Kybernetika

Obituary: Karel Sladký (1941–2025)

Kybernetika, Vol. 61 (2025), No. 5, 593–594

Persistent URL: http://dml.cz/dmlcz/153203

Terms of use:

© Institute of Information Theory and Automation AS CR, 2025

Institute of Mathematics of the Czech Academy of Sciences provides access to digitized documents strictly for personal use. Each copy of any part of this document must contain these *Terms of use*.

This document has been digitized, optimized for electronic delivery and stamped with digital signature within the project *DML-CZ: The Czech Digital Mathematics Library* http://dml.cz

OBITUARY

Ing. Karel Sladký, CSc.

(1941 – 2025)

The Director of the Institute regretfully announces that Ing. Karel Sladký, CSc., passed away on July 12, 2025, after a short and serious illness.

Karel Sladký was born on February 26, 1941, into a pharmacist's family that placed great emphasis on education. In his childhood, he was very interested in mathematics and exact sciences and that interest influenced his entire life.

In November 1963, he graduated from the Faculty of Nuclear and Physical Engineering at the Czech Technical University in Prague. Shortly afterwards, in January 1964, he joined ÚTIA, where he pursued a postgraduate degree (the equivalent of today's doctoral studies) supervised by Jiří Beneš. In 1973, he defended his dissertation in Theoretical Cybernetics entitled *The Method of Dynamic Programming for Controlling Discrete Markov Processes.* From October 1974, he was on a one-year study leave at Stanford University.

In his research, he focused on stochastic dynamic programming, Markov decision processes, and economic dynamics. He was the principal investigator on several research projects supported by both the Grant Agency of the Czech Academy of Sciences and the Czech Science Foundation.

His closest colleague was Nico M. van Dijk from the University of Amsterdam, with whom he collaborated for more than 10 years. Their partnership resulted in 20 joint publications. In the Czech Republic, he worked closely with colleagues from the Econometrics Department – Vlasta Kaňková, Miloslav Vošvrda, and Jan Kodera – as well as his doctoral student, Martin Sitař.

The most significant aspect of his scientific life was his dedicated work as Executive Editor of the Kybernetika journal. He held this position for an extraordinary thirty years, single-handedly from 1980 to 2007, and continued jointly with Lucie Fajfrová until 2010. Everyone who worked with him during those years appreciated his diligence

and meticulousness. Thanks in large part to his efforts, Kybernetika gained a significant international reputation.

In 2014, he was among the first to celebrate fifty years at the Institute. In 2021, he became an emeritus researcher of ÚTIA – but that changed nothing. He continued coming to the Institute every day and worked with full dedication until the end of his days.

A good man has passed away. May his memory be honoured.

Jiřina Vejnarová