

REGULATIONS

EIGHT INTERNATIONAL VIOLIN COMPETITION “VASCO ABADJIEV”

SOFIA, BULGARIA – 2025

General Provisions

Art. 1

The Non-Governmental Association “Club UNESCO Leonardo da Vinci Sofia” organizes the Eight International Violin Competition “VASCO ABADJIEV”, Sofia, Bulgaria, 2025. The competition is held under the patronage of the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Bulgaria, the Honorary Consul of Bulgaria for Piedmont and Val d’Aosta, Italy – Gianni Maria Stornello, with the support of Sofia Municipality, and with the support of the Italian Cultural Institute in Bulgaria, the Union of Bulgarian Musicians and Dancers, and NAM “Prof. Pancho Vladigerov”.

Art. 2

The international violin competition is part of the “Chaconne” project of Club UNESCO “Leonardo da Vinci”, along with other initiatives, aimed at reviving both national and international recognition of the great Bulgarian violinist Vasco Abadjiev (1926–1978).

Art. 3

The competition is held biennially (once every two years).

Art. 4

The Eight Edition of the competition will take place in three rounds at the National Academy of Music “Prof. Pancho Vladigerov” in Sofia, Bulgaria, from 20th to 23rd of November, 2025.

Conditions for Application

Art. 5

Violinists from all countries and nationalities are eligible to apply, provided that, as of the opening date of the competition (20th of November 2025), they are not older than 30 years (i.e., born after 20th of November 1995).

Art. 6

The application deadline is 15th of October 2025.

Art. 7

Applicants must submit the following documents by 15th of October 2025:

- Completed application form (according to the provided template).
- Short biography, including details on education, participation in competitions, awards received, etc.
- Copy of an identification document (ID card or passport).
- Recent photograph.
- Proof of payment for the participation fee (bank transfer receipt).
- List of compositions to be performed in the competition rounds and at the Gala Concert.

Art. 8 – Participation Fee

/1/ The participation fee of 80 (eighty) EUR or 157 (one hundred and fifty-seven) BGN must be paid via bank transfer to the following account:

Bank: UNICREDIT BULBANK AD

Bank Address: Sofia, Zapaden Park 127, Slivnitsa Blvd.

IBAN: BG45UNCR70001520905134

BIC: UNCRBGSF

Beneficiary: CLUB UNESCO “LEONARDO DA VINCI” SOFIA

/2/ All bank transfer fees must be covered by the participants.

/3/ The participation fee is non-refundable, except in the case of competition cancellation.

Art. 9 – Submission of Documents

The documents listed under Art. 7 must be sent by post to:

For “VASCO ABADJIEV” Competition

“Sveta Troitsa”, Bl. 378, Ent. D, Ap. 94

Sofia-1309, Bulgaria

or by e-mail to: club@unesco-ldv.com (Cc: juliankorabov@gmail.com).

Art. 10 – Language Requirement

Documents submitted by foreign participants must be in English.

Art. 11 – Notification of Approved Candidates

Applicants who meet the competition's requirements will be notified in writing by October 24th, 2025.

Art. 12 – Travel and Accommodation Costs

Each participant is responsible for their own transportation, travel allowances, accommodation expenses, insurance, and medical costs, as well as those of any accompanying persons.

Art. 13 – Accompanist (Pianist) Availability

Participants who do not have their own pianist can request one from the organizers for an additional fee of 25 EUR or 50 BGN per round (rehearsal or performance), payable by the participant.

CONDITIONS FOR THE COMPETITION

Art. 14 – REPERTOIRE

First Round

All approved candidates have the right to participate. The performance should not exceed 30 minutes and must include:

- J. S. Bach – Two movements (first and second) from the Solo Sonatas or Chaconne from the Partita No. 2.
- Caprice/Etude – By N. Paganini, H. Wieniawski, Vasco Abadjiev, or one movement from the Solo Sonatas for Violin by E. Ysaÿe (candidate's choice).
- W. A. Mozart – First movement (with cadenza) from Violin Concertos No. 3, 4, 5, or 7 (candidate's choice).

Second Round

Candidates selected by the jury after the First Round may participate. The performance should not exceed 40 minutes and must include:

- A complete sonata for violin and piano by one of the following composers:

L. v. Beethoven, F. Schubert, R. Schumann, J. Brahms, E. Grieg, G. Fauré, C. Franck, C. Debussy, M. Ravel, P. Hindemith, B. Bartók, S. Prokofiev, D. Shostakovich, P. Vladigerov, L. Pipkov, Vasco Abadjiev, etc. (candidate's choice).

- Virtuoso piece (candidate's choice).

