between Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski”, Bulgarian National Commission For UNESCO and L’Oréal Bulgaria. During this period, it honored 27 magnificent ladies for their impressive scientific potential, achievements and love of research with a total prize fund of 135,000 euros.

The German Federal Foundation for Environmental Protection (Deutsche Bundes-

tiftung Umwelt – DBU) is one of the largest and most influential environmental foundations in Europe, established in 1991 by a decree of the German Parliament to support and fund environmental projects with a special attention to medium and small enterprises. As part of its international scholarship programme for Central and Eastern Europe, DBU provides scholarships to young environmental scientists to gain additional qualifications through a six- to twelve-month research visit to Germany. Scholars gain knowledge and experience to apply in practice after returning home. The idea is to gradually build a network of experts around DBU who will stay connected, exchange ideas and experiences after their internship in Germany.

## Curricula internships in and internship programs

The “Student Internships – PHASE 2” project launched in 2020 by the Ministry of Education and Science facilitates the transition from academic environment to the workplace. As of October 2021, 284 have expressed interest to participate in the project and 437 signed mentoring agreements. Since the start of the project 4551 students are registered to participate in practical training. 2244 participated during

October 2020 – September 2021. The total number of students contracts for practical training from the beginning of the project to September 30th, 2021, is 1224. 1112 certificates for successfully completed practical training have been issued since the beginning of the project, of which 1002 in October 2020 – September 2021.

## Partnership in business

The SU leadership maintains a continuous connection between students, lecturers, and business, by making a constant effort for improving the existing partnerships and creating new ones in several key activity areas.

One of the distinctive characteristics of Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski” education is the practical orientation of the courses. Along with the team of experienced lecturers, students meet and learn from professionals in various fields. Efficiency, development and growth of partnership with business is sup-

ported by Boards of trustees of our Bachelor's and Master's programmes with the participation of business representatives. With their help, the learning process is constantly adapted and updated to the labor market needs. In the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration there are 138 partnership agreements with organizations, institutions and business representatives, and more than two thirds of them were concluded in the reporting period 2019-2021.

## Scientific activities. Projects. Partnerships

### Scientists

For the period 2019-2020, there are 1950 scientific publications by the University scientists. As a comparison, during the previous two years their number was 1830. Sofia University provides about 25-30% of the scientific results of all Bulgarian universities.

### Methods

By definition, the Research activities include research, analytical, forecasting, expert, development, technological, regulatory, implementation and other creative activities that are carried out systematically in order to increase the quality and quantity of the scientific knowledge and use it for new applications in various fields of science and practice. It is implemented through the development of theoretical and scientific-applied models, products and services, and at the same time these activities contribute to improving the scientific qualification of the individuals who perform them.

### Infrastructure

There are 36 specialized centers in SU, 18 scientific labs, 2 hospitals, 2 museums and 2 observatories.

Reasonable and fair distribution of labor and evaluation inspections, fair payment and scholarships are among the good indicators of sustainable behavior of Sofia University. In 2021, the development of reporting systems for scientific evaluation and funds distribution are an indicator for the work of Sofia University.

Sofia University is adapting to the modern digital and educational environment through an increased access to projects, research activities, competitions and programmes for students, scientists, and lecturers. The publishing activities of the University are another aspect of the unit for improving research practice. The University Publishing house develops towards self-sufficiency through the effective management of funds, distribution and sale.

### Key projects

One the University achievements is the establishment of many research laboratories, participation in national projects with significant scientific contributions, the establishment of centers which contribute to the environmental protection. One such example is establishing the environmental protection centers with the University participation.





## The GATE project

The GATE project is a joint initiative of Sofia University as a coordinator, the Chalmers University, and Chalmers Industrial Technology, Sweden. GATE receives partial 7-year EC funding under Horizon 2020. GATE will build a Center of Excellence in Big Data and Artificial Intelligence. It is one of the first research institutes at Sofia University, established by a decree of the Council of Ministers in early 2019. The aim of GATE is to develop research capacity and innovative potential and to cultivate a new generation of young scientists capable of applying science for society benefits. GATE research is focused on four areas:

- ▶ Future cities;
- ▶ Intelligent Government;
- ▶ SMART Industry;
- ▶ Digital healthcare.

