



**„LUBLIN IS FRIENDLY”**  
A PILOT PROJECT CARRIED OUT BY THE CULTURE DEPARTMENT OF MUNICIPALITY OF  
LUBLIN CITY AND HOMO FABER ASSOCIATION AS A PART OF “INTERCULTURAL  
CITIES” PROGRAMME - A JOINT INITIATIVE OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE AND THE  
EUROPEAN COMMISSION

**REPORT**

**LUBLIN, MAY 2009**

## **General description and the aim of the project**

„Lublin is friendly” is a pilot project carried out by the Culture Department of Municipality of Lublin City and Homo Faber Association as a part of the “Intercultural Cities” programme – a joint initiative of the Council of Europe and the European Commission.

The aim of the project was to ask foreign students from Lublin universities about:

- to what degree they are satisfied with their stay in Lublin,
- to what degree they are satisfied with studies at Lublin universities,
- their participation in cultural events organized in Lublin.

## **The research tool**

The research tool used in the project was a survey form consisting of 25 questions. The content of the survey is:

If you want to receive information about the cultural events in Lublin, please give your email address:

1. Why do you study in Lublin?
2. Did you receive enough support from the university/city during your first days in Lublin?
  - a. yes – go to question no. 4
  - b. no
3. What sort of help was not provided by the university/city in your case?
4. Have you had contact with the Polish administration offices?
  - a. yes
  - b. no – go to question no. 6
5. How was your issue handled?
  - a. without any problems
  - b. I had problems sorting out my issue. What kind of problems?
6. Do you feel safe in Lublin?
  - a. yes – go to question no. 8
  - b. no
7. What should be changed to make you feel safe?
8. Have you encountered any acts of intolerance towards you or other foreigners in Lublin?
9. Do you feel discriminated because of your nationality, religion or race?
10. What kind of changes would make your everyday life here easier?
11. Do you think that various places in Lublin are clearly marked?
  - a. yes – go to question no. 13
  - b. no
12. What places? What languages should they be marked in?

13. In your opinion, what should the universities and Lublin authorities do to make Lublin more attractive for foreign students staying here?
14. Do you know any cultural institutions in Lublin?  
a. yes – what institutions do you know?  
b. no
15. What do you usually do in your free time in Lublin? What places do you visit?
16. What are the things Lublin does not offer that you would like to do in your spare time?
17. Do you participate in any cultural events in Lublin?  
a. yes, what kind of events?  
b. no, why?
18. Where do you find information about the cultural events organized in the city?
19. What would encourage you to participate more in the cultural events organized in Lublin?
20. Would you like any cultural events to be aimed at foreign students?  
a. yes, what kind of events?  
b. no
21. Would you like to participate in organization of cultural events in Lublin?  
a. yes, what kind of events?  
b. no
22. Does a language barrier impede your access to the cultural events in Lublin?
23. Do you take the Polish language course?
24. Do you think you need such course?
25. Do you know any internet forums for foreign students?  
a. yes – give an example  
b. no

Age:

Sex:

Nationality:

Year of studies:

Subject:

University:

How long have you been living in Lublin?

Students could complete a survey form during open meetings organized in The Polish Language and Culture Centre for Polish People from Abroad and Foreigners UMCS, residence hall "Babilon", Collegium Anatomicum of the Medical University (two meetings) and during Polish language classes at the Medical University. The survey forms were also handed straight to the students, for example the students of the Maria Curie-Skłodowska University, The John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin, the Lublin University of Technology and the University of Life Sciences in

Lublin, as well as sent electronically by the coordinators of the students' exchange programme Erasmus and year representatives at the Medical University. The survey forms were prepared in Polish and English. The forms were also sent before the meetings to cultural institutions and socio-cultural non-governmental organizations. Out of 35 emails, the responses were received from The Centre for Culture (the representatives came to the meetings at The Polish Language and Culture Centre and the residence hall "Babilon"), Volunteer Centre in Lublin (its representative came to the meeting at The Polish Language and Culture Centre), organizers of the concert "Solo Zycia" and The Lublin Association for Cultural Tourism "West - East".

