
Charles University at the EAIE 2014

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When the EAIE, European Association for International Education decided that the capital city of the Czech Republic, Prague, will be the next host of the EAIE annual conference, following previous hosts Copenhagen, Dublin and Istanbul, Charles University was thrilled. EAIE is the largest conference and fair of the European higher education, annually visited by several thousand of higher education officers. It is always a great opportunity to introduce and promote the institutions located in the host city of the conference – such as it was this September for Charles University in Prague.

Using this unique occasion, Charles University decided to endorse itself by introducing its own exhibition stand at the EAIE conference fair in Prague Congress Centre. Most of the other Czech universities, which are traditionally part of the common stand Study in the Czech Republic, were direct neighbors to the Charles University's promotion area. This arrangement made it easy for the visitors of the exhibition to find their Czech partners and specifically the stand of Charles University in the conference fair effortlessly.

Charles University also took the opportunity to invite the conference visitors to its premises twice during the conference.

With the cooperation with the EAIE, a Campus Tour was prepared for the first day of the conference, Tuesday 16th September, which was visited by 92 representatives of universities and other higher education institutions from all around the globe. The participants visited the historical buildings of Charles University in the Old Town of Prague as well as one of our mini campuses, campus Albertov, the seat of 3 CU schools – First Faculty of Medicine, Faculty of Science and Faculty of Mathematics and Physics. The Rector of Charles University, Professor Tomáš Zima, invited another 170 distinguished guests to a reception held in the historical seat of Charles University, the Carolinum, on the eve of the conference fair opening.

The EAIE conference fair took place in Prague Congress Centre from Wednesday 17th to Friday 19th September, becoming a huge success with a record number of over 5000 participants. Aside of the fair with almost 200 exhibition stands, a broad offer of workshops and sessions with higher education topics was offered to the participants, taking place from Tuesday 16th until Friday 19th September. The topics were various and many of them truly intriguing, chaired by leading personalities from the higher education sector.

A great interest for European educators were no doubt the sessions introducing or enhancing new exchange and partnership programmes of the Erasmus+, run by the experts of the European Commission, or the session on the Swiss Mobility Programme, which currently substitutes the Erasmus+ in Switzerland. However there were many other topics to discuss, such as international student recruitment, English curricula in international as well as domestic study programmes, traditional and new internationalization options (with a session on various distance and online study programmes), strategic partnerships, employability of the graduates, changes of the curriculum for the non-mobile students, the effects of the economical crisis on the higher education, mobility of the university employees, etc., etc.

Charles University did its best to promote its various English taught programmes, Czech language preparatory classes as well as the many options for the students coming for short-term exchange stays of one or two semesters, with the Erasmus+ programme or other international student mobility structures. All CU schools took turns at the EAIE exhibition stand, providing information service for the current and possible future partner institutions. Aside from that, the members of the Rectorate's International Office and Information, Advisory and Social Centre took part in the whole EAIE exhibition, supplying the CU stand's visitors with the general information on Charles University and details of the various exchange possibilities for students and staff members alike.