



Editorial

Philately in the Digital Age

In March, FEPA organized and carried out a series of online teleconferences on the use of Social Media with its member-Federations. This initiative was a step forward on establishing a two-way communication on important issues for organized philately.

FEPA's report that followed soon after the conclusion of the six, scheduled group teleconferences pointed out the need and importance of facilitating dialogue, sharing experiences, and exploring solutions to common challenges faced by federations across Europe in an effort for adopting a systematic and collective action.

The overall feeling is that philately stands at a crossroads and the remaining time for taking action is rather limited. Over the past decade, the number of organized philatelists in Europe was reduced to 100,000 persons. That shows a 50% decrease compared to the respective figure ten years ago.

On the other hand, the number of philatelists –following various digital platforms, websites and the Social Media– reveals that there are multiple philatelists who are not members of Societies and Federations. The question is how this great number of non-organized philatelists can be reached?

In the digital world many Philatelic Societies and Federations are hardly visible and in some cases are just “present” by having an unattractive website with a rather mundane content. The question we should really ask ourselves is: if we were passers-by of a store with a dull shop-window, would we really feel like entering this store?

Although the use of Social Media is not a dilemma, it is a survival imperative for philately, on the other hand, the old way of participating in person for a philatelic presentation at the premises of a Society, a physical Exhibition and other face-to-face activities should by no means be abandoned.

Furthermore, an efficient use of Social Media and real-time communication for most of us, is something like Columbus's voyage to discover a new route to the West Indies, a voyage towards an unknown land sailing through uncharted waters.

The key issue that organized philately is currently facing, it is not the necessity of philatelists to acquire the technical skills in order to use efficiently the Social Media.

The biggest challenge in Philately, in my opinion, is to focus on the content of what we should say for philately to people who are not fully aware that philately is much more than the use of postage stamps. Philately is about every single human activity and this is transmitted, by means of an image encoding a symbolic message, through a postal item.

TOGETHER ON THE WAY

The Embassy of the Republic of Serbia in the Republic of Slovenia gave the occasion to organize an international philatelic exhibition in the Granary in Škofja Loka, which commemorated the collaboration of two world-class linguists, Jernej Kopitar (1870—1844) and Vuk Stefanović Karadžić (1787—1864), in Vienna, when between 1813 and 1844 they laid the foundations of the Slovenian and Serbian literary languages in the Austrian Imperial Library and in the tavern "Zum weissen Wolf".



Fig. 1

The Post of Serbia issued a personal postage stamp

For this commemorative event, the Embassy attracted the **Serbian Philatelic Association** (SFS), the **Philatelic Association of Slovenia** (FZS) and the **Philatelic Society Lovro Košir Škofja Loka** to prepare a comprehensive program of the event with an exhibition that included 96 frames (1536 A4 exhibition sheets) and 4 billboards, where 15 philatelists (8 from Serbia and 7 from Slovenia) and the Museum of the Serbian Post and the Museum of Post and Telecommunications of Slovenia (TMS), displayed 18 philatelic collections from the following philatelic classes: traditional philately, postal history, thematic philately and maximum cards and postcards.

In addition to the philatelic exhibition, the Post of Serbia issued a personal postage stamp (Fig. 1) with the motif of portraits of both linguists in the ambience of the former Austrian Imperial Library in Vienna. The Slovenian Philatelic Association was the issuer of two personal postage stamps (Fig. 2) and a Catalogue (Fig. 3).



Fig. 2

Both stamps feature portraits of Kopitar and Karadžić, nominal stamp A in the Imperial Library, and nominal stamp B features portraits of the linguists in the background with their birthplaces in Repnje by Vodice, where Jernej Kopitar was born, and the birthplace in the village of Tršić near Loznici, where Vuk S. Karadžić spent his childhood.



The The greatest achievement of this commemorative event is the publication of a Catalogue, which on 76 pages shows the historical intertwining of the two Slavic nations, Serbs and Slovenes, which was paved in Vienna by Kopitar and Karadžić, and continued by Fran Miklošič, Davorin Jenko, Mihajlo Pupin, Nikola Tesla, to name just a few. The content and motifs in the catalogue immediately give us a picture of how the Serbs established Karadžić as the father of their literary language, who created the foundations of the modern Serbian language from the former Old Church Slavonic and the language of simple Serbs. greatest achievement of this commemorative event is the publication of a Catalogue, which on 76 pages shows the historical intertwining of the two Slavic nations, Serbs and Slovenes, which was paved in Vienna by Kopitar and Karadžić, and continued by Fran Miklošič, Davorin Jenko, Mihajlo Pupin, Nikola Tesla, to name just a few. The content and motifs in the catalogue immediately give us a picture of how the Serbs established Karadžić as the father of their literary language, who created the foundations of the modern Serbian language from the former Old Church Slavonic and the language of simple Serbs.

Fig. 3

In this work, our Jernej was his mentor and patron. Many postage stamps, commemorative coins, banknotes with the image of Vuk S. Karadžić (Fig. 4) were issued at different times in Serbia. Kopitar, however, is nowhere to be found on stamps in Slovenia. The only stamp was issued in 1994 by the Slovenian Post Office, and even then only with an image of the cover of a facsimile of Kopitar's Grammar from 1808. (Fig. 5).



Fig. 4

German occupation of Serbia – Nedic's Serbia (1941–1944), banknotes depicting Vuk S. Karadžić



Fig. 5

Cover of a facsimile of Kopitar's Grammar from 1808

That is why the article by Jana Ozimek, Professor of Slovenian Language and Comparative Literature, entitled: "Jernej Bartholomeus Kopitar, scientist and patriot from Repnje near Vodice" (pp. 28–43 of the exhibition catalogue), which provides a comprehensive overview of Kopitar's life, education, training, his scientific work as a Slovene and Slavist, and his importance for Slovenians as a humanist, patriot and revivalist.

The Philatelic Society Lovro Košir Škofja Loka issued an exhibition poster, an invitation to the opening of the exhibition together with an illustrated card (stationery), (Fig. 6), a commemorative postmark (Fig. 7), a postcard with the motif of Jernej Kopitar's birthplace, a maximum card (Fig. 8) and a commemorative cover/envelope (Fig. 9).



Fig 6 & 7



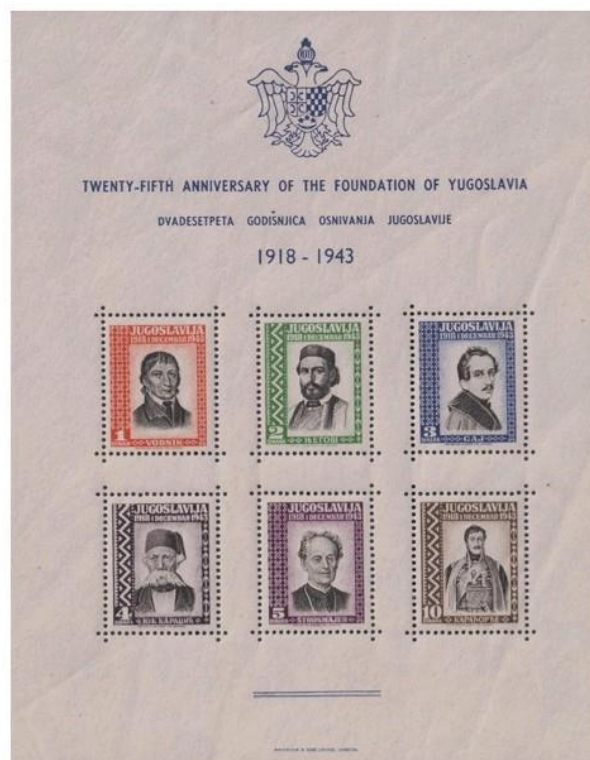
Fig. 8



Fig. 9

The Philatelic Society Lovro Košir Škofja Loka organized the exhibition with an opening in the granary, on Friday, March 21, 2025, in the presence of all organizers of this event (Embassy of the Republic of Serbia in the Republic of Slovenia, Post of Serbia, SFS, FZS, FD Lovro Košir Škofja Loka), exhibitors, sponsors and other participants (Municipality of Škofja Loka, Municipality of Vodice, Loka Museum Škofja Loka, Museum of Post and Telecommunications, as the Technical Museum of Slovenia, Post of Slovenia, Museum of Post of Serbia, Srbijamarka by Post of Serbia, University Library of Svetozar Marković University, Belgrade and Serbian Orthodox Church from Ljubljana), who made this international event possible with the title: "Month of the Republic of Serbia in the Republic of Slovenia" with the philatelic exhibition "Stamps of Slovenia and Serbia", which was opened by the Mayor of Škofja Loka, Tine Radinja, on behalf of the 4 sponsors (Embassy of the Republic of Serbia in the Republic of Slovenia, Municipality of Škofja Loka, Post of Serbia and SFS) of this event.

Yugoslav Royal Government in Exile in London (1941–1945)



Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia (1945–1963)



Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (1963–1992)



Republic of Srbija (2006–):

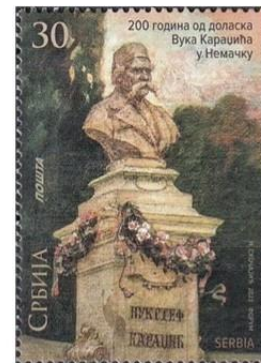


Bosnia & Herzegovina – Republic of Srpska



Republic of Serbia: postal stamp from 2018:
on the occasion of the 200th anniversary of the
publication of the Serbian language dictionary;
the stamps depict Kopitar and Karadžić.

Republic of Serbia:
postage stamp 2023



Commemorative coins from 1987 – 200 years since the birth of Vuk S. Karadžić



At the opening of the exhibition, the event was enlivened by two musical groups: male choir Garažni déctet and Aut Etno, a musical group by Uroš Jezdić.

As part of this exhibition, the President of SFS (Serbian Philatelic Association) Vladimir Milić presented the inflation rate and postal tariffs in the period between 1989 and 1994 in the then Yugoslavia in his lecture. (Fig. 10).

A letter franked on January 31, 1989 with stamps for the then 2200 dinars, would have had to be affixed with stamps for 1.69×10^{27} (27 zeros) of the then Dinars, if zeros had not been written off in 1994 in the then Yugoslavia, because almost 100 postal tariffs and 6 currency systems were recorded in five years.



