Comenius University Bratislava 2020/2021

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THE NAMES AND ABBREVIATIONS OF COMENIUS UNIVERSITY’S FACULTIES

CU Comenius University in Bratislava — FMED Faculty of Medicine — FLAW Faculty of Law — FARS Faculty of Arts — FNS Faculty of Natural Sciences

FEDU Faculty of Education — FPHARM Faculty of Pharmacy — FSPORT Faculty of Physical Education and Sport — FMED Jessenius Faculty of Medicine in Martin

FMPH Faculty of Mathematics, Physics and Informatics — FICTH Faculty of Roman Catholic Theology of Cyril and Methodius — FELTH Faculty of Catholic Theological, Theological Faculty — FM Faculty of Management — FSES Faculty of Social and Economic Sciences

MANAGEMENT AND ORGANIZATION

Faculties

Number of students 2 218

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS 1 902

Number of study programmes 84

Dean of the Faculty of Medicine — Prof. PhDr. Pavel Mučaj, PhD. (to 28 February 2021)

PhDr. Ján Klima, PhD., MPH (from March 1 2021)

Dean of the Faculty of Pharmacy — Prof. pharmDr. Pavol Čižmár, PhD., MPH

Dean of the Jessenius Faculty — Prof. MUDr. Andrea Čalkovská, DrSc.

Dean of the Faculty of Mathematics, Physics and Informatics — Prof. Mgr. Marián Vanderka, PhD.

Dean of the Faculty of Physical Education and Sport — Assoc. Prof. JUDr. Eduard Burda, PhD.

Dean of the Faculty of Law — Prof. RNDr. Peter Fedor, PhD.

Dean of the Faculty of Natural Sciences — ThDr. Ing. Juraj Thurzo, PhD.

Dean of the Faculty of Roman Catholic Theology of Cyril and Methodius — Mgr. Milan Jurík, PhD.

Dean of the Evangelical Lutheran Theological Faculty — Assoc. Prof. PhDr. JUDr. Lucia Mokrá, PhD.

Dean of the Faculty of Social and Economic Sciences — Assoc. Prof. PhD. JUDr. Lucia Medoň, PhD.

Dean of the Faculty of Management — Assoc. Prof. RNDr. Edita Partová, CSc.

Dean of the Faculty of Education — Prof. RNDr. Michal Greguš, PhD.

Professor — Assoc. Prof. JUDr. Marek Števček, PhD.

Dean of Comenius University — Prof. MUDr. Juraj Šteňo, DrSc.

Rector of Comenius University — Prof. MUDr. Andrea Čalkovská, DrSc.

Dean of the Faculty of Pharmacy — Prof. MUDr. Andrea Čalkovská, DrSc.

Dean of the Faculty of Arts — Prof. Mgr. Marián Zouhar, PhD.

Dean of the Faculty of Social and Economic Sciences — Assoc. Prof. RNDr. Edita Partová, CSc.

Dean of the Faculty of Management — Assoc. Prof. PhDr. JUDr. Lucia Mokrá, PhD.

Dean of the Faculty of Education — Prof. RNDr. Michal Greguš, PhD.

Dean of the Faculty of Management — Assoc. Prof. PhDr. JUDr. Lucia Mokrá, PhD.

Dean of the Faculty of Social and Economic Sciences — Assoc. Prof. PhDr. JUDr. Lucia Mokrá, PhD.

Dean of the Faculty of Management — Assoc. Prof. PhDr. JUDr. Lucia Mokrá, PhD.
Comenius University Bratislava was established on 27 June 1919. It was the first university in Slovakia to offer higher education in the Slovak language. It has educated generations of politicians, historically important figures, scientists, teachers and other scholars who have achieved success in many areas and contributed to the progress of Slovakia. It grew into a modern European university capable of responding to current challenges while maintaining its academic traditions.

**FIVE INTERESTING FACTS FROM THE HISTORY OF OUR BUILDINGS**

- The late Renaissance building on Kapitulská Street was built on the site of three older Chapter houses by the Archbishop of Esztergom, Peter Pázmaň (1570 - 1637), as a seat for the Jesuits. The building was intended to serve as a residence and college for the education of the Jesuits and the Italian architect Jacob Rava was commissioned by the Jesuit Rector Gašpar Malius to design it. This building housed the Rectorate, the Faculty of Law and the Faculty of Arts at the time when Comenius University was established. Today it is the seat of the Faculty of Roman-Catholic Theology of Cyril and Methodius.
- The building of the Faculty of Arts at Gondova Street used to be a government building. It was home to several central state institutions: the Land Office, the Ministry of Interior, URBION (State Institute of Urbanism and Town Planning), the Slovak Central State Archive (now named the Slovak National Archive), the Slovak Post, Czechoslovak Radio and the Slovak Philharmonic. The building was erected between 1909 and 1913, and was originally intended to serve the needs of the Austro-Hungarian military command. The prime location made it ideal for various government uses until it was placed under the administration of Comenius University in 1958.
- The period just before and during World War II was a historically difficult one but it did spur the development of higher education in Slovakia. When Czechoslovakia was dismantled and the Slovak Republic and the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia were created in its place in 1939, Czech universities were forcibly closed and students from Slovakia could not continue or complete their studies in the Protectorate. An urgent need arose to begin teaching technology and natural sciences in Slovakia. Efforts to establish a Slovak university with a focus on technology date back to the 1920's and culminated with the creation of the Slovak University of Technology in Bratislava. At the same time, the Faculty of Natural Sciences was finally established at Comenius University, fulfilling the plans laid out when the University was founded.
- The Faculty of Natural Sciences initially occupied several premises in Bratislava, but most departments were located in a building at Šmeral Street. The building was scheduled for demolition, partly because a part of its roof collapsed and partly because a major bridge crossing the Danube was planned nearby. All of this hastened the relocation of the faculty. Construction of the campus of the Faculty of Natural Sciences in Mlynská dolina started in 1967. The campus included a number of buildings dedicated to natural sciences, mathematics and physics, but also to student life. Alexander Dubček attended the ceremonial laying of the foundation stone for the construction at Mlynská dolina.

