

EVENTFUL SEMESTER

WINTER 2019/2020



University of Hradec Králové
Philosophical Faculty

Dear readers,

Thanks to the wide variety of programs and our rich network of partner universities, an increasing number of exchange students come to the Philosophical Faculty of the University of Hradec Králové every semester. To provide you with a few numbers, just for the 2019/2020 winter semester, our faculty received 68 new international students. They added to the number of international students already studying here, either as a degree students or simply prolonging their stay. Out of those 68 students, 14 were here via the Erasmus+ International Credit Mobility program, 17 via the European Erasmus+ and 37 via our Non-European Mobility program. They arrived from different parts of Asia, Africa, Latin America, and of course, Europe.

With the growing international community, our university has become more internationalized, and that has led to more opportunities for our exchange and our Czech students to meet each other. Not just during lectures, but also during the free time activities organized by our university, the Erasmus Student Network (ESN Hradec Králové) and others.

Since we are genuinely interested in knowing if our students enjoy their time at our faculty, we asked them to write about their experiences. And that brings us to this newsletter which is a result of the students' stories. We hope that you will enjoy reading them as much as we did.

Team of the International Office of the FF UHK



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SUMMER SCHOOL 2019



SUMMER SCHOOL

The summer school of the Philosophical faculty of the UHK is designed for students that will continue with their studies at our faculty during the subsequent semester. The students learn Czech language basics, improve their English, gain some knowledge about the Czech Republic and participate in our trips and freetime program.

SUMMER SCHOOL

Malena Pawliska

Considering I was about to arrive from Argentina to the Czech Republic, a country that has an entirely different language and culture than mine, a summer school seemed to be the perfect way of learning all the basics which I needed to adapt for my upcoming stay. Luckily, the Philosophical faculty of the UHK organizes a summer school with the focus on the teaching the basics of Czech language and classes about Czech history and culture. Classes are held by professors of the university, and they are helpful to help students understand more about the country. The country in which I was going to live for the upcoming six months.

Moreover, one of the main reasons why I enjoyed the summer school was because it allowed me to meet lots of new people from all over the world, who then became very close friends and with whom I am still in touch even after the end of my stay.

All the extra activities that the summer school offered, such as trips and evening games and reunions, were the perfect complement for the lessons and a fantastic opportunity to engage in interesting conversations with all the other participants. The two trips that I especially liked were the ones to Baroque style hospital "Kuks" nearby Hradec Králové, and a trip to a small village called "Harrachov". In Kuks, we visited a gorgeous complex that used to be a hospital and its stunning gardens. In Harrachov, a village that is located right on the border with Poland, we visited its famous glass-making factory from 1712 and walked around the national park to see its forests and a waterfall on the river Mumlava.

With a great staff and amazing planners, the summer school of the Philosophical Faculty was one of the highlights of my stay in the Czech Republic. All I have left to say is thank you!



ESN HRADEC KRÁLOVÉ EVENTS



ESN HRADEC KRÁLOVÉ

ESN Hradec Králové is a non-profit and independent volunteer student organization, part of the Erasmus Student Network. Its main mission is to support the idea of student mobility. Besides from everyday help, ESN HK also organizes different types of activities for all of the international students in Hradec Králové.

INTERNATIONAL DINNER

Fernanda Munguia Silva

The International Dinner is an event organized by the ESN Hradec Králové. The main idea is to become a chef for one evening and bring a typical dish representing your country in order to share it with everyone.

Because the main organizer is ESN Hradec Králové, almost all of the participants were exchange students that chose Hradec Králové as their new temporary home. Thanks to that, it was possible to find and taste a wide variety of dishes from all over the world. So during just one evening, I had the opportunity to try stroopwafel from the Netherlands, tostadas from Mexico, Colombian arepas, pasta from Italy, chorizo from Spain, quarkspeise from Germany, bubble tea from Taiwan, crepes from France, and rice from Nicaragua. Of course, we could also experience typical Czech food like goulash, kofola (Czech version of Coca Cola made from herbs), kofila (candy bar with chocolate and coffee), and žemlovka.