### **Foreign students at Lublin universities**

According to the information provided by the universities, in spring semester 2008/2009 the following numbers of foreigners study at Lublin universities (full-time bachelor and master degrees):

Maria Curie-Sklodowska University (MCSU): 125 foreigners studying within the Polish system, 16 Erasmus exchange students, 4 exchange students from the US and one person from Central European Exchange Program for University Studies.

The Polish Language and Culture Centre for Polish People from Abroad and Foreigners UMCS: around 100 people learning Polish at a foundation course.

Lublin University of Technology: 3 people studying within the Polish system and 30 Erasmus exchange students.

University of Life Sciences in Lublin: 5 foreigners studying within the Polish system and 4 Erasmus exchange students.

The John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin: 214 people studying within the Polish system, 20 Erasmus exchange students and one person from Central European Exchange Program for University Studies.

Medical University in Lublin: 115 people studying according to the European Program, 67 students according to the Taiwanese Program and 206 according to the American Program.

Overall, there are 878 foreigners studying at Lublin universities in spring semester 2008/2009 (including those attending the Polish language course at The Polish Language and Culture Centre). The data provided includes only students of bachelor and master degrees, as well as the students of the foundation course at The Polish Language and Culture Centre. It does not include, however, PhD students (e.g. PhD students from The European Ph.D. College of Polish and Ukrainian Universities) or 206 students of the Medical University having placements in Lublin hospitals.

### **Quantitative analysis of the survey**

270 people completed the survey forms: 108 from the Medical University, 82 from The Polish Language and Culture Centre, 39 from the Catholic University of Lublin, 24 from Maria Curie-Sklodowska University, 16 Erasmus exchange students from the MCSU and the Catholic University of Lublin and one person from the Lublin University of Technology.

Most of the respondents from the Medical University were Taiwanese (43) and American (31, with about 10 people highlighting their Indian nationality and American citizenship). There were 13 survey forms submitted by the Norwegians and 10 without any information about the nationality.

Among the Medical University students who completed the survey form, there were also the citizens of the following countries: Canada, Denmark, Sweden, Cyprus, Germany and Nigeria.

27 respondents studying at The Polish Language and Culture Centre come from Ukraine, 15 come from Belarus and 20 did not provide any information about their nationality. The remaining survey forms were completed by the citizens of the following countries: Kazakhstan, Georgia, the Czech Republic, Germany, Russia, the Lebanon, Syria, Italy and Venezuela.

The Catholic University of Lublin provided 39 survey forms completed by 21 Ukrainians, 11 Belarusians, as well as the Lithuanians and the Kazakhs. 2 people did not specify their nationality.

Among the MCSU respondents, there were 9 Belarusians and 4 Ukrainians. In the survey also participated: the Lithuanians, the Albanians, the Brazilians, the Russians and the Kazakhs.

5 out of the 16 Erasmus exchange students come from Belgium and 3 from Italy. There were also survey forms completed by the people from: France, Spain, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Ukraine, Hungary, Lithuania and Germany.

The only student from the Lublin University of Technology who participated in the research comes from Belarus.

Most of those who took part in the research come from Ukraine (53), Taiwan (43), Belarus (36) and the United States (31).

## **The analysis of the data collected in the survey according to the universities**

### **The Medical University of Lublin:**

#### 1. Why do you study in Lublin?

Foreign students choose the Medical University of Lublin because medicine courses in their countries are longer and more expensive. Quite often, it was the only opportunity to study medicine, as some of the respondents were not accepted at universities in their own countries.

#### 2. Did you receive enough support from the university/city during your first days in Lublin?

Most of the students gave the negative answer.

#### 3. What sort of help was not provided by the university/city in your case?

The students complained about insufficient information from the university, lack of a city tour or meetings with, for example, the police. They do not know where to go in case they get mugged or fall ill. They had troubles with renting a flat (landlords were unfair, they overcharged for the rents, agreements were signed only in Polish) or obtaining a residence card, as people working in the administration offices do not speak English, documents are only in Polish and the procedure is long. Only the Taiwanese had problems with obtaining the residence card.

