

EDITORIAL

100 YEARS OF THE YEARBOOK OF THE UNIVERSITY OF NATIONAL AND WORLD ECONOMY: LOOKING BACK, LOOKING AHEAD

A brief overview of the history of the University of National and World Economy

The University of National and World Economy (UNWE) is the largest and the oldest higher business school in Bulgaria and South-Eastern Europe, with 102 years of history. The University of National and World Economy started with the Free University of Political and Economic Sciences, established by Order No 2155/05.07.1920 of the Minister of National Enlightenment. In 1940 (SG 126/06/40), it was transformed into the State Higher School of Financial and Administrative Sciences (BIFAN), succeeded by the Faculty of Economic and Social Sciences at Sofia University in 1947.

Decree No 26 (Notices, issue 10 of 1.02.1952) restored the autonomy of the higher school under the name of the Higher Economic Institute (ESI). In 1953, by decree No 89, it was named “Karl Marx” (“Notices” section, issue 23 of 20.03.1953). On April 27, 1990, the Academic Council converted the Karl Marx Higher School to the University of National and World Economy. A decision of the National Assembly brings about the official transformation of the higher school for the establishment and change of higher schools (SG 68/95).

The University of National and World Economy, a successor to the Free University of Political and Economic Sciences, established in 1920 in Sofia, has the principle ambition to create its social world filled and organized around knowledge, with its own value rules, symbols, rituals, and traditions.

The emergence of this higher institution has been related to a series of events, the content of which reflects the state of society, its numerous problems, the societal economic, political and cultural needs, the spirit of the time, and changing public interests and expectations.

History of the scientific publications and the Yearbook of UNWE¹

The scope of the scientific and educational activity carried out since the establishment of the Free University includes its print scientific editions. It is generally accepted that different institutions in Bulgaria and abroad should have their scientific journals. Initially, the widespread form of yearbooks was adopted. In 1922, the first volume of the Yearbook of the Free University of Political and Economic Sciences (“Annuaire de l’Universite libre des sciences politiques et economiques”) was published. By 1938, a total of seventeen volumes had been issued.

The content generally followed the established standards for this educational and cultural institution in the country. The vast majority of the published articles reflected teaching activities, as well as the events of university life. The other part was allocated to scientific publications of the academic staff.

In the beginning, the edition’s format and volume were modest. This is understandable, considering that the University regulated its internal organization and started the educational process and that the information had to be fairly extensive. However, there have also been obstacles of a financial nature. The first budgets were more than modest, so the funds allocated to issuing the yearbooks were relatively small. Nevertheless, the situation underwent quick and significant changes. In just a few years, the appearance of yearbooks reflected a diverse and comprehensive university life with increased material opportunities.

Information about the management’s activities, the Rector and the Academic Council and their decisions have been regularly published on the journal’s pages. In addition, all adopted statutes, regulations and other documents presenting the University’s objectives and tasks, the rules on internal order, the relations of the academic community during the teaching process, exams procedures, and the status of the student companies have been presented on the pages of this journal.

In the Yearbooks, detailed information about the structural units and all curricula reflected the changes and additions made in different disciplines. The lecturers and the respective lecture courses they delivered have been presented by name. In addition, the necessary textbooks and aids have been recommended. An essential part of the current information encompassed the published timetables for each exam session and the reporting of the results after completion.

In each Yearbook, data about students revealed in detail the picture of their condition and movement during the school year. They were described in particular: the number of learners, their social situation, gender, faculty allocation, place of residence, etc. The published name lists of graduates were published as well.

¹ According to: Pencho Penchev, Lilyana Veleva, Marko Dimitrov, 100 Years University of National and World Economy, Publishing Complex - UNWE, Sofia, 2021 (in Bulgarian).

The Academic Council's annual reports were also included in the journal's publications in the early years. In terms of content, they represented a complete overview of the achievements and the problems of the Free University. They dealt with the main issues related to academic activities, the construction of its facilities /buildings, library, laboratories, budgets, activities of student organizations, international relations, cooperation, etc./

The academic community's diverse and eventful life was also a regular topic on the periodical pages. These include festivals and celebrations of various kinds at the university and national levels that have moral, emotional, and educational significance. In addition, the information on the domestic and international contacts made with other universities, businesses, cultural organizations, and societies, as well as with well-known public figures was detailed.

Given their overall appearance and rich content, the yearbooks are justifiably described as a "mirror" of the Free University, giving complete transparency of its activities and the opportunity to be the object of public opinion. In addition, the Yearbooks also provided various announcements and information about life at the Free University, the other universities at home and abroad, chronicles of significant events, etc. The scientific section of the issue contained several exciting publications. Most of them were intended to assist students in the disciplines directly studied, to expand and complement their theoretical knowledge, which is in line with the original intention of the appearance and character of the publication. Alongside clarifying theoretical formulations, the authors commented on the state and trends in the national and international socio-political and economic life. Some examples of these studies include the research of Prof. S. Bobchev on the problems of the recent history of the Middle East, legislation, and reforms in the Turkish Republic. Prof. P. Staynov has written about a general system of the forms of internal government. Prof. At. Ishirkov has reviewed the political-geographical conception of the state and the population density in Bulgaria. Prof. D. Dobrev has analysed the tremendous economic crisis and economic leadership, and has also examined the problem of joint-stock companies in the light of "national thrift". Dr. St. Danev has discussed in detail the convention between Russia and Bulgaria of 1902. Prof. P. Stoyanov has interpreted the subject of people's intelligence. D. Mishaykov has given a generalized economic picture of our economy in the 1930s. K. Bobchev has offered his views on the national monetary policy. Il. Palazov has written on topics of the cooperative movement, etc.