However, the best part of this event is not just the food tasting, but the interaction with other students who represent their country. So, in case you like any of the food, you can ask right away for the recipe directly from the person who prepared it. And it does not stop there; students also talk about other typical dishes that you should definitely try while visiting their home. You also have the opportunity to learn about different celebrations like Christmas, New Year, Birthday, or some other national days for each country.

Learning about different cuisines, traditions, and ultimately even ways of life, was a fantastic way how to spend an evening. Since it was one of the first events of the semester (it happened during the introduction week), it was also a great way to for people to get together. Aside from eating a lot (and I mean A LOT) of food, socializing with others was very enjoyable.

Since this event was held at the beginning of the semester, it provided us with an easy opportunity for interacting with new faces, and it made easy creating new friends. Even though we come from very different countries and social backgrounds, this event erased all the gaps among us. Since then, we recognize our faces and greet each other whenever we pass by, whether it is on the streets, in the dorms, or in the faculty.

Yet the highlight of the evening was still about to come. Almost at the end of the dinner, some of the Taiwanese students decided to play the piano, and suddenly everyone from Taiwan joined them in singing. That created a beautiful atmosphere, which was pleasant to watch and mostly to hear. It continued by them dancing, which motivated others to join them. Soon after, everybody was singing, even though almost nobody knew the lyrics, and dancing all over the place. All in all, the International Dinner was a great event, which was not just about eating as one might have thought.



COUNTRY "BATTLE"



Juliana Lozano Jaramillo

The Switzerland x Hong Kong x Colombia "battle" took place on November 6th. In events like this one, participants are responsible for showing the most beautiful things about their homeland: food, culture, celebrations, traditions, landscapes, jokes, and they also should mention some important facts. Without any doubt, all of them encouraged us to visit their countries, and for sure, we are excited to do it at some point. Each state is a new world full of adventures, knowledge, and great experiences.

The first presenter was a Swiss girl who told us about the diversity of languages in her country (there are 4 official languages in Switzerland), as well as famous chocolates and famous television shows like "Heidi." She also made some jokes about Switzerland for not having been part of World Wars, as Switzerland is generally known for being a neutral state. She also encouraged us to visit her country with beautiful pictures of the Swiss Alps and other natural sceneries.

Then it was Hong Kong students' turn. Hong Kong is a fascinating "melting pot" of cultures because it preserves many of the eastern features, but at the same time, it embodies the western culture (thanks to being part of the British Empire for over 150 years). That creates a fusion of two worlds in the city. During the presentation, we could see the cultural diversity, which is visible even in their internationalization of the food. We also had the chance to see some of the skyscrapers that form the famous panorama of Hong Kong. Of course, our presenters did not forget to mention their current struggles with the centralized government of the PRC (People's Republic of China).

When our turn came, we presented the most typical food, celebrations, landscapes, music, and some Colombian jokes. We warmed up by showing our funny words and mentioning the characteristics of Colombians to make some introduction to our culture. Then we began to talk about food, desserts, and drinks. Afterward, we tried to demonstrate musical diversity by reproducing songs and dancing the different rhythms. To keep people's attention, we also made an online quiz during which they could test their knowledge, and at the very end, the winners of the quiz were rewarded with some small presents.

Overall, I enjoyed discovering more about different countries, and I am glad for the opportunity to present my country to the international community. The most important thing about it for me is to see that we can leave aside prejudices and understand the beauty that each one of the countries has to offer.



WHAT'S WITH THE WORLD TODAY



WHAT'S WITH THE WORLD TODAY

What's With the World Today is a series of informal meetings of a group of chatty students from the University of Hradec Králové. They certainly can not solve many of the world's issues, but at least they can talk them through! These meetings give all of the participants the possibility to discover something new about different countries directly from international students.

COLOMBIA

Juan Pablo Muñoz Patiño

The discussion forum “What’s with the World Today” represents a very valuable contribution to exchange students. During this series of meetings, students have the opportunity to discover what is happening in certain parts of the world. The most significant advantage of these discussions is achieved thanks to the primary sources: the students themselves. Each country is presented directly by its residents.