#### 4. Have you had contact with the Polish administration offices?

Most of the respondents said "yes".

#### 5. How was your issue handled?

The problem concerns mainly those who tried to obtain the residence card. They could not communicate with the clerks. The students also complained about the communication problems with the police, on the bus station and the railway station, in buses, hospitals and post offices.

6. Do you feel safe in Lublin?

Most of the respondents feel safe in Lublin.

7. What should be changed to make you feel safe?

Most often the students listed the following solutions: more police patrols, English speaking police officers, more of video surveillance, security guards or street lamps switched on at night.

8. Have you encountered any acts of intolerance towards you or other foreigners in Lublin?

Most of the surveyed students said "yes".

9. Do you feel discriminated because of your nationality, religion or race?

As in the previous question, most of the students said "yes". Some of the students were the victims of aggression, many students experienced verbal assault, especially from teenagers.

10. What kind of changes would make your everyday life here easier?

The respondents would like to have the communication system at the university improved, easier access to the university authorities, easier and faster residence card procedures, night buses introduced during the week, more information available in English, e.g. train and bus timetables. They also mentioned English speaking staff in such places as the post office, the administration offices, train and bus stations, police stations. What is more, the students wish the Polish language course at the university was more practical. They also want to have more opportunities to get to know the Poles and the Polish culture. They would like to get a guidebook in English with the necessary information about living in Lublin and studying at the university.

11. Do you think that various places in Lublin are clearly marked?

Most of the answers were negative.

12. What places? What languages should they be marked in?

There should be signs in English. They should be in such places as the train station or bus stops (timetables).

13. In your opinion, what should the universities and Lublin authorities do to make Lublin more attractive for foreign students staying here?

The students named the following ideas: easier and faster procedures of obtaining the residence card, more frequent buses during the day and night buses over the whole week, more of the basic information in English (train and bus timetables). There were also the ideas of building an airport in Lublin and launching a guidebook in English for those who begin studies in Lublin. The Medical University students mentioned better communication with the university authorities, more education materials to be available online and more contacts with the Poles.

14. Do you know any cultural institutions in Lublin?

The institution named the most often is the Lublin's Castle.

15. What do you usually do in your free time in Lublin? What places do you visit?

Places visited the most often are: Plaza shopping centre, The Old Town and supermarkets. The students spend most of their free time shopping, learning, watching movies and going out with friends.

16. What are the things Lublin does not offer that you would like to do in your spare time?

Most of the respondents complained about lack of sports facilities where they could do sports (basketball, football, swimming).

17. Do you participate in any cultural events in Lublin?

Most of the students do not participate in the cultural events, as the information about them is not available in English.

18. Where do you find information about the cultural events organized in the city?

The main sources of information are the Polish language teachers and the internet.

19. What would encourage you to participate more in the cultural events organized in Lublin?

The students would participate in cultural events more, if they knew about them and if these events were in English (e.g. subtitles in the cinema)

20. Would you like any cultural events to be aimed at foreign students?

Many foreigners would like to have events bringing them together with the Polish students.

21. Would you like to participate in organization of cultural events in Lublin?

Most of the respondents do not want to get involved in organization of such events.

22. Does a language barrier impede your access to the cultural events in Lublin?

For most of the students, the language barrier is a major problem when it comes to participation in Lublin's cultural events.

23. Do you take the Polish language course?

Almost every interviewed person takes such course.

24. Do you think you need such course?

Most of the students find it useful.

25. Do you know any internet forum for foreign students?

The most often used forums are: Facebook, [valuem.com](http://valuem.com), [lublintw.com/bbs](http://lublintw.com/bbs) (for the Taiwanese), Association of Norwegian Student Abroad ANSA (for the Norwegians), [traveladvisor.com](http://traveladvisor.com), [studera-utomlands.com/forum](http://studera-utomlands.com/forum).