The Center's innovations will be developed in three modern technology labs – for modeling of urban processes, for interdisciplinary cooperation with industry and for virtual reality and Big Data visualization. The Labs are

in the heart of a living ecosystem in which innovative ideas will be generated, developed in projects and promoted in efficient cooperation with government, industry, academia and civil organizations. Through multidisciplinary educational programmes at European and global level, GATE will educate excellent researchers and professionals in Artificial Intelligence and Big Data. An educational laboratory will support the application of new methods for personalized and interactive learning.

As the only center in Eastern Europe, GATE will be the connection with the network of 55 data centers in Western Europe and will play a strategic role in expanding this network and disseminating best practices and innovative models, thus achieving public impact not only at national and regional but also at European level.

For a tenth consecutive year the Annual Youth Scientific Conference “Kliment’s Days” was organized by the Faculty of Biology. It provides an opportunity for students, PhD students and young scientists to present to

the scientific community the results of their research. It is conducted in three primary areas: Ecology and Sustainable Development (E&SD), Biodiversity and Biological Education (B&BE), Molecular Biology and Biotechnology (MB&BT).

A team from the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration (FEBA) implemented SCHOLARNET project, funded by the National programme European Scientific Networks. One of its key goals is to strengthen the research capacity of the academic staff of the FEBA by developing a comprehensive research strategy with the support of leading researchers from European universities. The participants' focused efforts support the creation of greater, stronger and more efficient research capacity in the field of economics and management: sustainable innovation models in public services and promoting SMEs competitiveness, risk management in target markets, models for institutional convergence as a factor for the economic development of the new member states (institutional sustainability), capacity building and reproducibility of successful innovative instruments.

**Conducting applied research related to industry and market needs.** The University continues to conduct a wide range of applied research related to industry and market needs. The Faculty of Physics maintains long-term relations with the Kozloduy Nuclear Power Plant as joint research in the field of radiation safety, NPP students' internships and scholarships for outstanding students. The Faculty of Chemistry and Pharmacy conducts joint research in the field of engineering chemistry with a number of companies, some of which are multinational corporations, as an example Unilever and Heineken. The Faculty of Biology has long-term joint research with a number of companies in the field of biotechnology and ecology, such as the Sofia Waste Treatment Plant and Cleantech.



During the Covid pandemic SU provides access for the students, lecturers, and employees to timely, relevant and sufficient information through its upgraded systems for distant work – SUSI, Elearn, learning centers, Moodle and other systems for access to the University digital platforms.

The efficient distance learning in online environment allows for the continued participation of external lecturers in the learning process.

Administrative service management systems help lecturers and administrative staff to work remotely, on site or through online platforms.

Despite the complicated situation, the University and the Career centers provide career counseling, both online and live, and in some of the faculties, through live meetings in compliance with all anti-epidemic measures.

The Rules for Sofia University structure and activities are adapted to the needs of the environment in accordance with the law and allow to create conditions for the full functioning of the institutes.



# Responsible manager

## Goal



A key priority for Sofia University is the renovation of the facilities and development of the infrastructure for teaching, research, cultural and informational activities. The activity funding is provided through subsidies and capital spendings and through Operational programmes. Achieving this goal is related to:

- ▶ maintenance and renovation of the buildings – major and current repairs, maintenance of the properties, administrative, technical and economic services and operating costs reduction;
- ▶ program for improvement of University's campuses and improvement of the surrounding areas and landscape;
- ▶ modernization of libraries and books and digital resources supply;
- ▶ providing an accessible university environment for people with special needs.

## Values



Management and maintenance of 18 buildings with cultural heritage value demand constant care and significant finances. Sofia University also owns or rents 10 campuses, 3 canteens, scientific bases, rehabilitation centers, real estate granted by the state or by individuals.