The first topic that was chosen in the winter semester was Colombia (A very culturally rich country, with high biodiversity and full of very generous people) and the current situation there.

The perspective of the analysis of the meeting is aiming to have an informal conversation about not only cultural issues, such as the main customs (such as artistic, gastronomic and tourist manifestations) while also seeking to address the socio-political problems currently afflicting the country.

This space allowed addressing the topics mentioned above in the tranquility of a conversation in a bar, without the interest of deepening figures and data, or opinions based on academic rigor. On the contrary, it is a space that aims to strengthen students’ capacity to build their own opinion and argue about social and political issues.

In the case of Colombia, there was a talk about the origin of some typical foods such as “la arepa”, in addition to other issues of social and political situation, such as recent protests of some students demanding educational reforms.

Overall, Colombia is a country that is in the process of implementing a Peace Agreement with a former guerrilla group. It is also the country with the second-highest internal displacement index in the world, and today there is an internal civil war that is taking the lives of a high number of social leaders.

And even though these issues were not deepened in the meeting, there was a general idea of what is currently happening in Colombia. Precisely, the informal discussion is a space that tries to promote in students the interest in expanding the comments and opinions shared during this.



VENEZUELA

Regina José Obando Narváez

One of the events in which I participated and the one that I enjoyed the most was: What’s with about the world today? (Venezuela). The event was part of a series of informal talks held in a local pub. During the “Venezuelan evening”, three of the Venezuelans currently studying here, gave a talks and answered questions related to their country. From my point of view, the information provided was quite clear, and it was also an excellent way of gaining getting news because they were shared with people of different nationalities, with varying points of views and questions.

The evening helped me to to discover more about Venezuela and alsoand to to open my mind. We usually hear a lot of things in the news, that might not be completely accurate. This type of discussion helps to clarify any doubts thanks to being present with people who have direct contact with reality.

I want for events like these to continue happening in the future because this is how we can learn a little bit more about other parts of the world. I think it is important to have a broad knowledge about the current problems and to know the context of international relations to be able to understand the world that we are living in.

We live in a world where inequality abounds in most of the countries, in which economic systems do not benefit the majority of the population. We all must learn more, in order to be able to act. With our actions based on a good knowledge of the problems, we can help a community, a state or even a nation.



CHILE

Maria Clara Zea Gallego

The Agora was a public space in ancient Greece where citizens could meet and debate about the relevant topics of the time. In *What's is With tthe World Today?* the spirit of the Agora is incarnated thanks to the fraternal notion of it being a meeting where the respect of others opinion and the share of knowledge thrives in every encounter. Being far away from home, especially for international students, can become there can be somea nostalgia for the warm of a place where you can express your opinions and thoughts. By realizing the importance of learning of one another experiences and how diversified living conditions passes in the national sphere is when the real notion of an international experience breaks through: we are all small pieces that form the whole puzzle of the world.

In the case of the discussion about Chile, for many of those who attended, we felt that Latin American countries were facing the most convulsed and turbulent times of the last years. We have friends and family members who daily experienced the protest and engaged actively in the hope for a better present and future. Chile was the first shout-out with the raise increase of the metro ticket price and the reactive manifestation from many sectors upon the neoliberal strategies and the actual constitution that can be traced down to Pinochet's dictatorship. The meeting was not about doing catharsis, but about bringing the vivid history of Chile and Latin America to the contexts of other international students who usually do not get the scope and the insight of what is happening abroad. During the discussion, some opinions were made upon the use of violence of protester and the abuse of force by the police, and how important it is to stand up, when injustice is the law that the state seeks to endure. Therefore, the words became important vehicles of communicating the urgent need for action and change.

