

**“EP Working Group of the Moment” A joint initiative between the EHRA National Cardiac Societies Committee, the EHRA Young EP Committee and the EHRA E-Communications committee.**

### **Presentation of the Association of Cardiac Stimulation and Electrophysiology in Bulgaria**



The Association of Cardiac Stimulation and Electrophysiology in Bulgaria (ACEB) is a non-profit scientific organization. It is an independent society collaborating closely with the Bulgarian Society of Cardiology.

Link to ACEB website: <https://portal.bgpac.com/>

Link to Bulgarian Society of Cardiology: <https://bgcardio.org/>

Link to the journal of Bulgarian Society of Cardiology: <https://journal.bgcardio.org/>

#### **The Association consists of:**

- President: current president (2017-ongoing) is Vassil Traykov
- Nucleus, consisting of:
  - Board: Tchavdar Shalganov, Ivaylo Kozhuharov, Borislav Borisov, Nadya Pancheva
  - Secretary: Milko Stoyanov
  - Treasurer: Milen Predovski
  - Control body: chaired by Krasimir Dzhinsov
- There are currently 71 members of the Association. All of them are involved as professionals in the field of cardiac pacing and electrophysiology.

- In Bulgaria there are 5 fully operational EP centres and 23 centres dedicated to device implantation.
- With a population of 6.927 million (2020) Bulgaria has an average of 0.72 EP centres per million population and 3.3 centres implanting devices per million population.

#### **Our main goals are:**

- To support our members in their studies and research.
- To provide education in the field of cardiac pacing and electrophysiology.
- To improve quality of care.
- To deal with the limitations of reimbursement of procedures and devices.
- To develop national strategies for the management of arrhythmias (in close collaboration with the Bulgarian Society of Cardiology).

#### **Education and scientific activity**

The Association of Cardiac Pacing and Electrophysiology in Bulgaria considers education a leading priority. Therefore, we participate in major local events organized by other local societies such as:

- Joint sessions at meetings and congresses, organized by the Bulgarian Society of Cardiology and Bulgarian Society of Invasive Cardiology.
- Biennial National Congress of Cardiac Pacing and Electrophysiology with 50-100 participants on site and more than 500 participants online in the most recent event – 2021. In the 2021 edition there were 13 international speakers. The event was supported by EHRA with a joint session.

#### **Collaboration with EHRA**

- Two joint sessions held at the National Congress of the Bulgarian Society of Cardiology in 2018 and at the most recent National Congress of ACEB 2021.
- Over the last three years we have established an application process for EHRA membership covered by the Association. Approximately 20 members apply for this membership annually. In 2021 there are 28 EHRA members from Bulgaria.
- Members holding positions at EHRA:
  - Vassil Traykov: Member of EHRA National Cardiac Societies Committee

- Krasimir Dzhinsov: Young EP ambassador

## **EHRA Young EP**

Young electrophysiologists in Bulgaria are represented within EHRA by one Young EP Ambassador and 3 EHRA Young EP members.

## **Certification**

Bulgaria has implemented a local certification process in the field of cardiac pacing and electrophysiology. It includes mandatory training at a nationally recognized centre followed by a board exam. There are two levels of expertise that are included in the local certification process for both subspecialties – basic and expert.

Overall, in Bulgaria there are:

- **47 cardiologists** licensed to implant cardiac implantable electronic devices of whom **28** are licensed to implant complex devices: CRT and ICD
- **16 cardiologists** working in the field of EP of whom 8 are licensed and work as independent operators.
- **Since 2019 EHRA certification for cardiac EP and pacing is also recognized in Bulgaria.** In the last 4 years 12 Bulgarian physicians have taken the EHRA exams, eight of which have successfully passed them – 4 in EP and 4 in cardiac pacing.

