

Chronology of AAM:

The Association of Architects of Macedonia (AAM) marks exactly 74 years since its founding in 2026.

On June 26, 1952, by a decision of the then Ministry of Internal Affairs, the establishment and operation of the Society of Architects of the People's Republic of Macedonia (DAM) was approved, with its headquarters in Skopje and jurisdiction across the country. The founding of the association took place only seven years after the end of World War II (1945) and three years after the start of operations of the Technical Faculty in Skopje on October 6, 1949.

Today, AAM is a leading voice of critical professional thought and position, standing in opposition to amateur attempts to degrade and dismiss the profession—something witnessed over the past decade through the notorious quasi-project “Skopje 2014.” AAM recognized this retrograde plan in time and adopted a Declaration rejecting it as unprofessional and politically motivated.

Chronologically, the formation of the Society of Architects was preceded by the establishment of the Association of Engineers and Technicians immediately after World War II, in May 1945, followed by the formation of the Union of Associations of Engineers and Technicians of Yugoslavia. Later came the establishment of societies of individual engineering professions, which until the end of Yugoslavia were part of the nomenclature of the Socialist Alliance of Working People of Macedonia (SSRNM). DAM operated under this name until 1980, when it was renamed the Union of Societies of Architects (SDAM), a transformation that introduced a new organizational structure and led to the formation of city-level architectural societies across the republic. As a modern form of civic association based on professional specialization, in 1999 SDAM was renamed the Association of Architects of Macedonia (AAM).

The first president of the Society of Architects was Sotir Tomovski, one of only five architects working in Macedonia before the war. According to the Association's records, presidents have also included Boris Čipan, Aleksandar Župan, Ljube Pota, Krum Tomovski, Miho Čakelja, Duško Pecovski, Ljubomir Tomić, Slavko Brezovski, Živko Popovski, Trajko Dimitrov, Aleksandar Smilevski, Aleksandar Nikoljski, Kiril Muratovski, Aleksandar Karev, Panta Hristovski, Venceslava Gavrilka, Vangel Božinovski, Vanja Stefanovski, Tihomir Stojkov, Zoran Ivanovski, Dragan Stojanovski, Kokan Grčev, Danica Pavlovska, Sanja Rađenović, Martin Panovski, Miško Ralev, and Valentino Konstantinovski. Many of these distinguished architects are today part of the cultural history of our country.

“At the very beginning, the activities of the newly established Society of Architects – DAM were neither frequent nor significant. In general, work was carried out according to political directives, and there were almost no professional issues. All graduates from the Technical Faculty in Skopje immediately found employment. The first more significant activity of DAM was organizing a gathering of Yugoslav architects in Ohrid in 1958, a

professional meeting where critical debates began and exhibitions of architectural works from the country and abroad were organized,” said Prof. Boris Čipan.

Prof. Krum Tomovski noted in one of his recollections that “the establishment of the Society of Architects of Macedonia was an important moment for the architectural formation and survival of the then new generations of architects. These were the years when the foundations were laid on which architecture as a profession and as education was built—a time of affirmation and social validation. Given the small number of trained architects at the time, the public was not clear about what this profession entailed, and many perceived architects merely as ‘draftsmen’ and nothing more.” Therefore, according to him, these were years of self-assertion and affirmation of architecture as a creative profession and as the initiator of every construction process—from idea and plan to project and final realization.

DAM had a pioneering role in interpreting the essential role of the architectural profession and its specificities. Over time, with the increased pace of post-war construction in Yugoslavia, the role of architects became much clearer. The association also played an important role in professional education. Through various conferences and congresses on design topics, architectural ideas were promoted through concepts, projects, and built works. The Skopje earthquake brought new engagements for architects and a new mode of operation for the association. This was followed by a period of intensive construction and communication with globally renowned authorities. As a result, contemporary Macedonian architecture became recognizable and acknowledged worldwide, becoming the subject of professional and scientific research and debate.

Part of AAM’s activities are articulated through several institutions that have, over the decades, become established as important cultural events: the Architectural Academy (AA), whose members are leading figures of Macedonian architecture and recipients of the lifetime achievement award “Andrej Damjanov”; the major annual award granted by AAM for the best architectural work completed in the country; and the most significant event, BIMAS – the Biennale of Contemporary Macedonian Architecture, which presents and evaluates the two-year production of architects in Macedonia. BIMAS is also one of the most important cultural events in the country, typically held over a fifteen-day program and concluding with the Grand Prix award for the most successful architectural work realized within a two-year period, along with other category awards.

More than 15 years ago, the Association of Architects of Macedonia was also one of the founders of the Chamber of Certified Architects and Certified Engineers of Macedonia, a step that introduced new legal and professional criteria in regulating engineering professions.

Skopje, February 2026