VISITING PROFESSORS



VISITING PROFESSORS

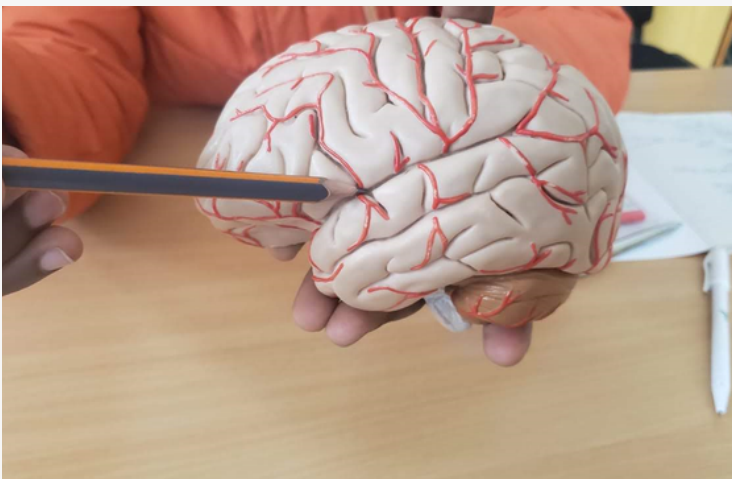
Every semester, the Philosophical Faculty of the UHK receives several experts from abroad, mainly from our partner universities. In order to provide students with a wide variety of courses FF UHK takes part in the program Erasmus+ International Credit Mobility, which significantly helps to host our foreign experts. Let's see how did the students enjoy some of the lectures from our lovely guests.

MAURICIO BARRERA VALENCIA

Purity Wanjiku Wangai

Last semester I participated in the classes by Professor Mauricio Barrera Valencia. He was offering two courses, both of which I decided to attend. The first one was called Neuropsychology, and the second one was Etiology of Brain Injury of Older People. The classes were held on even weeks only. Etiology of Brain Injury in Older People was scheduled for every second Monday starting at 2 o'clock while Neuropsychology followed on Tuesdays at half-past eleven.

These two classes soon became my favourites, and I cannot pick which one of them I enjoyed more because the discussed topics were quite related. Etiology of Brain Injury in Older People was majorly about the ageing people and the effects of brain injury on them. We talked about the illnesses that come as a result of brain injury in different parts of the brain, and then we discussed possible solutions in terms of ways to improve the lives of the older people in spite of the illness. Neuropsychology was equally impressive since it was about parts of the brain, their functions and their disorders; hence the two courses borrowed from each other.



The lecturer was a significant reason why I looked forward to the classes. He was easy to understand and very organized.

In the first class, he gave us a clear outline of the lectures, and because some of us had no prior exposure to the course, he actually took time actually to help us understand. He was very creative with his teaching methods which included: lectures, discussions among students, related videos which broke monotony in the class as well as mind-mapping, which I found very interesting, although it was my first time to do it.

In conclusion, I would say that these were classes I never regretted having picked. I am glad I did otherwise I would have missed out on a lot.

OLIVER KUHSCHELM

Hassan Lewa Juma

Professor Oliver Kuhschelm is a lecturer from the University of Vienna, Austria. He came here, to the University of Hradec Králové, to present to us his short course: "Economic Nationalism," and I had the opportunity to participate in his lectures. Fortunately, the professor is very resourceful and knowledgeable in the areas (both economics and nationalism), so he was able to provide us with all the necessary information that we needed during the classes and all that seems essential for a student to know and learn.

Generally speaking, the lectures were fantastic and very productive even though his mode of teaching was quite different from what I am used to from my home university. His style of teaching was putting more emphasis on the participation of students. Everybody was expected to write a short resume of an obligatory text, which summarized our understanding of the reading.

All of the literature was, of course, precisely chosen by our teacher and sent to us via email. This kind of teaching made students participate fully in the classes right from the start to the end because we were expected to explain personal thoughts that we have prepared for a particular text.

This method empowered me with the knowledge of in-depth understanding as it forced us to think critically, formulate, and analyze a given problem, for which we had enough time to prepare in advance. Thanks to that, I gained something useful from the professor, in-depth comprehension of the topic that I would not have again gained if I would not have registered for this particular course. The presentation that I later did prepared on "Purpose and Privation" made me discover more about the history of the Habsburg Empire, the Danubian countries, and more. I genuinely believe that my fellow students did the same. Credit to the professor, he did his work perfectly without mistakes.