As a result of stringent investors' control by the Department Repair and Supply on the construction activities, there are reported savings of over BGN 100 000 which could be reinvested in further renovation activities.



## Policies

The management of state property provided to Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" is carried out in accordance with the State Property Act, the Regulations for the Implementation of the State Property Act, the Property Act and the Obligations and Contracts Act.

In addition, Sofia University has adopted Internal Rules for organizing tenders, contracts and ex-post control for renting state-owned

properties managed by Sofia University aiming at good property management and revenue generation opportunities.

Facilities improvements like halls repairs, equipment, and study materials (access and preparation), Internet platforms, software etc. provided with donors' help are stimulating to lecturers, students and the administration.

## Practices

### Facilities, properties, and economic activities

The total value of repair activities for the period is more than BGN 4 960 000. In 2021 a capital expenditure of BGN 274 714 is provided to Sport Science and testing laboratory and another BGN 198 337 for repairs and furnishing of students' dormitories.

The Ministry of Education and Science allocates funds for urgent repairs of building

facilities, roof structures, and improvement of surrounding areas of campus, faculties and building of Rectorate. Apart from the approved capital program of the University for 2020 and 2021, additional funds of BGN 883 408 are provided for urgent repairs of the roof of the Faculty of Physics and another BGN 50 000 for repairs.

## Central air conditioning systems

Repair activities of the heating systems in the buildings of Rectorate, Faculty of Biology, Faculty of Educational Studies and the Arts and Block 1 are completed during the reporting period. The heating systems of Block 55, entr. A and entr. B are replaced. In the Faculty of Physics, the replacement of one substation is already completed and the second one of total three is planned to be replaced.

## Students' dormitories

In 2021 additional funds of BGN 2 500 000 are allocated for repairs in block 55 entr. B and completely renovated and furnished rooms are provided for the students. The project also includes implementation of energy efficiency measures for the building with heat insulation, replacement of windows and replacement of the heating system. Another project is completed this year with additional funding of BGN 50 000 and as a result campus "East" has an improved surrounding area of Block 4 of the Faculty of Philosophy. In 2022 more projects will be implemented for introduction of energy efficiency measures in students' dormitories which will contribute to better conditions and heat expenses reduction – an action with a significant importance in the conditions of the substantial increase of electricity and heating prices.

## Accessible environment

In 2021 the Faculty of Journalism and Mass Communication was equipped with an elevator for people with disabilities.

## Significant investments

In line with its commitment to improve the resource efficiency and buildings' energy efficiency, the University participates in a number of projects.

An emblematic project launched during this period is the construction of a new GATE Institute building. **The GATE Institute building** is designed with energy efficiency in mind with passive and active measures. The passive ones are highly effective enclosing elements – glass and insulation. The active ones are energy-efficient heating and cooling systems. The building will house innovative laboratories, presentation halls and open spaces for meetings and workshops. It will be located on more than 600 square meters and will be provided with modern technological solutions which allow mobility and versatility. The construction of the "UNITE" has also began and in 2022 the construction of a new building of the Clean Technologies project and the renovation of the buildings of the "Heritage BG" project will start.

The under-roof area of the University library in the Rectorate building has been renovated. The library will host the new reading room for students from the Faculty of Geology and Geography. The University library and the library of the Faculty of Pedagogy are equipped with new furniture at BGN 130 000 for the first time in many years.

In 2021 four projects for High Schools modernization received granting from Operational programme "Science and education for smart growth". The projects provide funds for assets acquisition, mainly for information and communication technologies and software. In MODERN-A project alone, they are over half a million BGN.







# Impact and contribution

## Goal



The University aims at developing students skills for generating sustainable value for the public, civil sector and business and working towards general sustainable development of society.

In its scientific work SU aims at meeting the modern needs for research and practical solutions related to the wellbeing of nature and society.

## Values



In its academic activities, curricula, and organizational practices Sofia University implements the global social responsibility values in line with its commitment and memberships in international networks.

