

In memoriam Zdeněk Pavlík (1931-2020)

Professor Zdeněk Pavlík, the key figure in the Czech demographic community, founding member of EAPS, and founder of the demography study programme in Czechoslovakia, passed away on 12 December 2020 at the age of 89.

Much of Zdeněk Pavlík's life has been dedicated to furthering demographic research and education in Czechoslovakia and later, since its breakup in 1993, in Czechia. Trained in statistics, he was among the founders of the Czechoslovak (and later Czech) Demographic Society in 1964, which he was chairing from 1977 to 1999. Pavlík's most lasting legacy lies in founding the university study programmes in demography in Prague, which provided demographic training at all three levels, BA, MA, and PhD. He initiated the establishment of the Department of Demography and Geodemography at the Faculty of Science, Charles University in Prague, since 1st January 1990, which coincided closely with the breakdown of state-socialist political system in the country—the „Velvet Revolution“— in November 1989. Zdeněk Pavlík was heading the department until 1997 and then continued lecturing and supervising students, being actively involved with the Department's work until his death. His research interests were broad, including the history of scientific development and population theories, global population change and, especially, the process of demographic transition. His friendly and open-minded attitude has shaped the new generations of young Czech demographers over the last five decades.



Professor Pavlík has a very rich publication record, especially in Czech, but also in Russian, French and English. He was leading a team of editors preparing the Czech edition of the Multilingual Demographic Dictionary in 1965, which established standard demographic terminology in the Czech language and is used to date. He was the main author of the landmark textbook in Czech, *Základy demografie* (Foundations of Demography) from 1986, a „door stopper“ of almost 700 pages, which has been used by demography students ever since.

Despite challenging circumstances and limited freedoms and opportunities for international collaboration during the state-socialist era until 1989, Professor Pavlík was always keen to establish collaborative links that bypassed barriers and

boundaries, including the Iron Curtain. His international career started in 1968-1971, when he joined the United Nations Population Division in New York. In 1983 Zdeněk Pavlík was one of the founding members of the European Association for Population Studies (EAPS), joined its first Council and acted as its first Vice-President until 1990. He was a guest lecturer at several universities, including in Moscow, Cairo and Strasbourg. In the late 1980s and 1990s he initiated an international Summer School in Demography at several countryside locations in Czechia, which brought together the best European demographers of the period and the most promising international students in a unique, relaxed and informal setting.

Zdeněk Pavlík was a towering figure in Czech demography, also in a physical sense—lean and tall. He was shaping population training and research long after the official retirement age. In fact, he has never truly retired, and his multiple roles included a spell as Dean of the newly established Socio-Economic Faculty of the J. E. Purkyně University in Ústí nad Labem in Northern Bohemia in 2004-2007. He was also a keen proponent of democracy and was deeply convinced that truly democratic societies rely on an active involvement of civil society organisations and NGOs. In 1990 he helped re-establishing one such organisation promoting societal dialogue and democratic values, „Democratic Club“ and has been actively involved in its activities, including international cooperation, until this year.

When asked, at the occasion of his 85th birthday, whether he had ever thought he'd still be lecturing at that age, he gave a fitting answer: „I have to admit I have never considered how long will I live. I never had time to contemplate this. (...) I am still active, lecturing. In fact I have a typical teacher's quirk, I love giving advice. And, so far, students are still listening to me and I have things to tell them, which they won't hear from anyone else.“

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