**View of the building at Kapitulská street after its renovation in 1925. Photo: Stenc, Prague, 1925**

**The building of the Faculty of Arts at Gondova street. Source: Comenius University Bratislava**

**Construction of the Faculty of Natural Sciences in Mlynská dolina, laying of ceiling rebar on the Physics I pavilion. Photo Collection - buildings, photo: Štefan Petraš**
In March 2020, Comenius University was the first university in Slovakia to switch to distance teaching. It used the pandemic to kick-start some changes which had been planned earlier but became necessary due to the situation. Thus, when the new academic year 2020/2021 started, the university was already prepared for online teaching.

The year without academic ceremonies and events. That is one way to describe the academic year 2020/2021. Activities happened almost exclusively online. Dormitories remained occupied only by those students who could not leave - due to their ongoing practical training, lab work, and medical or social reasons. Some international students were also allowed to remain at the dormitories, if their return home was deemed too complicated. All other students had to return to their homes. Strict rules were enforced and violators were fined.

The epidemic situation was particularly critical in January and February of 2021. For the third semester in a row, measures remained in force and some even became stricter. The prolonged functioning in a pandemic, however, also demonstrated that some activities could not take place remotely forever.

We had to make sure that practical exercises of students in essential fields could take place in person during the summer semester so the quality of their study was not compromised. We managed to pass a number of measures despite the situation which was extremely difficult. Students in their graduation years obtained exceptions wherever their personal attendance was necessary for the proper completion of their studies, like for example in the case of those studying medicine, dentistry, pharmacy, natural sciences and other fields. By the end of the summer semester, some students were gradually allowed to return to the dormitories and complete the necessary part of their studies in person. Exams and final exams took place in both modes.

The summer semester begins online. The Rector of Comenius University requested an exemption for students of medical faculties and other fields where on-site teaching is necessary from the Chief Public Health Officer, the Minister of Health Care, the Minister of Education and the Minister of Interior. The exemption was eventually granted.

Comenius University set up own mobile COVID testing units which served its employees and doctoral students. Guests at dormitories were also tested regularly.

Scientists at the Comenius University Science Park and the Faculty of Natural Sciences sequenced SARS-CoV-2 genomes. Bioinformaticians from the Faculty of Mathematics, Physics and Informatics then analysed coronavirus samples.
In its hundred years of existence, Comenius University has established itself as the most prominent and largest university in Slovakia. It entered its second century with a clear goal - to maintain its good reputation, continue to enhance its prestige in Europe and worldwide, and to continue improving the quality of education and scientific activities. The strategy of development of Comenius University reflects the changes happening to universities and societies in Slovakia and around the world. The goal is to reinforce its standing of the most important domestic university and science centre in Slovakia and to become a sought-after partner in the international area of education and research. Comenius University wants its voice to play an important role in the country's growth. Consequently, its long-term development is based on these ten goals.

1. Comenius University is a prestigious university
   The university provides quality education and motivates its staff and students towards it. It offers a wide range of study programmes linked to scientific activities and continuously innovates their content. It evaluates and improves the quality of tuition by means of internal and external quality assurance as well as student feedback.

2. Comenius University is a student-oriented university
   Students participate in the management of the university. The voice of students and alumni is a valuable input for development and modernization. The university continuously improves the quality of accommodation and the extracurricular and sports activities available to students. It addresses their specific needs individually.

3. Comenius University is a university of international impact
   It forms and maintains partnerships with foreign universities, especially as a member of the ENLIGHT alliance. The university strives to be an attractive teaching venue for foreign professors and wants to continue attracting international students. It also supports the mobility of domestic students and staff.

4. Comenius University is a place of free and creative research
   Its researchers prioritise original, rigorous, impactful and quality research. Researchers are free to choose research goals while observing areas of priority. The university builds top research centres and protects the intellectual property of its staff.

5. Comenius University is a place of excellence in science and research
   It focuses on publishing in the most renowned magazines. It connects its research with top international teams and creates new teams. It follows future trends in research and supports patenting and innovation.

6. Comenius University is a coordinator of knowledge transfer into practice
   In addition to higher education, it provides knowledge to the general public through events, media and publications. It coordinates activities with other universities, employers, businesses and public institutions.

7. Comenius University is a well-run university
   Comenius University is governed autonomously through academic self-governance. Its bodies communicate with each other in order to advance the institution. It works on improving its administration and makes it more electronic.

8. Comenius University is a caring employer
   It has a system of remuneration based on merit, is family-friendly and develops a university kindergarten project. The university supports the career and skill growth of its employees. At the same time, it develops a university-wide identity.

9. Comenius University is a responsible asset manager
   It responsibly manages its premises and undertakes investment projects.

10. Comenius University is a space for social responsibility
    It communicates key topics and opinions on societal and regional issues. It actively disseminates the results of the latest science. It provides high-quality assistance to bodies of the state and other organizations.

The Rector, Marek Števček
In 2020, Comenius University was included in all significant international rankings. Comenius University uses this type of feedback to improve its own activities.

ACADEMIC RANKING OF WORLD UNIVERSITIES 2020 – The "Shanghai" ranking
Comenius University placed in the 601st – 700th band out of more than 2 000 evaluated universities, achieving its highest ranking since it was included in the ranking. In the Global Ranking of Academic Subjects 2020, Comenius University ranked 201st – 300th in Physics, 301st – 400th in Energy Science and Engineering, and 401st – 500th in Mathematics.

RUR – Round University Ranking
In 2020, Comenius University ranked 394th out of 1 100 evaluated universities from 85 countries.

THE WUR IMPACT RANKING
Comenius University is ranked in the 201st – 300th band out of more than 768 universities from 85 countries. The project measures individual universities’ impact on the economy and the society. In an innovative project evaluating universities introduced by the leader in university rankings, THE WUR (Times Higher Education World University Ranking), the project measures individual universities’ impact on the economy and the society. The project measures individual universities’ impact on the economy and the society.

THE WUR (TIMES HIGHER EDUCATION WORLD UNIVERSITY RANKINGS)
Comenius University ranked 1001+ out of more than 1 500 evaluated universities from 93 countries.

QS WORLD UNIVERSITY RANKINGS
Comenius University ranked in the 651st – 700th band out of 800 top evaluated universities in the world. Its ranking improved 50 places from last year.

LEIDEN RANKING
Comenius University is ranked 593rd out of 1 176 world universities in an overall evaluation across all fields. In the evaluation of individual fields Comenius University achieved the following rankings:


CWUR (CENTER FOR WORLD UNIVERSITY RANKINGS)
Comenius University ranked 609th on the CWUR list which places it among the top 3% of schools in the world. It is the best ranked Slovak university in what is the most extensive world ranking.

