



# What you should know before the Polyglot Gathering 2019

Dear polyglot friends,

Welcome to Bratislava, Pressburg, Pozsony, Bratislava, Братислава, depending on where you cross the border. You're coming to the capital city of Slovakia, Slowakei, Szlovákia, Słowacja, Словаччина, Slovensko... (write it in all languages you know on the margin of this letter and show it to the organizers once you arrive, you might get a candy!)

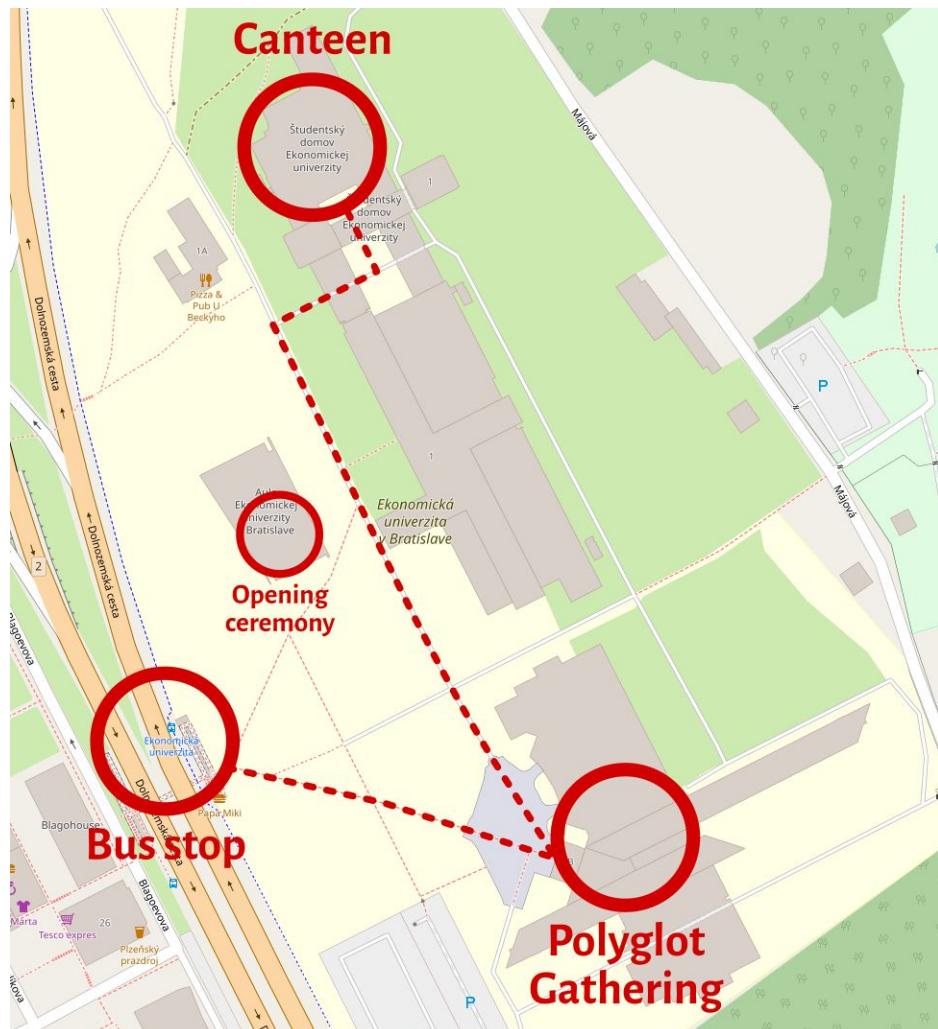
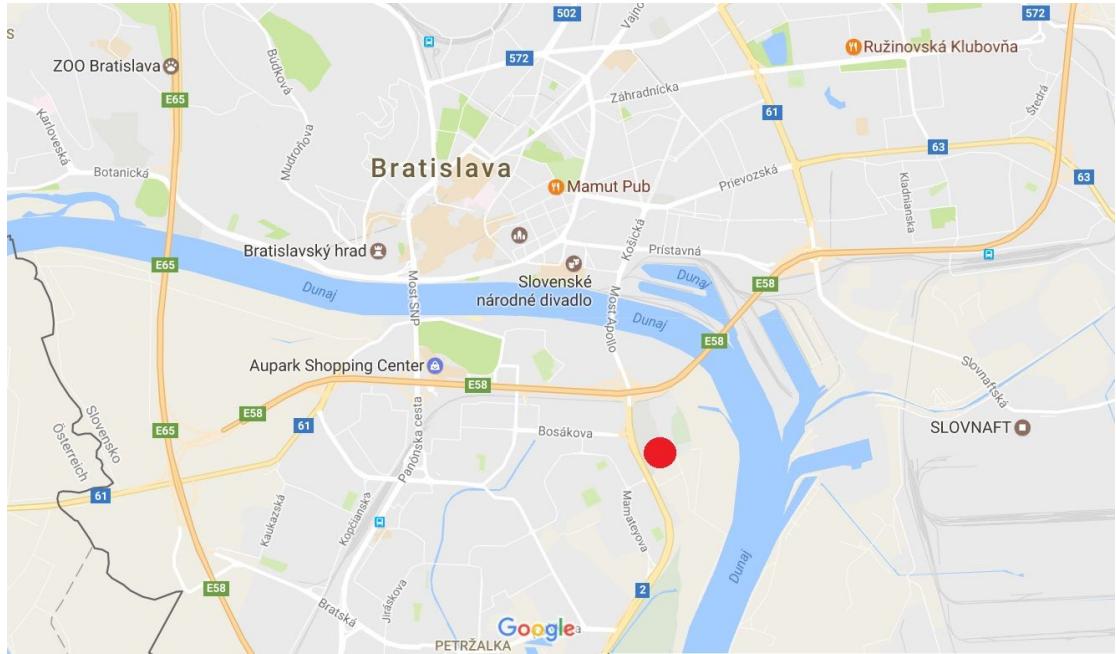
## Arrival at the venue