Fig. 10

Janez Cerkenik, Philatelic Society Lovro Košir Škofja Loka
Gregor Cerkenik, Philatelic Society Lovro Košir Škofja Loka
Igor Pirc, Philatelic Association of Slovenia

Union of Philatelists of Serbia activities in past period

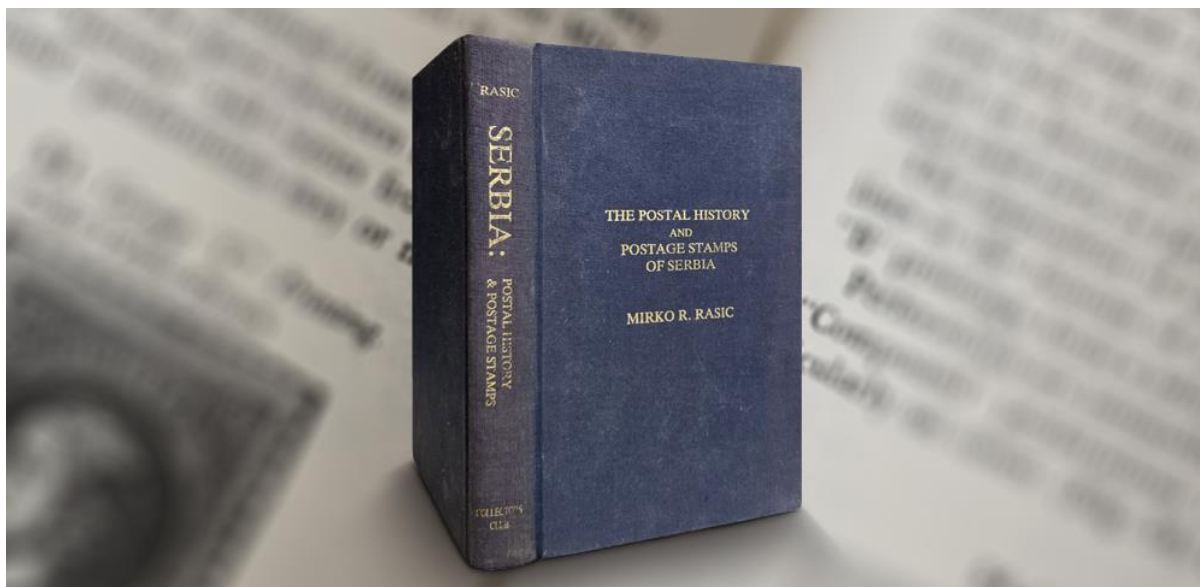
75 Years of the “Filatelist” Magazine

On November 6, 2024, in the premises of the PTT Museum in Belgrade, the Serbian Philatelists' Union, in cooperation with the PE “Post of Serbia”, organized a panel discussion entitled “75 Years of the “Filatelist” Magazine”. The panel participants were Prof. Dr. Milan Radovanović, Vojislav Begović and Vladimir Milić. The Union of Philatelists of Serbia also issued a personalized postal stamp on this occasion.



Mirko R. Rašić's book – “The Postal History and Postage Stamps of Serbia” is digitalized

It is with great pleasure that Union of Philatelists of Serbia is presenting the digital version of the handbook on the postage stamps of Serbia, authored by Mirko R. Rašić – “The Postal History and Postage Stamps of Serbia”.



This major work, the result of more than three decades of research, provides a comprehensive insight into the history of Serbian stamps, with detailed descriptions, illustrations, information on rarities and warnings about counterfeits. The digital version provides easy access to this rich heritage, while also representing an important tool for collectors and future generations of philatelists, who can now research the postal history of Serbia without limits on an official site of Union of Philatelists of Serbia **philaserbia.org**



<https://philaserbia.org/literatura/Mirko-R-Rasic-The-postal-history-and-postage-stamps-of-Serbia.pdf>

Activities of Union of Philatelists of Serbia Abroad

The President of the Union of Philatelists of Serbia, Mr. Vladimir Milić in China

The 2025 World Chinese Zodiac Philatelic Forum was grandly held in Suzhou, a famous historical and cultural city, on February 15th. Mr. Milić was invited to China to attend the forum and deliver a special speech. Mr. Prakob Chirakiti, The President of FIP, sent a congratulatory letter to this forum, praising that the zodiac stamps are not only an important carrier of Chinese culture but also gradually becoming a popular theme of global philatelic attention. The invited philatelic experts, designers and research scholars gathered together, with the theme of "Zodiac Philately: Inheritance, Innovation and Exchange", to jointly explore the profound significance and future development of zodiac stamps culture.



Febr, 6th,
Febr, 8th,
Jan, 31st,
Febr, 19th
Febr, 8th,
Jan, 27th,
Febr, 14th
Febr, 5th,
Jan, 24th,
Febr, 23rd

Mr. Milić gave a keynote speech on the theme of Chinese Zodiac Motif on Serbian Stamps from 2010 to 2024. He systematically elaborates on five aspects of Chinese zodiac stamps from 2010 to 2024: the Chinese zodiac, the stamp formats and the first day covers, the artist's marks on the zodiac stamps, the face value and postage of the zodiac stamps, and the used envelopes and letters with zodiac stamps affixed. Especially, the presentation displayed several envelopes he had personally exchanged with international philatelic friends over the past decade or so, each bearing a zodiac stamp. This greatly impressed and warmed the audience, who were deeply moved by his extensive knowledge and passion for philately.





Event “Month of the Republic of Serbia in the Republic of Slovenia 2025”

On Friday, March 21, 2025, at 6:00 p.m., the international philatelic exhibition “Stamps of Slovenia and/or Serbia” opened in the “France Mihelič” gallery, Škofja Loka, Slovenia, as part of the event “Month of the Republic of Serbia in the Republic of Slovenia 2025”. The exhibition is dedicated to the reformers of the Slovenian and Serbian languages: Jernej Kopitar and Vuk Stefanović Karadžić.



This exhibition testifies to the mission of philately to build cultural bridges, encourage intercultural dialogue and present our rich cultural heritage to the general public. Philatelic exhibitions make philatelic collections a cultural asset through public display to the general public. They remind us of the importance of tradition, while at the same time opening the door to new forms of cooperation and joint projects. On this occasion, both Serbia and Slovenia issued personalized postal stamps with joint motif.

During the event, President Vladimir Milić delivered a lecture on the topic of :

“THE YUGOSLAV INFLATION 1989/1994 INFLUENCE ON POSTAL RATES”

V okviru mednarodne filatelistične razstave:
„Znamka/marka Slovenije in Srbije“
v počastitev prireditve: “Dnevi Srbije v Sloveniji,
2025”

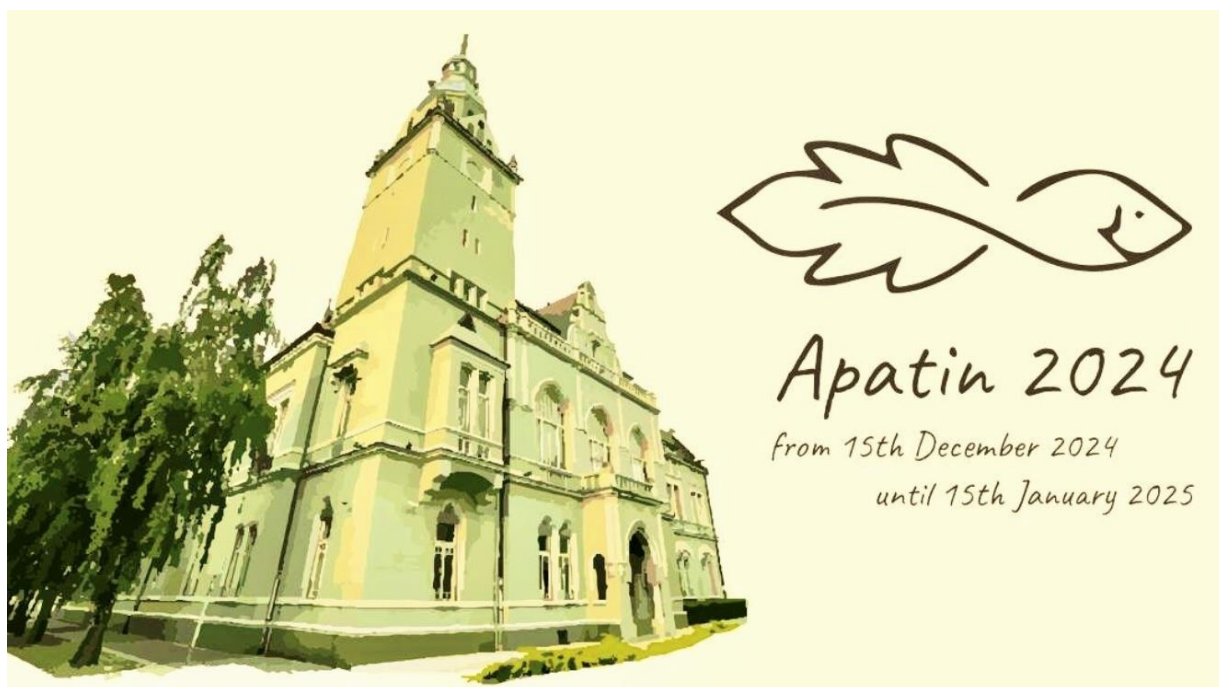


bo organizirano predavanje
predsednika Saveza filatelista Srbije,
Vladimirja Milića:

**„Jugoslovanska inflacija in
poštne tarife 1989 – 1994“.**

Galerija Franceta Miheliča,
Kašča v Škofji Loki,
Spodnji trg 1/Trg mesta Freising,
I. nadstropje:
sobota, 22. 3. 2025 , ob 10.00 uri.