## **Procedural volumes and registries**

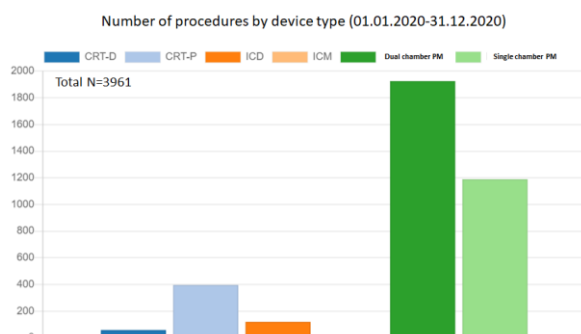
Bulgarian Association of Cardiac Pacing and Electrophysiology has developed two national registries to monitor the activity in cardiac pacing and EP in the country. They were introduced in 2014 and were later linked to the reimbursement process thus making data completion for each patient mandatory. This provided high-quality and complete data reflecting the activity in the two fields. The data accumulated in the registries served as a basis for two recent publications in the official journal of the Bulgarian Society of Cardiology:

- Review of interventional electrophysiology in Bulgaria in 2019 and 2020: data from the electronic ablation registry BG-EPHY. Bulgarian Cardiology 2021; 27(3): 31-42. doi: [10.3897/bgcardio.27.e66077](https://doi.org/10.3897/bgcardio.27.e66077)

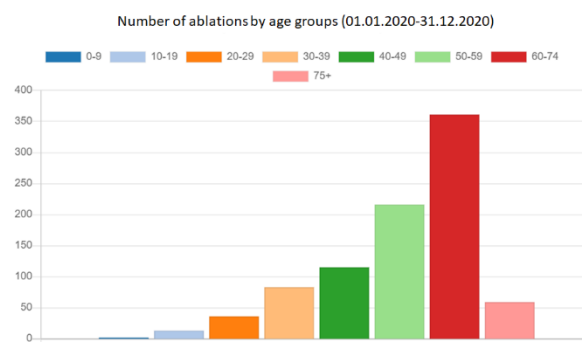
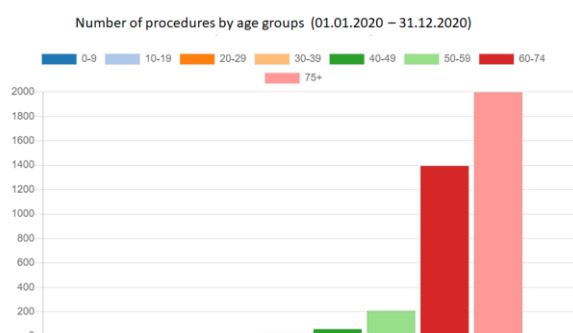
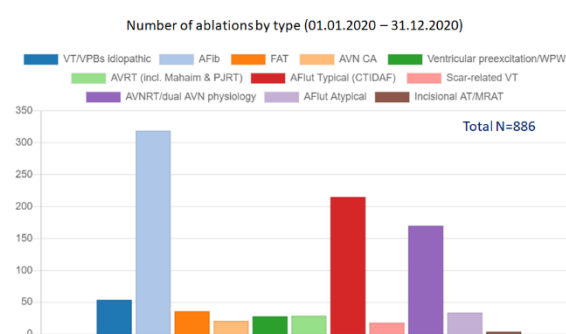
- Cardiac implantable electronic devices in Bulgaria: results from the electronic registry BG-Pace for the period 2019-2021. Bulgarian Cardiology 2021; 27(3): 69-87. doi: [10.3897/bgcardio.27.e71177](https://doi.org/10.3897/bgcardio.27.e71177)

The registries allow for the creation of precise summary of the activities in the field of cardiac pacing and EP for any given period with just a few mouse clicks. They also allow for a detailed analysis of the whole activity in Bulgaria:

### CIED volumes – 2020



### Catheter ablation volumes - 2020



### Participation in EHRA/ESC and other research projects:

- ESC EORP Atrial Fibrillation Ablation Long-Term Registry – 2 centres
- ESC EORP Atrial Fibrillation General Long-Term Registry – 5 centres

### Future directions:

- Better implementation of new technologies in the field by negotiating for better reimbursement in EP including field of high-power CIEDs aimed at further increase in the activity of CP and EP.
- Increasing EHRA membership and the membership in EHRA Young EP community.