

Multinational students visit a multinational corps

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It is not often the case that students from two countries come together to visit the Headquarters Multinational Corps Northeast (HQ MNC NE). However, on 12 May 2009, students from the High Schools Complex No 3 in Szczecin and their friends from Denmark entered Baltic Barracks to learn about the Corps itself and the idea of military cooperation.

Ms Barbara Ewert-Krzemieniewska and Aldona Steinke, teachers from Szczecin school, explained that their visit was related to a special students exchange programme. As a matter of fact, it has been successfully running for almost 20 years in their school. The main idea is to send Polish students abroad and invite students of partner schools from other countries to Szczecin. For one week, students go to school together and stay at their foreign friends'. As a result, it is an excellent opportunity to increase cultural awareness among students and learn how to cooperate effectively with people from other countries. Moreover, students work on common projects and visit places important for a given country. Obviously, they communicate in a foreign language, which is undoubtedly a great benefit.

This year, students from Slagelse in Denmark have been involved in the exchange programme with Szczecin school. Visiting HQ MNC NE in Szczecin seemed to be a brilliant way of showing how multinational cooperation across cultures may look. Polish and Danish guests took part in a briefing delivered by Lieutenant Colonel Detlef Schachel, Chief of Visitors and Observers Bureau, who presented the Corps' history, organisation and tasks. He also touched upon the mission in Afghanistan, in which MNC NE personnel participated in 2007. As Ms Ewert-Krzemieniewska and Steinke underlined, they really liked the idea of going beyond plain facts and talking also about what it is like to live in Szczecin for a foreign soldier. For Danish guests a multinational aspect of the Corps and the cooperation between soldiers from different countries turned out to be the most important.