

## Intercultural conference at Baltic Barracks

Written by AG

Wednesday, 13 June 2012 07:40

---



**On 11 June 2012, Szczecin City Hall, Multinational Corps Northeast and Service and Consulting Centres of the Pomerania Euroregion organised the conference titled 'Intercultural Competence as a Key Factor to the Effective International and Cross-Border Cooperation'.**

The conference was held at Baltic Barracks in Szczecin, the seat of Headquarters Multinational Corps Northeast, and attracted attention of international guests and speakers interested in intercultural competence, viewed both from the theoretical and practical perspectives.

Lieutenant General Rainer Korff, the Commander of the Multinational Corps Northeast, and Mr Piotr Krzystek, the Mayor of Szczecin, officially opened the conference. They have both referred in their speeches to the nature of Szczecin, the city of borderland between Poland and Germany which, for that reason, is an excellent place to discuss multinational and cross-border cooperation. Moreover, international and multicultural atmosphere of Headquarters Multinational Corps Northeast also added value to the conference.

## Intercultural conference at Baltic Barracks

Written by AG

Wednesday, 13 June 2012 07:40

---

Lieutenant Colonel Uwe Ulrich, PhD, the Chief Central Coordination Branch for Intercultural Competence at the German Armed Forces Leadership Development and Civic Education Centre talked about intercultural competence from the military point of view whereas economic and social aspects of the issue were presented by two other guest speakers. Right after the speeches, a moderated panel discussion took place and all conference participants had a chance to ask questions to the experts and explore areas of their special interest.

The conference was complemented by workshops which brought participants from the theory to practice when discussing coexistence in a multicultural environment. The workshops were run by members of the German Comparative Research Network – Mrs Kamila Kowenzowska, MA, and Mr Konrad Wdowiak, MA, as well as representatives of the German Bundeswehr - Lieutenant Colonel Uwe Ulrich, PhD, and Arno Tappe, who are responsible for cultural preparation of soldiers for foreign missions. The overall aim of the workshops was developing intercultural competence as well as broadening and learning to understand and accept other cultures' values and behaviours.

Communicating in the cross-border areas and establishing effective multinational cooperation can only be achieved when learning more about oneself. This, followed by motivating and group integrating techniques, helped all participants to actively get involved in the workshops. Additionally, Lieutenant Colonel Uwe Ulrich, PhD, introduced elements of the training originally offered to German soldiers preparing for the mission in Afghanistan. This part of workshops allowed the participants to confront the German and Afghan cultures – the stereotypes, customs and habits of these two, so much different, societies.

During the workshops, the importance of intercultural competence in various areas of life was underlined once again. Growing intercultural competence and awareness can for sure profit in successful accomplishment of multinational and cross-border projects, and be useful in everyday life.

{phocagallery

view=category|categoryid=198|displaydownload=0|displayname=0|displaydetail=0}

*Text by: Katarzyna Jackowska, POL CIV, & Anna Majewska, POL CIV*

*Photos: Marian Cihon, SVK CIV*