

Dear coxies,

after the covid and the war in Ukraine, this school year has been marked by another globally significant event – public release of ChatGPT. No one can foresee the consequences of that, yet we anticipate very interesting times and we happily continue developing our unique cognitive science program.

### Alumni survey

After 7 years from the previous one, we were able to prepare and administer a new version of our alumni survey, divided into two parts: (1) the study program evaluation and (2) expression of interest in collaboration. We sent out the survey to 120 alumni. We received 32 answers to part 1 (response rate 27%). 44 of you (37%) expressed your interest in keeping in touch with us and collaborating in various ways. We are very grateful for that and we will contact you when suitable opportunities appear. The detailed results of both surveys can be found [here](#).

### Study

We have got nine new graduates – Emil, Jano, Klára, Ľubica, Juliana, Matija, Matúš, Veronika, Zuzka – congratulations and welcome to the MEi:CogSciBA alumni family! Check out their master's theses in our [Master's thesis archive](#).

Since this year, we decided to unify the entrance exams (no longer using two forms – one for Slovak, the other for international students). We evaluated all the students based on their written materials (plus oral interviews where needed). These were also the first entrance exams after ChatGPT changed the game, so we are still learning how to account for that. We had 36 applications from 19 countries (most represented was Pakistan with 8 applicants), out of which we accepted 19. Unfortunately, only 8 of them enrolled in the first year as of today (5 from Slovakia, 2 from Germany, 1 from Ukraine).

We hosted 13 mobility students (6 Ljubljana, 6 Vienna, 1 Budapest).

### Science

Our department succeeded in acquiring a 1.5 mil euro Horizon Europe grant for a Twinning project [TERAIS](#). The grant is aiming at transformation of the workplace to a research centre of excellence, which spans management restructuring, research support, people development and internationalization, communication and workplace culture. In terms of research, we will be focusing on cognitive robotics and artificial neural networks, aiming to contribute to the development of trustworthy and human-friendly robots, teaming up with two strong partners: [Italian Institute of Technology](#) in Genoa and [University of Hamburg](#). This will also influence the students of cognitive



science program, because they will get more opportunities to get involved in experimental research in human-robot interaction.

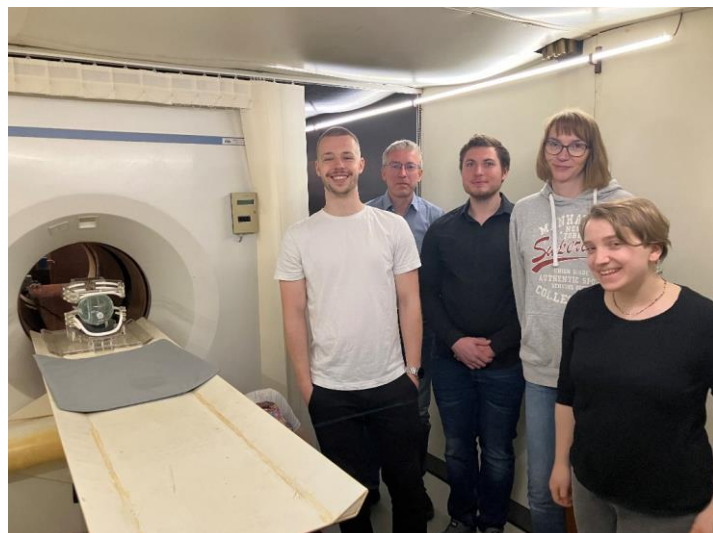


As for conferences, our annual MEi:CogSci conference took place in Budapest this year. We enjoyed it quite a lot. Our alumni Kristina Malinovská gave an invited talk and took part in the alumni discussion panel. Next year's conference will be hosted by us in Bratislava and will be collocated with a summer school on Human-Robot Interaction starting on June 10, 2024 with the last day overlapping with the start of the conference on June 13. The main topics of the summer

school are the main pillars of the TERAIS' project research: Trustworthy, Human-aware, and Explainable robots and interaction with them.

The annual Czech-Slovak conference [KUZ 2023](#) (Cognition and artificial life) was organized by our department this year and took place in a beautiful Smolenice castle. Nine people from our department attended, including two undergraduate students. The [conference proceedings](#) are freely available.

Thanks to Barbora Cimrová who organized it, our students attended several more events: excursion to Institute of Measurement Science of Slovak Academy of Sciences to see how magnetic resonance (MRI) works, workshop on brain activity recording with EEG and, last but not least, the lecture "Ways to think about the brain: Emergence of cognition from action" by world-renowned scientist György Buzsáki from Neuroscience Institute of New York University, which took place in Vienna in March.



## Social life

After the break forced by covid, we organized our traditional cognitive drink in September last year. We booked a place for 30 people and we had a turn-up of almost sixty! This year we are organizing the **cognitive drink** again and it is coming soon ([FB event here](#)). Please mark in your calendars **Tuesday October 3 from 18:00 at [Karloveska klubovna](#)**. We'd love to see you there!

The traditional annual **MEi:CogSci Christmas event** with the students and teachers from the partner universities is planned on **Friday December 1**. You are welcome to join us for a drink, if you like. We will send a reminder/confirmation when the date is closer.

Besides this, the students themselves self-organize and sneak in several smaller cognitive drinks throughout the year, so follow us on [Facebook](#).

We have also been active in the Slovak Cognitive Science Society (SSKV); check out our activities [here](#).

Thank you for reading this newsletter and for being part of our vibrant alumni community!

## Useful links

- [MEi:CogSci students and alumni Facebook page](#)
- Conferences [Cognition and Artificial Life](#)
- [Master's theses archive](#)
- [Slovak Cognitive Science Society](#)