The leading values in the performance of public benefit activities by lecturers and students are imprinted in the Code of Ethics of the academic community of Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", the Principles of Responsible Management Training and the UN Global Compact. The University incorporates in its academic activities, curricula and organizational practices the values of global social responsibility, combining its historical experience with modern environmental trends of work. The focus of the activity in the direction of the external environment is essential – on one hand considering the characteristics of the environment at local and global level, and on the other hand, working for the benefit of sustainable environmental development of society.

Researchers have an understanding of their responsibility to society and the importance of the research they conduct. They are expected to present publicly their research and the results, as accurately as possible, but also in a way that can be understood by non-specialists, thus contributing to the improvement of public understanding of science.

## Partnership

The University acts in partnerships, respecting the rights of all parties in interest – business representatives, government institutions, civil society and industry organizations. The partnerships of Sofia University are aimed at strengthening the trust in the institution, joint development of socially beneficial products and services, scientific innovations and their implementation in practice.

The partnerships with companies and organizations in sustainable development enables graduates from all faculties to monitor or participate in real time in the transformation towards business sustainability, the challenges that need to be addressed and the goals to be pursued.



## Dialogue

Sofia University is the initiator and a permanent partner for the development and implementation of state policy in the field of higher education and science. Sofia University is focused on building partnerships with business representatives and closer ties with employers' organizations to obtain information about student achievement, to connect with its graduates, for community initiatives and to attract the general public. One of the priorities needs to be raising the public image of the University by attracting media interest towards the educational and scientific activities which result in the benefits for society.

## For the benefit of society

The University supports and promotes the educational, science and practical activities related to the social aspect of the sustainable development.

### Institutions

Legal Barometer is a citizens' initiative of the Center for Legal Initiatives for monitoring, analysis and assessment of the state and development of the legal order in Bulgaria. The project is implemented by a team of lecturers, PhD students and law students from the Faculty of Law. The research consists of two main parts: quantitative analysis of a system of indicators for monitoring and evaluation of the main components of the legal order and content / qualitative analysis of important laws and bills. A legal barometer is published twice a year. Since its beginning, there have been presented 19 issues.

During 2019-2020 the Faculty of Pedagogy and the Center for Civic Education participated in a study of the experience of international and national non-governmental organizations implementing civic activity (human rights, anti-corruption legislation and their reflection in the work of institutions, environmental initiatives and projects etc.). An expert assessment of the good practices presented by kindergarten teachers and secondary schools teachers, pedagogical advisors, head teachers of kindergartens and specialized schools on "Educational integration of children and students from ethnic minorities", was undertaken.

### Business

The first national programme on children's rights and business organized by UNICEF and FEBA includes an overview of the main challenges related to business impact on children. The programme's focus is the social investments and companies' contribution for reaching the UN Sustainability goals. Experienced specialists present practical instruments and guidelines which can facilitate the improvement of the positive impact of business on the children's wellbeing and integration of their rights into corporate policies, business processes and non-financial reporting.

## Children

UNICEF Bulgaria invited FEBA to take part in adapting the instruments for supporting companies in applying policies and activities for children's rights protection. Together with the expert from the organization and representatives of the Bulgarian companies – stakeholders, the students can take part in creating social innovations and new products related to integration of children from vulnerable groups, encouraging young people at risk and their full participation in the labor market and civil society.