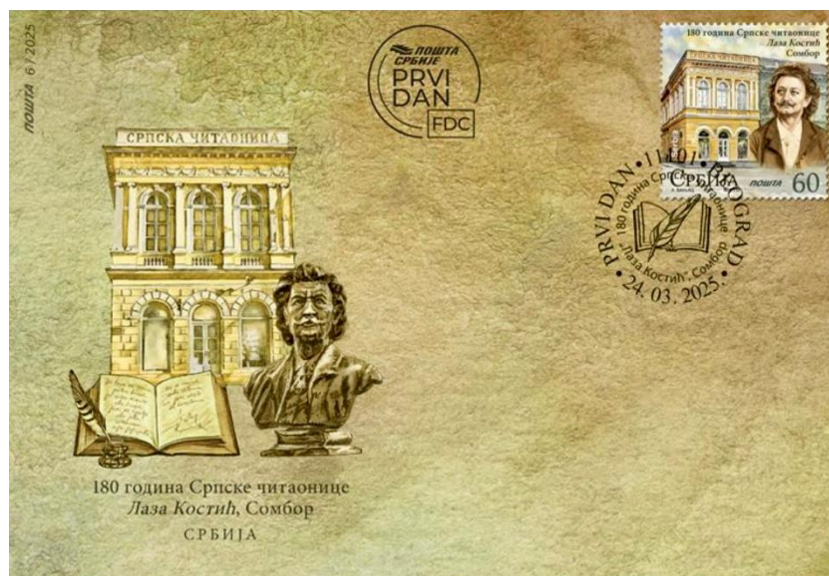
Online philatelic exhibition APATIN 2024



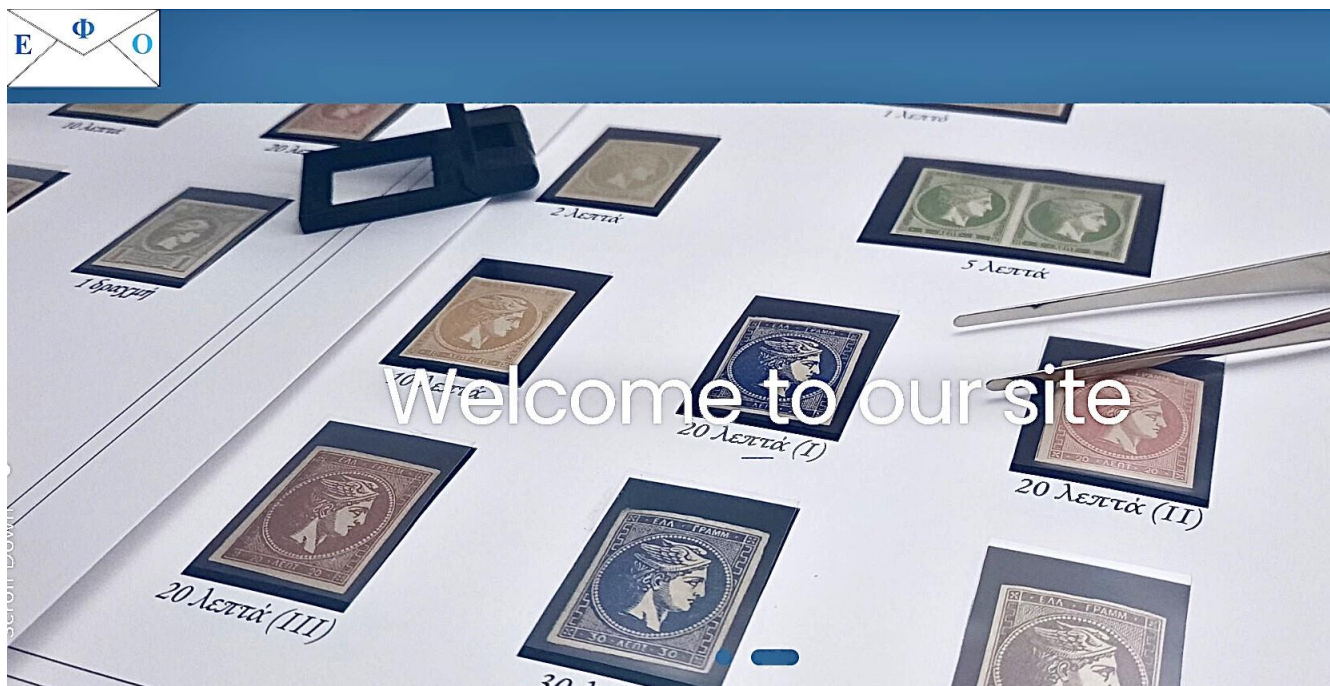
Philatelic society of Apatin in cooperation with Associazione Italiana di Maximafilia (AIM) and the Federation of Italian Philatelic Societies (FSFI). traditionally organized an online philatelic exhibition that took place in period 15.12.2024. – 15.1.2025. With a total of 12 categories and 54 exhibits from 15 countries, it made a nice philatelic impact.

Regular Annual Assembly of the Union of Philatelists of Serbia

On January 11, 2025, the regular annual assembly of the Union of Philatelists of Serbia was held in the premises of the PTT Museum. At the assembly, the reports for the work in the previous period were adopted and the work plan for the next period was confirmed.



The Hellenic Philatelic Federation's New Board



On March 16th, the Hellenic Philatelic Federation held its biannual elections for the New 9-person Board. The President Nikos Mallouchos, ending his second two-year term, along with three other experienced philatelists who have efficiently and long-term served the Federation stepped down. Four newcomers –though with long experience in organized philately– joined the Federation. It is worth-mentioning that three members of the new H.P.F Board are presidents of major philatelic societies, three are vice-presidents and one is a secretary general.

The members of the New Board of H.P.F are:

President: Christos Gikas,
Vice-President: Nikos Andriotis,
Secretary General: Evangelos Karras,
Special Secretary: Dr. Georgia Baltsou,
Treasurer: Ioannis Skarmoutsos,
Director of Exhibitions: MD Thomas Arvanitis,
Director of Publications: Professor Michalis Vaitis,
Office Director: Costas Dimisianos and
P.R Director: Evangelos Kotsis.

The main objective of the Federation's new Board of Directors is the steady, long-term cooperation with national, regional and international philatelic societies and federations, with an emphasis on communication and promotion of philately through systematic and effective synergies with cultural organizations and institutions.

TURKISH PHILATELIC ACADEMY

In 2014, the Turkish Philatelic Academy (T.F.A) was founded with co-chairs M. Ziya Ağaoğulları and Mehmet Akan, who were responsible for the selection of the initial members until the first election was scheduled.

The Academy is a project realized in line with the joint decision and opinion of many interested people who make up our philatelic community and should not be perceived as an educational institution. Turkey is undoubtedly one of the leading countries in the world in terms of philatelic wealth, and sharing the knowledge in hand and in memory by preserving this position is the leading purpose of the establishment of the Philatelic Academy. Thus, an environment is created where everyone interested in the subject will get to know each other, contribute and discuss. Another aim of the Academy is to provide access to our stamps, postal history, anthologies, thematic studies; in short, all kinds of topics that can be considered under the umbrella of philately. Thus, not only at the expert level, but also for beginners, a vast accumulation of knowledge is made available to our philatelists. From this point of view, new participants are encouraged and a body where anyone interested in philately can easily become a member has been created.



TFA's new website stands out for its high aesthetic and selected content which still is in a phase of rapid development.

The main purpose of the Academy is the research of philatelic topics, lectures (80 by 2024), exhibitions as well as the publishing of authoritative philatelic studies and books

The online library of the Academy hosts a significant number of articles and studies, relevant literature as well as 61 exhibits that have been uploaded so far.

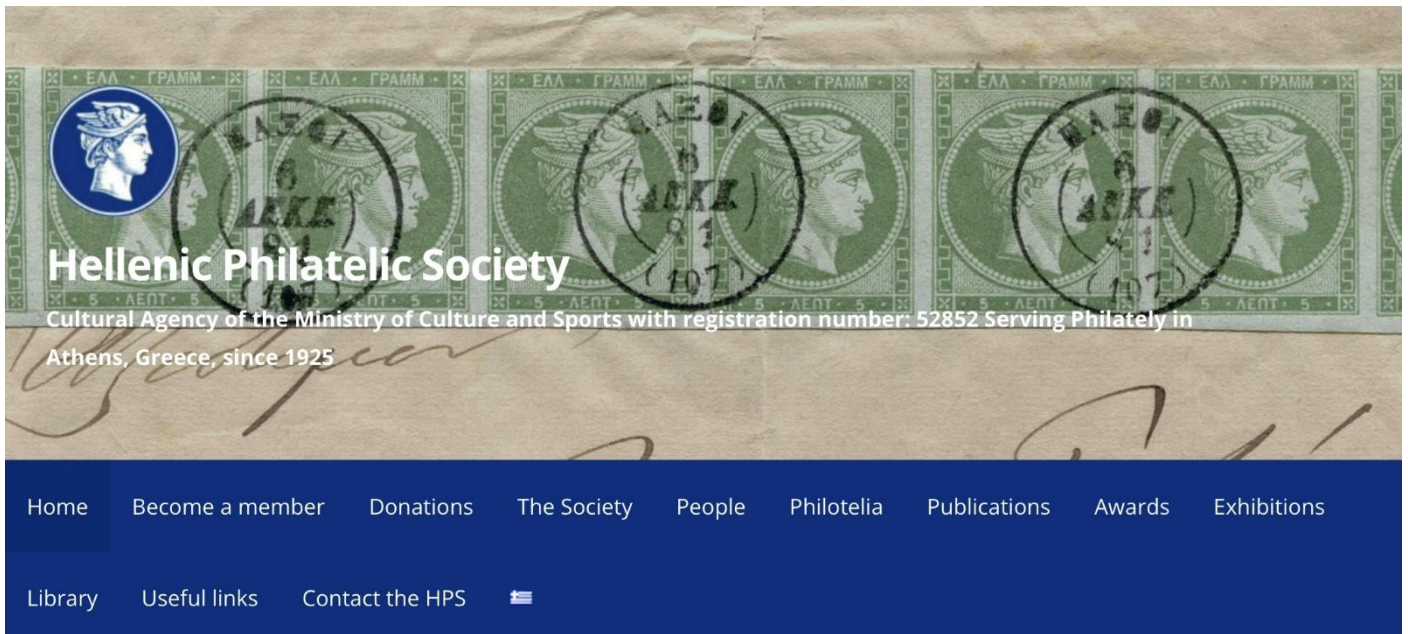
At the first meeting in 2025, the board of T.F.A took a step towards extending the Academy's membership abroad. First of all, our friends with whom we share a common cultural heritage joined us.

FIP Vice-President Yigal Nathaniel and FIP Director Peter Suhadolc, who accepted our offer of Honorary membership, FEPA Director Costas Chazapis, Federazione fra le Società Filateliche Italiane President Bruno Crevato-Selvaggi, Vladimir Milič, President of the Union of Philatelists of Serbia, Hellenic Philatelic Federation President Christos Gikas, and FIP Juries George Thomareis JF, Fransics Amburus JF and Alexandre Galinos were honored by the presence of prominent philatelists Otto Graf, Levent Acar, Yasemin Yazgan, Erdal Tanıl, Devrim Rehber, Manolis Koutsounakis and MEP Editor Tobias Zywiets.





