

Eighty years of the Bulletin of Geosciences

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Abstract: The eightieth anniversary of the Bulletin of Geosciences, the periodical edited by the Czech Geological Survey, is documented and evaluated. The milestones in the development of this Bulletin, which have mirrored the evolution of the activities of the Czech Geological Survey, as well as political and social changes, are described.

Key words: Bulletin of Geosciences, editorial policy, Czech Geological Survey

Introduction

With this issue, the Bulletin of Geosciences has reached the end of its 80th volume, and a practically unbroken eighty-year record of publication. During these years of continued coverage of the geosciences, the Bulletin has witnessed many changes and reorganisations of state structure as well as of the Czech Geological Survey. Important geological events have been anchored in the contents of the Bulletin, such as the stratigraphic events of the Earth's history, the onset of plate tectonics, impact cratering, and international geological congresses.

The Bulletin has undergone several changes throughout its history, as its title, its chief editors, its layout, and its distribution policy have all changed several times. Nevertheless, its main objective has remained unchanged. Even at the time of the establishment of the Geological Survey of Czechoslovakia, the problem of publishing the results of our geological investigations was already urgent. This is why the Geological Survey's responsibility for publishing geoscience literature was stated in its foundation charter.

The Bulletin of Geosciences was not the first journal of the Survey, but it was the first one to appear regularly on a quarterly, bimonthly, or annual basis. The Bulletin was overtaken by the *Sborník* (Journal of the Geological Survey) and the *Knihovna* (Library of the Geological Survey). Whereas the *Sborník* started to appear regularly each year, the *Knihovna* was only published occasionally.

The first issue of the Bulletin in 1925 and its successors

The appearance of the first issue of the Bulletin can be considered as a significant editorial act because of its importance and its subsequently unbroken record. The State Geological Survey of the Republic of Czechoslovakia was a successor of the Austrian "Reichsanstalt", the Geological Survey responsible for geological activities in all of the countries belonging to the Austrian-Hungarian Empire un-

til the end of the First World War. In the same way, the Bulletin can be considered as the successor of the geological periodical that was edited by this Institute.

In the editorial of the first issue (see Fig. 1), the Survey's director emphasized that detailed reports on mapping and research are to be published there. He also expressed his hope that the Bulletin would be a high-quality periodi-

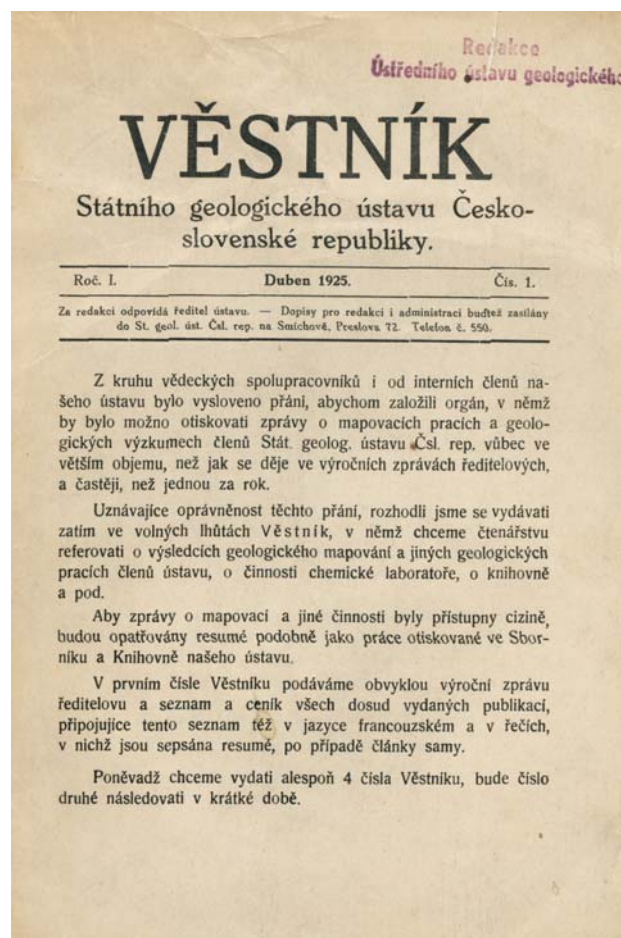


Figure 1. First issue of the Bulletin of Geosciences – former *Věstník Státního geologického ústavu Československé republiky* (Bulletin of the State Geological Survey of the Republic of Czechoslovakia).