PERFORMANCE RANKING OF SCIENTIFIC PAPERS FOR WORLD UNIVERSITIES (NTU RANKINGS)
Comenius University ranked in the 601st – 650th band out of the top 800 universities which were shortlisted from a broader selection of more than 4 000 scientific institutions.

EDUCATION
Comenius University Bratislava is the oldest, largest and most prominent university in Slovakia. It bases its education on its own scientific activity, having the ambition to be a leading centre of European education and a university with an international focus. It teaches its graduates to demonstrate the highest degree of personal and professional qualities as well as humanity and caring. The goal of the university is to enhance the scientific and cultural perspectives of the society and its economic prosperity.
In the 2020/2021 academic year, Comenius University offered a total of 935 study programmes at the levels of Bachelor, Master, Doctor and PhD, in which it was entitled to grant the corresponding academic degrees. There were 47 additional study programmes compared to the previous year. Comenius University admitted 10,288 students of whom 7,454 were enrolled in the first year of study.

STUDENTS

In 2020, the university’s thirteen faculties provided tuition to a total of 22,817 students at all study levels (Bachelor, Master, Doctor and PhD). Despite the declining demographic trend, Comenius University has maintained a high share of students in Slovakia. In 2020, almost 17% of all university students studied at Comenius University, compared to 12% in 2008.

More than a fifth of all international university students in Slovakia study at Comenius University. The increased interest of international students in studying at the 1st and 3rd level of study is especially encouraging. The number of international students who came from more than 70 countries increased by 312 to a total of 2,860 students, representing 12.5% of the total number of students at the university. The majority of international students study at the faculties of medicine in Bratislava and in Martin and at the Faculty of Management.

A significant scientific potential lies in young scientists. More than one quarter of PhD students in Slovakia study at Comenius University. There were 1,884 PhD students studying at Comenius University in 2020, constituting 28.6% of all PhD students in Slovakia.
International English Olympiad for students of medicine and pharmacy

On 2 October, the team of Richard Ančík, a general medicine student at the Jessenius Faculty of Medicine in Martin, won the International English Olympiad for students of medicine and pharmacy, which was organized for the third year by three Russian universities, in Moscow, Ekaterinburg and in Krasnoyarsk. In the finals, the presentation of his team on the human response to COVID-19 was chosen as the best out of more than 1,000 entrants by a jury consisting of experts.

Student Research Conference of the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Ostrava

On 3 November, 2020, the 10th annual Student Research Conference of the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Ostrava took place. The conference focused on the presentation of the research activities of students of both medical and non-medical fields of study. Jessenius Faculty of Medicine student Dominika Holubová managed to secure 3rd place in the category of non-medical Master’s degree students with a qualitative study which looked at how students in nursing perceive the assignment of nursing care.

Daniel Tupý Award

On 4 November 2020, fifteen years after student Daniel Tupý was murdered, the winners were announced in a nationwide competition of students on violence, extremism and the failure of the state in the area of human rights, spanning both extremism and the failure of the state in cemeteries. Victor Ibara from the Faculty of Natural Sciences took 1st place with an anatomical structures. Jozef Balcerčík and artistically valuable illustrations of seniors entitled “The Art of Living Under All Circumstances”. Students from the University of the Third Age of the Centre for Continuing Education at Comenius University achieved success in two categories: Viera Metelková managed to win the Gold Award in the “Best Original Work” category and Bohuslav Košútová’s work won the Outstanding Work Award in the “Price of Tradition” category.

Slovak Universities Esports Championships

Slovak University Esports Championships Comenius University students achieved success in the field of electronic sports. The Comenius KU FARP team, which consists of six Faculty of Law students - Patrik Hampl, Peter Mikúš, Tomáš Czvanga, Samuel Kellner, Matúš Fabian and Daniel Sokol secured second place in the Counter-Strike: Global Offensive (CS:GO) during the 2020/2021 summer semester at three events: The Slovak University Esports Championships, the University e-Sports League (UniCap) and 3EAM, making the first team in the history of university e-sports in Czechia and Slovakia to win all e-sports tournaments organized for university students in a single season.

AI in Environmental-Social-Governance Investing

A team of students of mathematics of Economics and Finance from Faculty of Mathematics, Physics and Informatics (composed of Natalia Sibavová, Lenka Králová, Adriána Lejníková and Adam Martinka) managed to finish 4th out of 45 teams from 28 European universities in the finals of an international competition Artificial Intelligence in Environmental-Social-Governance Investing, which took place on 7 June 2021. The competition was organized by CFA Society Poland and ran from March to June 2021. It focussed on socially responsible investing represented by ESG (environmental, social and governance) indicators.

Youth Embassy

On 17 June 2021, the Youth Embassy project took place in Bratislava for the 11th time. It invites any high school or university students to participate. This year, participants in the category of university students were asked to focus on improving the economy and the healthcare system with an emphasis on tourism in Slovakia. A jury of experts selected Marek Kajan as the winner. The Faculty of Arts student created an atlas of anatomy with highly professional and artistically valuable illustrations of anatomical structures. Jozef Bakárčik from the Faculty of Natural Sciences took 2nd place with his research of biodiversity in Central Europe. Victor Baba from the Faculty of Medicine secured 3rd place with a web portal which addresses the issues of time management, stress and disinformation in the healthcare sector using brief online videos informing about specific diagnoses.

Štúr’s Pen

On 24 June 2021, the winners of the nationwide journalism competition open high school and university students, Štúr’s Pen 2020/2021, were announced. In the category of online journalism the award was given to Kristína Kaščáková, a student of the Faculty of Arts, for her podcast named “Nampilíuds” (Indeed). In the category of university magazines, two Comenius University journals took 3rd place jointly: Farmakoviny and Namojdušu (Indeed), a student magazine issued by the Slovak Association of Pharmacy Students from FPFAHM, and the faculty magazine “Petračka”, created by PAFS students in cooperation with the Department of Journalism. Domínika Chrastová, a student from FSEV UK, won the 3rd place in the category of individual contributions of university students, and Domínika Pačíková from FIF UK won the prize of the Literary Fund.