## **The Polish Language and Culture Centre for Polish People from Abroad and Foreigners UMCS**

1. Why do you study in Lublin?

Most of the interviewed people came here for the one-year Polish language course.

2. Did you receive enough support from the university/city during your first days in Lublin?

The respondents usually said "yes".

3. What sort of help was not provided by the university/city in your case?

The students listed the following examples: better living conditions in residence halls, support over the first few days at the university (information where the buildings are situated, where to seek help, how to solve issues concerning their stay in Poland).

4. Have you had contact with the Polish administration offices?

Most of the students have not had contact with the Polish administration offices.

5. How was your issue handled?

In most cases, this question was left without any answer.

6. Do you feel safe in Lublin?

In general, the students feel safe in Lublin.

7. What should be changed to make you feel safe?

According to the respondents, there should be more police patrols on the streets and more street lamps.

8. Have you encountered any acts of intolerance towards you or other foreigners in Lublin?

The answers were mostly negative.

9. Do you feel discriminated because of your nationality, religion or race?

The students usually gave the negative answer.

10. What kind of changes would make your everyday life easier here?

The following solutions were listed: night buses, better connections with other cities and border crossings, better living conditions, longer holidays, a university canteen, less red tape in the administration offices (especially residence related issues), Polish citizenship, more contacts with the Poles, information about the cultural events on the noticeboard in The Polish Language and Culture Centre, opportunities for doing sports, more events bringing the students together.

11. Do you think that various places in Lublin are clearly marked?

According to the respondents, the places are clearly marked.

12. What places? What languages should they be marked in?

The respondents did not name any specific places.

13. In your opinion, what should the universities and Lublin authorities do to make Lublin more attractive for foreign students staying here?

In general, the students did not provide any suggestions for changes here.

14. Do you know any cultural institutions in Lublin?

The students mentioned places such as: Cultural Center „Chatka Zaka”, Centre for Culture in Lublin, Lublin Philharmonic, Juliusz Osterwa Theatre.

15. What do you usually do in your free time in Lublin? What places do you visit?

The students spend their leisure time mostly shopping and strolling about The Old Town.

16. What are the things Lublin does not offer that you would like to do in your spare time?

The respondents complained that it is impossible to rent a bike.

17. Do you participate in any cultural events in Lublin?

The students usually do not participate in such events or attend only the ones organized by The Polish Language and Culture Centre.

18. Where do you find information about the cultural events organized in the city?

The sources of information are: the internet, ZOOM, advertisements, posters.

19. What would encourage you to participate more in the cultural events organized in Lublin?

The following answers were given: more information about the events, posters put up in The Polish Language and Culture Centre, cheaper tickets.

20. Would you like any cultural events to be aimed at foreign students?

Most of the respondents want more events integrating students.

21. Would you like to participate in organization of cultural events in Lublin?

Most of the students would rather participate in than organize the cultural events.

22. Does a language barrier impede your access to the cultural events in Lublin?

In most cases, it is not a problem.

23. Do you take the Polish language course?

All of the interviewed people take the Polish language course.

24. Do you think you need such course?

Most of the students find it useful.

25. Do you know any internet forum for foreign students?

svoi.pl

vkontakte.ru

odnoklassniki.ru

Erasmus Student Network (ESN)

### **The John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin**

1. Why do you study in Lublin?

The respondents chose Lublin, as the Catholic University of Lublin is here, where they can obtain The John Paul II Foundation scholarship.

2. Did you receive enough support from the university/city during your first days in Lublin?

In general, they got enough support.

3. What sort of help was not provided by the university/city in your case?

The students listed: easier procedures for obtaining the residence card and more information from the university about the organization of classes.

4. Have you had contact with the Polish administration offices?

Most of the students have had contact with the Polish administration offices.

5. How was your issue handled?

In most cases, the problem was solved properly, however, the respondents complained about long queues and the red tape.

6. Do you feel safe in Lublin?

The students feel rather safe here.

7. What should be changed to make you feel safe?

A need for more police patrols was highlighted.

8. Have you encountered any acts of intolerance towards you or other foreigners in Lublin?

Most of the surveyed people have not encountered any acts of intolerance.