cal, based on the importance of geological literature for science and practice, as well as for culture and education. Esteemed professors of geology, such as Cyril Purkyně (the first director of the Survey), František Slavík, and Radim Kettner stood at the cradle of the Survey and the Bulletin. A French résumé was attached to each publication “in order to make the reports understandable also in foreign countries”. It is of interest that within the 158 pages of the first issue, short papers on Czech geology were published together with one paper on the geology of the Carpathian Ruthenia (at that time part of Czechoslovakia). The latter article, curiously enough, was written in English, with another in German, while the remaining papers were in Czech with short French abstracts. Reports on research activities have been an integral part of the Bulletin since its very beginning; not only general reports on the Survey’s activities written by its directors, but also reports on the activities of the chemical laboratories, and, starting from 1927, reports from the Czechoslovak Society of Mineralogy and Geology. The structure of the Bulletin crystallized step by step, and by 1928 the contents were subdivided into five main sections: A – original publications concerning geology, petrology, mineralogy, and paleontology, B – reports from the State Geological Survey, C – reports from the chemical laboratory, D – reports from the Czechoslovak Society for Mineralogy and Geology, E – chronicles, reviews, and reports from the library. By 1935 the sections for chronicles, personal columns, and reviews had been enlarged. Mineralogical and geological bibliographies also started to appear in several issues.

Up to 1938 Czech articles with French abstracts strongly prevailed, even though some German papers and occasional abstracts in English also appeared. From 1928 the French subtitle “Věstník du Service Géologique de la République Tchécoslovaque” was printed on the front page.

Articles of local geological character dominated the topics of the first ten issues, followed by paleontological papers. Many of the titles included adjectives like “preliminary” or substantives such as “remarks” or “notes”. Major papers of general interest were relatively rare, even though some of the smaller paleontological and petrological pa-

pers were of significant interest and are still being referred to in the literature.

The 1937 Bulletin was opened by the obituary notice announcing the death of the first president of Czechoslovakia, T. G. Masaryk, by the following words in French:

“C’est avec une profonde douleur que la Service géologique de la République Tchécoslovaque joint au deuil de toute la nation qui pleure la mort de celui qui fut son Libérateur.” This is followed by another notice concerning the passing away of the first director of the Survey, Prof. Cyril Purkyně.

With this and the subsequent 1938 volume, the first era of the Bulletin had come to an end. Beginning in 1939 the Bulletin and the entire Survey had to change not only its title, but also its contents and language while under Nazi occupation. The German title “Věstník der Geologischen Anstalt für Böhmen und Mähren”, which was changed in 1940 to “Mitteilungen der Geologischen Anstalt für Böhmen und Mähren”, was printed at the top of the front page. Articles written in Czech had full-length German translations, and many papers were written in German.

A complete overview of the Bulletin’s names is listed in Table 1.

The post-war development

Immediately after the Second World War, the Bulletin re-adopted its pre-war title. However, its structure and volume changed drastically. Russian abstracts started to appear together with English ones, whereas French abstracts and German articles hardly survived. In comparison with the 1946 volume, that of 1947 was doubled in volume as the post-war boom in geology and the need for mineral resources became evident. Folders, maps, and photographic plates grew in number, and many English and Russian articles appeared. This evolution culminated in the 1949 volume, after the communist takeover and a political reversal. This manifested itself mainly in political editorials and proclamations on the role of geology in a socialist economy.