Student Personality of Slovakia

On 1 July 2021 the sixteenth annual Slovak Personality of Slovakia competition, organised by the Junior Chamber International - Slovakia non-profit organisation under the auspices of the Slovak Rectors’ Conference and the Slovak Academy of Sciences, announced its winner: Marek Kajan. An expert jury selected successful students and young researchers from 91 nominations in thirteen categories. Laura Adamkovičová from the Faculty of Pharmacy became the student personality of Slovakia for the 2019/2020 academic year in the pharmacy category. Julián Enrik Smolíka, a student at the Faculty of Physical Education and Sports excelled in the sports category.

ACADEMIC MOBILITY OF STUDENTS IN 2020

In the context of multilateral international relations, Comenius University has been participating in Central European programmes, such as CEEPUS and Aktion Österreich - Slowakei, as well as in European Union programmes. The dominant form of cooperation in terms of quantitative figures is the European Erasmus+ programme.
The number of university graduates at all levels of study from Comenius University faculties in the 2019/2020 academic year was 5,237. The academic title of Doctor of Medicine was awarded to 686 graduates, 2,321 students graduated with a Master’s degree, 1,935 students graduated with a Bachelor’s degree and the academic title of Philosophiae doctor was awarded to 295 graduates.

Lifelong learning

The Centre for Continuing Education at Comenius University provides non-university education to various public groups. It provides language training to international students, preparing them for tuition conducted in Slovak; it also provides career and language education, as well as educational programmes for seniors and expatriate Slovaks. The programme portfolio responds to the current needs of the public, as well as the needs of the labour market. In 2020, Slovak language courses and specialised subjects taught in Slovak were attended by 261 students from 50 countries.

SUMMER SCHOOLS

In the previous year the Children’s Comenius University was held online but this year the summer school for children aged 9 to 14 years was held both in-person and online. During the course of July and August, the children could participate in eight lectures given by experts from Comenius University, the Slovak Academy of Sciences, the Slovak National Theatre, the University of Oxford and could hear a speech by the Minister of Foreign Affairs. They could also take part in a number of interesting workshops.

This year, the Summer University of Slovak Language and Culture, organized by the Centre for Continuing Education at Comenius University, took place on 5-16 July 2021 online. Participants who live abroad, expatriate Slovaks and students of secondary schools who are in the final year had the opportunity to start learning or improve their Slovak and learn about the richness of Slovak history and culture. Between 27 July and 5 August 2021 the Hall of Mirrors of the Primate’s Palace in Bratislava hosted the Summer University of Bratislava for Seniors. Participants could attend a discussion on “The position of women in the past and the present” and three lectures: on piano art in Pressburg, on the history and future of the Grössling Spa and on mental health in (post) covid times - and how to take care of it.

The Studia Academica Slovaca (SAS) Summer School of Slovak Language and Culture took place between 2 and 14 August 2021 in online form. This oldest summer university in Slovakia is run by the Faculty of Arts and offers language seminars, conversations and lectures. Every year it provides education to expatriate Slovaks, Slavic studies enthusiasts, students, cultural workers, managers, translators and others who are interested in our language and culture.

After the success of its initial year, the summer school Economy in the Circle for 5th to 9th grade pupils was held for the second time. The school’s purpose is to explain the essence of circular economy. It uses lectures, workshops and games with themes like the apparel industry, waste management, biodegradable waste management, green buildings or consumer behaviour, to show the children how everyday, practical solutions work. The school took place between 9 and 13 August and was organized by the Centre for Management Development and Applied Research at the Faculty of Management, the 3E Institute and by Circular Slovakia.

According to the individual level of study

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<th>Programme Type</th>
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<tr>
<td>Master</td>
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<tr>
<td>Doctor</td>
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Comenius University is one of Slovakia’s most prominent research institutions in terms of the number of its researchers, its ability to obtain financial support for research, and the results achieved.

PROJECTS AND GRANTS

Comenius University received a total of €10.95 million in state subsidies for its projects in 2020. Most of the funds came from the Slovak Research and Development Agency (SRDA) which provided a total of €7.4 million for 244 research projects undertaken at Comenius University’s thirteen faculties and selected units in 2020. This is an increase compared to the previous year.

Most research projects at Comenius University were supported by the Scientific Grant Agency (VEGA) of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport of the Slovak Republic and the Slovak Academy of Sciences, which provided funding for 325 research projects at Comenius University in 2020. The figures for 2020 show that there was an increase in the volume of obtained financial resources despite a lower number of projects.
HABILITATIONS AND INAUgURATIONS

In 2020, forty-eight lecturers became Associate Professors at Comenius University. The Scientific Board discussed fourteen and approved twelve nominations submitted by the scientific boards of faculties according to the title of Professor. In addition to the appointment of Professors, the Scientific Council also approved six nominations of CU’s faculties for the honorary degree of Doctor Honoris Causa.

TOP-CLASS RESEARCH

The highest concentration of top research teams in Slovakia - 26 out of 54 - can be found at Comenius University. The important thing to know for students is that the research teams working at Comenius University, who are excellent in an international context, also teach at the faculties.

The creative activity of PhD candidates is also supported through Comenius University’s own grant scheme, CU Grants. In 2021, Comenius University provided grants worth €249,210 to 257 projects.

Comenius University also has other scientific establishments which help generate top quality research and provide a connection to practical applications, such as the Science Park, BioMed in Martin and the Centre for Nuclear and Accelerator Technologies (CENTA).

PUBLICATION ACTIVITY OF COMENIUS UNIVERSITY IN 2020

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<th>FEDU</th>
<th>FPHARM</th>
<th>FSPORT</th>
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SCIENTIFIC DISCOVERIES AND RESULTS

COVID-19 RESEARCH

The more we trust, the less we fear

At the end of March 2020, Martin Kanovský and Julia Kanovská Halamová from Comenius University decided to look at how trustful Slovaks were of the measures related to COVID-19, and how they perceived the coronavirus threat. The results show that people who trust that others would behave responsibly are less likely to view the spread of the coronavirus as a threat. This conclusion can help formulate new public health policies and crisis communication.

We wanted to know how our university was doing

Psychologists Michal Hajdík and Anton Heretík, Jr. and psychiatrist Ján Pečeňák decided to study the mental health of students and staff at our university during the coronavirus pandemic. Their research showed that depression and anxiety increased approximately twofold compared to their first research, conducted in 2018. This means that the global pandemic significantly affected the life of young people at universities.