Part of the content of the Yearbooks has been devoted to life at the Free University. This includes the reports of the Academic Council, the academic speeches delivered at the opening of each academic year, statistics on the student body, the distribution of diplomas, lists of graduates, and the activities of student organiza-

tions. Academic and national anniversaries, international relations, and cooperation have also been highlighted.

All periodicals of the Free University became an integral part of the educational process, contributing to its quality. Broader awareness of students and lecturers was ensured not only on scientific but also on several topical issues in the social and economic life in our country and abroad. They were seen as precious and valuable because they were in essence a documentary record of university life, the academic atmosphere, the achievements, and problems that arose, and how they were solved. This also shed additional light on the Bulgarian educational system between the two world wars, particularly in the country's cultural and spiritual life.

With their thematic and professional focus, the Yearbooks enriched the economic literature in Bulgaria. In addition, the published specialized materials with analyses and interpretations of financial problems, specific proposals and recommendations for improving the country's public and individual economic practice still arouse interest.

Between 1950 and 1989, the content of the Higher Economic Institute's scientific publications (the University's name in this period) was improved and expanded with scientific research focused exclusively on national issues. It was found, however, that the scientific output of the Institute's academic faculty could not be covered in the existing collections of proceedings and articles, and therefore the number of volumes published by the Institute's scientific journals increased. The journals started to publish the research of the academic staff and graduates. The journals played an essential role in political economy and sectoral economics research fields, refracted through the prism of teaching and developing these sciences at the Institute's level.

In research importance was attached to developments directly related to material production. During this period, many departments signed direct contracts with individual ministries and departments to provide scientific assistance and jointly resolve essential practical problems.

At the end of each academic year, an evaluation of the publications in these journals was made, and measures were identified to improve the scientific research of the Institute and to decisively enhance the functions of the Institute's management units for scientific research and especially the Journals' editorial board.

Scientific research at the Higher Economic Institute gained a more extensive scale during this period. On average, between 90 and 120 research topics were developed annually in the research plans, and were covered in the pages of the Yearbook and other university journals.

After 1989, a prolonged crisis of absolute magnitude unfolded in Bulgaria, affecting all structures, institutions, social strata, and communities in depth. Like all other areas of society, the outlined new historical dimensions inevitably af-

affected higher education and research. On the one hand, the entire higher education system was subject to the steady and contradictory influence of political, economic and social internal factors, some of which were dramatic at certain stages. International processes in all their dynamics also had projections on the state and long-term perspectives of Bulgarian education and science. On the other hand, changes in political paradigms also brought about changes in research theories, approaches and methodologies. All this impacted the changing requirements regarding research and scientific publications published on the Yearbook's pages.

Current development of the Yearbook of UNWE

The Yearbook of the UNWE is a peer-reviewed scientific journal of the University of National and World Economy. The journal is a leading academic issue in the country, which publishes in Bulgarian and English the results of research in the thematic areas of social science, economics, administration and management, law, political science, public communications and information sciences and related fields. Submissions are accepted from Bulgarian and foreign authors, members of the academic staff of the UNWE and beyond, and scholars and partners from other educational and research institutions from the country and abroad. The Yearbook publishes only original pieces of research that have not been published or submitted elsewhere. Manuscripts are prepared and presented in accordance with the requirements of the Editorial Board. The review of studies and articles is carried out according to the standards for evaluating incoming manuscripts through the double-blind peer review system. Publications are indexed in CEEOL, RePEc, ROAD, SIS, J-Gate, and Google Scholar databases. The journal is also included in the National Reference List of Contemporary Bulgarian peer-reviewed scientific journals with ID No 1493.

The journal is published in two issues per year every six months. The publications are in English and include research results – studies, articles, scientific communications, literature reviews and other pieces of research. The average annual volume of published scientific content is 380 pages. The journal's circulation is 180 copies for each volume, i.e., 360 printed issues per year.

The Yearbook of UNWE has developed and implemented an editorial policy with established ethical standards for publication, presented on the website, and visible to all authors and stakeholders. The Editorial Board applies generally accepted rules of publication ethics, and the journal's Editorial Policy is based on the international standards of the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE), which define the conduct of editors, reviewers, authors and the publisher in the publication process. The journal publishes the rules under which it operates on its website: the requirements for authors of studies and articles, the criteria for

evaluation/review of manuscripts, the contact channels and feedback to the editorial office. In addition, the journal uses specialized software to check submitted manuscripts for plagiarism. The journal maintains an active website in English, providing access to the full text and abstracts database of scientific publications (since 2004) – <http://unwe-yearbook.org/en/journalissues/archive>.

The International Editorial Board includes ten scholars from abroad who comprise more than a third of the roster.

The way ahead

The journal aims to offer its readers research publications of the highest quality and the authors' vast international recognition of their work by increasing the visibility and citation of the articles in databases worldwide. In addition, the journal's editorial board is actively working to improve its quality and publications by implementing and maintaining a state-of-the-art manuscript submission and review platform developed in 2022. In parallel, to increase the scope, quality, and visibility of Bulgarian research in the Open Science Initiative, the journal focuses on developing and providing opportunities for complete information on the interest of scientists from all over the world in the published articles. Its main ambition is to give authors a chance to publish their pieces of research in a distinguished international journal and offer readers examples of research excellence.

Acknowledgments

We would like to express our deepest appreciation to all the Editors and members of the Editorial Boards of the Yearbook of UNWE during its 100-years history.

We are deeply indebted to all the journal's authors and readers who made it possible to develop our publications' excellent quality.

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On behalf of the Editorial Board,

Prof. Dr. Christina Nikolova,
Editor-in-Chief