9. Do you feel discriminated because of your nationality, religion or race?

Most of the answers were negative.

10. What kind of changes would make your everyday life easier here?

Faster procedure for obtaining the residence card was the most frequently given answer.

11. Do you think that various places in Lublin are clearly marked?

The respondents said that in most cases the places are clearly marked.

12. What places? What languages should they be marked in?

No answer was given.

13. In your opinion, what should the universities and Lublin authorities do to make Lublin more attractive for foreign students staying here?

The following ideas were mentioned: information meetings and integration parties, faster procedures for obtaining the residence card, better quality of service in the university offices, more sport fields and pitches.

14. Do you know any cultural institutions in Lublin?

The students listed such institutions as: The Centre for Culture, Cultural Center "Chatka Zaka", the Lublin Philharmonic.

15. What do you usually do in your free time in Lublin? What places do you visit?

In their free time, the students usually go for a walk, sightsee or go shopping. They also visit The Old Town, pubs, clubs and churches.

16. What are the things Lublin does not offer that you would like to do in your spare time?

The respondents think that there are not enough facilities for sport and recreation in Lublin. However, in most cases this question was left unanswered.

17. Do you participate in any cultural events in Lublin?

Some students do not want to participate in the events or cannot find information about them. However, those who do participate in the cultural events go to the cinema, concerts or theatre.

18. Where do you find information about the cultural events organized in the city?

The sources of information are: ZOOM, the internet, posters and advertisements.

19. What would encourage you to participate more in the cultural events organized in Lublin?

This question was usually left without any answer. The respondents would like the cultural events to be free of charge or multicultural.

20. Would you like any cultural events to be aimed at foreign students?

The respondents would like to have the events which could bring the Polish and foreign students together, e.g. national cuisine days.

21. Would you like to participate in organization of cultural events in Lublin?

Most of the students prefer to participate in than organize any cultural events.

22. Does a language barrier impede your access to the cultural events in Lublin?

The respondents do not have problems with the language barrier.

23. Do you take the Polish language course?

Most of the students said "no".

24. Do you think you need such course?

In most cases, the answer was negative.

25. Do you know any internet forum for foreign students?

vkontakte.ru

odnoklassniki.ru

e-kul

fjp2.opoka.pl/lublin

### **Maria Curie-Sklodowska University**

1. Why do you study in Lublin?

The respondents chose this city, as some of them had been accepted for the Scholarship Programme in Konstanty Kalinowski Name, while others have family here or find the proximity of their own country attractive (mainly the students from Ukraine).

2. Did you receive enough support from the university/city during your first days in Lublin?

In general, the students received sufficient support.

3. What sort of help was not provided by the university/city in your case?

The respondents did not provide any examples.

4. Have you had contact with the Polish administration offices?

In most cases, they have had contact with the Polish administration offices.

5. How was your issue handled?

In most cases, it was handled properly.

6. Do you feel safe in Lublin?

The students feel rather safe here.

7. What should be changed to make you feel safe?

No specific answer was given.

8. Have you encountered any acts of intolerance towards you or other foreigners in Lublin?

Most of the respondents (about 2/3) have encountered some acts of intolerance.

9. Do you feel discriminated because of your nationality, religion or race?

Most of the answers (about 2/3) were negative.

10. What kind of changes would make your everyday life easier here?

The students listed the following solutions: actions against xenophobia, more tolerance and respect for the foreigners, easier and faster procedures for obtaining the residence card, 24-hour bus service, and more street lamps. At the same time, however, many people do not see the need for changes.

11. Do you think that various places in Lublin are clearly marked?

According to the respondents, the places are rather clearly marked.

12. What places? What languages should they be marked in?

No answer was given.

13. In your opinion, what should the universities and Lublin authorities do to make Lublin more attractive for foreign students staying here?

This question was usually left unanswered, nevertheless, there were suggestions to organize more of free of charge events, such as "The Night of Culture."