We're looking forward to seeing you at the venue from Wednesday 12:00 onwards. The opening ceremony will start at 19:30, with dinner being served at 18:00 (if you ordered one for Wednesday in your registration form).

There are no talks on Wednesday, but the Polyglot Games held by Cesco and Elisa on Wednesday afternoon and evening will allow you to warm up for the Gathering and get to know other participants.

For the rest of the week, we have prepared more than one hundred talks and workshops for you. Check out the detailed program here: <https://www.polyglotbratislava.com/program/>. You'll receive it all printed in the conference booklet and in the Polyglot Gathering Android application so there's no need to print it out. Search "Polyglot Gathering 2019" in Google Play to download the app.



## Opening ceremony on Wednesday in the auditorium

The opening ceremony will be held in the auditorium (the same place as in 2017, if were there) on Wednesday at 19:30. The auditorium is a big building in front of the canteen, our volunteers will guide you.

## Arriving by public transport

The venue is located in Petržalka, a big part of Bratislava on the Danube's right bank, and you can get there by bus. The bus stop in front of the Gathering venue is called "Ekonomická univerzita".

**From the main station** (Bratislava Hlavná stanica): the easiest is to take bus 201 and change at "Saleziáni" to 68. Or you can walk down from the railway station and turn right, there is the "SAV" bus stop and bus 84 goes directly to "Bulíkova", one street away from the university (takes 15-20 minutes).

**From the Bratislava-Petržalka train station:** bus number 99 will take you to "Bulíkova" bus stop in 8 minutes. Cross the street and turn right to Gettingova street. At the end of the street there is a busy road. Turn left until you come to a subway station and follow the signs to the university.

**From the Bratislava Airport:** bus 61 will take you to "Bajkalská" bus stop. When you get off, cross the street to the other side and then cross the street to the right. You will arrive at another "Bajkalská" bus stop where you take bus number 98 to "Ekonomická univerzita". It will take around 35 minutes.

**From the Vienna International Airport:** Direct, regular bus connections are provided by three bus operators. Buses depart daily from 6:00 AM on a frequent basis approximately every 30-60 minutes and a single ticket costs about 5-7 EUR. They go to "Most SNP" or "Einsteinova" bus stop. In both cases take bus 88 in direction "Autobusová stanica cez Petržalku" (takes 17 minutes). If the bus from Vienna arrives at another station called Autobusová stanica Mlynské Nivy, please see instructions below.

**From the bus station** (Autobusová stanica Mlynské Nivy): Very easy, just take bus number 88 (in direction "Most SNP cez Petržalku"). It'll take only 8 minutes.

See the section Public transport for general information on tickets.

## Arriving by taxi / own car

Use your preferred car navigation system or online route planner or just show this to the taxi driver:

**Ekonomická univerzita, Dolnozemská cesta 1, 852 35 Bratislava**

There is a parking lot in front of the university that will be available for you *for free!*

See the taxi section for contacts and general information on taking a taxi/alternatives in Bratislava.