The H.P.S passed its 100th Anniversary, proceeding further



Highlights of the H.P.S history

The Hellenic Philatelic Society (H.P.S) was [established in 1925](#) and is the oldest and the largest philatelic institution in the country with multifarious activities within Greece and abroad.

In 1925, with a Memorandum addressed to the Ministries of Communications, Finance and Education in 1925, the H.P.S. had [defined the specifications for the new postage stamp issues](#), as not to be characterized as speculative ones.

In 1926, the late Stephanos Macrymichalos (1902–1983) [assigned to the H.P.S the bimonthly journal "Philotelia"](#) he had established in 1924. "Philotelia" has just published its 750th issue without any interruption.

Also in 1926, the H.P.S was one of [FIP's founding members](#), representing Greece until the founding of the Hellenic Philatelic Federation in 1947.

In 1933 and 1937 respectively, the Society has published, in Greek and French, two volumes of a monumental work dealing with the classical Greek issues (Large and Small Hermes Heads etc.) titled ["Study on the Greek stamp"](#).

The H.P.S activities have drastically contributed to the [foundation of Hellenic Philatelic Societies](#) in New York (1942), Great Britain (1960), The Netherlands (1966), Chicago (1968), Germany (1976) Melbourne (1978) Canada (1981) and Washington (1986). These active philatelic organisations have published five philatelic magazines dedicated to Hellenic Philately and study of the Greek stamp.

Since 1957, H.P.S has launched its ["Philatelic Library"](#) publications with 61 philatelic monographies in Greek and English or French.

In 1966, the H.P.S organized for the first time in Greece ["FEGE '66"](#), a national philatelic exhibition with international participation of foreign collectors with collections of Greek philatelic interest from 12 countries, which had international impact and was the forerunner of the H.P.S international exhibitions.

In 1975, the H.P.S received a [Commendation by the Academy of Athens](#) for the Society's scientific work.

In 1981, the H.P.S was honoured by the [Hellenic Philatelic Federation](#) for its service to organized philately.

In 1984, the H.P.S organized the largest national philatelic exhibition ever held to that day in the country under the name “[E.F.E HELLAS '84](#)”, with the participation of collectors from 13 countries.

The HPS established in 1984 two awards: the “[Hellenic Philatelic Society Medal](#)”, an annual honorary distinction, acknowledging the services and thus offering a moral reward to individuals or institutions with notable philatelic activities and the annual “[Stephanos Macrymichalos Award](#)” for the best article published in “Philotelia” the preceding year.

In 1984 the [Municipality of Athens](#) awarded the [H.P.S](#) for its cultural contribution.

The contribution of the H.P.S members was decisive in the staging of the most National Philatelic Exhibitions, the [two regionals Balkanfila](#) in 1979 and 1989 and the two internationals Athens 1896–1996 and Olympilex 2004.

In June 2001, the [H.P.S went online](#): www.hps.gr in Greek and English. Today, the H.P.S website is the international reference on the Hellenic Philately.

In 2000, H.P.S was honoured for its work by the [European Philatelic Federation \(FEPA\)](#).

In February 2005, the H.P.S organized the National Exhibition “[Philotelia 2005](#)” with the participation of exhibitors from 12 countries and, for the first time, with the participation of four foreign FIP judges from Israel, Canada, Great Britain and Belgium.

In October 2009, the H.P.S co-organized with the Scientific Association of Lavrion the National Exhibition “[Lavrion 2009](#)” with the participation of exhibitors from 11 countries.

The [European Academy of Philately](#) (Académie Européenne de Philatélie, AEP) awarded “Philotelia” with the AEP Philatelic Press Award (Prix AEP de la Presse Philatélique) for 2010.

In June 2013, the European Philatelic Academy published its [annual volume “Opus”](#) dedicated to the Hellenic Philately. 22 out of the 23 articles were original research made by the H.P.S members.

In November 2015, the HPS organized “[NOTOS 2015](#)” International Philatelic Exhibition under the patronage of FEPA and AIJP with the participation of exhibitors from 38 countries.

In November 2021, the H.P.S organized “[NOTOS 2021](#)” European Philatelic Exhibition, under the Patronage of the President of the Hellenic Republic, the philatelic patronage of FEPA, AIJP and AEP and FIP Recognition of the FIP, with the participation of exhibitors from 44 countries.

In 2022, the H.P.S was included in the [Registry of Cultural Organizations](#) of the Ministry of Culture.

In 2024, the Hellenic Post issues a [Miniature Sheet for the 100th Anniversary of “Philotelia”](#) Journal.

In 2024, in celebration of its centenary, the Hellenic Philatelic Society (H.P.S) has released a publication –titled “[Traces of Communication](#)”– showcasing its longstanding contributions to philately and culture. This publication highlights the scope and wealth of philately and its profound connections to history, sociology, the arts, and communication, as reflected through philately.

More than [100 medals and diplomas](#) in international exhibitions have been up to date awarded to the H.P.S related to its publishing production whilst the H.P.S maintains the [richest philatelic library in Greece](#).

Use of SOCIAL MEDIA by FEPA

FEPA has initiated a series of discussions with Europe's National Federations on the common challenges in European organised philately. The purpose of these meetings is to share successful experiences and practices aiming at leading to creative solutions through the use of Social Media to face the current organised philately challenges.

The topic of this first meeting was:

"The Federations use of Social Media to gain new members".

26 FEPA-member Federations participated, during six FEPA-hosted Zoom meetings, in March 2025 trying to deal with the same challenge: how to stay visible, relevant, and accessible in a fast-changing digital landscape.



FEPA Report

Effective Social Media Strategies and Activities for Philatelic Federations and Societies

Four actions were suggested :

- **Establish a Strong Facebook Presence** by posting in relevant Facebook Groups, regular updates, repostings from FEPA and other societies as well as encourage engagement (e.g., "Show your favorite stamp").
- **Engage with Facebook Groups** by answering questions, share trivia, post rare finds – become a helpful voice in the community and developing attractive –both fun and educational posts– such as: *"On this day in philatelic history..."*, *"Did you know?"* stamp facts etc.
- **Simplify Membership Onboarding** by offering free trial memberships and simplify communication.
- **Start a YouTube Channel** by uploading recordings of society talks, exhibitions, or collector tips in a short, engaging, and informative way (e.g., 5-10 minutes) and Cross-posting videos to Facebook for more reach.

Here are **5 Key Recommendations** for how Federations can lead the way in modernizing philatelic outreach across Europe:

1. Support Local Societies with Professional Content

Not all local societies have the time, skills, or resources to create engaging digital content. Federations can play a critical role by producing professional videos, visuals, and social media posts that local societies can share on their own channels. This helps ensure consistent quality and messaging across the network, while saving time at the local level.

2. Create a Content Calendar and Templates

To help societies stay active and relevant online, Federations should provide a content calendar with suggested post ideas (e.g., *philatelic holidays*, *historical events*, or *collector tips*). Simple template posts—ready to be adapted—can make it easier for local groups to maintain a regular social media presence. This also helps amplify key messages across many channels at once.

3. Explore Collaboration with Influencers

Philately has a rich visual and storytelling potential that can resonate well on social platforms – especially when presented by the right voice. Federations should consider partnering with a philatelic influencer or content creator to promote the hobby in a more modern and visible way. This could include:

- Featuring philately on popular YouTube or TikTok channels
- Hosting live Q&As with collectors
- Promoting Federation events or exhibitions

This kind of collaboration can bring philately into new digital spaces and reach broader audiences.

4. Provide Training in Social Media Strategy and Tools

Federations can help build long-term capacity by organizing training workshops or webinars to national philatelic societies on topics such as:

- Creating engaging posts
- Managing Facebook Pages and Groups
- Using Instagram, YouTube, WhatsApp or TikTok
- Converting digital followers into members

Training empowers local societies to take ownership of their online presence and communicate more effectively.

5. Maintain a Central Facebook Presence

Federations should maintain an active, central Facebook Page that acts as a hub—linking to:

- Local societies
- Specialized collecting groups
- National events and exhibitions
- Educational resources

This central presence ensures greater visibility, encourages coordination, and helps reinforce a pan-European philatelic identity online.

By taking a leadership role in content creation, training, and digital strategy, Federations can ensure that philately remains visible, vibrant, and accessible to new generations of collectors. The tools are available – and with the right approach, so is the opportunity.

1. Why Focus on Social Media?

Philately, like many other hobbies, is undergoing a rapid digital transformation. Across Europe, **traditional philatelic societies are experiencing a significant decline in membership— by as much as 50% over the past decade in FEPA member countries.** At the same time, online philatelic communities, especially those on platforms like Facebook, are thriving. This contrast reveals a compelling opportunity: by embracing social media, traditional philatelic societies can potentially reverse declining membership trends and engage with a new generation of collectors where they are already active—online.

- A New Reality for Organised Philately

The future of organised philately in Europe depends on our ability to adapt to digital change. Many collectors today are no longer attending local stamp clubs in person as regularly as before. Instead, they are engaging in lively discussions, exchanging information, and showcasing their collections in online forums and social media groups. These platforms allow for immediate interaction, quick answers to questions, and vibrant sharing of content— benefits that traditional meetings often struggle to match.

This shift calls for a rethink: if collectors are increasingly active on social media, should philatelic societies not also strengthen their presence on these platforms? FEPA believes the answer is a resounding **YES**.

- What is Social Media – and Why Does It Matter?



Social Media refers to digital platforms and applications that allow users to create and share content, and to participate in social networking online. Examples include:

- Facebook
- YouTube
- Instagram
- WhatsApp
- TikTok
- X (formerly Twitter)
- Snapchat

These platforms differ from a traditional society website. While a website may offer useful information, it typically does not facilitate interaction. **Social media, by contrast, is interactive by nature.** It empowers users to ask questions, share experiences, and **form communities in real time.** This is exactly the kind of engagement that can strengthen the visibility and vitality of organised philately.

- FEPA's Role: Supporting Societies in the Digital Age

FEPA's strategic focus is to support its member federations in navigating this digital transformation. We aim to:

- Facilitate dialogue among European Philatelic Federations
- Share experiences, tools, and success stories
- Explore practical solutions to common digital challenges
- Encourage closer cooperation on building the future of philately

By working together, FEPA members can learn how to effectively use social media not just as a communication tool, but as a bridge—turning digital engagement into real-world membership growth.