Last but not least, I thank go to the administration of UHK and its tireless international office for the great work and support that it gave to other fellow students and me. I would also like to express my gratitude to the visiting professor Oliver Kuhchelm as he has passed to me something beneficial in my academic journey.

ANDRÉS HERRERA RODRÍGUEZ

Silvia Rocío Canales Parrales

The lectures from visiting Nicaraguan teacher, Dr Andrés Herrera Rodríguez, who arrived in Hradec Králové, were aiming to give us more knowledge about Nicaraguan history and to enrich us by talking about Nicaraguan public policies. The time period on which the course focused was from 1979 until nowadays. The classes themselves were about the different governments that ruled the country, about their policies and its projection onto the state social and economic structures.

We were able to focus on the Nicaraguan struggle for a growing economy and slow social progression. Part of the course was also reflecting past problems and their solutions. Emphasis was also given on "thinking outside of the box" approach, in order to come up with creative and new solutions to the country recent problems.



Even though the whole course of Doctor Herrera was quite short, it was still very enriching. His approach was professional, just like all the other teachers from the University of Hradec Králové. But at the same time, it was interesting to hear different kinds of perspectives from both Czech and Nicaraguan teachers. It allowed me to gain a different view of my own country.



My whole stay in the Czech Republic helped me realize how the opportunity of studying abroad developed my ability to look at things with a different point of view. And not just that, I was also successful in gaining new knowledge, mostly on how to improve policies; economy solutions of social problems in my country. And all of that was achieved by my studies during the lectures at the Philosophy Faculty. Generally, it helped me to grow on my personal development, just as an academic and professional one. Leaving my comfort zone surely formed me, just like it did for other students studying abroad.

The experience that the University of Hradec Králové gave me was very good. The partnership agreement with my university, such as many others in different countries, opened the door to a lot of international students and provided them with a big help for studying abroad. Thanks to the quality of education and prestige UHK and its Philosophical Faculty possess. Its classrooms have all that you are going to need to get the best higher education.

FRED YONIO

Rocio Leonela Zepeda Davizón

As a bachelor's student in Social Sciences (International Relations) I can say that our areas of opportunity are too many and the given possibility of developing in the specific one that we want the most is like a sort of blessing.

I had that feeling when I attended Dr Fred Yonio's class. I think that it is one of the few teachers in who I have seen so much energy and passion for what they do. He projected a very pleasant vibe, and the whole class was delighted with his presence. All of us being from different countries and with very different backgrounds, having a panorama closer to reality in diplomatic, economic and political terms was very enriching.

The professor focused the course in countries of the African continent. Dr Yonio talked about how many African countries are under the yoke of Asian, European and North American economic powers. He developed explanations for theories that described this phenomenon and how it is handled today for both parties, as well as using examples that facilitated our understanding without problem.

What I liked the most is that this course deepened into economics, a topic many are not familiar with. That was like a breath of fresh air and very useful for our study. I can say that I am very happy to have had the opportunity to take this course, to have known of other case studies for future research and to have shared a classroom with my classmates and the teacher. I would highly recommend that this course continues to be presented in future semesters and more teachers like Mr. Fred Yonio would be invited.

EXCURSIONS



EXCURSIONS OF THE FF UHK

International students of the Philosophical Faculty of the UHK have the opportunity to join several excursions to historical or cultural sites around the Czech Republic.