A new layout for the Bulletin was adopted in 1952. Changes in the organisation of geological work were in

Table 1. The history of the titles of the current Bulletin of Geosciences

Year	Title in original language	English analogy
1925–1938	Věstník Státního geologického Ústavu Československé republiky	Bulletin of the State Geological Survey of the Republic of Czechoslovakia
1939	Věstník Geologického ústavu pro Čechy a Moravu	Bulletin of the Geological Survey of Bohemia and Moravia
1940–1942	Zprávy Geologického ústavu pro Čechy a Moravu	Reports of the Geological Survey of Bohemia and Moravia
1943–1944	Zprávy Úřadu pro výzkum půdy v Čechách a na Moravě	Reports of the Office for the soil investigation in Bohemia and Moravia
1945–1950	Věstník Státního geologického Ústavu Republiky Československé	Bulletin of the State Geological Survey of the Republic of Czechoslovakia
1951–1973	Věstník Ústředního Ústavu Geologického	Bulletin of the Central Geological Survey
1974–1991	Věstník Ústředního ústavu geologického	Bulletin of the Geological Survey, Prague
1992–2002	Věstník Českého geologického ústavu	Bulletin of the Czech Geological Survey
2002 onwards	Bulletin of Geosciences	Bulletin of Geosciences

progress during that year, and this is apparent in the Bulletin's content. Its structure started to be as follows: A – personal column, B – original articles, C – mapping reports, D – general reviews, E – reviews of literature, F – chronicles. Only short papers were published, mostly without abstracts, or with Russian and English annotations. An overview of the Survey's activities was published in almost every volume. Great emphasis was laid on the positive evaluation of geological science in the countries of the Eastern Block. Nevertheless, many important papers appeared from various fields of the Earth sciences. Some English papers were also published. Moreover, English translations of the table of contents began to be printed in 1968. The sections of discussions and chronicles were extended. In 1973 much space was devoted to the report on the International Geological Congress in Montreal. In 1989, an entire issue was dedicated to the International Geological Congress in Washington.

These developments demonstrate the gradual approach toward the modern Bulletin of Geosciences.

From institutional newsletter to scientific periodical

In its very beginnings the Bulletin also fulfilled the function of a "gazette", as it was the official journal of a formal institution that published reports on activities, chronicles, obituaries, awards, and biographies with lists of publications. Twenty years ago the Survey's directorate posed the question of whether the Bulletin should have the internal character of a newsletter, or if it should be transformed into a purely scientific periodical. Fortunately, the second op-

tion won, being backed not only by progressive members of the management but also by a great majority of Czech geologists.

Towards publications of general interest

The so-called "preliminary reports" and "notes and reports" appeared very often in the former Bulletin. This system of publications was very popular among Czech geologists who were concerned with establishing priority for new discoveries. This practice had already been strictly abandoned during the late 1980s.

Towards the international scientific language

In this respect the Bulletin passed through developments that were similar to those experienced by many European geoscientific periodicals, though with some delay. Czech papers, although with French, English, German, and Russian abstracts, gave place to articles written in English. Only English manuscripts have been accepted since 1998.

Towards an international perspective

As seen in Fig. 2, foreign contributions comprise a significant proportion of the Bulletin's contents. In recent years, the percentage of foreign authors is getting up. The publications of international research teams are far from being an exception nowadays.