2. Target Groups

An effective social media strategy starts with a clear understanding of the target audience. In philately, this is especially important because different age groups use different platforms. Choosing the right platform means speaking the right digital language to the right people.

- Who Are We Trying to Reach?

This is the key question: Which age group are we aiming at?

The answer has a direct impact on where and how we engage online.

1. Youth (under 18 years old)

If the goal is to attract younger collectors, the focus should be on platforms that are popular with this generation. In recent years, TikTok has emerged as a favourite among teenagers. It is a short-form video platform where creativity and visual storytelling thrive—ideal for showing off eye-catching stamps, telling mini philatelic stories, or sparking curiosity in a fun, accessible way.

However, it is worth noting that attracting and retaining young collectors requires more than just being present on TikTok. It demands engaging content and a different tone—playful, informal, and fast-paced.

2. Mature Collectors (50+ years old)

In contrast, if the target audience is more experienced or returning collectors—typically men over 50—then Facebook is by far the most relevant platform. Many online philatelic communities on Facebook are already active and vibrant, with members regularly posting about their collections, asking questions, and offering advice.

This group tends to value in-depth discussions, access to knowledgeable peers, and a sense of community—features that Facebook groups support very well.

By aligning content and platform with the interests and habits of different audiences, philatelic societies can build meaningful digital relationships—and potentially grow membership both online and offline.

3. Membership Strategies

As philatelic habits shift toward digital platforms, traditional membership models are being challenged. European federations must now consider new approaches to what "membership" means—and how to maintain relevance, engagement, and sustainability in a more digital world.

- New Idea: Online Membership

A more radical idea is to define a new category of "online membership"—for instance, being a member of a federation's social media group (such as a Facebook group). This type of membership might be:

- Free (to encourage broad participation), or
- Low-cost with access to exclusive digital content or events.

While this model might not generate immediate income, it could dramatically expand reach, especially among younger or more casual collectors. Over time, some of these online members might convert into full members of societies or federations.

- Alternative Revenue: Sponsorship Memberships

To offset the potential loss of membership fees from online members, Federations might also **explore “sponsorship memberships”**—offering visibility or recognition to individuals or companies who support the federation financially.

This model has the potential to attract new forms of support without relying solely on traditional membership fees.

- Rethinking Membership for the Digital Age

Ultimately, the goal is not just to maintain numbers, but **to build a vibrant, engaged, and sustainable philatelic community**. This may mean offering multiple paths to involvement, including:

- Traditional society-based membership
- Direct Federation membership
- Online social media engagement
- Sponsorship or supporter models

By rethinking membership in this flexible and inclusive way, federations can stay relevant and continue to support the growth of philately across Europe.

4. Which Social Media to Prioritize?

With many different social media platforms available, philatelic societies may wonder where to focus their limited time and resources. The answer depends on the audience—but for most federations aiming to reach collectors over the age of 50, Facebook is by far the most effective platform.

- Why Facebook?

According to recent data, **71% of adults in Europe over the age of 50 use Facebook**. This makes it the most widely adopted social media platform among the key target group for most philatelic societies: mature collectors.

Facebook offers two primary tools that societies can use **to build visibility, foster engagement, and attract new members**:

5. Facebook Pages – Your Digital Bulletin Board

A Facebook Page functions much like a traditional website. It allows societies to:

- Share news, announcements, and event information
- Post links to publications, exhibitions, and society resources
- Maintain a visible, public-facing digital presence

While Pages are primarily used for broadcasting information, they are an important starting point—especially for making a society more discoverable online.

6. Facebook Groups – Community and Conversation

More dynamic and interactive than Pages, Facebook Groups are where true engagement happens. Unlike Facebook Pages, which are more suited for broadcasting news, **Groups create dynamic, community-driven conversations among collectors.** These groups often serve as informal “meeting places” for buying, selling, sharing, and discussing stamps—with reach and activity levels that far exceed those of many traditional societies.

In philatelic Facebook Groups, members:

- Ask questions and share knowledge
- Post pictures of their collections
- Discuss themes, issues, and news
- Buy, sell, or trade philatelic material

Groups offer a strong sense of community and immediate interaction – something many collectors value highly. For Federations and Societies, creating or participating in active Groups can be a powerful way to reach new audiences and build relationships with potential members.

➤ **A Practical Focus**

Given the demographics of collectors and the tools Facebook offers, it is both practical and strategic for philatelic societies to prioritize this platform when aiming to grow their membership base. It allows societies to:

- Reach the right audience
- Share meaningful content
- Build a sense of belonging and dialogue

➤ **On Membership...**

The Bad News

Based on FEPA statistics, there are an estimated 100,000 members of philatelic societies across FEPA countries – a figure that **represents a 50% decrease compared to ten years ago.**

and the Good News...

But while traditional membership is declining, activity in online groups is expanding rapidly.

- Some examples of large international Facebook Groups include:

<u>Facebook Group Name</u>	<u>Members (approx.)</u>
Stamp Collectors	66,900
Stamp Collecting	46,200
Sell Your Stamps	52,800
British Colonies Stamp Collectors Group	9,900

These numbers suggest that **many collectors are active online**, but **not necessarily members of official philatelic organizations**.

➤ *Case Example*

In one of the FEPA countries, this shift is clearly visible:

- **3,500** are members of traditional philatelic societies.
- The Federation's official Facebook Page has **just 900 followers** by comparison.
- The local language Facebook group "Stamp auction – buying and selling" has **5,600 members**.
- Other local language philatelic Facebook groups **collectively include over 32,000 members** (*though many are members of multiple groups*).

These figures indicate that the **online collector community in the country is already larger and more active than the traditional, organized one**.

➤ **The Power of Specialization**

Specialized Facebook Groups—**focused on specific areas like Postal History, Perfins, Postal Stationery, or individual stamp editions**—are particularly successful at attracting and engaging dedicated collectors. In many cases, these **specialized groups are helping drive new interest and membership** in the corresponding specialized societies.

➤ **Non-philatelic Facebook Groups**

Several Federations have **successfully posted in non-philatelic Facebook groups** where there's a natural connection between the group's theme and philately. These groups might focus on history—such as a specific war—or on topics like geography, nature, or culture, where stamps can serve as a meaningful link to the subject.

Engaging with these communities helps promote stamp collecting more broadly, while also showcasing the enjoyment and fascination philately can bring.

➤ **Local Promotion Through City Groups**

Even general, non-philatelic Facebook groups can support promotion efforts. Most towns and cities have their own Facebook community groups, often with very high engagement.

➤ *For example:*

- In a town with a **population of 21,000**, the local town Facebook group has **11,000 members**.
- The local philatelic society (with **only 35 members**) can **regularly post information about its activities in this group** – a free and effective way to raise awareness and attract visitors – in the target group of residents of the town (there must be more than 35 collectors in a town of 21,000!).

➤ **A New Membership Frontier**

These trends suggest that Facebook Groups are not just places to observe philatelic activity—they are vital tools for societies seeking to connect with collectors. Societies can:

- Join and participate in existing groups
- Create their own focused groups around regions or specialties
- Share society events, resources, and sign-up links
- Offer value (knowledge, events, community) to encourage membership conversion

7. YouTube Channels

YouTube is the world's largest video-sharing platform, where users can watch, like, share, comment on, and upload videos. It is easily accessible on all devices—PCs, laptops, tablets, and mobile phones—making it a powerful tool for reaching collectors across age groups and geographies.

In recent years, video content has become one of the most engaging formats for digital outreach, and philately is no exception. For philatelic societies and federations, YouTube offers a valuable opportunity to present collecting in a fresh, visual, and accessible way.

Successful Philatelic YouTube Channels

Several YouTube channels **dedicated to philately have built strong audiences**. Notable examples include:

@exploringstamps @thedigitalphilatelist

These channels produce a mix of educational, entertaining, and accessible content that appeals to both beginners and experienced collectors.

Some of their most popular videos include:

- *"Inherited stamp collection – What to do?"* – over **443,000 views**
- *"How to value and sell a stamp collection"* – over **425,000 views**

These numbers highlight the real interest in philatelic content on YouTube, especially when videos address common questions or practical topics.

Creating Philatelic Videos: Anyone Can Do It

While professional video production can be expensive, modern smartphones make it easy and affordable to start. Most new phones are capable of recording high-quality video, and with some basic editing skills, anyone can create compelling content.

- Editing, adding text, and uploading takes practice, but these are skills anyone can learn.
- Video length matters—attention spans are short, so aim to keep videos concise and engaging.
- Long, unedited recordings of meetings may not capture a wider audience unless the topic is especially compelling.

What Kind of Content Works?

Philatelic videos can cover a wide range of topics. Some common and successful formats include:

- Collecting guides for specific themes (e.g., airmail, postal history, topical stamps)
- Practical tips and tricks for collectors
- How-to videos (e.g., mounting stamps, using stamp albums, soaking stamps)
- Explainers such as *“What is a stamp exhibition?”*
- Interviews with collectors or dealers
- Behind-the-scenes at society events or exhibitions

Many Societies and federations have already begun posting such videos—some with over 100 uploads on their channels.

Making the Most of YouTube Content

It's not enough to simply upload a video—promotion is key. To maximize reach:

- **Share** videos across multiple philatelic Facebook groups
- **Post** in local and regional online communities
- **Link** videos from your Federation's website and newsletters

Also consider user feedback:

- Are the videos **too long** or **too technical**?
- Could they be made **more entertaining** or **visual**?
- Is there a **clear call to action** (e.g., “Join our society,” “Visit our website,” “Subscribe for more”)?



FEPA Zoom meeting 20250304 Meeting 1 Social Media

Getting Started

For Federations and Societies ready to explore YouTube, a helpful resource is available on the FEPA website:

fepanews.com/youtube-channels

This page lists active philatelic channels, offers examples, and can serve as inspiration for developing your own video content.

The Participants in the FEPA Sessions

This report is based on six meetings with Federation representatives from FEPA countries. The meetings were facilitated by FEPA Director Lars Engelbrecht together with FEPA President Bill Hedley, FEPA Director Thomas Höpfner and FEPA Treasurer Lars Jørgensen. The technical set-up for the meetings was prepared by FEPA Director Costas Chazapis and the invitations to the participants sent out by FEPA Secretary Igor Pirc.