VISIT OF THE SENATE

Maryam Isa Gidado

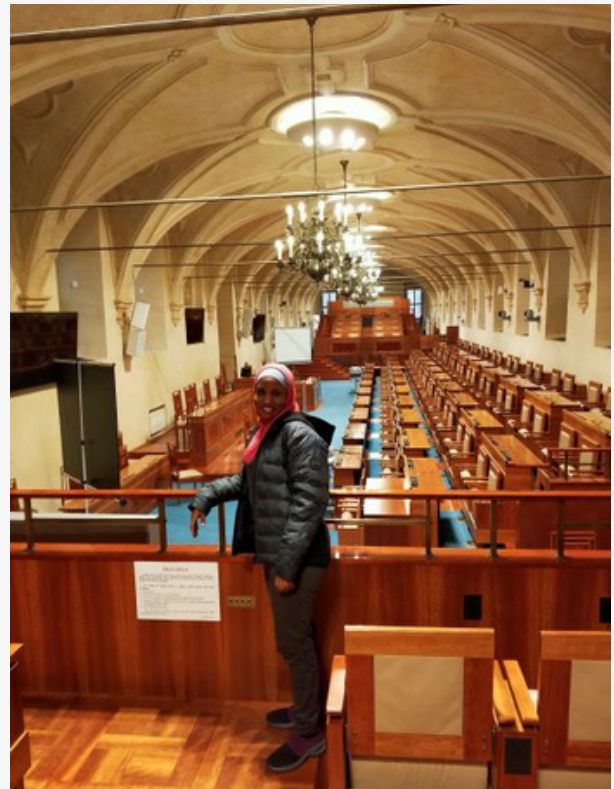
The tour was organized by Dr Vít Šimral as a voluntary part of the course 'Combatting Corruption', taught in the UHK, but it was not exclusively for participants of that course. Other students had the opportunity to join as well.

The Senate is the higher chamber of the bicameral parliament of the Czech Republic. Its members are seated in the Wallerstein Palace, which was built for the most powerful and wealthiest nobleman of Bohemia in the 17th century, Albrecht Von Wallerstein. The Senate has 81 members, amongst them one Senate president and four vice presidents.

Arriving at the Senate building, a lady welcomed us and led us to the Main Hall or the 'The Knight Hall' where she showed us the painting on the ceiling called the "god of war". From there we proceeded to 'The Leather Parlour' which was the audience hall for Duke Wallerstein. Today, his painting, painted in 1631 by a artist from Frydlant, Christian Kaulfersch, is hanging on the wall of the hall above a fireplace.

The most exciting part of the tour to me was "the Mirror Hall" there are the paintings of the Duke and his family on the walls, and the two "Venetian mirrors". From the mirror hall, we proceeded to the "the circularly shaped, richly decorated Audience Hall" embellished with beautiful chandelier and old paintings. From there we were led to the "Mythological (Ovid's) Corridor", where the Duke himself used to walk from the Audience Hall to his study room or the stables.

The last destination of our tour in the Senate was the "Meeting Hall", where the senators meet to discuss matters and, in some cases, summon the members of the Executive branch for questioning. The very last detail that I remember from our visit was a frame of the map of Europe hanged on of the walls of the Meeting hall which stated: "In Prague lies the Heart of Europe".



MEETING OF THE NATIONS



MEETING OF THE NATIONS

The Meeting of the Nations is a traditional event organized by a local charity. During the event, locals get the chance to meet people from the whole world. Every year, our students participate and cook their traditional dishes which they later serve during the event.

MEETING OF THE NATIONS

Fatima Shehu Buhari

Meeting of Nations is an event organized by the local branch of the Caritas. More precisely, the main coordinator Mrs Šárka Vachalová. It was an event in which people of different nationalities displayed their various cultures. There were ethnic tastings, national costumes, paintings, and so on.

The day of the event was set on Wednesday 13th November 2019 in Adalbertinum, Hradec Králové. I participated in the event together with another Nigerian lady, and we were given some funds with a task to prepare some traditional Nigerian food. I decided to cook Nigerian Jollof Rice and peppered meat. In the morning, one of the coordinators picked us up along with other students at the Palachova dormitories and helped us with transporting the food we cooked.