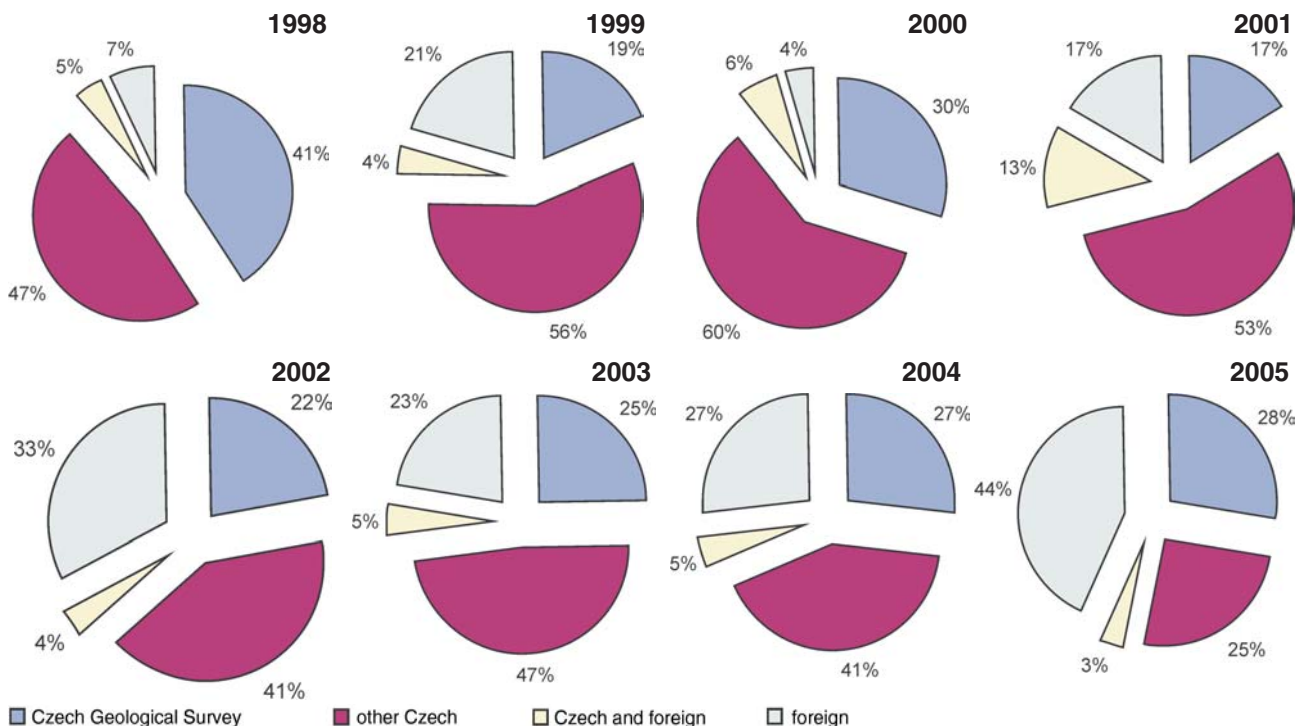


Figure 2. The proportion of papers published by Czech and foreign geoscientists and/or research teams.

The Bulletin offers room for proceedings

Some issues of the Bulletin are devoted to important geoscientific problems. From 1999 onwards nine special issues have been published (Table 2).

Towards an international Editorial Board

Since 1990 the Editorial Board has been extended by members from foreign countries. The present Board, nominated by the Survey's Director, has five non-Czech Members from the United Kingdom, Germany, France, and Slovakia.

Towards progressive manuscript processing

Since 2000 all the manuscripts are evaluated first by a handling editor who suggests two reviewers, preferably from

abroad. Their reviews are evaluated by the Chief Editor for further processing.

Towards an international layout

Since 1989 the Bulletin has been published in a large format and printed on high-quality paper. A table of contents is printed on the front page, which is illustrated by colour photographs with geological themes that represent various geoscientific disciplines.

The first coloured geological map was printed in the Bulletin in 1966. Colour photographic plates and text photos started to appear in the 1980s, while the current issues are completely multicoloured.

Towards an informational society

The Bulletin website is <http://www.geology.cz/app/bulletin.htm>. Full papers in PDF format are available there, starting from Volume 77/2002.

The Bulletin is indexed and/or abstracted in: Current contents (Physics, Chemical and Earth Sciences), GeoRef, GEOBASE, Zoological Record, EZB – Elektronische Zeitschriften Bibliothek (full version of papers), and DOAJ – Directory of Open Access Journals.

The esteemed editors-in-chief

The function of chief editors requires not only great geoscientific knowledge, but also professional and diplomatic capabilities. Among the Bulletin's chief editors there have been the Survey's directors and research directors, heads of departments, and/or reputable senior geologists. A list of them is given in Table 3.

