

Message on the occasion of the 100th Anniversary of the Bucharest University of Economic Studies

Established by Royal Decree on April 6, 1913, under the name of the Academy of High Commercial and Industrial Studies, the Bucharest University of Economic Studies is celebrating a century of existence.

The idea to establish a Commercial Academy had been germinating for a while, against the background of Romania's economic development during the first decade of the 20th century. A group of young economists who had attended leading European universities designed the project for establishing our university, based on the experience of Western European Commercial Academies and under the aegis of the Romanian Ministry of Industry and Commerce, at that time led by Nicolae D. Xenopol. It is the latter's merit to have undertaken the responsibility to see the project to completion; before political opposition and the public opinion, he demonstrated the usefulness of and necessity for the establishment of such an economic higher education institution. There were voices that were against the establishment of the University at that time, when Romania was participating in the second Balkan War with troops sent over the Danube. Nonetheless, the optimism and endeavours of those who were in favour of the establishment of our institution were rewarded by the enrollment in the first year of study of 600 students (among which 107 were foreigners), although at that time the university did not yet have its own building.

When celebrating the 100th Anniversary of ASE Bucharest, we ought to remember what the University's first Rector, Anton Davidoglu, the internationally renowned professor of Mathematics, said about the role of the University, during his Inaugural Address held on November 1, 1913: *"This Academy must become a point of convergence for the country's entire economic activity"*.

Throughout its existence, our university has successfully overcome all the obstacles arising from the transformations that the Romanian society has undergone, the ebbs and flows of history also influencing our academic community.

During the first two decades of existence, our University was subordinated to the Ministry of Industry and Commerce and it benefitted from the latter's unconditional support, especially as regards the building of the Palace from Piața Lascăr Catargiu, today Piața Romană. Between 1913 and 1947, when the University was known as the Academy of High Commercial and Industrial Studies, it went through a favourable period during which the first university study programmes were created on the basis of similar programmes taught at Western universities. At that time, a series of outstanding professors contributed to the development of the aforementioned programmes; among whom we mention: Gheorghe Tașcă, Virgil Madgearu, Ion Răducanu, Nicolae Iorga, Victor Slăvescu and others.

In 1947, the Academy of High Commercial and Industrial Studies merged with the Academy of Cooperative Studies, to form the Academy of Commercial and Cooperative Studies. However, after less than a year, due to the 1948 education reform, the university was turned into the Institute for Economic Sciences and Planning. After two decades of education according to the Soviet model, since the 1967-1968 academic year, Romanian economic higher education has rediscovered its European vocation. During this modernization process, our University was reorganized and became the Bucharest University of Economic Studies (in Romanian: “Academia de Studii Economice din București”, a name similar to “Academia de Științe Economice” – the University of Economic Sciences – which the founding fathers proposed in 1941).

After the December 1989 revolution, the Bucharest University of Economic Studies, on a par with the entire Romanian society, underwent profound changes, trying to strengthen the position and role our forefathers delineated at the establishment of the institution. It was a period of institutional reorganization and restructuring, of tuning to the values and principles of the European Union, by implementing the Bologna system and participation in the European Higher Education Area and the European Research Area.

Apart from institutional transformations, our university's academic staff has experienced a permanent renewal process: a great number of the staff members have been awarded Master's and Doctoral degrees by leading universities from around the world. Without false modesty, we can say that today the university has elite professors, who are reviving the spirit of our great forerunners.

The University has always had eminent students who, upon graduation, became exceptional professionals in every economic and social domain, both in Romania and abroad. Today,

there are 22,684 students enrolled in Bachelor's, Master's, Doctoral, Postgraduate and Postdoctoral study programmes. In its centennial history, ASE Bucharest has moulded more than 300,000 professionals, who take pride in having graduated from our University.

Due to the endeavours and dedication of the academic and administrative staff, as well as of its students, the Bucharest University of Economic Studies is now a **research intensive university**, institutionally accredited by ARACIS (the Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education), which has granted a **high confidence rating** to our University. This standing honors us and determines us to resort to university management strategies and programs that would allow us to capitalize on our tradition and prestige so as to rank among **internationally competitive universities**.

Hence, our motto is *Excellence through unity and diversity!* Excellence is attained only by capitalizing on diversity and catalyzing competences towards common goals. This is what we undertake to accomplish in the future.

The year 2013 is the centennial year! We hereby invite all the members of our academic community (former or current students, former or current academic and administrative staff members), as well as our partners from other universities, research institutes, public administration and private companies to rejoice with us! Let us honour the memory of our forerunners, overcome present difficulties with dignity and confidently build a glorious future!

Happy Anniversary to our academic community and graduates!

Happy Anniversary to the Bucharest University of Economic Studies!

Vivat, crescat, floreat!

Rector,
Prof. Pavel Năstase, PhD

President of the Senate,
Prof. Răzvan ZAHARIA, PhD