

Lviv University – 350 years

This year the *Ivan Franko National University of Lviv* celebrates its 350th anniversary. On January 20, 1661, the King of Poland Jan Kazimierz II signed the diploma granting the *Jesuit Collegium of Lviv* “the honor of the Academy and the title of the University”. The diploma conferred the right to teach all contemporary university subjects and to deliver the academic degrees of Bachelor, Licentiate, Master, and Doctor. The newly created university consisted of two faculties: *Theology* and *Philosophy*. In 1667 it counted some 500 students, who attended courses conducted by eight lecturers. In 1744 the *Faculty of Mathematics* was opened, a laboratory of mathematics and physics was set up, and an observatory was created. In 1772 Lviv was annexed to Austria; the Society of Jesus was dissolved and the following year the academic school was converted into a state academy named *Theresianum*. The school recovered university status in 1784 with now four faculties: *Theology*, *Philosophy*, *Law*, and *Medicine*. Through its history the university has had to adapt to several geopolitical changes, when the city of Lviv progressively passed from Poland (-1772), to Austria (1772-1919), back to Poland (1919-1939), then to USSR (1939-1991; the university being closed during the German occupation 1941-1944), and Ukraine (1991-).

Depending on the ruling government, the official languages were Polish, German, or Ukrainian. In November 1919 the school received the official name *Jan Kazimierz University*, in honor of its founder. In January 1940 it was renamed to *Ivan Franko Lviv State University*, honoring the well-known Ukrainian poet, writer, and statesman Ivan Franko, who studied at the Faculty of Philosophy in the 1870s. In 1999 it was conferred the status *National* by the Ukrainian authorities.

At present, the *Ivan Franko National University of Lviv* is one of the leading higher education institutions of Ukraine and Europe. The internal structure of the university includes 18 faculties subdivided into 130 departments, an *Institute of Advanced Studies*, 3 colleges, 7 research institutes, an observatory, a botanic garden, a library, and 6 museums. In 2011 the total number of students exceeds 30'000 and the academic staff is composed of more than 1'700 lecturers, including two thirds of post-doc assistants and professors. Since 1990 a distinguished physicist professor Ivan Vakarchuk is the rector of the university.

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