The 26 participating FEPA countries were:

4 March: Israel, Egypt, Romania, Serbia

10 March: Armenia, Lebanon, Turkey, Moldova

18 March: Finland, Denmark, Norway, Czech Republic, Monaco

24 March: Liechtenstein, Poland

26 March: France, Germany, Portugal, Spain, Ireland

31 March: Greece, Italy, United Kingdom, Austria, Slovenia, Belgium

BOSNIA & HERZEGOVINA – MOSTAR

550th Anniversary of the birth of Michelangelo Buonarroti



Michelangelo di Lodovico Buonarroti Simoni was born on 6 March 1475 (Caprese Michelangelo) and died on 18 February 1564 (Rome). This Renaissance painter, sculptor, architect and poet is described as a genius inspired by God himself. He grew up in Florence where he began his journey into art, which for him was a divine creation of a world in which man is the central figure of God's universe.

After arriving in Rome in 1496, he created his first significant work, a marble sculpture of Jesus and Mary – *the Lamentation (Pietà)* for St. Peter's Basilica. After returning to Florence in 1501, he created *David*, the earliest monumental sculpture of the High Renaissance, which embodies the entirety of Michelangelo's art. At the same time, he painted the *Holy Family (Tondo Doni)*, one of the masterpieces of Italian art of the 16th c. The same characteristics of his *David* are also found in the sculptures of *Moses* and *the Slaves* carved for the tomb of Pope Julius II, who commissioned him to paint the ceiling of the *Sistine Chapel* (1508–1512). He returned to Rome in 1534, where he worked on the construction of the new St. Peter's Basilica. He modified Bramante's plan and conceived the basilica as a single and magnificent space dominated by a 138 m high dome. In *the Sistine Chapel*, on the west wall behind the altar, he painted the fresco *The Last Judgment* (1536–1541), his last major painting. During his lifetime, Michelangelo was considered the greatest living artist. Today he is considered one of the greatest and most versatile artists of all time.

Međugorje 2025

Međugorje has been a place of prayer and reconciliation since 25 June 1981 and the testimony of six children about the apparition of the Blessed Virgin Mary – Queen of Peace. There are three special pilgrimage sites in Međugorje. The first is the Apparition Hill, where the visionaries first saw Our Lady. The second is Križevac, where an eight-meter-high concrete cross was erected in 1934. And the third site is the parish church dedicated to St. James the Elder, the apostle and patron saint of pilgrims.

Now Međugorje is also on the map of one of the most important Christian pilgrim routes, the Way of St. James – *Camino de Santiago*. The Camino Dubrovnik – Međugorje pilgrim way is about 147 kilometres long and connects the Benedictine monastery on Višnjica in Dubrovnik and the church of St. James in Međugorje.



The monastery and church of St. James on Višnjica were built in 1222 thanks to a gift from the Dubrovnik nobleman Miho Gundulić and his wife Dobroslava. With the fall of the Republic of Ragusa, the Benedictine monastery ceased to exist. The church of St. James today belongs to the parish of St. Andrew in Dubrovnik.

The parish of Međugorje was canonically founded on 1 May 1892, and dedicated to St. James, the patron saint of pilgrims. The first church, built in 1897, was built on shaky ground; its walls soon began to crack and the entire building began to sink. Work on the new church lasted from 1934 to 19 January 1969, when the church was blessed.

EUROPA 2025 – National archaeological discoveries

The theme of the EUROPA 2025 stamp issue is "National Archaeological Discoveries". Croatian Post Mostar chose the motif of an archaeological find from 1880, known as *Glasinačka kolica* (Glasinac cart). It was found by the Austro-Hungarian lieutenant Johann Lexa and handed over to the Naturhistorisches Museum in Vienna, where it is still kept today. Its replica is housed by the National Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina in Sarajevo.

The cult bronze cart with representations of waterfowl probably had a ritual purpose connected with the cult of the Sun. Researchers date this find to the 7th century BC. In terms of motif and style, it relies on the tradition of the Late Bronze Age, when waterfowl were the dominant symbol of the "Urnfield Culture" (the ritual of burning the deceased and storing the ashes in urns that were then buried in earthen graves).



The Glasinac cart consists of four interconnected wheels with two imaginary birds on top, which have the body of a dove, the beak of a marsh bird, the crest of a rooster and the ears of a bull. On the lower larger bird, which is hollow inside, a smaller bird sits as a lid. On each axle there is another smaller bird as decoration. The cart is 19 cm long, 10 cm wide and 15 cm high, and weighs 1055 g. It was used in rituals as a vessel for embers to burn fragrant substances, and was left in the deceased's grave.

World Autism Awareness Day

Autism is a lifelong congenital condition. It can range from very severe to mild, where children are able to attend regular schools with the help of assistants and can achieve a high degree of independence in their lives. The United Nations General Assembly declared April 2 as World Autism Awareness Day to draw attention to the growing problem of this complex disorder.



The cause of autism is unknown, but it is believed to be a disorder of brain structure and function. It is characterized by poor or no communication and social interaction, restricted and repetitive patterns of behaviour and activities, along with learning difficulties, delays in speech and understanding ideas. There is a lack of signs of emotional experience, with resistance to any change, and unexpected responses to stimuli.

Autism is diagnosed during the first three years of life. Early detection can help a child gain certain social skills and independence. It is important to recognize the strengths of autistic people, since there are areas in which they function exceptionally. However, despite exceptional strengths in one domain of life, they may require additional support in other domains. Therefore, early diagnosis and properly targeted support are necessary for a fulfilling life for autistic people.

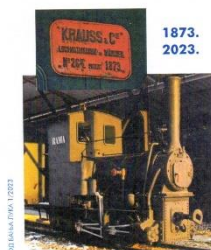
BOSNIA HERCEGOVINA – Republika Srpska

The new commemorative stamp of the Republika Srpska post office
Српске поште is 200 years
since the first railway



There are two other issues from the same theme. These are two commemorative envelopes with two commemorative cancellations. Both envelopes were issued by Banja Luka Philatelic Society. The first is dedicated to the 150th Anniversary of the steam engine RAMA. The cancellation with the date December 13, 2023 was in use in the post office 73249 Vardište. The second envelope is dedicated to the 100th Anniversary of the steam engine JŽ 83-052. The date on the cancellation is December 14, 2023 in the post office 73249 Vardište.

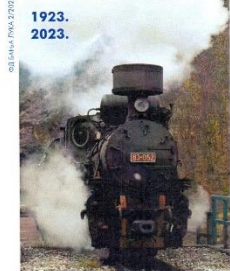
150 godina parne lokomotive
760 mm kolosijeka RAMA



150th anniversary of the narrow gauge
railway (760 mm) steam engine RAMA



100 godina parne lokomotive
760 mm kolosijeka JŽ 83-052



100th anniversary of the narrow gauge
railway (760 mm) steam engine JŽ 83-052



Why Vardište? Because the narrow gauge railway Mokra Gora–Vardište–Višegrad has been reconstructed. The second reason is that Vardište is a border station on the Republika Srpska (Bosnia and Herzegovina) and Serbia.

EUROPA national archeological discoveries



"EUROPA national archeological discoveries" was issued by the Poste Srpske on April 24, 2025.

The Motive are the Mosaics Solomon's knot and the head of medusa Gorgona found in Roman Municipium Malvesiatum, today called Skelani in Republika Srpska.

MAGNOLIAS

An interesting issue, having as topic *Flora*, will be introduced into circulation by Romfilatelia on *Thursday, March 06th, this year*, under the title ***Magnolias***, consisting of four postage stamps, a set of 4 maxicards, for maximaphilia enthusiasts, a block of 4 stamps enclosed in a philatelic booklet and a First Day Cover.

Magnolias are a species belonging to the **Magnoliaceae** family. Their name is dedicated to the French botanist Pierre Magnol, former director of the Botanical Garden in Montpellier, who made significant contributions to their classification. These plants have flowers that evolved to encourage pollination by beetles.



The postage stamps of the issue reproduce images of the following species: *Magnolia grandiflora* (postage stamp with the face value of **Lei 4**), *Magnolia × soulangeana* (postage stamp with the face value of **Lei 5**), *Magnolia acuminata* (postage stamp with the face value of **Lei 9**), and *Magnolia liliiflora* (postage stamp with the face value of **Lei 25**).

Their lifespan can extend up to a century. In China and Japan, magnolia flowers hold symbolic meanings, such as a love for nature or a representation of life's strength. The green magnolia symbolizes enthusiasm, joy, and good fortune, while the purple magnolia conveys encouragement and well wishes for recovery to the person receiving it. Magnolia is also the official flower of certain states, such as North Korea and the U.S. State of Mississippi, which is known as "The Magnolia State".

Among the most widely spread species, we find: *Magnolia grandiflora*, *Magnolia × soulangeana*, *Magnolia acuminata* and *Magnolia liliiflora*.

HOOPOES

A set of four postage stamps were issued March 12th, under the Fauna theme, titled Hoopoes.

The images of the postage stamps show birds from the order Bucerotiformes, suborder Upupi, of which we have illustrated specimens from the Upupidae family and the Phoeniculidae family, commonly known as hoopoes. Hoopoes are found in dry regions, open plains, orchards and hills, shrub-covered savannas, etc. Hoopoes are predominantly insectivorous birds but also feed on worms, spiders, snails, slugs, and centipedes.



In the Upupidae family, the Upupa genus includes three known hoopoes species, each with distinct geographic distribution: *Upupa marginata*, endemic to Madagascar (represented on the postage stamp with the face value of Lei 5), *Upupa africana*, native to Africa (featured on the postage stamp with the face value of Lei 6,50), *Upupa epops*, found in Europe and Asia (depicted on the postage stamp with the face value of Lei 9). Additionally, the series includes a species from the Phoeniculidae family – the green wood hoopoe, *Phoeniculus purpureus* (illustrated on the postage stamp with the face value of Lei 25). The design of the First Day Cover features the African hoopoe, *Upupa africana*.

In Romania, the Eurasian hoopoe, *Upupa epops*, commonly known as the hoopoe, is found in lowland and hilly areas, as well as at altitudes of up to 1,300 meters in the Carpathian Mountains and in the floodplain regions of the Danube Delta, where hollow willow trees provide suitable nesting sites. Most *Upupa epops* populations are migratory, with birds from Southern, Central, and Eastern Europe travelling to South Africa, South Asia, and Southeast Asia for the winter.

The hoopoe was designated as the national bird of Israel on the occasion of the 60th anniversary of the country's founding.

FOXES

On March 19th, a postage stamps issue under the Fauna theme, titled **Foxes**. The issue consists of 4 postage stamps, 4 maxicards for maximaphily enthusiasts, a philatelic folder with a special product in a limited edition, and a First Day Cover.