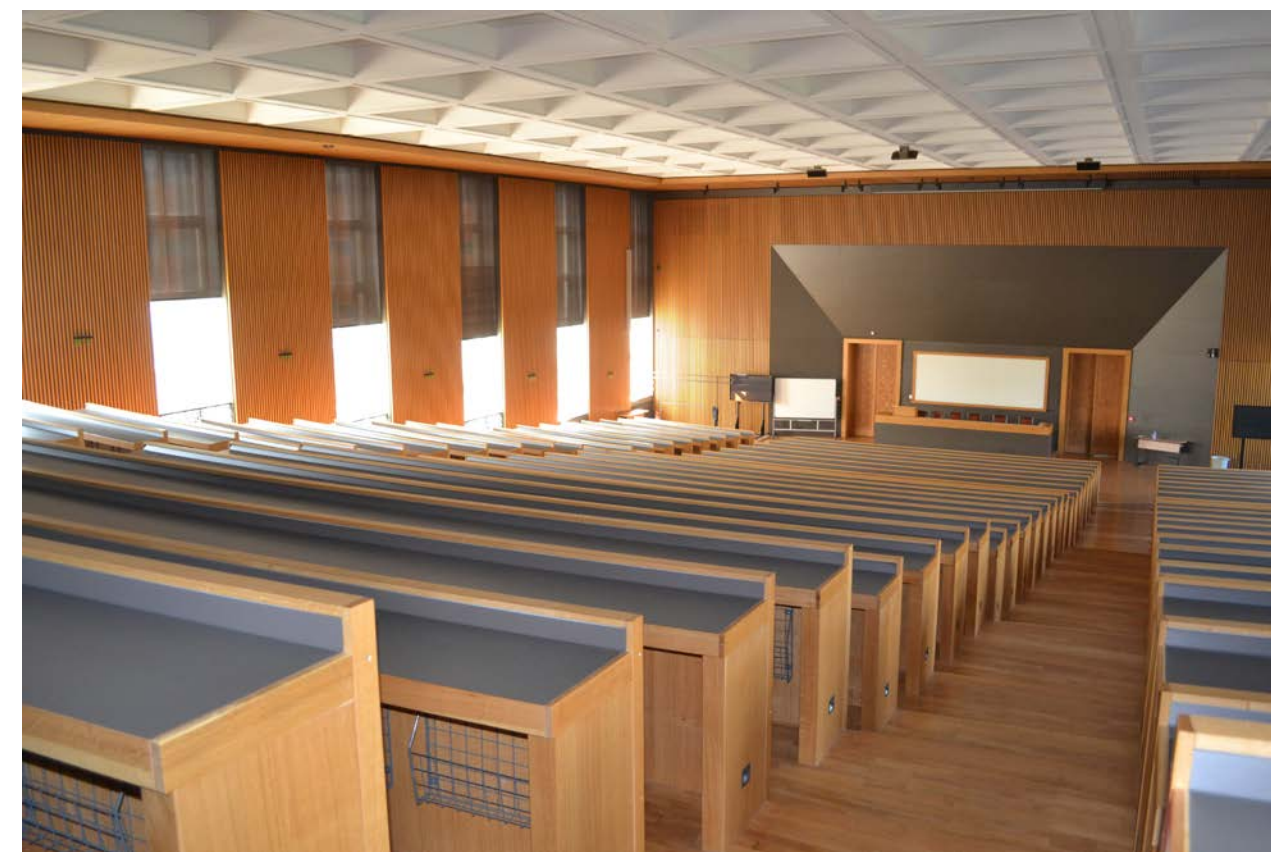
In December 2021, the Faculty of Medicine hosted a Campaign for financial support for the children from the Center for family type accommodation for children "Paisii Hilendarski". The campaign was organized by the Committee for human rights and peace of the Association of medical students in SU.

## Media

Students from the SU Faculty of Journalism and Mass Communication together with students from different faculties developed the University TV programme, radio and publications. Their aim is to present real problems and topics of interest for the young people.

## Citizens

The Research infrastructure on biomedical cell technologies project which started in September 2018 as a result of the Agreement with the Ministry of Education and Science still continues its work as part of the National roadmap for science infrastructure 2017-2023. The project is presented by a consortium based on the PPP Alliance for Cell technologies created in 2013, in which teams from SU, BAS, NGOs and private clinics in new cell technologies and reproductive medicine take part. The infrastructure is planned to be based on five technological platforms which will develop a plan for free access to science and education goals for providing specialized services to business and in benefit of the economy aiming at promoting public health.





## For the benefit of environment

The University supports and promotes educational, scientific, and practical work related to the environmental aspect of sustainable development.