Third Round

Candidates selected by the jury after the Second Round may participate. The program must include:

- Virtuoso piece – A new work, explicitly prepared for the Third Round (candidate's choice).

- Violin Concerto (selected movements) – Candidates must perform:

- First movement or
- Second and third movements or
- Third and fourth movements

from one of the following concertos:

L. v. Beethoven, J. Brahms, N. Paganini, Bruch (No. 1 or No. 2), Tchaikovsky, H. Wieniawski (No. 1 or No. 2).

COMPETITION RULES

Art. 15 – All pieces must be performed in their original versions.

Art. 16 – All works must be performed from memory, except for the sonata.

Art. 17 – All pieces, sonatas, and concertos must be performed with piano accompaniment. The Third Round and the Gala Concert will be performed with a symphony orchestra.

Art. 18 – The results and scores of the participants will be announced after the Third Round.

Art. 19 – Prizes will be awarded at the Gala Concert. Participation of the laureates in the Gala Concert is mandatory and pro bono.

Art. 20 – Candidates may perform their chosen pieces in any order but must specify the order in the application form.

Art. 21 – The submitted repertoire cannot be changed after registration.

Art. 22 – All performances are public.

Art. 23 – Participants must have the sheet music for all pieces that are not for solo violin.

Art. 24 – All candidates have the right to rehearse before each round of the competition by a timetable, approved by organizers.

COMPETITION SCHEDULE

Art. 25 – The competition will be organized and conducted according to the following schedule:

Day 1: Registration and First Round

Date: 20/11/2025 (Thursday)

- 08:30 – 10:00 – Registration of approved candidates and payment of the participation fee. The process will be conducted by the Competition Secretariat at the National Academy of Music “Prof. Pancho Vladigerov” in Sofia.

- 10:30 – Official opening of the competition and introduction of the International Jury.

- 11:00 – Drawing of lots to determine the order of performance for each round.

First Round:

- 11:00 – 12:00 – Rehearsal of candidates

- 12:00 – 14:00 – Auditions

- 14:00 – 14:30 – Break

- 14:00 – Rehearsal of candidates

- 14:30 – 16:30 – Auditions

- 16:30 – 17:00 – Break

- 17:00 – 19:00 – Auditions

Day 2: Second Round

Date: 21/11/2025 (Friday)

- 09:30 – 10:00 – Rehearsal of candidates
- 10:00 – 12:00 – Auditions
- 12:00 – 12:30 – Break
- 12:00 – Rehearsal of candidates
- 12:30 – 14:30 – Auditions
- 14:30 – 15:00 – Break
- 15:00 – 17:00 – Auditions

Day 3: Third Round

Date: 22/11/2025 (Saturday)

- 10:00 – 11:30 – Rehearsal of candidates with piano accompaniment
- 11:30 – 12:30 – Auditions with piano accompaniment
- 12:30 – 13:00 – Break
- 13:00 – 15:30 – Rehearsal of candidates with symphony orchestra
- 15:30 – 17:30 – Auditions with symphony orchestra
- 17:30 – 18:00 – Break
- 18:00 – 19:30 – Auditions with symphony orchestra

Day 4: Gala Concert

Date: 23/11/2025 (Sunday)

(Program to be announced later.)

JURY AND EVALUATIONS

Art. 26 – The jury consists of internationally recognized music teachers and violinists.

Art. 27 – The jury's evaluations are based on rules established and approved by the organizers.

Art. 28 – The jury’s decisions are final and cannot be contested.

Art. 29 – The jury has the right to interrupt a candidate’s performance if it exceeds the time limits specified in Art. 14 (1) and (2).

Art. 30 – Any jury member who has taught or had any professional relationship with a candidate in the past two years must disclose this before the candidate’s performance and withdraw from evaluating that candidate.

PRIZES

Art. 31 – The jury will award the following prizes:

- First Prize: €1,500, diploma-certificate, and laureate title.
- Second Prize: €1,000, diploma-certificate, and laureate title.
- Third Prize: €500, diploma-certificate, and laureate title.
- Young Talent Award: €300.

Special prizes will be announced additionally.

Art. 32 – All participants will receive a “Participation Diploma”.

Art. 33 – The jury reserves the right to divide or withhold prizes. Additional special awards from institutions, private sponsors, and other donors may be proposed, subject to the jury’s approval.

OTHER CONDITIONS

Art. 34 – The organizers reserve the right to modify these regulations under exceptional circumstances, with prior notice to participants.

Art. 35 – Additional events such as masterclasses, meetings, and concerts may be organized during the competition.