Foxes are mammals from the Carnivora order. Foxes belong to the Canidae family, distinguished by the following characteristics: a slender body, a long and bushy tail, large and pointed ears, and an elongated snout.

Recognized for their intelligence and adaptability, foxes are opportunistic omnivores that consume both small vertebrates and fruits or insects.

The images on the postage stamps feature various species of foxes, from different genera:

The Fennec fox – *Vulpes zerda* (Lei 4),
Arctic fox – *Vulpes lagopus* (Lei 6.50),
Grey fox – *Urocyon cinereoargenteus* (Lei 9)
and the Red fox – *Vulpes vulpes* (Lei 25)
is the most widespread fox species in the world.



These foxes, with their specific traits, are symbols of wildlife diversity and the complexity of the relationships between wild animals and the environments in which they live.



HOLY EASTER 2025

On the occasion of the greatest celebration of the Christianity, Holy Easter, **Romfilatelia** introduces into circulation a postage stamps issue titled **Holy Easter 2025**, on Wednesday, March 26th this year.

The issue consists of two postage stamps, a perforated souvenir sheet, a First Day Cover, and a special philatelic album in a limited edition.

The postage stamps of the issue reproduce images of icons with the subjects of the Entry into Jerusalem (face value of Lei 5,00), the Resurrection (face value of Lei 14,00), and the Crucifixion (the stamp of the souvenir sheet with the face value of Lei 30,00).



The Resurrection of the Lord represents the most important event in the history of salvation. 'This chosen and holy day' is 'the feast of feasts and the celebration of celebrations', as beautifully taught by the words of Saint Gregory the Theologian, Archbishop of Constantinople.

The Church has ordained that the Paschal period be preceded by a time of spiritual preparation, a 40-day fast during which people are called to increase acts of love towards their neighbour, seeking to draw closer to God. After this period, there follows another, more intense time, the Week of the Holy Passion or Great Week. During these days, when fasting and spiritual struggles intensify, we are called to deepen our prayer and repentance, in order to worthily welcome the great feast of the Resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ.

On the night of the Resurrection of the Lord, believers receive the Holy Light, which is kindled from the Tomb of the Saviour Christ in Jerusalem, but only on the day when Orthodox Easter is celebrated.

ROMANIAN SCHOLARS

On the occasion of the centenary of the passing of the Romanian scholar Petru Poni, a postage stamps issue entitled Romanian Scholars on Wednesday, April 2nd this year. The issue consists of a postage stamp and a First Day Cover.

The Romanian scholar Petru Poni (born on January 4th, 1841, in the village of Secărești, Cucuteni Township – died on April 2nd, 1925, in Iași, Romania), whose portrait is depicted on the postage stamp (Lei 8), is considered the founder of the higher education school of inorganic chemistry and one of the most prominent figures in the history of Romanian science. Coming from a family of ‘răzeși’ (free peasants), he learned to appreciate rural work and displayed a passion for learning from an early age. In 1859, as a Romanian state scholarship recipient, he studied physics and chemistry at the Sorbonne University in Paris. He obtained a degree in Physical and Chemical Sciences in 1864, after five years of study in France.



Upon returning to Romania, Poni began teaching at various institutions in Iași as a professor of mineral chemistry at the Faculty of Sciences (1878–1920) and the Faculty of Medicine (1878–1911) at the University of Iași. Petru Poni laid the foundation for the first laboratory-based chemistry studies, even under difficult conditions, with limited resources, and was among the founders of the Romanian school of inorganic chemistry.

A significant moment in his career was the discovery of brostenite (a manganite containing Mn, Fe, and Ca) and badenite (a cobalt, iron, and nickel arsenobismuthide), which led him, starting in 1870, to initiate the first research on Romania's mineral resources. He also dedicated himself to the study of Romania's mineral waters and petroleum, conducting research that had an international impact on the oil industry.

Beyond his scientific and educational achievements, Petru Poni was a supporter of progress in various fields, including agriculture and industry. He advocated for agrarian reform and the application of science in areas such as mineralogy and industrial chemistry. For his contributions, he received numerous distinctions, including the Order of ‘Saint Sava’ of the Republic of Serbia (1896), the ‘Legion of Honour’ order of the French Republic (1900), and the Grand Cross of the ‘Franz Joseph’ Order of the Republic of Austria (1902).

ANNIVERSARIES: GEORGE EMIL PALADE TARGU MURES UNIVERSITY OF MEDICINE, PHARMACY, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Romfilatelia dedicates a postage stamps issue to a prestigious institution, George Emil Palade University of Medicine, Pharmacy, Science, and Technology of Targu Mures, on the occasion of the anniversary of eight decades of academic excellence. This institution, which bears the name of the laureate of the Nobel Prize for Physiology or Medicine, is not just a place for teaching and learning but a space where tradition and innovation intertwine naturally, shaping generations of professionals, opening new horizons, and redefining the standards of higher education.



The philatelic issue Anniversaries. George Emil Palade University of Medicine, Pharmacy, Science, and Technology of Targu Mures, was issued on April 4th, 2025.

In 1948 the Medical and Pharmaceutical Institute (IMF) of Targu Mures, comprised the following faculties: General Medicine, Hygiene, Dentistry, and Pharmacy. The association of George Emil Palade's name with the prestigious University in Targu Mures entails the duty to honour the renowned researcher, Nobel Prize laureate, by maintaining a high standard in education and research, reflected in all programmes and projects promoted by the George Emil Palade University of Medicine, Pharmacy, Science, and Technology of Targu Mures. Under the motto 'E Pluribus Unum' (Out of many, one), medical education in Targu Mures stands as a symbol of unity in diversity, progress through knowledge, and excellence embraced with responsibility.

The postage stamp of Lei 14 features the portrait of the great scientist George Emil Palade, Nobel Prize laureate, in a graphic composition alongside an architectural detail of the University's façade, marking the 80th anniversary of its establishment. The souvenir sheet features a panoramic image of the university campus, integrated into the design of the postage stamp with the face value of Lei 30.

History of the Automobile II

A new issue for collectors as well as the general public passionate about the automotive theme, titled “History of the Automobile (II)”, consisting of four postage stamps, a First Day Cover, and four of maxicards, was released on April 11th this year. It offers philately enthusiasts unique images of car models from the early stages of automotive construction and innovation.

The beginnings of automobile history date back to the 18th century when Nicolas Joseph Cugnot conceived and built the first steam-powered automobile (1769). In the modern sense, the first functional automobile, which preceded mass production, was invented by the German Karl Benz (1886). The automobile was equipped with a four-stroke internal combustion engine powered by gasoline. It had three wheels.



The first mass production of automobiles was initiated by Karl Benz in Germany (1888), with the license also being adopted in France by Emile Roger. In 1934, the Chrysler Airflow was designed and produced, becoming the first mass-produced car with an aerodynamic design.

The postage stamps of the issue, which depict images reproduced from period engravings, illustrate four automobile models: Mercedes 12/16 CP (Lei 5.50), a 1903 model, represents the result of the collaboration between Karl Benz and Gottlieb Daimler, Peugeot Four-Seater Type 7 (Lei 6.50) participated in the Paris-Bordeaux-Paris rally (1895) and was declared the winner. The tires supplied by the Michelin company played a decisive role in the victory, Peugeot Two-Seater (Lei 9), a model from the French company of the same name, founded in 1810 and Panhard et Levassor (Lei 11).

By accessing the QR code on the stamp minisheets, one can discover the story of the issue “History of the Automobile (II)”.

Europa 2025 “National Archaeological Discoveries”

The annual EUROPA-themed issue has, for the year 2025, the assigned topic: National Archaeological Discoveries. In collaboration with specialists in the fields of history and archaeology, the two-stamp issue was released on April 29th.

The postage stamps feature images of objects discovered during archaeological excavations at Ulpia Traiana Sarmizegetusa (the capital of the Roman province of Dacia) in 1973, and in the eastern necropolis of Vețel Township, Hunedoara County, in 1967. The exhibits depicted are titled Medusa the Gorgon (on the stamp with the face value of Lei 5) and The Abduction of Europa by Zeus transformed into a bull (on the stamp with the face value of Lei 25).



The Gorgon Medusa, a gilt bronze appliqué, portrays the features of a mythological creature—Gorgon (the woman with the ‘deadly gaze’)—named Medusa (‘the mistress’), who was said to possess supernatural powers thanks to her gaze, which could kill anyone who came near her. Legend has it that she was slain by the Greek hero Perseus, who kept her head as a fearsome weapon (the Gorgon’s eyes, when directed at enemies, would turn them to stone).

The artefact The Abduction of Europa (Europa, from whom the continent takes its name, was the daughter of the Phoenician king Agenor) has been classified as a decorative element that belonged to a Roman funerary structure. Carved in stone, it depicts—within the circle of a wreath woven from leafy branches—the figure of Europa being carried on the back of a bull (Zeus), who, according to mythological accounts, took her to the island of Crete.

The Gorgon Medusa and The Abduction of Europa were exhibited at the Exhibition ‘Archaeological Treasures of Romania: Dacian and Roman Roots’, hosted by the National Archaeological Museum in Madrid (September 2021 – February 2022), where they attracted the interest and appreciation of both specialists and the general public.

Chinese Traditional Lunar Horoscope – Year of the Snake

Chinese culture, thousands of years old, has given the world and humanity a precious cultural heritage and spiritual wealth. The Chinese horoscope is one of the oldest known horoscopes, including the mouse, ox, tiger, rabbit, dragon, snake, horse, goat, monkey, rooster, dog and pig. They correspond to twelve astrological branches, with a twelve-year cycle. In addition to the Chinese horoscope, the elements are also very important: metal, wood, water, fire and earth. The personality traits of a person are often closely associated with the characteristics of the Chinese horoscope linked to their birth year.

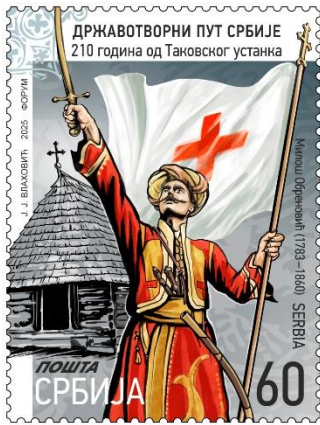


The year 2025 will be the year of the Wood Snake. The Snake is known for its enigmatic and introspective nature, analytical mind, and ability to deal with complex situations, and heralds a year full of opportunities for financial growth and new romances. The Chinese Lunar year of the Wood Snake begins on January 29, 2025, marking the beginning of the fifteen-day Spring Festival celebrated by Chinese people around the world.