The Meeting of Nations itself was a fabulous and exciting event I have to commend it. There were lots of cultural displays. I got to see cultures I had never seen in my life. Especially the Latin American cultures: it was my first time tasting their food and knowing about their habits. There was also African drumming, dancing, fashion parade and other activities. Apart from that, I got the chance to see people of different nationalities like Turkish, Ethiopian, Eritrean, Colombian, Bolivian, Mexican, and so many others. I got the opportunity to share my experience in Czech Republic with some locals, and I also shared with them the history and the culture of Nigeria. I was pleased because they all loved the food we made. Also, I must say that the organizers decorated our stand very well. It had pictures of Nigerian food, Nigerian farmland, Nigerian dressing, Nigerian Map, the coat of arm, the National Assembly, Zuma Rock and lots of other interesting Nigerian facts.

Finally, I would like to recommend the university to inform the upcoming exchange students so that they will know about the events and prepare for it even before coming because unfortunately, I didn't have my cultural attire with me. Luckily, my Nigerian colleague had at least a typical Nigerian skirt, so she wore it.

Meeting of Nations is one of the best experiences I had or the best event I attended in the Czech Republic.



UHK EVENTS



UHK EVENTS

As you probably know, the UHK is not just the Philosophical Faculty. This means that there are of course events during which students can meet other friendly faces from other faculties of the university. Traditionally our students take an active part, for example, in the UHK International Day and the Flag Parade. You can read more about these events [here](#)

UHK

INTERNATIONAL DAY

Michelle Stephanie Salguero Márquez

The UHK International Day was an intercultural event held on November 20th 2019 at our university. This event was an incredible opportunity where we could get to know more information about the vast possibilities of exchange programs. During the whole day, as a visitor you had the chance to stop by several stands around the university to understand how it is to study abroad and gain practical information from the experience of students who have already gone on an exchange. Also, you could find out the different programs that are currently available with corporations such as the National Agency, Fulbright Commission, Visegrad Scholarships, Campus France and Alliance Française, German Academic Exchange Service, and Goethe -Institut.

Besides, the event did not only focus on an academic approach, but it also provided an incredible atmosphere conducive to the discovery of the world through cultural, linguistic and gastronomic expressions. There were “language tables” in which you had the chance to speak in foreign languages with native speakers and learn some basic phrases. Several stands provided cuisine from different parts of the world so that you could experience diverse tastes of different countries. And last but not least workshops in which you could learn how to make traditional Peruvian jewellery, or dancing classes that could teach you some basics of the Argentinean Tango.

Definitely, one of the most fruitful things of the UHK International Day was to get to meet people from all over the world together in the same place and altogether enjoy one day outside of the classrooms.



FLAG PARADE

Alda Guillermina López Salmeron

The flag parade is a wonderful activity organized by the UHK in coordination with the ESN Hradec Králové. Thanks to this event, we get the chance to meet other exchange students, not just from the Philosophical Faculty, but also from different parts of the university. It was also a great way to discover more about the city of Hradec Králové and its rich history. Even though it was raining a bit during the day of the activity, it could not stop us from attending the event. We met in front of the fountain on the main university campus, where we received some souvenirs from the university. Afterward, they gave us our flags, and body paints in case we would like to paint our national colours on our faces. All of a sudden, I got very excited when I saw the flag of my country, Nicaragua, here almost 10 thousand kilometres away from my homeland.



Right after that, we started with a tour of the city, and it was super exciting to learn about the history and to see some places with a great legacy. My favourite place was definitely the white tower, together with the history of its construction. Even when I returned later to see it from inside and climb to the top, I liked it a lot.



During the walk, it was possible to get to know other participants from different countries and learn a little about their culture and customs. There were people from Brazil, Bolivia, Germany, Bosnia, Nigeria, Taiwan, Netherlands, etc. While we walked the streets with our flags, either in our hands or painted on our faces, locals started to approach us in order to ask questions about our countries. Of course, we were delighted by their interest. Besides, the activity guides were always paying attention and clarified any questions we had. The activity ended in a bar where we could play on consoles and even board games for free and enjoy a drink with our new friends after a long stroll through this beautiful city. That was a pleasant end of our busy day. I will remember the experiences of Hradec Kralove forever, and they will always stay in my mind and my heart.

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