### Institutions

Sofia University acts as a partner in the National science programme “Protecting the Environment and Reducing the Risk of Adverse Events and Natural Disasters” (2018-2023). It aims at fundamental and applicable research focused to providing sustainable, favorable, and safer living environment for the population of the Republic of Bulgaria.

### Business

The Green Deal and the National Recovery and Resilience Plan needs to be translated to the language of business so that it is prepared to take the most appropriate steps. It is a fact that there are currently too few specialists in sustainable development, which also hinders the transformation of industries. This challenge can be successfully solved if universities and business work together to build professionals, combining academic knowledge with economic experience. Banks will also be extremely important in the transition to a sus-

tainable economy, as through their funding mechanisms they have the role of validators of regulatory requirements for business.

The Center of Competence “Sustainable utilization of bio-resources and waste of medicinal and aromatic plants for innovative bio-active products” functions with success in the Faculty of Chemistry and Pharmacy and the Faculty of Biology. In 2018-2023 the center implements a project for efficient utilization of the national resources of medicinal and aro-

matic plants and utilization of agribio waste for applications in the green technologies for creating and offering innovative products and technologies to the economy which will create conditions for sustainable growth of the bioeconomy of the country and beyond the borders. Out of almost 4000 medicinal and aromatic plants in Bulgaria, at least 750 have a potential for processing and manufacturing products with high added value. 200 have a high economic cost-efficiency.

The Faculty of Physics participates in a project “National center for mechatronics and clean technologies (2018-2023). Along with other topics, the areas for development are Bio-mechatronics and green technologies. In accordance with the programme modern and competitive science centers of a highest level are established and equipped with unique for this country scientific technology. These centers provide opportunity for conducting high quality research in accordance with the best standards and practices. The planned activities are in direction of clean technologies with a focus on transport and energy (storage, saving and efficient distribution of energy, electric vehicles and eco-mobility, hydrogen-based models and technologies, waste-free technologies, technologies, and methods for inclusion of waste products and materials from production in other industries).

In February 2019, the Faculty of Chemistry and Pharmacy participated in the first open meeting of The National Scientific Program “Low Carbon Energy for Transport and Domestic Use” (E+). The programme combines research potential of seven universities and eight BAS institutes, providing conditions for integrated research conduct of research and demonstration activities for the development and implementation of new technologies related to renewable energy and decarbonization of the economy.

The Center of Competence **Clean & Circle** within the Faculty of Biology participated in the project “Clean technologies for sustainable environment – water, waste, energy for circular

economy” (2018-2023). The aim of the project is to create efficiently functioning infrastructure in water control, purification, and management; processing, recycling, utilization and disposal of solid waste; energy and resource efficient economy by obtaining renewable and alternative energy sources, materials and resources; encouraging innovation in technologies for sustainable environment and circular economy and development of young specialists’ entrepreneurship in the above-mentioned directions. consists of three vertical and four horizontal modules. The partners of the project are The University of Architecture, Civil Engineering and Geodesy; University of Forestry; University “Professor Dr. Asen Zlatarov” – Burgas; Institute of Physical Chemistry; Institute of Organic Chemistry with Center for Phytochemistry – Sofia; Institute of Microbiology; Cleantech Bulgaria Foundation.

The Faculty of Physics and scientific groups from Germany, Slovenia and Portugal implemented a project “Graphene and graphene nanostructures – the new materials of high technologies” (2019- 2022) which studies the implementation of graphene in the electrodes of new batteries and supercapacitors, expected to accelerate the mass use of electric vehicles by reducing their weight and to shorten the charging time.

SU signed a Memorandum for cooperation with the national branch organization Electric vehicles industrial cluster (2019). Both sides work jointly for development of the educational model “Sector Council for Electricity mobility” to the Ministry on the education and science and EMIC for new forms of training of students in economics on the electric mobility.

