

Trakia University Stara Zagora:

A Young University with Long-Standing Traditions

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Trakia University is located in Stara Zagora, one of the larger towns in Bulgaria, with a rich and dramatic 8,000-year-old history, a city of straight streets, linden trees, poets and artists.



The Stara Zagora region ranks third among the 28 regions in Bulgaria in terms of the Human Development Index and economic activity. Its industrial sector, services and agriculture are highly developed. In October 2004 *FDI Magazine*, a project of the *Financial Times* awarded the Stara Zagora Region – alongside the Zurich Region in Switzerland – First Prize for best quality of life in Europe, thanks to its newly built homes, low prices, and rich historical and cultural heritage.

Founded in 1995, Trakia University brought together several long-standing universities: the Higher Institute of Zootechnics and Veterinary Medicine, the Higher Institute of Human Medicine, the Human Medicine College, and the College for Training of Children's Teachers, and the Technical College in Yambol.

Almost 600 highly qualified professors and guest lecturers educate over 8,000 students from Bulgaria and abroad in over 60 accredited BSc and MSc degrees and more than 90 PhD programs. At present, the university's structure includes the following departments: Agriculture, Veterinary Medicine, Human Medicine with University Hospital, Economics, Pedagogy, Technology, Medical College, and Information and Teacher Training. In recent years Trakia University has consistently ranked around fifth or sixth place in the ratings of 51 universities in Bulgaria and is member of the European Association of Universities (EUA) and the International Association of Universities (IAU).

Practical training is carried out on the university's campus and in the region on experimental fields and animal farms; at the University Hospital; in veterinary clinics; in the Regional



Trakia University students celebrating traditional Bulgarian culture

Veterinary and Animal Breeding Centre; in elementary schools and kindergartens; in social welfare institution; as well as in financial institutions, private companies, and state enterprises.

In the last five years the university faculty has worked on a total of 440 research and educational projects in the frame of *Erasmus+*; Horizon 2020, 7 FP, COST, Marie Curie, Fulbright and on a number of national and university projects. Priority areas of research are in the fields of biotechnologies, food and health, ecology, biodiversity and natural environment, cultural and historical heritage, national identity, educational strategies, agricultural sciences, social environment, informational and communication technologies. The university publishing house publishes educational and scientific literature. Five scientific journals issued by the university in Bulgarian and English language promote the research results.

Trakia University has signed bilateral agreements for with over 60 universities and organizations worldwide. An excellent example is the collaboration with Agricultural

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and Veterinary colleges of Iowa State University of Science and Technology on various educational and research activities – a study abroad program, the faculty exchange program, the Norman E. Borlaug International Agricultural Science and Technology Fellowship program and the Fulbright program.

The university infrastructure includes modern lecture and computer halls, seminar rooms, labs and clinics and specialised diagnostic labs for education and research. In 2012 the new campus was opened- one of the most modern in country. The new America for Bulgaria National Center for Professional Training and Competence was created with ABF support in 2015 as a basic scientific and practice-oriented unit of Trakia University. It is a place for research, consulting and innovation in the

dairy cattle and sheep farms, in close collaboration with Iowa State University of Science and Technology (USA) and with universities from member-states of the EU. The center also coordinates practical training of students in various international exchange programs.

The Informational Centre and Department Libraries hold over 300,000 volumes of literature and specialized periodicals in Bulgarian, English, French, German and Russian. Domestic and international book exchange is carried out with 35 countries and 108 universities. There is continuous access to databases such as SCOPUS, Science Direct, ISI Web of Knowledge, Pro Quest Central, EBSCO; CAB Abstracts; Springer Link, and AGORA. Guests to Trakia University can also visit the Museum of Horses and Equestrian Sport, as well as the Museums of Agricultural Education and Veterinary Medicine in Bulgaria.

Trakia University students live either on campus or in Stara Zagora, where they can enjoy numerous restaurants, bars and shops. The university also has its own sports facilities for over 15 different kinds of sports: football, basketball, volleyball, tennis, track and field, aerobics, martial arts, bodybuilding, and more. Students have opportunity to practice and improve their talents in Bulgarian Folk Dance, Latino and Sport Dances, vocal ensemble singing and theater. In these activities, Trakia University students perform very well at the regional and international level. The Student Council has initiated various types of charitable, volunteer, and sports activities.

With its young age but deep roots in education and science Trakia University- Stara Zagora offers its students a great place for education, sports, entertainment and success after graduation.