Faster and simpler sequencing

During the pandemic, researchers from Comenius University and their colleagues from the Biomedical Center of the Slovak Academy of Sciences sequenced samples of coronavirus which were taken in all parts of Slovakia. Sequence analysis allowed researchers to observe the changes in the virus genome. It is then possible to adjust diagnostic procedures so that tests discover individuals infected with different variants of the virus, who can then be quarantined early enough. They managed to identify several lineages of the virus present in Slovakia. These included the Czech, British and the South African variant, but also numerous other strains.

MEDICINE AND PSYCHOLOGY

Excessive alcohol use is the third leading cause of death worldwide

Scientists from the Institute of Forensic Medicine and Medical Expertise in Martin studied the effects of alcohol on the human body for a long time. The consequences of excessive alcohol consumption are the third leading cause of death in the world. They include diseases caused by excessive drinking and alcohol-related injuries. The researchers also discovered that people over 14 years of age (including teenagers) in Slovakia consume on average 11.1 litres of pure alcohol per year, which is 1.3 litres more than the European average.

Scientists develop an enhanced detection of hazardous substances in wastewater

Cytostatic agents are chemical substances that kill cells or prevent their multiplication and so are extensively used to treat cancer through chemotherapy. However, they also have a host of side effects. Approximately 50% of the administered dosage is excreted from the patients’ bodies with urine, causing systematic environmental contamination. This may pose additional risks to human health. Researchers from Comenius University who were part of an international team have developed a more sensitive analytical method for monitoring environmental contamination caused by these substances.

Switching genes on and off

Wherever DNA is damaged, the body engages mechanisms to repair it. Some of the most toxic DNA damage occurs if both of its strands break. Slovak researchers found that homologous recombination proteins (a type of emergency DNA repair in case of extensive damage) regulate the on/off switching of genes.

In a recent study, researchers from Comenius University and their colleagues from the Czech Academy of Sciences sequenced samples of coronavirus which were taken in all parts of Slovakia. Sequence analysis allows researchers to observe the changes in the virus genome. It is then possible to adjust diagnostic procedures so that tests discover individuals infected with different variants of the virus, who can then be quarantined early enough. They managed to identify several lineages of the virus present in Slovakia. These included the Czech, British and the South African variant, but also numerous other strains.

Researchers studied the mental health of students and staff at our university during the coronavirus pandemic.
ARCHEOLOGY AND ANIMAL DISCOVERIES

Genes that are responsible for evolutionary changes

A team of scientists which also included Comenius University zoologist and evolutionary biologist David Jandzik, compared the functions of vertebrate developmental genes with different body structures, like that of the sea lamprey (a representative of jawless vertebrates) vs. the African clawed frog (a representative of jawed vertebrates). This allowed them to reconstruct the mechanisms whose modifications enabled various types of cells, tissues, organs or whole body parts to arise and evolve.

Amphibians trapped in an amber grave

Thanks to the perfect preservation in amber, it was possible to study the bodies of 165-million-year-old amphibians - called albanerpetontids. They were examined by an international team of scientists who collaborated with evolutionary biologist and palaeontologist Andrej Cerňanský.

How amphibians turned into tetrapods

They decided to leave their aquatic life behind and moved to dry land. Amphibians which underwent this radical change 340 million years ago exhibited several anatomical transformations. Their fish fins morphed into tetrapod limbs and breathing organs changed their function, but a crucial adaptation was in the way their blood cells, which are necessary for life, formed.

An international group of scientists, one of whom was the evolutionary biologist from Comenius University Jozef Klembar discovered at what point in time and in which group of vertebrates blood cells began to be produced in bone marrow. This discovery confirmed that haematopoiesis did not migrate to bones until the Permian, millions of years after tetrapods evolved from amphibians.

A strange lizard which baffled the scientists

In 2019, a specimen of an animal found in 99-million-year-old Cretaceous amber had been mistakenly identified as a dinosaur by scientists who had published an article about the discovery in the prestigious journal Nature. Another team of scientists, one of whom was Andrej Cerňanský from Comenius University, managed to correct this mistake a year later. They discovered a strange lizard, whose species was given a new name, Oculudentavis naga.

A lizard that used to be a snake

The unique anguid lizards are mistaken for snakes and killed needlessly. However, an international team of scientists led by zoologist Daniel Jablonski has shown that they have several features which clearly distinguish them from snakes. They are a subspecies of lizards occurring in the Middle east which scientists have now described for the first time.

Comenius University maintains both bilateral and multilateral international contacts. The contacts lead to student and teacher exchanges. Erasmus+ activities are the predominant form of cooperation.

ENLIGHT

Comenius University is a member of the ENLIGHT alliance which will offer joint study programmes. In July 2020 the European Commission approved the establishment of the consortium which enables students and teachers to participate in activities at several universities. Other members of the alliance in addition to Comenius University are the University of Chert (BE), the University of Bordeaux (FR), the University of Uppsala (SE), the University of Groningen (NL), the University of the Basque Country (ES), the University of Göttingen (DE), the National University of Ireland in Galway (IE) and the University of Tartu (EE). This European University will develop new models of education, research, and joint study programmes. A host of events dedicated to the future of education took place at the beginning of March 2021. Between 1 and 5 March students and professionals were invited to participate in a number of public events, including speeches, lectures, round table discussions, virtual networking and an exchange of students' opinions. Associate Professor Andrej Findor from the Faculty of Social and Economic Sciences spoke about diversity, inclusion and justice in higher education.
How digitisation affects international cooperation
Digitisation has become an integral part of our professional and private lives and both aspects are important to science and higher education. This is why on 23 to 24 March 2021 the University of Göttingen and the University of Tartu, with the support of their ENLIGHT partners, jointly hosted a virtual conference on the topic of “The Impact of Digitisation on Internationalisation: Challenges and Opportunities for the Future of Universities”. Comenius University Vice-Rector for International Relations Jozef Tancer was one of the speakers at the conference.

Public assembly of ENLIGHT members
On 18 June 2021, representatives of all ENLIGHT member universities met at a public assembly to present the priorities of their activity and the Alliance’s future agenda.

Responsible artificial intelligence and analytics for an ethical and inclusive digital society
The use of artificial intelligence, despite its many benefits, still raises various ethical issues and concerns. The IFIP Conference which took place between 1 and 3 September 2021, offered different points of view on the issue and brought together experts from various disciplines and communities to jointly develop an ethical system for information technologies and artificial intelligence.

