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The following news concerns Slovakia.

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Festival presence raises profile of Slovak Bible Society

SLOVAKIA — Very different locations but the same positive response. This was the experience of staff from the Slovak Bible Society who attended two Christian festivals recently. In both cases, they were very encouraged by many people's eagerness to learn more about Bible work.

This year's Campfest festival, the largest of its kind in Slovakia, took place in the open air in the northern town of Kráľ'ova Lehota. Some 5,000 mainly young people gathered here in the breathtakingly beautiful surroundings of the Tatras Mountains to enjoy a varied schedule of concerts, pantomimes, drama, workshops and lectures designed to appeal to both practising Christians looking to deepen their faith and to people interested in exploring Christianity.



The Society set itself ambitious goals for its presence at Campfest: as well as generally raising public awareness of Bible work, the project managers who managed the Bible Society stall were challenged to promote fundraising for the ecumenical Bible translation project, to gather the names of potential new supporters and to sell Bible Society publications. And with many people showing great openness to learning more about Bible Society activities, its hopes were not disappointed.



"We made a big step forward at this festival in helping people to discover our Bible Society and make it part of their lives," says Project Manager Terézia Pilková. Many people made a financial contribution to the translation project, while others filled in a questionnaire designed to assess their awareness of Bible Society work and others showed great interest in the products on display.

"We met lots of interesting, kind and talented people," continues Ms Pilková. "We left the festival encouraged to continue our efforts. It was a wonderful opportunity to meet God and to show that Christianity is alive."

In contrast to the rural location of Campfest, the city of Bratislava was the venue for the second European Methodist Festival in early August. This event brought together some 1,400 people from 25 countries to mark the 300th anniversary of the birth of Charles Wesley, hymn writer and an early leader of the Methodist movement, through worship, prayer, Bible study and workshops. At the

heart of the festival was a 'marketplace', where the Bible Society was one of a wide range of attractions representing many different expressions of Christianity.

"We had good opportunities to tell people about the United Bible Societies and our own Bible Society, as well as to promote the new Bible translation, to show our latest products and to make valuable contacts," says Project Manager Ivana Hudecová, one of four staff members who travelled to Bratislava for the event. "We arrived home at about midnight with gladness in our hearts that, once again, we had been able to bring Bibles to people in languages they are able to understand or learn to understand."

Photos (Slovak Bible Society):

SLK07DJ-1: The Slovak Bible Society's stall at Campfest, a festival held in Král'ova Lehota in August 2007.

SLK07DJ-2: Bibles in many different languages on the Slovak Bible Society's stall at the second European Methodist Festival in Bratislava in August 2007.

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