



CZECH RECTORS CONFERENCE

Brief History 1993—2013

Czech Rectors Conference established on 28 January 1993

Czech Rectors Conference Origin Roots

The Czech Rectors Conference (CRC) origin roots are in the Czech and Slovak University Rectors Club (RC) officially founded in Žilina, Slovakia, at the Transport and Communication University on 26 April 1990, following a meeting of five Czech rectors held at Czech Technical University in Prague on 14 March 1990. It was established by seven members – four Czech university rectors (Tomáš Čermák, Ostrava Mining University; Stanislav Hanzl, Czech Technical University in Prague; Arnošt Höhnig, Brno University of Technology; Věněk Šilhán, University of Economics in Prague) and three Slovak university rectors (Norbert Frištacký, Slovak Technical University in Bratislava; Pavol Kluvánek, Transport and Communication University in Žilina; Miroslav Kusý, Comenius University in Bratislava). The first RC President was Professor Milan Jelínek, the first rector of Masaryk University in Brno in the post-communist era. In the planning period of building the administration pool for the RC in Brno, which is on half way between Prague and Bratislava, he managed to find an active collaborator in the person of Professor Martin Černohorský – the Silesian University in Opava rector – who agreed to take responsibility for that and whose effort resulted in the RC Secretariat open in Brno Masaryk University premises on 1 March 1992. Professor Černohorský was officially in charge of the RC Secretariat operation becoming thus a member of RC leaders (Vice-President) bearing the title of Chancellor.

In the next development phase two sections – RC Czech Section and RC Slovak Section – formed (26 September 1992) within the RC while the RC remained a unit. The two RC sections evolved into two Rectors Conferences – Czech Rectors Conference (CRC) and Slovak Rectors Conference (SRC). The RC Slovak Section made the decision of reforming into SRC at its first ever assembly on 25 November 1992. The RC Czech Section needed three sessions until it reformed.

Czech Rectors Conference Establishment

At the first meeting held on 22 October 1992, the RC Czech Section elected Professor Zdeněk Kovář, Technical University of Liberec rector, for its President. Professor Černohorský kept being responsible for RC Secretariat operation. Having discussed the

matter beforehand with rector Kovář, he presented the second assembly held on 12 January 1993 a proposal of the Czech Rectors Conference establishment. It provoked a lengthy discussion with the prevailing opinion of maintaining the word of “club” in its name (Czech Rectors Club). Nevertheless, draft statutes that had been made could be modified to comply with discussion results and made available to all participants of the third session of the RC Czech Section held on 28 January 1993 in the premises of Czech Technical University in Prague. On behalf of President Kovář who could only arrive one hour late for his serious duty reasons, Professor Černohorský opened the session recommending discussion on draft statutes of the Czech Rectors Conference as the first point of agenda and, if approved, the third RC Czech Section assembly would change into the first Czech Rectors Conference meeting immediately. The proposal turned true as 24 present rectors (26 of 27 were present) voted for the Czech Rectors Conference while the Czech Rectors Club received 2 votes and the Czech Rectors Conference Statutes were approved unanimously. Steered by Professor Stanislav Hanzl, Czech Technical University in Prague rector, as meeting host, rector Kovář was elected the first CRC President and rector Černohorský the first CRC Chancellor.

The approval of the Statutes and the elections of the President and the Chancellor meant the official establishment of the Czech Rectors Conference as of 28 January 1993.

Czech Rectors Conference had grown into a position that it was less difficult to push through the idea of it being mentioned in the Higher Education Act as a part of the Czech higher education institutions leading bodies along with the Council of Higher Education Institutions of the Czech Republic.

Czech Rectors Conference International Activities

Similar success the Czech Rectors Conference recorded in its international activities. Most negotiations resulting in establishing international contacts were held by the CRC President, Chancellor or Secretary General. They managed to resume both working and friendly contacts between the CRC and the HRK (Hochschulrektorenkonferenz – German Rectors Conference seated

in Bonn) and similar were the interactions with France (Paris), Austria (Vienna) and Hungary (Budapest), apart from the closest Slovakia (Bratislava).

