

Summer School of Slavonic Studies Attracts Students from as far as Peru, Mongolia and Mexico

Saint Vitus Cathedral, Říp Mountain, Vyšehrad and Lány. These and other symbolic venues in the Czech Republic were visited by participants of the 58th Summer School of Slavonic Studies. In total, 142 students came to Prague from 37 countries this year. The closing ceremony of the Summer School was held in the Great Hall of the Karolinum on 21 August.

The Summer School is a regular meeting point for students from all over the world. This year, the most numerous group was that of the Germans (30 participants), followed by students from Russia (12) and Poland and Spain (8 participants from each of these countries). Seven students came from Tai-wan. Other countries which sent their representatives to Charles University include Peru, Mongolia, Mexico and Columbia.

The participants took courses in the Czech language, with four levels of proficiency. In addition to language instruction, students in the advanced courses were offered seminars on specialized topics.

“Personally, I am happy that the phonetics component in the courses for beginners and advanced beginners met with such good response and that the other participants showed a huge interest in the optional afternoon consultations with professional phoneticians who were extremely helpful in eliminating pronunciation deficiencies among the students,” says PhDr. Jiří Hasil, Ph.D., Director of the Summer School and Deputy Head of the Institute of Czech Studies, CU FA.

Lectures were devoted to some of the anniversaries relating to Czech culture and history which we mark this year, such as the 670th anniversary of the promotion of the Prague Bishopric to Archbishopric and the 670th anniversary of the laying of the foundation stone of St Vitus Cathedral in Prague Castle, 110th anniversary of the establishment of the Foundation of Josef, Marie and Zdeňka Hlávka, the 100th anniversary of the breakout of WWI, anniversaries of major personalities of Czech culture, Bohumil Hrabal, Jiří Kolář, Jan Švankmajer and Bertha von Suttner. "Unfortunately, the lectures drew rather few attendees in total this year," says Jiří Hasil.

As has been the tradition for years, the language courses and lectures were complemented by extensive cultural and social programme. Afternoon outings included a tour of Prague theatres and Vyšehrad; weekend trips were made to numerous attractive destinations such as Lány, Říp Mountain, Kersko, or the Czech Paradise.

The 58th Summer School of Slavonic Studies was held under the auspices of the Rector of Charles University, Professor Tomáš Zima, from 25 July to 22 August.