## Arriving by bicycle

You'll be arriving on the Eurovelo-Route 6 (Donauradweg / Duna menti kerékpárút), right? At "Piváreň Bigger Rock Garden" near the ugly fifth bridge just turn right away from the Danube and you're there. Everyone who arrives by bike from further away than Kittsee (in Austria) or Rajka (in Hungary) will receive a respectful pat on the shoulder from our team upon arrival!

## What to pack for the Gathering

### Book crossing

Do you have beginners' language books for some of your B2 languages? Or an intermediate book for another language you abandoned after an A1 level? A dictionary you don't need any more? *Le Petit Prince* in a dozen of language versions? Blow or wipe off the dust off them, bring them to the Gathering and in exchange for it you might find a new exciting book for your bookshelf that you will actually read and use and bring joy to

someone else at the same time.

## Food and drinks

You won't be hungry at the Gathering and there is no need to bring your own food with you. There will be a buffet and stalls at the venue where you can buy food on top of the lunches and dinners which you might have ordered in the registration form. See the "Food and drinks" section further in this document.

However, do **bring some specialties from your country** and share them at **the culinary festival on Thursday evening** and try out new flavours from other participants' countries.

## Board games

There will be a game zone at the Gathering, so bring your board games to spend a few moments with other participants. Some popular games have slightly different rules in different languages. Can you find a compromise?

## International evening (Polyglots have got talent)

Saturday will be your opportunity to shine! If you can dance, sing read a poem or do anything else related to your culture or the culture of the language that you're learning, the floor will be yours. In the previous Polyglot Gatherings, we have already heard songs in the Klingon language, seen performances in Japanese kimonos and seen the interpretation of a song in Esperanto into the Slovak Sign Language. Whatever it is you'd like to share with us this year, we'll be thrilled to look at / listen to you! Make sure you bring whatever you need for this (a special dress, a musical instrument or other props) and during the Gathering, you can sign up on the list of the International Evening Performers at the information desk.

## Sli.do – application for questions during talks

Go to [Sli.do](#) and enter the event code `#polyglot` and explore it. Each room of the Polyglot Gathering will have a "room" on Sli.do where you will be asking questions during talks and vote for the best ones. Sli.do is available as a website, but also as an application for Android and iOS.

## What you should know about Slovakia and Bratislava

There is a small walkable historical centre (Old Town / Staré mesto) that is absolutely worth a visit, unless you prefer the jungle of concrete housing blocks around the Gathering venue in the Petržalka quarter. Climb up to the castle and see the whole city center, the Danube river with all its bridges, surrounding hills and the neighboring Austria and Hungary.



Source: [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Bratislava,\\_Hrad,\\_Slovensko.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Bratislava,_Hrad,_Slovensko.jpg)

## Money

Slovakia has been using the euro since 2009. Unfortunately, no other currency is accepted in the shops. You can usually pay by card in all supermarkets and most restaurants and withdraw money from ATMs. Please check before your trip how to proceed to avoid unnecessary fees. From among our neighboring countries, Austria also uses the euro, the Czech Republic has its koruna and Hungary its forint.

## Mobile services

Slovakia is part of the EU, which means that if you have your mobile phone operator from any other EU country, you can call, text and use your data just like from your home country, with no extra charges. Yay!

If you'd like to buy a SIM card for your stay in Slovakia, you can choose from several operators, such as o2, Orange and Telecom being among the biggest ones. All of them offer a prepaid card but you can only get it in their shops by registering as a new customer. For a quicker solution, you can buy a SIM card of the Tesco Mobile operator in every Tesco store directly at the counter, or a 4ka SIM card at every post office.

## Safety and emergency

Googling for “Bratislava safety” gives you much more results than you could read before the Gathering. The city is generally very safe and with a rational behaviour you can avoid most problems. If you find yourself in a state of emergency, call **112**. This number is used everywhere in the European Union and can be dialed from any mobile phone, even locked or without a SIM card for free, as well as from phone booths (if you find any).

## Transportation

### Public transportation

Website of Bratislava public transport system: <http://imhd.sk/ba/public-transport>

The best app for the public transport is **Ubian**. It's very intuitive and available in English. You can just write the address where you want to get and it will show you how to get there. Another one is **imhd.sk**.