The role of executive editors should also be mentioned. Several names deserve to be added to the list of good souls of the Bulletin's staff. Helena Neumannová

Table 2. Overview of monothematic issues in years 1999–2005

Year	Title of the special number
1999	Eighty years of the Czech Geological Survey
	Proceeding of the 8 th Coal Geology Conference held in Prague in 1998
2000	Neoproterozoic of the Barrandian (Czech Republic)
2002	Proceedings of the conference: Petrology, geochemistry, and structural geology of phosphorus and fluorine rich granites
	Proceedings of the conference: Asteroids, impact cratering and shock metamorphism
2003	The Middle Ordovician in the temporary outcrops of Prague
	Complex geochemical research on interaction and migration of organic and inorganic compounds in rocks and soils
	Memorial volume in honour of Prof. Ivo Chlupáč (Early Paleozoic stratigraphy and paleontology, bibliography of works of Prof. Chlupáč)
2005	Proceedings of the 10 th Coal Geology Conference held in Prague in 2004

Table 3. Chief editors of the Bulletin

Years	Name	Fields of interest
1925–1930	Prof. Dr. Cyril Purkyně	stratigraphy, paleontology, Survey's director
1931–1934	Prof. Dr. Odolen Kodým	regional and structural geology
1934–1937	Prof. Dr. Josef Woldřich	applied geology, petrology, paleontology, Survey's director
1937–1941	Dr. Vojtěch Smetana	applied geology, mineralogy, paleontology, Survey's director
1941–1944	Prof. Dr. Odolen Kodým	regional and structural geology
1945–1965	Dr. Josef Svoboda	regional and economic geology, stratigraphy, Survey's director
1966–1970	Doc. Dr. Zdeněk Roth	Carpathian geology, petroleum geology
1970–1974	Dr. Vladimír Šibrava	Quaternary geology, Survey's director
1974–1983	Dr. Zdeněk Vejnar	petrology and structural geology of crystalline formations
1983–1989	Dr. Jan Hus Bernard	mineralogy, ore deposits
1989–2000	Dr. Mojmír Eliáš	Carpathian geology, lithology, stratigraphy
2000–2003	Dr. Jan Pašava	economic geology, geochemistry
2003 onwards	Dr. Lilian Švábenická	Carpathian stratigraphy, micropaleontology

was the Bulletin's executive editor until 1958. She was replaced by Marie Vejlupková, who served in this capacity until her retirement in 1985. Šárka Beránková took this office until her retirement in 1999. After a short period of rapid takeovers, Eva Pačesová took up the torch in 2001 followed by Petr Maděra in 2003, who finally handed the baton on to Šárka Doležalová in 2005.

Some statistics

The thematic structure of articles published in the Bulletin during the past nine years is documented in Fig. 3.

In the interest of IF (Impact Factor) calculation the proportions of articles representing individual disciplines, a diagram is also attached (Fig. 4).

The data on the proportions of Czech and foreign authors are also interesting. The Czech geoscientists are subdivided into two groups, the first one representing staff members of the Czech Geological Survey, the second being comprised of contributors from other institutions (see diagram on Fig. 2).

Attached diagram (Fig. 2) shows the more-or-less expected situation: the share of foreign contributions is slightly increasing, while that of international teams has remained stable.

The Bulletin's plans for the future

Since its foundation the Bulletin has experienced rapid growth in scientific scope, and has been transformed from a sort of newsletter into a real international scientific journal. As the Bulletin will try to mirror the evolution of the geosciences, the Editorial Board hopes that the ongoing development of the Bulletin has been noticeable and has positioned it well for continued progress in the forthcoming years.

At present, the Bulletin's Chief Editor, Associate Editors, and the entire Editorial Board is giving special consideration to several important measures, such as

- quality control in order to achieve a high standard submissions;
- calls for papers and the publishing of challenging contributions referred to in high-impact periodicals;
- advertising and the extension of contacts with domestic and foreign geological communities.