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES
An international scientific conference Slovak (not only) as a foreign language III took place at the Faculty of Arts on 1 and 2 February 2021 to honour Associate Professor Jana Pekarovičová.

On 18 February the third annual interdisciplinary scientific conference Phenomenon took place. Lecturers from a number of universities in Slovakia and Czechia met online using MS Teams to discuss the one major topic which has kept the whole world on its toes for a whole year: COVID-19. The phenomenon that entered our lives regardless of our age, gender or nationality.

On 15 March 2021, the seventh international conference of PhD students and young researchers was held online under the title “Young Russian Studies - New Tendencies and Trends”. It was organised by the Department of Russian and Eastern European Studies at the Faculty of Arts. The conference delivered new perspectives on linguistic, literary, translational, historical and cultural issues related to Russia and the countries of the Eastern Partnership (Belarus, Ukraine, Moldova, Georgia, Azerbaijan, Armenia).

The first international conference Health Technology Assessment was held on 21 April 2021 at the Slovak Medical Association. In their speeches, experts from Denmark, Canada, Hungary and the Czech Republic dealt with issues arising in the use of medical technologies and related to the aspects of health, as well as the social, economic and ethical dimensions.

The Faculty of Law held the 15th annual international scientific conference of PhD students and young researchers under the title Milestones of Law in Central Europe 2021, which took place from 24 to 25 June 2021.

The current pandemic was the main focus of the international online conference, "XLVI. Pharmacy Days of Milan Lehký" organised by the Slovak Pharmaceutical Society on 24 and 25 June 2021. Experts from Slovakia and the Czech Republic spoke about what life is like with COVID-19.

Between 19 and 21 July 2021, students from all over Europe convened at the UNICA International Student Conference to discuss various topics related to education and the role of universities in addressing social issues.

EC President Ursula von der Leyen is welcomed at Comenius University’s Science Park by the Rector Marek Števček.
On 1 March 2021 Comenius University began a protest against political interference in the functioning of universities. The protest is an expression of extreme disappointment with a draft amendment of the Higher Education Act. The academic community at Comenius University, the Slovak Rectors’ Conference, the Council of Higher Education Institutions and the Club of Deans of the Faculties of Higher Education Institutions of the Slovak Republic all categorically rejected the submitted draft amendment as a whole. They believe it lacks strategy and purpose, is unsystematic and is in conflict with the mission of universities. "Its purpose is to bring public universities under political control. If the proposed amended act was implemented, it would not deliver the increase in the quality of education, research and science that the proponents expect," affirm the Academic Senate of Comenius University and the University’ Management in their written statement. As part of the protest, lectures by experts were held at Comenius University during the course of two weeks.

Universities are subject to public law and perform a public service. Associate Professor Anna Sámelová from the Department of Journalism gave the first lecture. She clarified the terms we sometimes confuse in Slovakia: public law and public service. She also explained why it was necessary to arrive at a common definition of both public law and public service.

Academic self-governance and freedoms have a long history going back to medieval times. Associate Professor Vincent Múcska from the Department of General History explained how deep the roots of university autonomy reach and how the organisational structure of universities was defined by the church’s affinity for order, system and authority.

Universities and their interaction with political authority
Associate Professor Miroslav Lysý from the Department of Legal History and Comparative Law emphasized the real essence of any self-governance. He then explained how Comenius University did in this respect during the century of its existence.

What are the benefits of self-governance?
Professor Gabriela Lubelcová from the Department of Sociology outlined the significance and benefits of the self-governance management model for all involved and the organisation itself. She emphasized that the concept of administration described not only the way in which the university was organised, but also its mission.

From Comenius to the Slovak University
Dr. Eva Škorvanková from the Department of General History of the Faculty of Fine Arts undertook to explain the drastic restriction of academic freedoms by the Slovak state regime during WWII. She reminded that from the second half of the 1930s the growing influence of populist rhetoric caused ethnic tensions to gradually build up at the university as well.

Becoming a lawyer without a university?
Associate Professor Ondrej Podolec from the Department of General History and Comparative Law lectured about the building of the communist justice system and public service. She also explained why it was necessary to arrive at a common definition of both public law and public service.
after February 1948. In his contribution he described the two ways in which the Communists sought to accelerate the insertion of their people into the judiciary. One was new legislation introducing the lay element to court senates and another consisted in accelerating legal training, which would ensure a rapid “production” of new judges and prosecutors. The speeding up was achieved by circumventing the more time-consuming university education.

Self-governance as an added layer to the division of power

Associate Professor Martina Gajdošová from the Department of Theory of Law and Philosophy of Law outlined university self-governance from the legal point of view and in terms of the organization of power in the state. She particularly emphasized its own mechanism for creating internal regulations which the current Act on Higher Education Institutions allows and even mandates.

Academic freedoms between February 1948 and the beginning of Communist “normalization” in the 1970s

Dr. Tomáš Černák from the Department of Slovak History of the Faculty of Arts clarified how the communists, after securing power, used Action Committees to plant the first seeds of an atmosphere of fear and favouritism at universities, both among teachers and students. There was no tolerance of opinions not favourable of the ruling regime and no free discussion was allowed. Regular personal reviews became the norm. Those who failed to meet the new criteria had to leave the university environment.

WE POPULARIZE SCIENCE

Coffee at nine

Self-isolation during the first wave of the pandemic and the transition to online learning as well as a lack of contact inspired the External Relations Office to create a project of regular Thursday talks. The project continued into 2021. Every Thursday morning at 9 a.m. an online discussion would take place via Microsoft Teams and Facebook with one of the scientists or students of our university, or a well-known figure from another field. The most viewed segments included the coffee talk with Marek Števček, the University’s Rector, the coffee talk about John Amos Comenius with Janka Medveďová and the coffee talk where Alfréd Sedláčik discussed the topic “You run like my nan - insult or compliment?”. All recordings are available on the University’s YouTube channel.

European Researchers’ Night

On 27 November 2020 the European Researchers’ Night science festival took place online. This year these Comenius University faculties participated: FMED, FARS, FPHARM, FMPI and FSES. The festival included a “Slovak-Slovenian Night”, an event at which the Faculty of Arts hosted two round table discussions. The first focussed on the standardization of language and the second took a look at cultural and university contacts between Slovaks and Slovenes.