We worked hard to get a wonderful deal for all participants of the Gathering: **free public transport for the whole 5 days** plus the following Monday! As soon as you get to the venue and obtain your name badge, you can use it as a ticket for all buses, trolley buses and trams in the city zones 100 and 101 (the whole city and most suburbs on both banks of the Danube) from Wednesday to Monday which really means that during the whole Polyglot Gathering **you won't have to buy any bus or tram tickets whatsoever, all days long!** Thank you [Bratislava Tourist Board](#) for making this possible!



If a ticket inspector checks the tickets on your bus, just show them your badge. If you don't have it on you, you'll have to pay a fine of 50 euro if paid in cash, or 70 euros if paid later.

In order to get to the venue, this is how you buy a ticket:

You can buy a ticket for 15 minutes (0.70€), for 30 minutes (0.90€) or 60 minutes (1.20€). All tickets are transferable, meaning you can change buses within the time limit. See beforehand how much time you need to get to your destination (the information is at every bus stop). There are ticket machines at bus stops and

tickets are also sold at kiosks. **The drivers do not sell tickets.** Ticket machines accept coins, but if you see a fancy modern machine with touch displays, you can also pay with banknotes or by card.

## Taxi

This year's our Transport sponsor is **BOLT!** A great app to get a taxi quickly. And as a participant of the Gathering, you get a **5 euro discount** from your first trip!



Download the app before coming to Bratislava, create an account, then go to the menu and Promotions, and type "**POLYGLOT2019**". You'll receive a 5 euro bonus instantly which will be deducted from your next ride. Cool, huh? Also, you can check the approximate price of the journey before you order a taxi.

### On the phone (usually possible in English)

- Taxi Bratislava: +421 2 16 300
- Prešporok Taxi: +421 2 17 699
- Fun Taxi: +421 905 316 111 / +421 905 767 757
- 5€ Taxi: +421 918 555 555 (every simple ride in the city, venue incl., costs 5€)

The usual minimum rate is about 5 euros, you can hardly ever take a taxi for less. This fare will, however, often be sufficient, if the taxi ride is roughly 5-8 minutes.

We also recommend the app **HOPINTAXI**, which allows you to see the current situation of the public transport as well.

### By waving taxis down in the street

This is by far the most expensive way of getting a taxi. The rates can be really high with extra charges. **WE DO NOT recommend you to wave down a taxi** directly in the street or in front of the stations, and especially not at the airport because then they charge an extra fee (as much as 25 euros instead of the usual 7-8 euro rate from the airport). In general, taxi drivers tend to charge foreigners more (therefore, learn some basic Slovak!).

## Food and drinks

If you ordered meals during the registration, you will be served them directly in the building of the venue (University canteen – just follow the signs or see the map in the conference booklet). Apart from that, you can buy various local specialities from our catering partners. You won't be hungry even if you are vegetarian, vegan or gluten-free and you can look forward to good coffee, too.

If you're staying in Bratislava for a few more days, you really must try the country's cuisine. Ask local participants for individual tips, check various websites such as zomato.com or go with the following recommendations.

Restaurants closeby:

- [Tarpan](#) (2 minutes on foot), the closest place, but with higher prices for food (but nice terrace and beer)
- [Eurovea](#) is the closest shopping center (with rich Food court – even with a vegan/raw restaurant: Shinya) (bus 88 to "Landererova" or bus 90 to "Nové SND")

The Slovak national dish is: "**bryndzové halušky**", a sort of potato dumplings with bryndza sheep cheese and fried bacon (or without bacon if you prefer). You can try this delicious dish at some restaurants with Slovak cuisine, for example: Slovak Pub (Obchodná 62), Bratislava Flag Ship Restaurant (Námestie SNP 8), Divný Janko

(Jozefská 2).



Source: [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Bryndzov%C3%A9\\_halu%C5%A1ky\\_so\\_slaninou.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Bryndzov%C3%A9_halu%C5%A1ky_so_slaninou.jpg)

**Other meals** you may want to try out while in Bratislava:

- *langoš* – a fresh-made deep fried flatbread with garlic sauce you can buy at some stands in the street
- *treska* (*v majonéze*) – this is cold codfish salad with mayonnaise you can buy in most supermarkets together with two bread rolls. Bratislava is quite far from the ocean but *treska* (codfish) belongs to it just like the seaman's "ahoj" greeting.
- *vyprážaný syr* – fried cheese – imagine a piece of cheese in flour, egg and breadcrumbs, and fried. Served with fries and a special mayonnaise called *tatárska omáčka* (Tartar sauce). Sounds unbelievable, but believe us it is like a second Slovak national food (after *halušky*) and sometimes the only vegetarian dish on the menu.
- garlic soup served in a loaf of bread (you can get it in Slovak Pub, Obchodná street 62)