During this period, the joint educational project between Utilities magazine and the Center at FEBA continue successfully. It includes trainings on “Environmental assessments of products and services. Carbon Neutrality and Business Strategies”, “Energy Policy and the European Green Pact”, “Emissions Trading”, “Risk Management in Energy Markets – REMIT, MiFID II, EMIR and Financial Instruments”, and others.





## Nature

Among the most successful Bulgarian projects approved by the German Federal Foundation for Environmental Protection is "Trends in the population of Bulgarian birds" by Aleksandar Zarkov. The study aims to assess the impact of certain biological characteristics (such as migration and weight strategy) on the development of the bird population. Based on the data from the National Programme, which monitors changes in breeding populations of common bird species in Bulgaria, he found that bird populations in agricultural areas and cities are declining the most.

The National University Center "Geospatial Research and Technologies" and the Institute of Forestry at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences have launched the project "Improving the conservation status of natural habitats 4070 and 5130" on the parameter "Future Per-

spectives". It aims to improve the conservation status of natural habitats 4070 "Shrub communities with Pinus mugo" and 5130 "Juniperus communis on limestone", protected in the Natura 2000 Network.

In June 2021, the Faculty of Mathematics and Informatics launched the large-scale Green FMI campaign, which aims to recycle tons of paper, plastic, and metal. Thus, in addition to breathing new life into the materials, instead of being in the landfill, the funds raised supported the planting of new trees together with Gorata.bg.

The Association of Medical Students at Sofia University conducted the "I love our forest" campaign aiming at cleaning the trees in the park of Lozenets Hospital. There are over 1000 trees in the park, most of which needed cleaning to prevent breakage in the crowns.

## Children

In October 2019 the Faculty of Chemistry and Pharmacy started the introduction of the scientific program BASF Chemgeneration to Bulgaria. It is organized in 8 countries in Central and Southern Europe. The program includes interactive seminars which in a practical way introduce students to the importance

## Citizens

Climateka – The science of climate in your language (climateka.bg) is a project of the Faculty of Geology and Geography. It is an open platform for knowledge that aims to make climate science accessible to all. Climateka presents facts and analyzes on climate, climate change and its consequences. In this way, more people will be able to be an argumentative party in the climate conversation. We believe that the first step to responsible behavior

of chemistry and science for creating a sustainable future. Each seminar was attended by 20 students aged 14-18. They conducted four experiments on purifying contaminated water, studying biodegradable plastics, regenerating metal by electrolysis and recycling wastepaper.

towards the world is to understand its processes, so we want to make knowledge accessible to all. The authors at Climateka are scientists, climate specialists, and their main goal is through their knowledge and analytical skills to explain climate change in an easy and understandable way. Their mission is to improve the information environment in Bulgaria by becoming a reliable source of information on climate change. It is the place where people come to find answers to their questions about climate change and its consequences. Climateka was awarded as The campaign of the year in the awards for biodiversity and climate at the International Geographical Conference "Geo Decade 2020-2030".

The INNOAIR Sofia project takes ambitious steps to reduce air pollution and protect it by electrifying and expanding public transport opportunities. In 2020-2023, the "Green public transport meeting consumers' demand" was launched. This innovative public transport service has been implemented together with a wide range of initiatives: low-emission areas, green corridors, congestion charge, promoting active mobility. Partners in the project are Sofia Municipality, Sofia University, Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski", Sofia Development Association, National Association of Municipalities in Bulgaria, Center for Urban Mobility in Sofia, Modeshift Europe EAD and National Institute of Meteorology and Hydrology.

In September 2019 the BioFest2019 "Journeys through the depths of science" was held for the third consecutive year. BioFest aims to popularize and present the Faculty of Biology







as an educational and scientific institution. Participants are scientists, students, and citizens. The sessions include Biochemistry in Everyday Life, The Voice of Plants, Biotechnology in Our Home, Ecological Footprint and Animal Behavior in Their Home and Family.

The Center for energy efficiency “EnEffect”, the municipal network EcoEnergy and FEBA conducted a joint training course in 2020 on “Renovation of existing residential buildings”, aimed at house managers and representatives of homeowner associations and municipal specialists.