Art. 36 – The organizers are not responsible for any damages to persons or property occurring during travel to the competition or during the event itself.

Art. 37 – By entering the competition, participants confirm their acceptance of these regulations.

Art. 38 – All copyrights are owned by the organizers.

Art. 39 – By signing the application form, candidates confirm their acceptance of all competition rules.

Art. 40 – Candidates grant the organizers permission to store and use personal data, record performances, take photographs, and distribute recordings for competition purposes, promotion, and result announcements.

Art. 41 – All sound and video recordings are made by authorized personnel, and the organizers hold exclusive rights to store and distribute them. Unauthorized recordings and photography during auditions are strictly prohibited.

Art. 42 – The only legally binding version of these regulations is in Bulgarian.

PROJECT

“Vasco Abadjiev” International Violin Competition

The competition is named after Vasco Abadjiev for a reason. He was a great Bulgarian violinist who, unfortunately, has been undeservedly overlooked over the past half-century. A musician of global significance, he embodied one of the most refined traditions in violin and piano music. Beyond being a virtuoso performer, he was also a gifted composer. From an early age, he captivated European audiences, paving the way for other distinguished Bulgarian musicians and contributing to the establishment of the Bulgarian violin school.

The musician Vasco Abadjiev was a rare phenomenon in the world of classical music. He was unique and captivating. Even as a child, he was compared to legendary violinists such as Yehudi Menuhin and David Oistrakh. He was even called “the Bulgarian Paganini” and “the Paganini of the twentieth century.” Abadjiev possessed extraordinary sensitivity, intelligence, a phenomenal memory, and an innate musical intuition. He embodied the very ideals that today form the foundation of a united Europe.

Unfortunately, from the late 1950s onward, he was consigned to oblivion. Choosing freedom, he left Bulgaria and settled in West Germany. As a consequence, nearly three-quarters of his recordings were destroyed. All records produced by the “Radioprom” factory, were melted down, and books mentioning his name were removed and confiscated from libraries. In 1963, he was officially declared a “traitor to the motherland,” and a file was opened on him in the Third Section of the State Security.

On December 14, 1978, Vasco Abadjiev died in Hamburg, Germany, in total poverty and isolation. Despite his hardships, he remained a Bulgarian citizen, refusing foreign nationality even when it was offered to him—first by Queen Elisabeth of Belgium in 1939, later by the German government during World War II, and subsequently by other European governments.

With seven successful editions from 2011, the International Violin Competition “Vasco Abadjiev” strengthens cultural values by emphasizing Bulgarians’ cultural self-awareness, national pride, and sense of belonging to the European family—not only in a geographic and historical sense, but also through their remarkable artistic contributions to the European cultural heritage.

Objectives of the International Violin Competition “Vasco Abadjiev”

General Objectives:

- Establishing the name and legacy of the great Bulgarian violinist Vasco Abadjiev in national memory.
- Restoring the true significance of his contributions, both for Bulgarians and for connoisseurs of musical art across a united Europe.
- Enhancing Bulgaria’s cultural image worldwide through a prestigious competition, featuring a substantial prize fund, an international jury, and high-level patronage.

Specific Goals:

- Contributing to the global tradition of international competitions named after world-renowned violinists, ensuring equal standing among similar forums in Europe and beyond.
- Providing opportunities for talented Bulgarian and international violinists to launch and develop successful careers.
- Strengthening the authority and prestige of the Bulgarian violin school and musical performance on the global stage.

The competition is organized by the Club for UNESCO “Leonardo da Vinci” Sofia with the support of the Ministry of Culture of Bulgaria. Traditionally, it is held under the honorary patronage of:

- The Ministry of Culture
- The National Commission for UNESCO to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- The State Cultural Institute to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

- The Italian Cultural Institute
- His Excellency Mr. Gianni Stornello, Honorary Consul of Bulgaria for Piedmont and Val d'Aosta, Italy

The International Violin Competition “Vasco Abadjiev” has established itself as a highly esteemed platform for promoting young violin talents worldwide. The third edition received applications from five continents, reinforcing the competition’s global reach.

This contest plays a key role in shaping a positive international image of Bulgaria, thanks to its prestigious prize fund, distinguished international jury, honorary patronage, rigorous competition program, and the participation of a symphony orchestra. It also contributes to the global tradition of violin competitions, standing on equal footing with similar prestigious events in Europe and beyond, while elevating the status of Bulgarian art and culture.

The competition provides exceptional opportunities for young musicians, motivating them to develop their potential and advance their careers. The high professional standard required for participation serves as a powerful incentive for young talents, encouraging their artistic growth and showcasing their creativity.