

Press Release

Prague, November 11st, 2022

Higher education experts met in Prague. CZEDUCON conference began

The fourth annual CZEDUCON conference is dedicated to the development of strategies and policies in the field of higher education.

The Minister of Education, Youth and Sports, Vladimír Balaš, opened the international CZEDUCON conference today. The conference is organised by the Czech National Agency for International Education and Research (DZS) together with the Ministry of Education as part of the Czech Republic's activities in the field of education under the Czech Presidency of the Council of the EU. Top representatives of European universities met with representatives of the European Commission as well as experts, government officials and education specialists to jointly address the issues of developing and implementing strategies in the field of internationalisation of higher education in Europe.

"We have made great strides in internationalisation in recent years. I have a very positive view of the activities of the European Commission which aim to promote cooperation between universities. I am very happy about the involvement of Czech universities in alliances of European universities as these connections are the future of higher education. That is why I am very glad that on the occasion of the Czech Presidency of the EU Council we could organise this conference and thus create a space for meeting and joint discussion on the future of higher education in Europe," said Minister Balas in his opening speech.

Themis Christophidou, Director-General for Education and Culture of the European Commission stressed the importance of international cooperation in addressing current challenges in her speech.

"CZEDUCON represents an exceptional opportunity to meet and discuss current challenges and I believe we are well equipped to face them. Using European tools for university collaboration, guided by common values and shared visions, we can lead European universities towards a sustainable and digital future. The development of the European University Alliance, the European Student Card Initiative and the Joint European Degree Label will help to achieve the same goal."

Over the course of two days, over fifty experts will take the stage at the O2 Universum Arena in Prague to discuss topics such as the *European University Alliance*, digitalization of education and virtual learning exchanges, joint educational programmes and synergies between education and research. The opening panel will bring together Deputy Minister Václav Velčovský, Sophia Eriksson Waterschoot from the European Commission's Directorate-General for Education and Culture, the Rector of Charles University Milena Králíčková and Matteo Vespa, President of the European Students' Union. Other keynote speakers include Kateřina Šimáčková, a judge at the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg, whose lecture will focus on the importance of European values in contemporary society.

"The conference brought experts in the field of international higher education and decision-makers from a number of European countries to Prague. These people are shaping the European education space and deciding its future. Their meeting therefore has an important place among the activities of the Council Presidency, and I am glad that the CZEDUCON conference, which DZS organises every year, has become a platform for it," says Václav Velčovský, Deputy Minister of Education, Youth and Sports.



"This year's CZEDUCON conference is exceptional for us. We have elevated it to the European level and focused on the development of strategies and policies in the field of internationalisation. Although internationalisation is already an almost self-evident part of the development of higher education, we still have room for further development. One of our goals as the Czech National Agency for International Education and Research is to shift the perception of internationalisation in education to the same level as internationalisation in science. We all know that cutting-edge research is only produced in an international context. Higher education should be viewed in the same way and international cooperation should play an integral part of it," adds Michal Uhl, Director of the Czech National Agency for International Education and Research.

The conference will be held in Prague until tomorrow. Selected parts of the programme can be watched on czeducon.cz without prior registration.

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Czech National Agency for International Education and Research

The main objective of the Czech National Agency for International Education is to facilitate international cooperation in education. It is responsible for administration of European educational programmes, for example Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps. More information can be found at dzs.cz/en.