14. Do you know any cultural institutions in Lublin?

The students named the following: The Centre for Culture, Cultural Center „Chatka Zaka”, the Lublin Philharmonic, The Ukrainian Society in Lublin, The "Grodzka Gate – NN Theatre" Centre. A few people did not know any institution in the city.

15. What do you usually do in your free time in Lublin? What places do you visit?

The respondents spend their leisure time mostly walking and sightseeing. They visit The Old Town, pubs and clubs. They socialize with friends.

16. What are the things Lublin does not offer that you would like to do in your spare time?

There are not enough cycle paths and swimming pools in Lublin.

17. Do you participate in any cultural events in Lublin?

1/3 of the surveyed foreigners do not participate in the events, because they do not have time for that. The rest of them take part in such events as: The Night of Culture, "Mikolajki Folkowe" International Folk Festival, Student Culture Days, International Festival Theatre Confrontations and the film festivals: "Crossroads of Europe," Human Rights in Film, Student Film Confrontations

18. Where do you find information about the cultural events organized in the city?

The sources of information about the cultural events are: ZOOM, the internet (e.g. lublin2016.eu), posters, advertisements and friends.

19. What would encourage you to participate more in the cultural events organized in Lublin?

The students usually wrote „more free time" or „free of charge entry."

20. Would you like any cultural events to be aimed at foreign students?

The respondents would like to have more events bringing together the foreign students and the Polish ones. They also suggested organization of film festivals where the films about selected countries would be showed, or e.g. „national days."

21. Would you like to participate in organization of cultural events in Lublin?

The students would rather participate in the events than organize them. However, some would get involved in organization of such events as "The Night of Culture."

22. Does a language barrier impede your access to the cultural events in Lublin?

The respondents do not see that as a problem.

23. Do you take the Polish language course?

Most of the students gave the negative answer.

24. Do you think you need such course?

Most of the answers were negative.

25. Do you know any internet forum for foreign students?

In most cases, the respondents did not give any answer. Just a few people wrote *svoi.pl*.

## **Erasmus exchange students (from both MCSU and The Catholic University of Lublin)**

1. Why do you study in Lublin?

The respondents study here as the Erasmus exchange students. Some people came here for high standards of teaching (Law and Slavonic studies at The Catholic University of Lublin and The Faculty of Arts at MCSU).

2. Did you receive enough support from the university/city during your first days in Lublin?

In general, the students got enough support.

3. What sort of help was not provided by the university/city in your case?

There were no examples given.

4. Have you had contact with the Polish administration offices?

Most of the students have had contact with the Polish administration offices.

5. How was your issue handled?

Mostly in a proper way, however, some problems in the dean's offices occurred.

6. Do you feel safe in Lublin?

The students feel rather safe here.

7. What should be changed to make you feel safe?

In most cases, the respondents did not give any specific answers.

8. Have you encountered any acts of intolerance towards you or other foreigners in Lublin?

Most of the respondents have not encountered any acts of intolerance.

9. Do you feel discriminated because of your nationality, religion or race?

They do not feel discriminated here.

10. What kind of changes would make your everyday life easier here?

The following ideas were mentioned: 24-hour bus service, more hot spots and maps in the city, better infrastructure, the airport, more practical the Polish language course. However, many people do not think that any changes are necessary.

11. Do you think that various places in Lublin are clearly marked?

The respondents usually consider the places clearly marked.

12. What places? What languages should they be marked in?

The students listed such places as bus stops and the train station (they wish there was information in English).

13. In your opinion, what should the universities and Lublin authorities do to make Lublin more attractive for foreign students staying here?

This question was usually left without any answer but there were also suggestions about organizing more free of charge cultural events like "The Night of Culture."

14. Do you know any cultural institutions in Lublin?

There were listed the following institutions: The Centre for Culture, Cultural Center „Chatka Zaka,” the Lublin Philharmonic, "Tektura," Centre for Theatre Practices "Gardzienice," State Museum at Majdanek. A few people did not know any cultural institution in the city.

