

## **Prof. Dr. Zdravko Petkovšek (1931 – 2018)**

On July 9th, 2018 passed away in Ljubljana (Slovenia) Prof. Dr. Zdravko Petkovšek (born on February 20th, 1931).

Prof. Petkovšek was for decades a pillar of the meteorological education at university level and of meteorology research in Slovenia. He belonged to the first generation students of meteorology in Slovenia. After finishing his studies in 1954 he worked for a short time in operational meteorology and in 1957 moved to the University of Ljubljana. He started his academic carrier as a teaching assistant in the period when meteorology was establishing as a study programme based on mathematics and physics at the Faculty of natural sciences and mathematics. In 1974, he became a professor. He taught and supervised not only meteorologists but also geographers as well as students studying the air pollution. Thus, the number of his students is numbered in thousands. Several dozens of Slovenian meteorologists completed their diplomas under the mentorship of Prof. Petkovšek.

At the beginning of his professional career he acquired expertise through research visits to the Freie Universität in Berlin and in Denmark, and later spent a sabbatical in Canada. He was representing his country in air pollution group of OECD.

The main research interest of Prof. Petkovšek was mesoscale atmospheric processes in the mountainous terrain. He carried out observations of Bora, cold air pools in basins (and polluted air in these), katabatic and anabatic winds, etc. either with his students or alone. For example, with a very simplified equipment he recorded Bora gusts and lulls, tracked the daily upslope winds and the night drainage winds, evaluated the effects of a heat islands of towns. He filmed the upper fog boundary in basins to learn how fog and heavy cold air may persist in winter in concavely-shaped relief for days and what were mechanisms that break such long lasting period of stagnant weather conditions, that in urbanized basins may lead to high levels of air pollution.

Prof. Petkovšek very early started to participate at the International Alpine Meteorology Conferences (ICAM) where he presented many of his findings before



being published in meteorological journals. He was the president of the Slovenian Meteorological Society and the editor of the society's journal *Razprave-Papers*. He was a member of the Editorial Board of *Geofizika* since 1985.

After his retiring in 1992 prof. Petkovšek remained active – for example he continued to teach meteorology to geography students until 2000. He was twice awarded for his work in meteorology and in the air pollution research with a Slovenian research award in 1981 and with a WMO award (B. Dobrilović fund) in 1983, respectively.

Prof. Zdravko Petkovšek was a very kind person of a cheerful disposition, but also strongly determined when necessary. He was tolerant, never imposing his opinion on others regardless of eventually disagreeing with them. This is how he is going to stay in our memories. Zdravko: thank you!

*Jože Rakovec*