We also love **beer** (not together with *halušky*, of course!). You can choose between traditional big brands like Zlatý bažant or Czech breweries (available at almost every restaurant and supermarket) or you can try the current trend of small local craft breweries:

- Meštiansky pivovar (Drevená 8 and Dunajská 21)
- Zámocký pivovar (Zámocká 13)
- Stupavar Bar (Prepoštská 4)
- Stein Platz (Kamenné námestie)
- Unity Street (Štúrova 12)

In case you want to try some **spirits**, try "slivovica" (plum spirit) or "borovička" (juniper spirit). But be careful. A relatively new but already quite popular spirit is Tatranský čaj ("Tatra tea") made of herbs which comes in various forms: from 22% to up to 72%. During the culinary festival you can try the power of this Slovak "tea".

Another interesting drink is "**medovina**" (mead), a honey spirit.

And what would Slovaks do without **wine!** We love this drink very much and we produce tons of good quality wine for surprisingly low prices. Don't be suspicious if you see bottles in supermarkets for less than 4 euro – you can often find some good wine inside. We recommend trying "ríbezľák", a red-currant or black-currant wine (a bit sweeter and stronger), "Devín" (white wine), "Dunaj" (red wine), "Tramín červený" ("Gewürztraminer", white wine) and "Pálava" (white wine) but you will most



probably not be disappointed by other wines either.

If you do not feel like drinking alcoholic drinks, you still shouldn't leave Slovakia without trying **Kofola**, a Czech-Slovak version of Coca-Cola, or **Vinea** (sort of a non-alcoholic grape drink).

## Drinking with Slovaks

The Slovaks like to drink beer and like hanging out. It is acceptable to treat somebody to a drink, but usually people split the bill at the end of the night and everyone pays for what they ordered. Please note that it is prohibited to drink alcohol in public spaces.

## Smoking

Also note that you are not allowed to smoke at bus stops. You can smoke in pubs and cafés but only in special smoker areas, if they are available (most cafés and restaurants are purely non-smoking).

Smoking is forbidden in the whole area of the University as well, so please, no smoking inside! If you find yourself in an urgent need of nicotine, you can use the ash bins right outside the main entrance.

## Pubs and clubs

Want to hang out with other Gathering participants after the end of the evening programs? We can recommend the following places, specially selected for our purposes:

- **Thursday** – U Čerta, Beblavého 286/2 81101 Bratislava, Hrad, 811 01 Staré Mesto, Slovakia. There are multiple pubs next to this one and it is possible to hang out in the street in front of the pubs with your drink. Castle Night Walking Tour arrives here after 9:00 PM.
- **Friday** – Bratislava Flag Ship Restaurant, Námestie SNP 8, 811 02 Bratislava, Slovakia. Bratislava City Night Walking Tour arrives here after 9:00 PM.
- **Saturday** – Cargo Boat, Nábrežie armádneho generála Ludvíka Svobodu 1868rkm, 811 02 Staré Mesto, Slovakia. Summer Party with DJ Ricardo after 8:00 PM. Free entrance for PG 2019 participants. **Show your badge at the entrance.**
- **Sunday** – U Čerta, Beblavého 286/2 81101 Bratislava, Hrad, 811 01 Staré Mesto, Slovakia. There are multiple pubs next to this one and it is possible to hang out in the street in front of the pubs with your drink. Castle Night Walking Tour arrives here after 9:00 PM.

## What languages can you practice in Bratislava?

While it's easy to have a short look at your partner's name badge at the Gathering, people in the street, public transportation, restaurants, shops and hotels usually don't have a list of their preferred languages printed on their forehead. Here's a short overview of languages you could try to use outside of the Gathering.

## Slovak

That's why you're taking part in our Slovak Language Challenge, aren't you? This is the language to go! Slovak is the official language in Slovakia and with Bratislava being its capital city and economic center, you will hear all Slovak dialects. Everybody understands your standard Slovak learnt at [slovake.eu](http://slovake.eu), which is based on dialects spoken in Central Slovakia. Can you, however, understand native speakers from Malacky, Radošina, Nové Zámky, Prešov, or Sobrance as well?