15. What do you usually do in your free time in Lublin? What places do you visit?

The respondents spend their free time mostly walking, sightseeing and shopping. They visit The Old Town, pubs, clubs or Plaza shopping centre. They socialize with friends and do sports.

16. What are the things Lublin does not offer that you would like to do in your spare time?

Some of the students mentioned lack of cycle paths, however, many of them did not answer this question at all.

17. Do you participate in any cultural events in Lublin?

Some of the foreigners do not participate in the events, because they do not know about them. The others go to the cinema, theatre, the Philharmonic, the events organized in "Tektura" or the film festival Human Rights in Film.

18. Where do you find information about the cultural events organized in the city?

The sources of information are: the internet (e.g. lublin2016.eu, „Tektura's" website), posters, advertisements and friends.

19. What would encourage you to participate more in the cultural events organized in Lublin?

Mostly, the respondents would like to get information about the cultural events in English.

20. Would you like any cultural events to be aimed at foreign students?

Some of the students do not think it is necessary but there were also suggestions to organize events bringing the students together.

21. Would you like to participate in organization of cultural events in Lublin?

In most cases, the students said "yes".

22. Does a language barrier impede your access to the cultural events in Lublin?

For half of the respondents it is a problem.

23. Do you take the Polish language course?

Most of the students take the Polish language course.

24. Do you think you need such course?

The positive answer was prevailing.

25. Do you know any internet forum for foreign students?

Most of the foreigners did not answer the question. Some, however, named the following: facebook, google groups Erasmus, Erasmus Student Network.

### **The survey results for all the interviewed students:**

1. Why do you study in Lublin?

The main reasons for starting a course in Lublin by the foreign students are:

- a foundation course (mainly the students of The Polish Language and Culture Centre)
- scholarships awarded by The John Paul II Foundation (mainly the students of The Catholic University of Lublin)
- courses taught in English (mainly the students of the Medical University of Lublin)
- shorter system of studies (mainly at the Medical University of Lublin)
- the students also named such reasons as: they wanted to study in Lublin, they wanted to get to know the Polish culture, renowned universities (mainly the Medical University of Lublin and

The Catholic University of Lublin), proximity to their country of origin (mostly the students from Belarus and Ukraine).

2. Did you receive enough support from the university/city during your first days in Lublin?

The positive answer was given mostly by the students of The Polish Language and Culture Centre, The Catholic University of Lublin, MCSU and the Erasmus exchange students, while the students of the Medical University of Lublin provided rather negative answers.

3. What sort of help was not provided by the university/city in your case?

In most cases, it was the students of the Medical University who replied to this question giving the following answers:

- insufficient help when legalizing their stay in Poland (it concerns only the Taiwanese from the Medical University who could not communicate with the clerks or complete the Polish documents)
- lack of information about where they should go in case of emergency (especially places with the English speaking staff, e.g. the police, medical care)
- lack of information about the city and the university (such as a guidebook in English with basic information about the most important places in the city, guidelines how to get around the city and at the university – where the buildings or classrooms are situated, etc.).
- the students also wanted to have the city tour and meetings with e.g. the police.

4. Have you had contact with the Polish administration offices?

The majority of the respondents have had contact with the Polish administration offices. Most of the negative answers were provided by the students from The Polish Language and Culture Centre).

5. How was your issue handled?

The students from the Medical University had the most problems visiting the Polish administration offices. Their problems come down to communication: the clerks do not speak English, the documents are available only in Polish and there is no one to help the students with the paperwork (mostly the students of the Medical University, however, some of the MCSU and The Catholic University of Lublin students also had such problems when they applied for the residence card). Moreover, the respondents complained about the red tape and long queues and procedures in the offices.

6. Do you feel safe in Lublin?

The negative answer was usually given by the Medical University students.

7. What should be changed to make you feel safe?

Mostly the students from the Medical University replied to this question. They suggested the following solutions:

- more police patrols, especially at night and in places where students usually gather,
- more street lamps switched on at night
- English speaking police officers
- more surveillance cameras

8. Have you encountered any acts of intolerance towards you or other foreigners in Lublin?

122 people have encountered some acts of intolerance (mostly from the Medical University – 2/3 of all the answers), while 128 students stated otherwise. 20 people did not answer the question at all.

