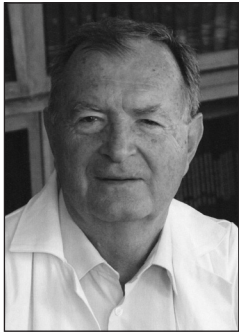


PROFESSOR VLADIMÍR BENCKO CELEBRATES 80TH BIRTHDAY



Professor MUDr. Vladimír Bencko, DrSc., one of the most eminent figures in the fields of public health and epidemiology in the Czech Republic and abroad, will be celebrating his 80th birthday on January 6, 2018.

Professor Bencko's origins, approach and thinking typify him as a classic citizen of the former Czechoslovakia. He was born in Rimavska Sobota in southern Slovakia and studied medicine

at the Medical Faculty of Charles University in Prague. His professional career was devoted through a variety of roles to public health, the study of environmental factors on population health, population exposure to chemical contaminants and the epidemiology of malignant diseases. Indeed, his professional scope has been exceptionally broad: already in the 1970's he focused on monitoring Slovak population load caused by arsenic from poor-quality coal combustion. Arsenic, with all its complex detrimental effects on human health, became a lifelong object of study. The rich palette of his scientific and pedagogical activities covered virtually all of the important areas in environmental health, exposure to toxic metals and persistent organic substances and evaluation of health risks from contaminated environments. His lifelong efforts were crowned by his involvement in human biomonitoring of population exposure to environmental toxins and estimation of general population load.

Professor Bencko has held a number of significant posts over the years: as a board member of the Ministry of Health CR Scientific Council he was instrumental in co-founding the concepts of the epidemiology and public health fields. He has been, and is, a member of a number of international organisations: since 1995 a consultant to the Committee for Challenges to Modern Society/NATO, since 2001 a delegate of the Czech Republic in the committee of the European Medical Councils of the European Science Foundation in Strasbourg. He is a founding member of the Central and Eastern European Chapter of the International Society for Environmental Epidemiology, acting in 1999–2001 as chairman. Since 2010 he has been a member of the Experts Management Module of the European Commission.

The professor's teaching activities are likewise noteworthy: from 1990 he was the head of the Institute of Hygiene and Epidemiology of the 1st Medical Faculty of Charles University and since leaving this post continues to intensively teach medical students. His written output remains prolific, with 226 WoS-registered publications and a citation index of 5804 and h-index of 39. Nonetheless, we would primarily like to pay tribute to his many years of work since 1993 in improving the quality of the Central European Journal of Public Health, as vice-president of the editorial board.

The editorial board wishes Professor Bencko the continuing health, well-being and vitality that have accompanied him throughout his life and career.