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# 2017 Highlights

**Innovation.bg** has been ARC Fund's flagship initiative since 2004. **Innovation.bg** encompasses the *Innovation.bg* report, the National Innovation Forum and the Innovative Enterprise of the Year contest.

- **The *Innovation.bg* 2017 report** is focused on the technology interlinks of the national economy on a European and global scale with a special attention on the automotive industry and its related manufactures, which increase the attractiveness of Bulgaria for foreign investments as a R&D center, as well as a source of new technological solutions.
- **The National Innovation Forum (NIF)** is a platform for exchange of ideas and cooperation among the government, business community and research organizations. The National Innovation Forum in 2017 gathered more than 200 participants who shared views on Bulgaria's position in the global value chains. The event took place on 15 December 2017 on the eve of the Bulgarian Presidency of the EU Council.
- **The Innovative Enterprise of the Year contest** is open to participants from all sectors of industry nationwide. The contest is recognized by the European Commission as a best national practice for promoting innovation-based development. The contest of 2017 attracted nearly 100 applicant companies from various sectors of the economy. Ontotext JSC was given the Award for Market Leadership for its radical innovation in the management of big volumes of dynamic content and Proffit Technologies JSC received the Innovation for Quality of Life Award for its medical software and integrated digital service involving customized design and 3D printing of prosthesis for patients with amputated limbs.

## Innovation and business support

ARC Consulting (part of ARC Fund Group) has been coordinating the Bulgarian node of Enterprise Europe network since 2008. EEN-Bulgaria co-organized some of the most significant business events in the calendar of Enterprise Europe Network in 2017, among which E<sup>2</sup> Tech4Cities 2017 – Energy & Efficiency Technologies for Cities Brokerage Event in Brussels, 10th Cluster Matchmaking Mission – European Cluster Collaboration Platform in Thessaloniki, Computex Taipei 2017 Brokerage Event, SME Vision2020 Brokerage Event in Skopje, Reducing, Reusing and Recycling – Business opportunities in the circular economy in Oslo. These events resulted in more than 100 negotiations between Bulgarian and foreign companies on business and technological partnerships in a variety of sectors, with some of them reaching international agreements, mainly in the automotive, ICT and gaming industries.

## Science, technology and innovation policy

Building on its commitment to Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI), in 2017 ARC Fund continued engaging citizens in improving the connection and collabora-

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tion between science and society and in developing a more inclusive, responsive and responsible research and innovation system. Based on the results of several consultative workshops with citizens across the EU, ARC Fund developed the policy report *Citizens' Views of Engagement in Research-Related Activities* and made important contributions to the preparation of a *Social Innovation Atlas*.

### **Safer internet**

Since 2005, ARC Fund has been coordinating the Safer Internet Centre (SIC) in Bulgaria as part of the European Insafe network and the International Association of internet hotlines INHOPE. In 2017, the SIC Hotline processed over 4000 reports. Hundreds of online child sexual exploitation websites and materials were identified and removed. SIC delivered trainings on how to avoid online threats and risks and respond to incidents on the Internet to over 800 teachers, school psychologists, school counselors and social workers, more than 300 parents and over 350 children and teenagers in more than 25 towns nationwide. The Cyberscouts Training Program, underway for a third consecutive year, has proven to be one of the most successful awareness raising and training tools.