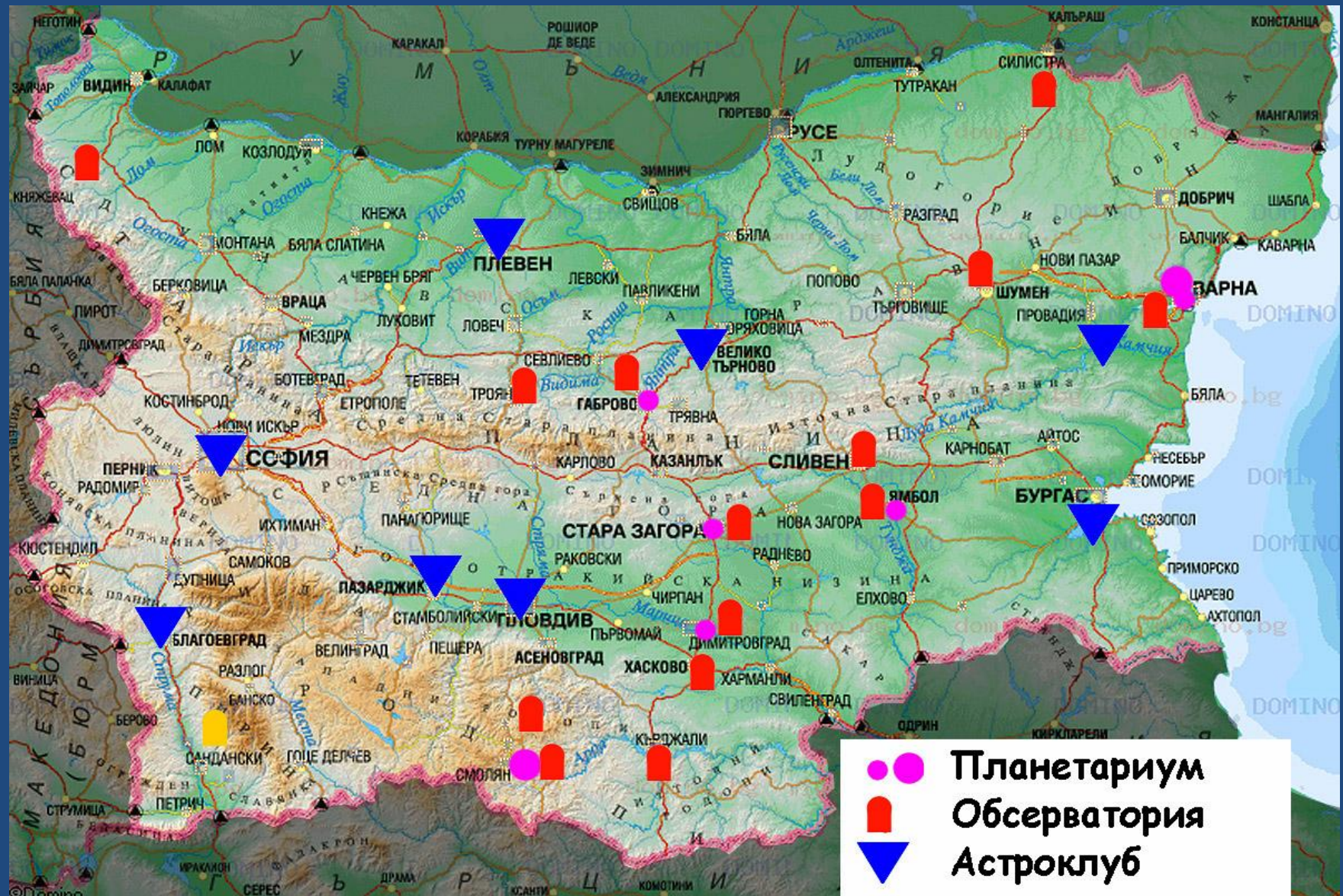


Activities
of the Society of Astronomers in Bulgaria
in the period 2008-2011

Tanyu Bonev
On behalf of the President
and the members of SAB

Astronomical institutions in Bulgaria



Census of SAB (status in 2008)

