



Newsletter 3

„Internationalization starts at home”

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"Meet my culture" events conducted in the form of presentations, lectures and workshops showing elements characteristic of a given culture. Workshops are held once a month for a minimum of four teaching hours. Both Polish and foreign students and academic staff were involved in the workshops. Entire groups of students are invited to participate in the events to ensure a high level of integration. The activities carried out contribute to increasing the adaptation and integration of foreign students and staff with the local community and have a positive impact on increasing the level of internationalization of the University.

The second important element supporting the integration process is an intercultural course conducted in the form of lectures and workshops, taking a practical form. Thanks to workshop forms, it allows participants to acquire specific competences and inclusion in activities. The course addresses issues related to overcoming barriers and stereotypes, building an open, empathetic and tolerant society. The course initiates the construction of a new academic community - open, aware, empathetic and understanding issues related to intercultural differences.

The Project co-funded by the Polish National Agency for Academic Exchange
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On 6th of December, on the Saint Nicholas Day, the hall of the University of Bielsko-Biala hosted two events at once.

The first of them was introducing the participants in the Christmas mood, as they were preparing, under the guidance of prof. Ernest Zawada, the Dean of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences of the UBB. Those who wanted to participate were given white, Styrofoam balls to decorate and to express themselves as such they had a variety of materials at their disposal: sequins, glitter, coloured foil... When the decorations were ready, the authors hung them on the Christmas trees. A paper chain was also made during the workshops, its links adorned with written wishes for Christmas and the new year. When all the decorations were ready, the organisers chose the most beautiful and rewarded their authors.

Saint Nicholas, as it is known from his hagiography, was a bishop of Mira, in contemporary Türkiye. This fact allowed for a smooth transition to the second event of the day, which was a presentation of the Turkish culture, as a part of the “Meet my Culture” cycle organised within the framework of the programme “Internationalisation Starts at Home”. The Turkish students from the Erasmus+ programme prepared a lot of attractions. A quiz of the Turkish culture and history defied many common stereotypes. Then, very detailed, well-prepared presentations gave in-depth insight in the historical, geographical and ethnical conditions of

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development of the Turkish culture, its diverse nature and its manifestations in areas of literature, painting, music, architecture, as well as in folklore and language. Important part of the presentation was, of course, the cuisine – with a possibility for the participants to try Turkish specialities, including the real Turkish kebab. The event ended with everyone, presenters and participants, dancing a common dance, typical for a Turkish wedding party.

We hope that this meeting with the Turkish culture helped to break many stereotypes, to learn or remind numerous interesting facts and to build an intercultural understanding.



On 28th of February “Meet my culture – Ukrainian culture” took place. The meeting was opened, as usually, by dr. hab inż. Tomasz Kniefel, prof. UBB, who welcomed the participants. After him, the floor was given to Ms. Aleksandra Hasior, who presented the objectives of the “Meet my culture” project. Then, followed the representatives of the MyBB Foreigners Integration Center in Bielsko-Biała and Help Ukraine

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Manufacture. That part was started by Ms. Grażyna Staniszevska, the President of the Board of the Association of Friends of Bielsko-Biała and Podbeskidzie. She presented the activities of the Association and the MyBB Foreigners Integration Center in response to the humanitarian crisis caused by the Russian aggression to Ukraine lasting since 2022. Next speaker was Ms. Nataliia Beliukh from the Help Ukraine Manufacture, who presented the activity of her organisation focused on help to the civilian victims of the ongoing conflict.

Then, the Ukrainian students of the University of Bielsko-Biała: Ms. Dariia Shiriayeva and MS. Sofiia Zavadzka gave a presentation about Ukrainian cultural heritage. They presented interesting facts about the Ukrainian language, history and interesting

places in the most important cities of Ukraine and the most well-known people of the Ukrainian culture. The ending part they presented together with Ms. Nataliia Beliukh, talking about the Ukrainian cuisine. Then, Ms. Beliukh invited the participants to tasting part, closing the meeting.

It is good to know the culture of our neighbours – especially now, when the heritage of that culture is endangered by the invaders and many of the representatives of that culture live among us, as the war has expelled them from their homeland.



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