Science and Technology Week 2020

Comenius University actively participated in the event which has a seventeen-year tradition and took place from 9 to 15 November 2020 online. Like in the past, the most active faculty was the Faculty of Natural Sciences, offering the participants lectures on water, minerals, rock development and the causes of the extinction of species. The Faculty of Mathematics, Physics and Informatics hosted the iBobor IT competition and showed experiments using a new LEGO kit to elementary school students. It also cooperated with other universities to organise a virtual visit of the ATLAS experiment at CERN. The Jessenius Faculty of Medicine presented interesting videos about teaching through simulation and offered a tour of the faculty. The Faculty of Arts brought out stories from the life of ethnologists and presented examples of simultaneous interpretation, ways of vocabulary development and exercises for the development of interpreting skills. The Faculty of Physical
Education and Sport hosted a seminar on the latest developments in sports science.

WE WORK WITH YOUNG PEOPLE

In the 2020/2021 academic year Comenius University spent 21 days at education fairs reaching out to young people interested in studying at a university. The pandemic restrictions did not allow personal attendance at the fairs, but the upside was that online events could be attended by more students from all parts of the country.

Gaudeamus

Comenius University participated in the online event Gaudeamus which took place between 3 November and 2 December 2020. A whole day of lectures was dedicated to CU on 10 November and the University used it to present itself and twelve of its faculties. The presentation of Comenius University was the most viewed of the entire fair with a viewership index of 73.95 and 1 833 viewers, earning it the accolade of the most viewed lecture. The whole day of Comenius University’s lectures was the second most viewed day of the fair.

Another online fair took place from 19 January to 14 April 2021. A total of 137 presentations were given during 21 broadcasting days. Comenius University and its twelve faculties had their presentations on a single day dedicated to the Comenius University, 4 February.

Virtual open day

Comenius University also participated in a virtual open day event for future applicants, which was organized by the National Career Centre. The event took place between 8 and 11 December, 12 and 15 January, and 9 and 12 February. It was designed to attract secondary school graduates from all eight regions of Slovakia.

Studuj.to

Comenius University also participated in Studuj.to, a newcomer among fairs. The live broadcast was viewed by more than 8 000 online visitors.

Comenius University Open Days

In 2020, Comenius University held its open days for the first time online. Over two days, 5 and 6 November 2020, the University presented the possibilities for study at its twelve faculties. Every day, there were two live streamed sessions during which the faculties provided information about their study programmes, the application process, and student life beyond classes. At the end there was always a question time for the participants. The event was hosted at the address https://zaziden.uniba.sk/ and visitors could either connect using MS Teams or the University’s Facebook page. On the first day the page reached 700 views and on the second 500 visitors came along. The event was rated positively by the participants. Prospective future students did not have to travel to Bratislava and could learn about several faculties at once thanks to the online format.

The second Open Day of Comenius University

Another open day event took place online on 16 and 17 February, 2021 and followed the same template. Representatives of faculties provided the usual information but also revealed more about student life. On the first day the event had 350 viewers and on the second it attracted 250 visitors.

Open Days at Faculties

Faculty open days were also held online. The Faculty of Physical Education and Sport, held its open day on 22 January. On the next day, the Faculty of Arts and the Faculty of Education had theirs. On 1 February an open day was held at the Jessenius Faculty of Medicine. The Faculty of Natural Sciences opened its virtual doors on 5 February 2021 and both the Faculty of Pharmacy and the Faculty of Mathematics, Physics and Informatics did so on 10 February. The whole month of February was an open month at the Evangelical Lutheran Theological Faculty Open day at the Faculty of Social and...
A day in the life of a university student

This event was developed by Comenius University for those high school students, who were admitted to several universities and were now facing the decision of choosing one of them. Here they could virtually experience a day in the life of a university student, look behind the scenes and get information directly from Comenius University students. The online event took place on 18 May 2021. Comenius University students were asked questions like - What assignments do university students receive? What is a seminar paper? How does mandatory practice work? What benefits does membership in a student association have? How will college change my private life? How hard is it to live in a student dormitory? What are the first days at university like?

WE INSPIRE

We use mostly social networks to engage with students and involve them in university life. In the previous academic year, we ran several campaigns focused at them. During periods of online learning, the students were sending us their picture stories for the SamoUK (“Self-taught”) campaign, and anything funny that happened to them during the online lessons.

We began cooperating with photographer Stefan Cipar, who is behind the popular project Beautiful Bratislava. He showed his thousands of followers some extraordinary nooks and crannies from inside the university.

We also collaborated with the student of journalism Andy Frank, who specializes in graphics and art.

We turned the spotlight on the students themselves and we ran a series of articles entitled “I am CU” in which we introduce some of our students.

Julian Enrik Smoliga became the student personality of Slovakia in sports.

Laura Adamkovičová, the student personality of Slovakia in pharmacy.

Source: JCI-Slovakia

Fedor Šimkovic received the title of an outstanding individual of the Slovak science.

A number of quizzes and surveys for students were produced. Students could test their knowledge of, for example, the history and the present of Comenius University, of John Amos Komenský, and fields like ecology, The Earth Day, World Water Day or foreign words in Slovak. We ran a number of challenges intended to educate about mental health and we announced a digital detox challenge - one weekend without social networks.

AWARDS OF SCIENTISTS

Every year Comenius University scientists receive various national and international awards.

Literary Fund Prizes

On September 24, 2020, the committee of the Section for Scientific and Professional Literature and Computer Programs of the Literary Fund awarded prizes and special awards for works published in the previous year, 2019. The prize in the category of Science of Encyclopaedias, Dictionary Literature and Architectural Sciences was awarded to Associate Professor Juraj Šebesta from FMPI for the publication The Founder of Slovak Physics. Life and Work of Dionýz Ilkovič. The Biological and Medical Sciences Prize went to Associate Professor Adriana Liptáková from the Faculty of Medicine et al. for the book Medical Microbiology. In the category of Social Sciences special awards were given to Assoc. Professor Martin Hurbanič from the Faculty of Arts for the publication The Avar Siege of Constantinople in 626, to Professor Roman Holec, also from the Faculty of Arts, for the publication Hlinka. The Father of the Nation?, to Dr. Jana Lindbloom from FSES for her book Transformation and Demise of Agricultural Cooperatives, to Professor Martin Homz from the Faculty of Arts and Dr. Nora Malinovská from JFMED for the Galician-Volyn Chronicle, and to Professor Ján Kačala from the Faculty of Education for the publication The Phenomenon of Compounding in Language, particularly in Syntax. The first special award in the category of Biological and Medical Sciences was awarded to scientists from
the Faculty of Medicine, Professor Viktor Matejčík, Dr. Zora Havlanová, Dr. Roman Kuruc, doc. Andrej Šteňa and Professor Juraj Šteňa for the work Intraspinal Variations of Nerve Root.

