

# The 101<sup>st</sup> World Esperanto Congress opens up to the wider public



**Slovakia will host the prestigious 101<sup>st</sup> World Esperanto Congress in the historical city of Nitra in July 2016, during the first month of the Slovak presidency of the European Union. The President of Slovakia, Andrej Kiska will be a patron of the event and the Slovak post office is preparing a special edition of stamps.**

The World Esperanto Congress is organised every year in a different country. This year, it will be held from the **23<sup>rd</sup> to the 30<sup>th</sup> of July 2016 in Nitra**, in the buildings of the Slovak Agricultural University. **1400 participants from 60 countries** are expected. For the very first time the congress will take place on the territory of Slovakia. The 101<sup>st</sup> World Esperanto Congress will be dedicated to the topic “Social justice – linguistic justice.” The number of participants, the diversity of their origins and its duration make it one of the biggest international events during the first Slovak presidency of the Council of the European Union.

Specialised conferences and annual meetings of specialised Esperanto organisations are organised within the World Congress. However, as the president of the organisational committee Peter Baláž says: *“Esperanto-speaking tourists will be satisfied too: a rich programme has been prepared to help them discover the beauties of Slovakia. The cultural programme will be rich too: theatrical plays, films, concerts of various genres and discos are waiting for an international audience. This congress is rather a festival of Esperanto and Esperanto culture, but a century of calling it a congress makes it difficult to rename it.”*

The programme will be enhanced by a performance of the Slovak art ensemble Lúčnica, which will take place on the 24<sup>th</sup> of July 2016 on Svätopluk Square in Nitra. The inhabitants of Nitra and its surroundings can freely come and attend the performance. During the evening of Friday, the 29<sup>th</sup> of July, there will be an attempt at the world and Slovak record of mass Slovak tango dancing, which will be followed by a free international music festival, during which music of various genres will be heard, both from Slovak bands from Nitra and Esperanto bands from Germany, Sweden and Lithuania.

Organising such an international event with participants from so many countries is not an easy task. This is why the organisational committee meets regularly in Nitra: the last meeting before the congress will be during the weekend of the 17<sup>th</sup> to the 19<sup>th</sup> of June. The programme of the event will be finalised and the last tasks will be determined. As Peter Baláž says: *“This congress is also an opportunity to express our gratitude to the previous generations who cultivated Esperanto in Slovakia. This is one more reason why we are doing our best to ensure that the participants feel good in Slovakia and leave the country with a smile on their faces and happiness in their hearts. Esperanto is much more than a language: it’s a philosophy of*

*friendship, collaboration across borders and worldwide communication, and when people understand this, they remain faithful to Esperanto.”*

During the congress, three specialised side events will take place to open Esperanto to the wider public:

### **Language policy conference of the V4+ countries**

This event will be held on the 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> of July 2016 and its main topic will be “Perspectives of language policy in the EU”. Politicians, linguists and representatives of civil society will attend the conference and discuss the language policy that is currently applied in the EU, in thematic domains: language problems in citizens’ participation; economical integration of individual states to the EU; state and perspectives of foreign language education in the EU. Miroslav Lajčák, vice-president of the government and Minister of Foreign and European Affairs, took auspices over the conference, and two European Commissioners promised to attend as main speakers: Vytenis Andriukaitis (Lithuania) and former commissioner Ján Figel’ (Slovakia).

More information: <http://www.polaco.fss.ukf.sk/conference/index.php?lang=sk>

### **Forum of the World’s Religions – CEIF 2016**

This meeting will be held on the 25<sup>th</sup> of July 2016. It is organised by the Slovak Esperanto Federation and the citizens’ association Parliament of World Religions – Slovakia. The meeting will be Slovakia’s contribution to the strengthening of the dialogue between religions, the common search for solutions to the growing interethnic, intercultural and interreligious tensions, the conflicts that arouse nationalism, extremism, xenophobia, resistance and fear among the population, as well as complex economic and social problems of people around the world, currently especially in the EU because of the uncontrolled arrival of a large number of illegal migrants.

More information: <http://parlament2017.sk/ceif-2016/>

### **20<sup>th</sup> International Medical Esperanto Congress**

The topic “Doctors and globalisation: what doctors are needed in the new century?” will be discussed in the teaching hospital of Nitra from the 20<sup>th</sup> to the 22<sup>nd</sup> of July 2016. The congress is organised by the Slovak Esperanto Federation together with the World Medical Esperanto Association. The participants of this congress will mostly deal with the challenges faced by today’s doctors because of globalisation, which can be solved only through international collaboration. The event will be held under the auspices of Tomáš Drucker, the Minister of Health.

The events will take place under the auspices of the high representatives of the state and within the context of the Slovak presidency of the Council of the European Union.

Negotiations with potential sponsors of the congress are currently being conducted.

You can find more information on the website of the 101<sup>st</sup> World Esperanto Congress:  
[www.nitra2016.sk](http://www.nitra2016.sk).

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