

Resolution of the 160th Czech Rectors Conference Plenum Meeting

Pardubice, 15 April 2021

Czech Rectors Conference (CRC) Plenum adopted at its 160th Meeting, the following resolution:

1. CRC insists on its requirement to renew, at least partially, practical and contact teaching no later than on 26 April 2021. In particular, students of the last years must complete their studies in standard time and quality. CRC points out that employees and students have been tested for a long time at High Education Institutions (HEIs) workplaces, where teaching takes place in a limited manner, and the situation is completely satisfactory and under control from an epidemiological point of view.
2. CRC states with regret that HEIs were included in the vaccination plan as one of the last priority groups. CRC calls on the Government of the Czech Republic to speed up the vaccination process as much as possible. Without vaccinated academic and non-academic staff, it will be difficult to ensure the admission procedure for the academic year 2021/2022 and the state final examinations. CRC recalls that HEIs provide more than 300,000 students; the social and economic losses associated with reducing HEIs' activities are devastating for the country's future.
3. The early return of HEI students to full-time teaching is an important prerequisite for a quick and successful start-up of the Czech economy and its competitiveness. CRC therefore asks the Government of the Czech Republic to set clear rules for possible testing of HEIs students, including the possibility of accepting tests from public sampling points. It is unacceptable the costs of testing to be passed on to HEIs. HEIs' budgets are to be for the development of educational and scientific research activities. In addition, HEIs have been affected by loss of income, for example from applied research or fees from foreign language study programs, and have to deal with significant declines from the income of dormitories and canteens. For some HEIs, long-term reimbursements of similar costs would be liquidation. At all HEIs, these costs would require the reduction of basic activities. Selected HEIs are ready to become a pilot place for testing PCR tests and quality antigen tests.
4. CRC reiterates the significant damage to the catering and accommodation services of dormitories and canteens due to the COVID-19 pandemic. CRC asks the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports to ensure the possibility of compensation for these workplaces.

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On behalf of the Czech Rectors Conference

Prof. Petr Sklenička
President