



2015/16 RAUN PRAGUE SESSION

Report

28th – 30th April 2015

The Programme of the session

Tuesday, 28th April 2015



After a short introduction of the coordinators the official part of the RAUN academic year 2015/16 began. The students also had the chance to present themselves to their fellow colleagues.

To introduce the recent students to further possibilities within the RAUN community, the Alumni Network was presented. In particular the Peer+ (Peer Review and Peer Tutoring) was presented to the students as an additional assistance for their upcoming research projects and an opportunity to remain engaged with RAUN after they graduation.



Following that, the research topics were presented and distributed within the students to create international and transdisciplinary research groups.

After the lunch break, the programme was continued by a presentation by Mr. Michal Broza from the United Nations Information Service (UNIS) in Prague about the UN in the contemporary world, followed by a lively discussion with the students.



In particular the development of the Post-Millennium Development Goals in a rapidly changing world raised interest within the students. Mr. Broza stressed that, despite challenges it faces, the UN remains the only forum to solve major security and development problems in the world today. It became quite clear that there are no simple solutions for the challenges of climate change, maternal mortality, inequality or among others peace and security.



One of his key messages to the participants was the need of young, global minded people to tackle nowadays challenges and find adequate solutions for them. Therefore he stressed the importance of the youth within the context of development.

The first day of the Prague Sessions concluded with an official welcoming reception at the University of Economics in Prague where Professor Zuzana Lehmannova, president of the Czech United Nations Association, greeted and welcomed the students.

Wednesday, 29th April 2015

On Wednesday the Regional Academy had once again the honour to be invited by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic in the Czernin Palace.

Under the title 'The Czech Republic and the UN family', high-ranking officials of the Foreign Ministry presented the priorities of the Czech Republic regarding the United Nations such as the reform of the Security Council and a more transparent election process of future UN Secretary Generals, disarmament and non-proliferation as well as human rights. The Czech Republic also hopes to intensify its involvement within peacekeeping operations and to increase the numbers of staff involved.

The students had the chance to ask questions to the representatives of the different departments, in particular regarding the cooperation of the Czech Republic with other countries of the region. All of the officials agreed upon the importance of the UN as a forum where issues can be discussed universally.

Afterwards the students were provided with a guided tour though the Czernin Palace with its interesting history and magnificent and representative halls and rooms.

The visit to the Czech Ministry of Foreign Affairs was followed by walk down to the city center where students enjoyed a fantastic weather with a nice picnic next to the Moldova during the lunch break before heading back to the University of Economics.

The afternoon session began with a presentation on the '*Community-led local development as a tool of development policy*' by Radim Srsen, Associate Professor at the University of Economics in Prague, coordinator for the RAUN in the Czech Republic and member of the ELARD (European LEADER Association for Rural Development) for the Czech Republic. In his presentation he explained the specific approach of this form of development on a local level. The aim of this approach is to give the rural people access and to mobilize them to shape their own future. Crucial features of that are the public – private partnership, the de-centralised administration as well as the bottom-up approach as central pillars. He also showed successful case studies in Europe and in Africa, in particular in Mozambique, to demonstrate the universal application of this approach. The topic was very positively received by the participants and led to a lively



Conclusion

All participants showed strong interest in the programme and are already very committed to the RAUN. They actively participated in all the discussions and debates and they seemed to have enjoyed the wonderful and historic city of Prague. The students as well as the coordinators are already looking forward to meeting again in Szeged, Hungary in September where the program will focus on the challenges to human rights. In the meantime, students will be working in groups on their chosen research projects.

Many thanks go to all the speakers, the participants and every supporter of the RAUN 2015/16! A very warm thank you also to the organizing team in Prague!

