



## Estonian Academy of Sciences 75

In 2013 the Estonian Academy of Sciences celebrated an anniversary – 75 years from its foundation in 1938. There are several dates to mark. On 28 January 1938 the President of Estonia issued the decree on establishing the Estonian Academy of Sciences. On 13 April 1938 the first 12 fellows were nominated, among them the President of the Academy, the microbiologist Karl Schlossmann. The first General Assembly meeting was held on 20 April 1938 but the official opening was on 22 October 1938. The Academy can be proud of its first fellows – L. Puusepp (medical sciences), E. Öpik (astronomy), the first elected fellow T. Lippmaa (biology) and others who gained international reputation for their studies.

Starting from the first modern academies launched in the 17th century, one of the main tasks of these congregations of top scientists has been publishing scientific findings. The first publication of the Estonian Academy of Sciences was *Annales Academiae Scientiarum Estonicae* issued in 1940. Besides the academic documents, it contained also several scientific papers devoted to problems in astronomy, biology, agriculture, archaeology, etc. and were written in English, French, German, and Estonian. In this way *Annales* was meant for international community.

The history of scientific publications in Estonia actually dates back to the 19th century. The first periodicals were *Astronomische Beyträge* (1806–1807) and *Publications of the Observatory of Tartu* (1817–1990), later *Acta et Commentationes Universitatis Tartuensis* (starting from 1921) and *Folia Neuro-pathologica Estoniana* (1923–1939).

World War II and the annexation of Estonia interrupted the normal development of the Academy but it was reestablished in 1946 after the forced closing by the Soviet regime. For a long time the Academy, besides uniting its fellows, ran also a system of research institutes which was the Eastern European equivalent to the Max Planck Society in Germany. This system was restructured at the beginning of the 1990s after Estonia

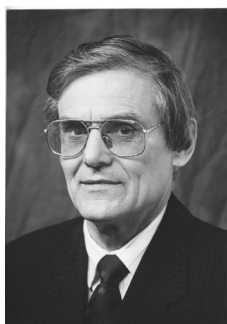
reinstated its independence. Just now the Academy has one research institute – the Under and Tuglas Literature Centre. Preparations for launching the Institute of Advanced Studies started in 2013.

During its existence the Academy has paid attention to publishing research results. The journal *Proceedings of the Estonian Academy of Sciences* was first published in one volume in 1952 but in three separate series from 1955 on, while later some series were added. Since 1990 essential changes in publication policy have been reflected also in the structure of journals. Presently, the Estonian Academy Publishers has nine journals in its list but only one, the *Proceedings*, is published under the definite name of the Estonian Academy of Sciences. From 2008 on this journal has a new face as a multi-disciplinary journal [1,2]. Other journals, issued together with public universities of Estonia, cover specialized fields like humanities and social sciences, Earth sciences, history, archaeology, oil shale studies, linguistics, etc. The Estonian Academy Publishers runs the publishing of journals but takes also care of publishing monographs, yearbooks of scientific societies affiliated to the Academy, etc.

The Academy, as stated in its Law and Statutes, has a mission to resolve issues related to the development of research in Estonia and the social and economic development of the state. It is clear that fellows of the Academy are the top scientists in their field and their main aim is to foster research. The results of their studies, however, must also reach the community. The main lingua franca of science is English and most of the papers published by the Estonian Academy Publishers are in English. Only one journal, *Linguistica Uralica*, uses other languages because of its goal to reflect studies in Uralic languages. In addition, the Academy publishes several series in Estonian in order to communicate with local society. These series include *Estonian Research Awards* (published annually since 1997) and *Scientific Thought in Estonia* (published since 2002). Together with other institutions the Academy has published also

several overviews of top research in Estonia, e.g. on Centres of Excellence in Research, future trends in research, science policy. The yearbooks of the Academy, published since 1996 both in Estonian and English, reflect the main activities of the Academy and affiliated institutions (research centres and scientific societies).

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The world is changing fast. Electronic publishing and open access to results of research gain more and more importance. Together with colleagues from all over the world, the Estonian Academy of Sciences and its *Proceedings* are open to face challenges. We are all in the same boat.

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## REFERENCES

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