Professional astronomers:

17 from Institute of Astronomy with NAO

10 from universities

6 from public observatories

26 scholars and students

4 amateur astronomers

Collective members - 3

Total (in 2008) : 63 individual members

3 collective members

Today: less than 40

2008

- Meeting in Leiden – decision to affiliate SAB with EAS
- 40 years anniversary of the pupil observatory and planetarium in Varna – meeting on 27 July, many Society members recognized the role of Varna observatory for the development of astronomy in Bulgaria. Relations between Varna observatory and the National astronomical observatory.
- Preparation for activities in 2009, the IYA

2009 – The International Year of Astronomy

- Opening by the President of the SAB, prof. Diana Kyurkchieva - 23 January in the Great Hall of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences
- Talk “Astronomy and Art” by D. Kolev, member of the Society
- Third science meeting of SAB – 24 January
- End of September – SAB was a partner organization in “The European night of scientists 2009” (5-th edition in Europe, 4-th in Bulgaria)
- October - Joint meeting of SAB and the Society of physicists – devoted to the IYA

2010 – Year of up-and-down

Strong reduction (> 30 %) of the budget for science (reflects automatically on astronomy. Example: The National Astronomical Observatory had budget for running costs = 0.0 Lev.

In May, in his annual meeting SAB decided to start several actions:

- May – press conference (talks by representatives of research and educational organizations., members of SAB)
- Petition “Save NAO” - more than 5000 signed the petition (many EAS members)
- Letters to the Prime Minister – thanks to N. Samus, M. Knezevic (SREAC), Colleagues from Skopje University, ...
- Group in Facebook “Save NAO” – more than 12000 members
- September – Consortium RACIO included in the national roadmap for research infrastructures (joint effort of many SAB members).
The underlying idea is: Integration of the research and educational resources in the field of astronomy in BG.

2011 – the crisis continues

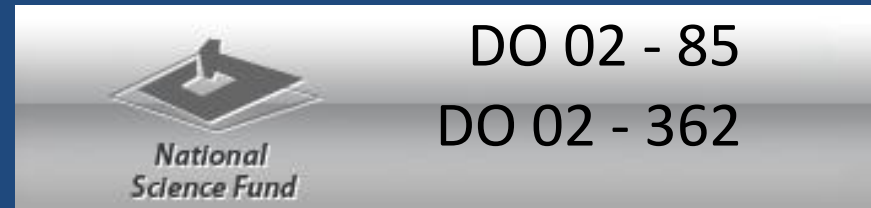
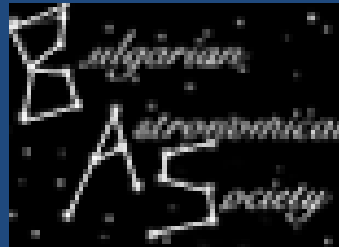
Nevertheless

- March 10 – public talk in Smolyan on occasion of 30 years from the official opening of NAO.
- May 13 – 15 – 6-th national conference of SAB on occasion 50 years anniversary of the pupil astronomical observatory in Stara Zagora.
- September 26 – 29 – International conference in Smolyan on occasion of 30 years from the official opening of NAO. “Thirty years eyes on the sky”.

Conclusions

- The Society of astronomers in Bulgaria plays an important role as the organization which integrates and coordinates the efforts of all astronomers in the country for the development of astronomy.
- The importance of this role was demonstrated in several difficult situations in the last two years.
- In future the role of the SAB could be even stronger. As an NGO it can be an effective mediator between the astronomical community and the government.

Thank you!



Meeting of the EAS, Rolle, Switzerland, Jan 31 - Feb 2, 2012 , Tanyu Bonev, SAB