## Czech

No problem, virtually everyone will understand you. Czechoslovakia was one country with two official languages a few decades ago and everyone could use their own language. We emphasize the words “everyone” and “their own”. It means that if you speak Czech, everyone will answer in Slovak, because only few people in Bratislava actually speak Czech fluently. And the two languages are not the same. While “jedno pivo prosím” (one beer, please) is identical in both languages, “žíznivý velbloud zvedl sklenici” will be translated as “smädná ľava zdvihla pohár” (the thirsty camel raised the glass). Can you feel the faint difference between the two?

## English

Most Slovaks under forty have learned it at school to some extent and those working with foreign tourists or in international companies speak it quite well. A lot of information is printed both in Slovak and English and you will be overwhelmed by a number of English words and names everywhere. Why? Because it sounds so cool! Recently, spoken announcements in English have been introduced in the city buses and trams so you will be reminded of where to get off or change your bus if going to the airport or one of the main stations.

## German

Over the centuries this was the main native language in Pressburg (German word for Bratislava). After the World War II it became a foreign language. Many people study or work in nearby Vienna, work for German speaking companies or just travel to Austria for shopping and leisure. The wind turbines you see from the castle are all located in Austria. You may also recognize quite a lot of German words used in the local dialect of Bratislava. Do you know what *gerét, ruksak, šnicel, špajza, fajront* and *vercajch* mean? Anyway, don't be surprised if Slovaks won't be able or willing to reply in German if you address them in this language, even if they have spent several years learning it at school (which they most probably did, given that it is our second most frequent foreign language taught in schools). For some reason, most Slovaks are not very keen on using German in practise or they are just too shy.

## Hungarian

This other historically dominant language of Pozsony is nowadays almost exclusively a native language of people coming from Southern Slovakia. So if you are lucky and find someone speaking it, they do it usually at a very high level. Travel just a few kilometers to the South-East from the city and you will be greeted bilingually in both Slovak and Hungarian. You choose the language of the further conversation! Also, you can find ample Hungarian used by vendors at Bratislava's biggest open-air market called Miletička (bus stop Miletičova, bus 68), which is, by the way, very recommended for fresh fruits and vegetables.

## Polish/Russian

These two Slavic languages are quite similar to Slovak. Russian was even compulsory in all schools before 1989, so everyone who is over forty today had to learn it. Many people may understand what you say in Polish or Russian, but they might ignore those plentiful false friends! We really enjoy “čerstvý chlieb” and may sometimes “meškať” for a meeting. Also, please be more explicit if you are just “looking for” someone in Polish...

## French/Spanish/Italian

Very popular among Bratislava polyglots. If you find them.

## Vietnamese

Most East-Asian people you meet in Bratislava who don't look like tourists are actually Vietnamese.

## Esperanto

Just like anywhere in the world, there are some Esperanto speakers out there... (and to find the Esperanto speakers more easily, you should definitely try the app "[Amikumu](#)").

## Other languages

If you find someone speaking a language not listed here, ask them to keep their Gathering name badge visible.

## Your turn!

## Code of conduct

Our conference is dedicated to providing a harassment-free conference experience for everyone, regardless of gender, gender identity and expression, age, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance, body size, race, ethnicity or religion (or lack thereof). We do not tolerate harassment of conference participants in any form. Sexual language and imagery is not appropriate for any conference venue, including talks, workshops, parties, Twitter and other online media. Conference participants violating these rules may be sanctioned or expelled from the conference *without a refund* at the discretion of the conference organisers.

Our whole Code of Conduct is available at [www.polyglotbratislava.com/coc](http://www.polyglotbratislava.com/coc), and it is based on <https://github.com/confcodeofconduct/confcodeofconduct.com>. As a polyglot, you might consider helping them to add new translations next to the nineteen they provide now.

## Let's stay in touch

Do you have any questions? Feel free to let us know:

- Facebook:
  - [Polyglot Gathering 2019](#): this event is used for all participants to communicate with one another and discuss lodging, social program, meeting each other, etc.
  - [Polyglot Gathering](#): this page is for all fans of the Polyglot Gatherings and is used to communicate all official announcements by the organizers.
- Telegram: <https://t.me/polyglotgathering> – which will be used for live updates during the Gathering from the organizers and which you can use to coordinate your eating out, city rallies and lost children. Feel free to join in the discussion!

See you soon in Bratislava! / Dovidenia v Bratislave!

On behalf of the whole PG2019 team,

Jitka Vršovská & Peter Baláž