

This year Russia is being invited to Greece as the Special Guest of the 16th Thessaloniki International Book Fair, May 9-12, 2019. On the Fair's opening day – May 9, 2019 – the “2019-2020 Russia - Greece Year of Language and Literature” will be launched, a celebration first proposed by Russian President Vladimir Putin and Greek Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras. In 2020, Greece will be invited to Russia, in turn, as Russia's Special Guest at the Moscow International Book Fair.

A major 200-square-meter Russian stand will be at the center of the exhibition pavilion. The Russian exhibition will showcase new editions of classic and contemporary fiction and non-fiction as well as literature for young readers, with an entire section devoted to Russian-Greek textbooks and Russian translations of Greek writers. In the center of the stand will be a large stage for public presentations by and meetings with Russian authors. And a significant part of the stand will be given to Russian universities. Visitors can learn how to take courses and pursue degrees at leading Russian universities and also become acquainted with new textbooks. The Pushkin State Russian Language Institute will introduce new online programs for Russian language study as well.

Award-winning Russian writers Alexey Varlamov and Sergei Shargunov will be the featured authors at the fair; the public will have the opportunity to hear them speak about their new works and modern Russian literature. Well-known children's book author Yury Nechiporenko will introduce his new book, *The Village Fair Boy - The Life and Work of Nikolai Gogol* which has been released in a Greek translation (*Το αγόρι της Χαρμοσύνης – Η ζωή και το έργο του Νικολάι Γκόγκολ*) by Kasseris Publications; the book's author Yury Nechiporenko will speak about Gogol's relation to Greece.

Representatives of the Gorky Institute of World Literature of the Russian Academy of Sciences will share research news and talk of their latest discoveries. Book fair visitors also will have a chance to attend a presentation of the Orthodox Encyclopedia, a 53-volume scientific work that will be presented at fair's end as a gift from Russia to the library of the Orthodox Church in Thessaloniki. In addition, the Lomonosov Moscow State University Student Theater will perform theatrical productions about the works of Alexander Pushkin and the Second World War.

Come visit the Fair – and visit Russia in Thessaloniki!