

## Lithuanian and Albanian Academies of Sciences Strengthen Ties through Bilateral Scientific Cooperation Protocol

On October 15-18, 2024, a delegation from the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences (LMA)—including President Jūras Banys, Vice President Zenonas Dabkevičius, Chairman of the Department of Mathematics, Physics, and Chemistry Leonas Valkūnas, and Chief Specialist for International Relations Violeta Skirgailienė—visited the Academy of Sciences of Albania (ASA) and other academic and research institutions in Albania. This visit was a follow-up to a 2023 visit by ASA representatives to the LMA in Vilnius.

On September 26, 2023, the LMA and ASA signed a bilateral scientific cooperation agreement in Vilnius, and on October 16, a protocol was formalized in Tirana. This protocol outlines concrete measures for collaborative exchanges, which focus on fostering relationships between scientists across disciplines in each academy. The agreement seeks to promote joint research initiatives, support the organization of scientific conferences, and facilitate researcher exchanges for three weeks each year.

ASA President Skender Gjinushi, Vice Presidents Vasil S. Tole, Scientific Secretary Shaban Sinani, Chair of Natural and Technical Sciences Neki Frashëri, Chair of Social Sciences and Albanology Gëzim Hoxha, and UEAA Vice-President Nazim Gruda attended the signing ceremony.



*Presidents Jūras Banys (LMA) and Skender Gjinushi (ASA) signed the Bilateral Scientific Cooperation Protocol in Tirana, Albania.*

Following the signing, an extended meeting was held in the ASA’s “Academics Hall,” gathering ASA heads, members, and various institute leaders to discuss the collaboration. Established in 1972, the Academy of Sciences of Albania is Albania’s foremost scientific institution. It includes research centers in archaeology, history, linguistics, literature, and art studies and virtual research units in advanced fields like biotechnology, genetics, geosciences, artificial intelligence, and energy. ASA recently introduced a Junior Academy modeled after the LMA to support emerging scientists.

LMA President Jūras Banys shared insights into the structure and achievements of Lithuanian science with the Albanian academicians, expressing appreciation for ASA’s hospitality and admiration for Albania during his first visit. Priority areas for the partnership will include agriculture, scientific technology, and plant genetics. Collaborations are anticipated between biotechnology and genetics institutes, nanotechnology research centers, comprehensive publications, and agricultural institutions.



*Lithuanian Academy of Sciences Delegation with Leaders and Academicians of the Academy of Sciences of Albania.*

The LMA delegation also toured key cultural and academic sites. On October 17, they visited Korça, a significant cultural and industrial hub in Eastern Albania. The delegation met with the Rector of Fan S. Noli University, Prof. Dr. Lorenc Ekonomi, and discussed the university's core areas of study, including education, languages, economics, natural sciences, and agriculture. LMA representatives introduced the Lithuanian education system and highlighted possibilities for future educational cooperation.

The delegation also explored the Agricultural Transfer Technology Center in Korça, which is known for breeding agricultural livestock and providing specialized training for farming professionals. In close cooperation with the Agricultural University of Tirana, the center breeds agricultural livestock and provides specialized training for farming professionals. In Korça, the delegation visited the Museum of Medieval Art, which houses over 6,000 icons, and toured the archaeological site in Pogradec.

On the final day, the delegation visited the Agricultural University of Tirana, Albania's first higher agricultural institution, established in 1951. With five faculties and around 6,000 students, the university is Albania's leading agricultural research and conservation center. The university, known for extensive international collaboration, has signed 160 international agreements and partners closely with BOKU in Vienna, Austria.

Throughout the visit, the LMA delegation presented the advancements and structure of Lithuanian science and explored additional opportunities for Albanian-Lithuanian scientific collaboration. Relations between Lithuanian and Albanian researchers are developing, with a shared focus on enhancing scientific knowledge and cooperative achievements across both countries.

For further information, please see:

<https://akad.gov.al/vizite-pune-e-kryetarit-te-akademise-se-shkencave-te-lituanise-akad-juras-banys-ne-ashsh/>

<https://www.lma.lt/news/2475/253/Lietuvos-mokslu-akademijos-delegacija-viesejo-Albanijoje>