



Common Meeting of Czech Rectors Conference and Slovak Rectors Conference in Trnava on 6 and 7 June 2024

Resolution

Czech Rectors Conference (CRC) and Slovak Rectors Conference (SRC) adopted at the Common Meeting the following resolution:

1. The previous common meeting of CRC and SRC was held on 2 and 3 June 2022 in Prague. At the meeting on 6 and 7 June 2024 in Trnava, Rectors of Czech and Slovak Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) mutually informed each other about the development in the higher education sector of the Czech Republic (CR) and the Slovak Republic (SR) and discussed current events. Those present appreciated the regular common meetings alternately organized by both HEIs representations.
2. CRC and SRC reject any form of violence and terror and call for respect for democratic values and principles and for the return to decent discussion in public space. CRC and SRC reject the spread of disinformation, hoaxes and statements that question scientific evidence. They also call for diplomatic solutions to ongoing war conflicts in the world and continue to offer help and support to war-affected academics and higher education sector.
3. CRC and SRC fulfill their long-term goals, which are the full participation of HEIs of the CR and the SR in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA), the European Education Area (EEA), the European Research Area (ERA). These create a framework for international cooperation. At the same time, CRC and SRC support close bilateral relations between HEIs, their representatives and academics and students themselves.
4. CRC and SRC agreed that their common goal is to ensure that universities in the CR and the SR are safe places for students and employees. Representatives of CRC and SRC reported on systemic steps and recommendations which are supposed to strengthen the security at HEIs. They request the governments of the CR and the SR to pay an increased attention not only to the protection of so-called soft targets, but also to cyber security and procedures that can eliminate unknown interferences and strengthen strategic autonomy, research security and knowledge security. CRC and SRC consider the sharing of information about the security of HEIs to be very important.
5. CRC and SRC have long considered institutional autonomy and academic freedom as part of the basic principles of modern universities, which develop their institutional profiles and effectively fulfill their mission. They request that all changes concerning HEIs are to be discussed with their official representations. They consider the principle of responsibility of HEIs themselves, as well as the compliance of processes with European Standards and Guidelines (ESG), to be essential in ensuring the quality of provided higher education.
6. In accordance with the recommendations of world organizations and international academic associations, CRC and SRC request the government of the CR and the government of the SR to ensure adequate resources for HEIs so that they can be attractive institutions for domestic and foreign students and academics and can fulfill their mission. They demand to systematically increase investments from public resources in higher education and investments in science, research and innovation to the level of the average of developed OECD countries.

7. CRC and SRC adopted a statement on the elections to the European Parliament, which will be held in the CR on 7 and 8 June 2024 and in the SR on 8 June 2024 (attachment).
8. CRC and SRC will continue the tradition of common meetings and have agreed that the next common meeting will be held on 4 and 5 June 2026 at the Academy of Performing Arts in Prague and will be organized by CRC. In this context, CRC and SRC also consider cooperation within the framework of the European University Association to be important, of which both representatives have been full collective members since 2001. CRC and SRC have been representing Rectors of HEIs and universities for more than 30 years. SRC was established on the grounds of the joint Czech and Slovak HEIs Rectors Club on 25 November 1992, CRC on 28 January 1993.

In the university city of Trnava on 7 June 2024

On behalf of the Czech Rectors Conference

Prof. Milena Králíčková
President

On behalf of the Slovak Rectors Conference

Assoc. Prof. Vladimír Hiadlovský
President

Statement of Czech Rectors Conference and Slovak Rectors Conference regarding the European Parliament Elections 2024

Czech Rectors Conference (CRC) and Slovak Rectors Conference (SRC) consider the European Union as a guarantor of democracy and plurality of opinions, but also of institutional autonomy and academic freedoms. Academic freedom is inextricably linked to democracy, the rule of law and human rights. These principles are guaranteed in the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights.

Citizens of the Czech Republic (CR) and the Slovak Republic (SR), through the membership of both countries, have obtained for example the opportunity of study at Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and universities in EU Member States under the same conditions as apply to nationals of the given Member State. Students of HEIs and academics can use the Erasmus program for the purpose of academic mobility and internship. Researchers have the opportunity to receive financial support for their research from European programs. The EU also supports research aimed to combat climate change, addresses the digital transformation and the advance in the field of artificial intelligence.

CRC and SRC identify themselves with the arguments and recommendations adopted by the European University Association in the document "A renewed social contract for Europe and its universities. How universities and policy makers can work together to shape a strong, open and future-proof Europe" and the Initiative "Universities for Enlightenment" in the declaration "Universities vote for Europe!"

CRC and SRC recommend the citizens of the CR and the SR to use their vote in the elections to the European Parliament, which will be held in the CR on 7 and 8 June 2024 and in the SR on 8 June 2024. They call on politicians running in the elections to ensure that European and national politics guarantee a firm commitment to Europe based on the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

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Prof. Milena Králíčková
President

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