Falling Walls Lab Slovakia
On 1 October 2020, the third Slovak national finals of Falling Walls Lab Slovakia, an initiative of Comenius University, took place online. The event is based on a global format and offers an opportunity to present new findings, ideas, research projects and business models of young innovators. Dr. Klaudia Kyselicová from the Faculty of Medicine who studies the links between fingerprints and autism spectrum disorders, managed to secure 2nd place.

ESET Science Award
On 14 October 2020, the ESET Foundation presented the ESET Science Award to top Slovak scientists for the second time. An international jury of experts presided by Kip Thorne, a laureate of the Nobel prize in physics, decided to present an award in the category of outstanding individual contributor to Slovak science to Professor Fedor Šimkovic from the Faculty of Mathematics, Physics and Informatics for his research of neutrinos. First place in the category of Outstanding Academic was awarded by representatives of Slovak scientific universities to Professor Ivan Varga from the Faculty of Medicine of Comenius University.

Award of the Association of Adult Education Institutions
During the Week of Lifelong Learning which took place from 19 to 25 October 2020 the Association of Adult Education Institutions was presenting awards in its twentieth year. The award for contributions in the field of adult education was presented to the University of the Third Age at the Centre for Continued Education, which has been educating Slovak seniors for three decades.

Fra Angelico
On 8 June 2021, the Fra Angelico Award was presented for the nineteenth time in the courtyard of the Prime Minister’s Palace in Bratislava. The award is given by the Council of the Conference of Bishops of Slovakia for Science, Education and Culture to prominent artists, scientists and theoreticians who have made an extraordinary contribution to the advancement of Christian culture in Slovakia through their creativity and work. The award in the category of the verbal art was given to the poet, translator, literary scholar and editor Ján Zambor, who was a long-time university teacher and now holds the title of Professor Emeritus at the Faculty of Arts of Comenius University.

Crystal Wing
On 20 June 2021, the laureates of the 2020 Crystal Wing award were announced at a gala dinner in the historic Šimák Chateau Pezinok. In addition to the awards in nine categories, two extraordinary lifetime achievement awards were presented in Crystal Wing’s 24th year. One of the awards was presented to Professor Daniela Ostatníková from the Faculty of Medicine who has researched the brain and its functions, the influence of sex hormones on the specific cognitive abilities of both genders and the causes of autism.

Slovak Woman of The Year
On 27 August 2021 the magazine Slovenska announced the absolute winner and the winners in individual categories of its 13th annual readers’ survey. First place in the category of science and research was awarded to Professor Zdenka Ďuračková of the Faculty of Medicine who teaches at the university and researches oxidative stress and the possibility of affecting the symptoms of several disorders like cardiovascular diseases, diabetes, Crohn’s disease, ADHD and depression disorder in children.
Comenius University is intimately linked to the city of Bratislava. It is the soul and the lungs of the city. Units and facilities of the university can be found in all parts of the city. Comenius University does not only consist of its faculties; it also has hospitals, pharmacies, the Comenius University Botanical Garden, the garden of medicinal plants, a herbarium, dozens of dormitory buildings, libraries, the Comenius University Press and the Comenius University Archive. Although Comenius University is not a campus-type university, this has its advantages. When you are getting to know the individual parts of the university, you will travel around the whole city and get to explore it.

DORMITORIES
Comenius University has the largest portfolio of accommodation facilities for students in Slovakia. In addition to Mlyny and Družba, Comenius University also owns the Lafranconi dormitories, dormitories in Martin, a home for theologians and three priest seminaries. At the end of 2020, these dormitories accommodated 8,218 students of the university. However, due to the pandemic, the capacity of the dormitories was not fully utilised. Only 361,470 main meals were served in the canteens, a seven-fold decrease from the previous year.

ACADEMIC LIBRARY
In 2020, the services of the library were used by 14,076 registered users. Comenius University students accounted for the largest number of them - 12,748. During the year, 294,582 documents were borrowed. The library offers access to 540,543 publications, including books, theses, journals and articles.

COMENIUS UNIVERSITY PRESS
In 2020, Comenius University Press published 238 publications, the largest proportion of which were study materials, accounting for 47%. The proportion of electronic publications has increased, and they already make up one third of all publications. These publications are sold through brick-and-mortar shops and an e-shop.

CENTRE FOR INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES
The centre operates the information systems and maintains the information and communication infrastructure. The centre is also technically responsible for the electronic student information system, electronic mail, the online presence of the university, the IT Support Center and other things.

BOTANICAL GARDEN
The Botanical Garden's mission includes the preservation and enlargement of the collections of living plants as well as the experimental acclimatization of various plant species. The plant displays are accessible to primary and secondary schools as well as the general public through exhibitions and seminars.

THE ARCHIVE
This is an expert unit which receives, records, protects and makes accessible archived documents which are related to Comenius University or education in Slovakia in general. Its collections include diplomas, photographs, general documentation, audio-visual documents and museum artefacts, including gowns, medals, insignia and teaching aids.

PSYCHOLOGICAL COUNSELLING CENTRE
Many people found it hard to cope with the changes, and experienced stress and anxiety due to isolation. They could turn for help to the professionals at the Comenius University Psychological Counselling Centre who were assisted by final year students of psychology supervised by the therapists. The students started using e-mail for communication when personal meetings were impossible and when the number of cases increased.
In 2020, Comenius University had a total of 4,434 employees. Out of this number, 2,152 were university teachers and 358 were researchers. Comenius University is one of the largest employers in Slovakia. The university focuses on the development of its human resources, especially those most qualified.

The current President of Comenius University’s Academic Senate, Professor Zlatica Plašienková works at the Department of Philosophy and History of Philosophy at the Faculty of Arts. The Academic Senate is one of the primary bodies of academic self-governance. In addition to other important functions, it elects the Rector of the University.