The State-building path of Serbia

210 years since the Takovo Uprising

The Second Serbian Uprising is one of the most significant events in the process of creating the modern Serbian state in the 19th century. The uprising, the beginning of which was officially marked on the Palm Sunday, April 23, 1815 in Takovo, was the third and last in a series of armed movements within the Serbian Revolution (1804–1833). Its successful outcome created the foundations for negotiations with the Ottoman Empire, which were crowned a decade and a half later with the establishment of the autonomous Principality of Serbia.



The Takovo Uprising was prompted by the difficult living conditions of the Serbian population in the area of the Belgrade Pashalik in the years following the collapse of the First Serbian Uprising (1804–1813) and the failure of the Hadži Prodan's Rebellion (1814). In response to the Ottoman violence, the national elders decided in the spring of 1815 to launch an uprising, led by the voivode and senior-chief Miloš Obrenović.

After taking the ceremonial oath in front of the church log cabin in Takovo, the insurgents set off to battle. In the following weeks and months, a series of major battles followed, among which the battles of Čačak and Ljubić, the battles of Palež and Požarevac, and the Battle of Dublje stood out for their significance.

The rapid occupation of almost the entire territory of the Pashalik, excluding fortified cities, as well as the humane treatment of Turkish civilians and soldiers, enabled the Serbian leader Miloš to reach an oral agreement with the Turkish military commander Marshli Ali Pasha at the end of July 1815, which guaranteed the Serbs self-government in the Belgrade Pashalik. This agreement served as the basis for a long-standing diplomatic struggle for autonomy, which ended with the Sultan's issuance of three hatt-ı sharifs, in 1829, 1830, and 1833, by which Serbia acquired the status of a vassal principality of the Ottoman Empire.

190 years since the Sretenje Constitution

The first constitution of the Principality of Serbia was ceremonially proclaimed at the Great National Assembly in Kragujevac on Sretenje (the Presentation of Our Lord in the Temple) – 15 February, 1835. Its adoption was the epilogue of long-term efforts to limit the personal power of Prince Miloš Obrenović and establish the foundations of a legal state in Serbia with a separation of power into legislative, executive and judicial branches.



Inspired by Belgian and French models, the first Serbian constitution seemed too liberal to its contemporaries, and it soon encountered resistance from the Great Powers. The travel writer Cyprien Robert called it as “French seedling in the Turkish forest” and it was abolished 55 days after its adoption. Three years later, it was succeeded by a much more conservative, so-called Turkish constitution, adopted with the consent of the Turkish Sultan and under the patronage of the Russian Emperor.

European Nature Protection

150 years of the Establishment of Rational Beekeeping in Serbia

Beekeeping is an activity of exceptional importance, not only for beekeepers and farmers but for the planet as well, as the bee is a key element in maintaining ecosystem balance and preserving biodiversity and natural resources. The honeybee cultivated in Serbia is the so-called “domestic bee,” “Western honeybee,” or “Euro–African honeybee” (*Apis mellifera* L.).

The father of rational beekeeping among Serbs and on the Balkans is considered to be Professor Jovan Živanović (1841–1916) who established an orchard near Karlovci, where, in 1875, he first encountered bees, introducing his first eight traditional woven hives.



Instead of harvesting honey by suffocating the bees, Professor Živanović, in search of new solutions, turned to innovations, contacting renowned beekeepers from Europe and around the world, and began introducing advanced working technologies such as the most modern equipment — the first hive with movable frames (“the American”), Hruschka’s honey extractor, the first steam wax melter, and the first press for casting wax foundations for hives. Professor Jovan Živanović founded the second Chair of Modern Beekeeping in Europe, intended for students of the Karlovci Seminary.

He published a series of books and edited several journals in the field of beekeeping, and he organized four apiaries with around 400 hives in the surroundings of Karlovci.

Through his work, he laid the foundations for the modernization of beekeeping in Serbia, making it more efficient, ecologically sustainable, and long-term viable, thus leaving an indelible mark in the advancement of beekeeping practices, both from a technical and an ecological perspective.

Military Academy Day

175 years since the establishment of military education in Serbia

Military Academy Day is celebrated on March 18, commemorating the day when Prince Aleksandar Karađorđević, in 1850, signed the Act on the Establishment of the Artillery School – the first military higher education institution in Serbia, the traditions of which are today preserved by the Military Academy in Belgrade, a higher education and scientific research institution of the Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Serbia.

The Military Academy, which has been educating officer staff for the needs of the Serbian Armed Forces for 175 years, is part of the higher education system of the Republic of Serbia, within which it has accredited study programmes for undergraduate, master's and doctoral academic studies. Education at the Military Academy is a complex process that combines education, military training and upbringing of future officers.



In its long history, the Military Academy has produced a pleiad of top intellectuals and experts, experienced military strategists of unbreakable moral strength, unwavering in the service of their homeland. Many of them were also successful scientists and commanders, military writers and professors, such as Academician Jovan Mišković, General, Minister and Military Reformer; Academician Jovan Dragašević, General, Military Writer and Poet, Professor at the Military Academy and the Great School; Academician Živko Pavlović, General, Commander and Intellectual, a Giant of Serbian military thought.

In the year of anniversary, we also proudly remember all the officers who demonstrated their abilities in the Balkan and World Wars, led by Field Marshals Radomir Putnik, Stepa Stepanović, Živojin Mišić and Petar Bojović.

A significant part of the credit for the defence of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia from NATO aggression in 1999 belongs to the Military Academy, which educated an excellent staff of officers, and the battles at Košare and Paštrik, full of examples of the extraordinary sacrifice of our officers and soldiers, undoubtedly prove this. Throughout its existence, the Military Academy has provided Serbia with officers trained, ready and capable for their high calling – the defence of the homeland.

E A S T E R

The most important and greatest Christian holiday – the day of eternal joy, the Resurrection of Christ, is celebrated in memory of the day when Christ, the Son of God, defeated death. Easter is a moving holiday, it is always celebrated on a Sunday, and the date is calculated based on the date of the full moon that preceded Christ's Resurrection in 30 BC. The decision to celebrate the Resurrection of Christ was made at the first Ecumenical Council in Nicaea in 325. The Orthodox Church celebrates Easter according to the Julian calendar. Easter is preceded by a seven-week fast, and the last week before Easter is called the Great Week. Many folk customs are associated with this week, the most famous of which is the painting of eggs, which are painted on Great Friday.



The first egg is painted red, and in many parts of our country this egg is called the “housekeeper” and is kept all year round, to guard the home until the next Easter. Painting and decorating eggs, which are actually a symbol of resurrection, is a custom that children certainly love the most. The Day of Christ's Resurrection is marked by solemn liturgy in churches, and believers greet each other with the words: “Christ is risen!”, “Truly, He is risen!”

Children especially enjoy the most joyful Christian holiday, because the celebration of Easter is also a day of children's joy, fun and games. In the past, children would get up early on Easter morning, wash themselves with water in which eggs had been soaked overnight and rub their cheeks with the “housekeeper” so that, according to belief, they would be healthy and rosy. Children spend Easter playing, looking for Easter eggs, gifts, chocolates and sweets hidden around the yard and house and giving each other coloured Easter eggs. Joyful Easter customs and cheerful children's games are accompanied by appropriate songs, of which the most famous today is the one sung to the verses of Bishop Nikolaj Velimirović – “Christ is risen, and brings the joy!”.

180 years of the Serbian Reading Room “Laza Kostić”, Sombor

One of the oldest cultural institutions of the Serbian people that still exists today, the Serbian Reading Room “Laza Kostić” in Sombor, was founded on March 24, 1845. At the beginning, it had 72 founding members, and its first president was the Sombor parish priest Avram Maksimović.

In the first decades of its existence, the Serbian Reading Room did not have its own building, but with the participation of the members of the Reading Room, voluntary contributions from Sombor Serbs and the help of the Orthodox Church Municipality in Sombor, a specific-purpose building was erected in 1882, today a building of exceptional cultural and historical significance for the city of Sombor and the Serbian people in general.

In the period from 1901 to 1910, the president of the Serbian Reading Room was Laza Kostić, and after his death this institution bore his name. In 1908, the Constitution of the Sombor Serbian Reading Room was printed.



The premises of the Serbian Reading Room are adorned with 21 portraits of famous figures who, in different eras, contributed in various ways to the cultural, educational and spiritual development of the Serbian people. All of the portraits on display were painted and donated to the Reading Room by the painter Sava Stojkov, its honorary president.

After World War II, the Reading Room was stripped of the first part of its name in the new socialist state, so instead of the Serbian Reading Room, as it had been called for 112 years, it started to be called the “Laza Kostić” Reading Room as of 1957.

Today, the Reading Room in Sombor is once again called the Serbian Reading Room “Laza Kostić”, and its programmes, both 180 years ago and now, are closely connected to preserving the educational, cultural and spiritual identity of the Serbian people, nurturing traditions, customs, and the Serbian language and Cyrillic script.

One of the most famous customs that still connects us with the traditional **May Day**, a celebration of spring and nature with ancient roots, is the May Day wreath.



The celebration of **May Day** is associated with the human joy of spring and vegetation welcoming the power of nature into our home.



For **Suggestions, Comments and Inquiries**, kindly contact the **National Delegates**

Albania : **Julian Demeti** julian.demeti@gmail.com

BiH Kanton : **Danijel Potocki** tockipo@gmail.com

BiH Republika Srpska : **Radenko Radanović** radenkoradanovic@gmail.com

Bulgaria : **Boncho Bonev** bnb11@abv.bg

Croatia : **Capt. Slavoljub Katancevic** katem-sjeme@pu.t-com.hr

Croatia : **Julije Maras** julije@maras-filatelia.com.hr

Greece : **Christos Gikas** (editor) xgikas@gmail.com

Moldova : **Andrei Adam** ufrm@mail.com

Montenegro: **Tomo Katuric** tomokaturic@t-com.me

North Macedonia: **Sinisha Pavleski** unionofphilatelists.mk@gmail.com

Romania : **Francisc Ambrus** franambrus@yahoo.com

Serbia : **Svetislav D. Jelic** svetislav.jelic@gmail.com

Slovenia : **Igor Pirc** ipirc711@gmail.com

Turkiye : **Mehmet Akan** studiotasarim@gmail.com