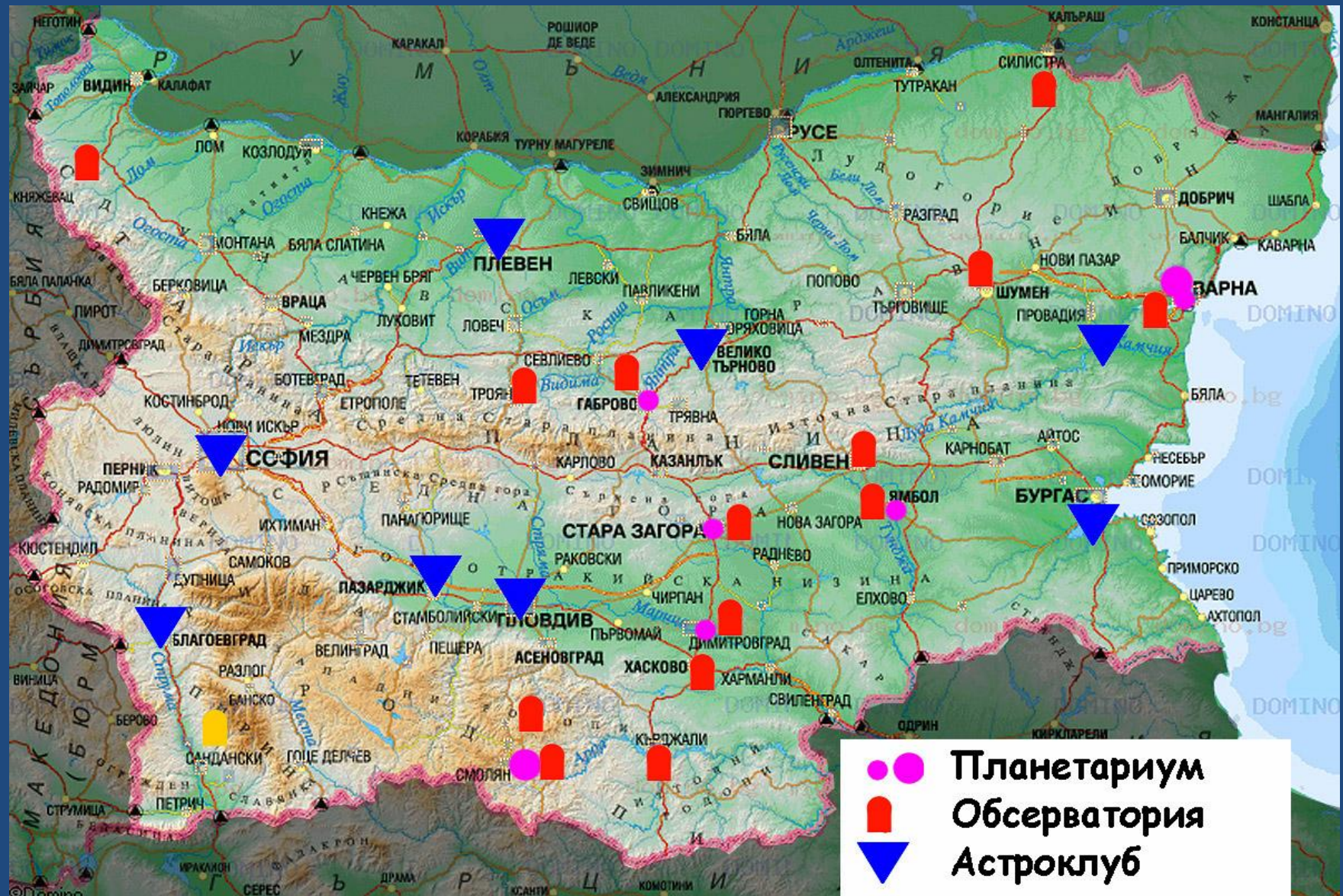


Activities  
of the Society of Astronomers in Bulgaria  
in the period 2008-2011

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

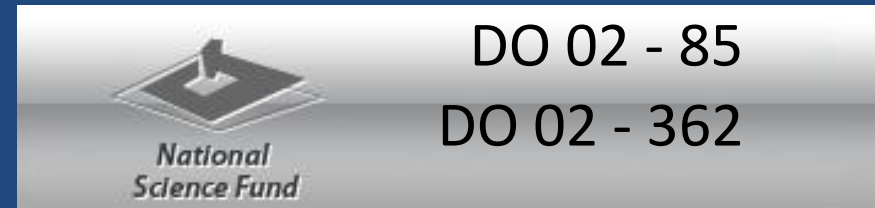
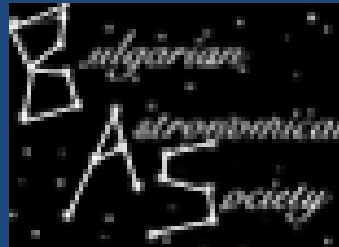
- March 10 – public talk in Smolyan on occasion of 30 years from the official opening of NAO.
- May 13 – 15 – 6-th national conference of SAB on occasion 50 years anniversary of the pupil astronomical observatory in Stara Zagora.
- September 26 – 29 – International conference in Smolyan on occasion of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