Quite a lot of effort was needed for achievements, today considered natural, such as the Czech Rectors Conference being the Full Collective Member of the European University Association (EUA) that originated from a merger between the Association of European Universities (CRE) and the Confederation of European Union Rectors Conferences (Confederation). As soon as the CRC had been established, its representatives were regularly invited to CRE Council meetings. It could be considered extraordinary that as early as in 1996 the CRE 47th Bi-Annual Conference took place in the Czech Republic (Palacký University in Olomouc, October 1996). Thanks to the systematic negotiations of its representatives, CRC has been accepted for the Confederation observer already since 1994 and since 1996 it has received the status of the associated member. If the list of CRC international activities should continue the length would be formidable containing names of many other players who claim credit for developing CRC international contacts. The Czech Rectors Conference holds a fast position as a fully-fledged partner of Rectors Conferences in the whole Europe.

It should be also mentioned that the CRC was the first Rectors Conference from non-EU member countries hosting the Confederation of European Union Rectors Conferences Board meeting (Masaryk University in Brno, May 1997). The CRC should also be given credits for hosting 2001 summit of European ministers of education by Charles University in Prague in May or for 2006 EUA Conference taking place in Brno hosted in October by Masaryk University. Another CRC big success is also 2009 EUA Convention held in Prague in March before the ministers of education May summit. The noted event held in the period of the Czech Republic EU Presidency was hosted by Charles University in Prague, along with the CRC.

Another exceptional progress favourable for the CRC and not only the CRC is that based on the CRC proposal Professor Václav Hampl, Charles University in Prague rector and that time the CRC Vice-President for creative activities (later the CRC President) was elected EUA Board member for the four-year office period of 2011–2015 by the EUA General Assembly (Denmark, Aarhus, April 2011).

Czech Rectors Conference Secretariat

Since its establishment, the CRC has held 124 CRC Plenum Meetings and 125 CRC Presidium Meetings. The number of CRC members has grown from the original 27 (all public and state higher education institutions in the Czech Republic) to 50 (all 26 public higher education institutions, both state higher education institutions and 22 private higher education institutions). The CRC Secretariat has kept its location in the Masaryk University headquarters building in Brno since its creation employing only one person as the CRC Secretary General till mid-October 2009. Since 15 October 2009, the CRC Secretariat has employed the CRC Secretariat Assistant along with the CRC Secretary General.

Brno, February 2014



10th CRC Plenum Meeting, Prague, Academy of Fine Arts, 21 January 1994.



119th CRC Plenum Meeting (CRC General Assembly), Prague, Czech Technical University, 14 February 2013. CRC Presidium with EUA President and other foreign guests.



121st CRC Plenum Meeting, Olomouc, Palacký University, 6 June 2013.



Rectors Meeting with President Václav Havel after the 25th CRC Plenum Meeting, Lány, Villa Amálie, 3 May 1996.

Czech Rectors Conference Presidents and Secretary General 1993—2013



Prof. Zdeněk Kovář

Rector of the Technical University of Liberec
28 January 1993—24 February 1994, President



Prof. Stanislav Hanzl († 14 June 1996)

Rector of Czech Technical University in Prague
25 February 1994—14 June 1996, President



Prof. Jan Hron

Rector of Czech University of Life Sciences Prague
15 June 1996—6 March 1997, Acting President
7 March 1997—24 February 2000, President



Prof. Ivan Wilhelm

Rector of Charles University in Prague
25 February 2000—31 January 2006, President



Prof. Petr Sáha

Rector of Tomas Bata University in Zlín
24 February 2006—10 May 2007, President



Prof. Jan Hron

Rector of Czech University of Life Sciences Prague
11 May 2007—31 July 2007, Acting President
1 August 2007—31 July 2009, President



Prof. Petr Fiala

Rector of Masaryk University in Brno
1 August 2009—31 July 2011, President



Prof. Václav Hampl

Rector of Charles University in Prague
1 August 2011—31 January 2014, President



Dr. Marie Fojtíková

28 January 1993—till now, Secretary General