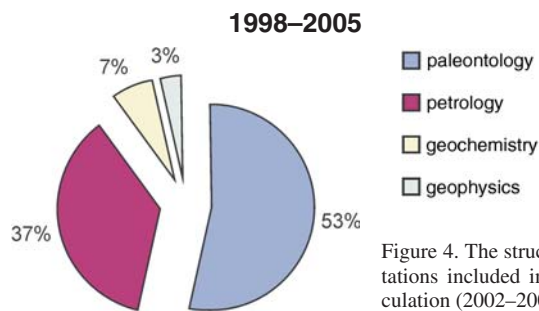


Figure 4. The structure of citations included into IF calculation (2002-2004).

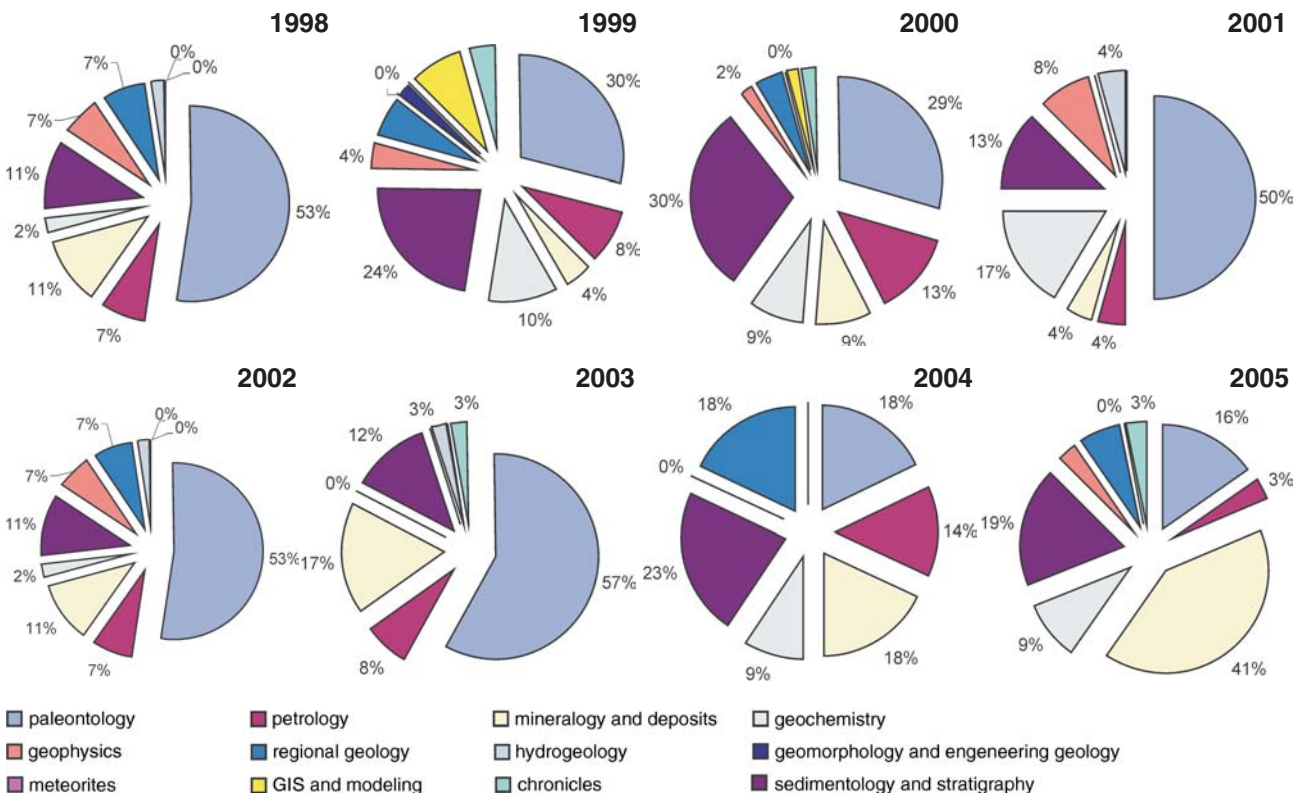


Figure 3. The proportion of published papers according to geoscientific discipline.