In September 2021, the international symposium “ART-eco” was held in Kiten. The art works dedicated to environmental topics and created by the participants were donated to the Faculty of Educational Studies and the Arts. During the symposium three presentations on environmental issues were conducted by Prof. Dorota Sak, Prof. Marek Sak and Assist. Prof. Dr. Julian Stankulov.

### Media

The Faculty of Journalism and Mass Communication implemented the project “Statistical modeling of the risk to the environment and human from soil contamination with heavy metals”. The main idea of the event was to unite science and journalism and to provoke young journalists and PR specialists to promote the Bulgarian scientific results and achievements. The meeting is the first step towards creating a new generation of journalists with knowledge and interest in science.



The university had a leading role as a stabilizing factor in society in a critical situation. With its specialized knowledge and potential, it focused its efforts on collecting new data and providing practical solutions related to health risk, health protection, the functioning of people at risk, as well as the economic challenges facing business.

The scientific contribution to development, research and analysis on topics related to Covid-19, successfully supported with reliable and up-to-date information the professions most affected and at highest risk during the crisis – medics, teachers etc.

**Online education.** The Ministry of Education and Science introduced complete online learning in schools, and the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration supported the work of Bulgarian teachers in the transition to digital education and in a state of emergency it trained over 16,000 colleagues to work in digital environments to support distance learning.

A series of free webinars for business, sustainable leaders and the crisis were held at the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration, together with the Causes Foundation. Topics discussed included: effective CSR practices in crisis situations, communications and CSR activities in crisis situations, opportunities, common mistakes, channel selection and response management. Participants also discussed what responsible leadership during crisis is – leader’s characteristics and behavior, the relationship between leadership and online presence.

**Donations.** Forum (ACF) at the Faculty of Physics designed and manufactured helmets for the needs of medical workers in their fight against the virus. All costs for production and delivery to medical institutions were covered by the association. They donated 5,000 protective helmets to Bulgarian medics in the largest hospitals in the country.

**Scientific research and analysis related to Covid-19.** The HPC laboratory of Sofia University in Sofia Tech park has included its computing capabilities in the work of an international project to study the way the viral protein works.

Successful tests of masks were developed at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences and at the Institute of Defense and International Security. Tests were conducted in the laboratories of the Faculty of Biology at Sofia University.

Lecturers from the Faculty of Chemistry and Pharmacy have developed a reliable hand gel disinfectant which meets all requirements. The disinfectant is in production.

The Faculty of Economics and Business Administration, in partnership with the Causes Foundation and Junction Bulgaria, conducted an express survey among FEBA students on trust during COVID-19. Lecturers from the Department of Economics at the same faculty prepared an analysis of the economic effects of the health crisis.

Faculty of Educational Studies and the Arts prepared a study on how lecturers adapt to the emergency and the need to transition to a new way of working with no prior preparation.

A team from the Faculty of Mathematics and Informatics and the Institute of Information and Communication Technologies of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences created computer mathematical modeling of the epidemic development and stochastic modeling of the COVID-19 pandemic.





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COMMUNICATION  
ON PROGRESS



This is our **Communication on Progress** in implementing the Ten Principles of the **United Nations Global Compact** and supporting broader UN goals.

We welcome feedback on its contents.

## The Ten Principles of the UN Global Compact



### HUMAN RIGHTS

Principle 1: Businesses should support and respect the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights; and

Principle 2: make sure that they are not complicit in human rights abuses.



### LABOUR

Principle 3: Businesses should uphold the freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining;

Principle 4: the elimination of all forms of forced and compulsory labour;

Principle 5: the effective abolition of child labour; and

Principle 6: the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation.



### ENVIRONMENT

Principle 7: Businesses should support a precautionary approach to environmental challenges;

Principle 8: undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility; and

Principle 9: encourage the development and diffusion of environmentally friendly technologies.



### ANTI-CORRUPTION

Principle 10: Businesses should work against corruption in all its forms, including extortion and bribery.



