

IASWECE Council meeting in Prague

Silvia Jensen



In May the IASWECE council had its semi-annual meeting in the beautiful town of Prague in the Czech Republic. We were there exactly 50 years after the social movement called the Prague Spring, a period of political liberalization in Czechoslovakia during the era of its domination by the Soviet Union after World War II.

Prague is a lively old town, with charming historical buildings. It is divided by the river Vltava (Moldau) that flows calmly, bringing so much joy and refreshment for everyone who crosses its many bridges.

We felt very welcome in this city, right from the beginning. Our meeting took place in the Christian Community, a few steps from the Royal Botanical Garden, and close to the Saint Vitus Cathedral.

30 of our 33 member countries were represented at the council meeting, and we were pleased to welcome the Steiner Waldorf Association of Vietnam as our 34th member.





During the meeting we had the opportunity to take part in a conference at the Charles University in Prague, which had been prepared by the Czech Waldorf association in collaboration with the International Forum for Waldorf Education, ECSWE and IASWECE, with the theme “Education as a challenge in the digital age”. Digital media are a part of our lives today. The main question that has arisen is: What kind of education do children need today so that they can deal with this technology with mastery yet not be controlled and manipulated by it? Even adults have great difficulty in shaping their use of digital media consciously. Digital media make our lives easier in many ways, but they can never replace real human encounters. Work and experiences in nature can create a healing balance. (See the videos of the lectures in this newsletter).

Another fact that made this meeting so special was that at the same time the IASWECE Council members were in Prague, the International Forum - with teachers from Lower, Middle and Upper Waldorf Schools from around the world along with leaders of the Pedagogical Section - were also there, having their semi-annual meeting. We met together one afternoon in order to discuss two themes. The first was how to deal with digital media in our schools with our curriculum, and the second was how to better integrate all the teachers from Kindergarten up to Upper School as one body, considering that every stage of life has its uniqueness and at the same time they all belong together.



Along with the many meetings, we were also invited to visit several kindergartens in the town. We were received so warmly and felt very grateful for all the effort the educators put into our visit. A special thank

you for Tánja Smolková, our Czech representative, who made every effort to do her best to offer us a pleasant experience.

Many moments of our meeting were dedicated to preparing ourselves for the celebration of the 100 years of Waldorf education that will take place next year. One of the highlights will be the Early Childhood Conference in Dornach, which will take place from April 15 – 19th. (See article in this newsletter) You are all invited to join us!

We left Prague with a feeling of gratitude, wishing all the best for that country.

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