9. Do you feel discriminated because of your nationality, religion or race?

87 students feel discriminated (2/3 from the Medical University) and 181 do not. 2 people did not give any answer.

10. What kind of changes would make your everyday life easier here?

The answers included:

- night buses over the whole week
- easier procedures for obtaining the residence card
- an office/place where the foreigners could get useful information in English how to find oneself in Lublin/Poland, where they could get some help when completing any documents in Polish or have these documents available in English (mostly the Medical University and Erasmus students)
- improving communication with the university authorities (mainly the Medical University students)
- more English speaking staff in the administration offices, public places, police stations, hospitals (mainly the Medical University students)
- bus and train timetables in English (mostly the Medical University students)
- more opportunities for bringing the Polish and the foreign students together
- places where the students could rent a bike
- more information about the events organized at the universities,
- advertisements in English (mostly the Medical University students)
- more practical the Polish language course
- actions against xenophobia, more tolerance and respect for the foreigners
- the airport, better connections with other cities and border crossings

11. Do you think that various places in Lublin are clearly marked?

About 1/5 of the respondents say that some places are not marked properly.

12. What places? What languages should they be marked in?

Most of the students said that the places should be marked in English. However, a few students suggested other languages: German, French, Russian, Arabic and Chinese.

13. In your opinion, what should the universities and Lublin authorities do to make Lublin more attractive for foreign students staying here?

The following ideas appeared:

- more sports facilities (or more information about where these places are situated)
- more events for both the foreigners and the Polish students
- more trips (mentioned especially by The Polish Language and Culture Centre students)
- a better system of informing students about the cultural events (e.g. a noticeboard in The Polish Language and Culture Centre)
- information about the cultural events in English (mostly at the Medical University)
- more English speaking staff in the administration offices (mainly the Medical University students)
- a guidebook and a map of the city in English

14. Do you know any cultural institutions in Lublin?

The students mentioned such institutions as:

- The Centre for Culture
- Cultural Center „Chatka Zaka”
- The Lublin Philharmonic
- The Lublin’s Castle
- cinemas
- theatres

15. What do you usually do in your free time in Lublin? What places do you visit?

The respondents usually spend their leisure time:

- shopping
- strolling about The Old Town
- studying
- watching movies
- in Plaza shopping centre
- with friends
- in pubs, clubs and restaurants
- sightseeing other cities

16. What are the things Lublin does not offer that you would like to do in your spare time?

The students do not have opportunities to do the following things:

- cycle
- do sports
- go to leisure places, such as parks (where they can sit on the grass)
- meet more Polish students

17. Do you participate in any cultural events in Lublin?

About 1/3 of the respondents participate in the cultural events. They listed the following events:

- Kozienalia/Juwenalia/Student Culture Days
- The Night of Culture
- International Film Festival “Crossroads of Europe”
- Erasmus Student Network events
- concerts in Lublin Philharmonic
- exhibitions
- concerts
- cinemas
- “Mikolajki Folkowe” International Folk Festival
- film Festival „Watch Docs. Human Rights in Film”
- national evenings (an event organized in The Polish Language and Culture Centre)
- All Saints’ Day (an example given by the Medical University students)

2/3 of the respondents do not participate in the cultural events giving the following reasons:

- lack of information about the events or the information provided only in Polish (mostly the Medical University students)
- they do not like such events
- they never had a chance to take part in the events
- they do not have time
- Polish as the language of the events (mainly the Medical University students)

18. Where do you find information about the cultural events organized in the city?

The main sources of information are:

- the internet (with lublin2016.eu mentioned several times)
- friends
- ZOOM
- advertisements
- posters
- the Polish language teachers
- media

19. What would encourage you to participate more in the cultural events organized in Lublin?  
In general, the respondents would like:

- to receive information about the events in English
- the events to be free of charge
- the events to be translated into English

20. Would you like any cultural events to be aimed at foreign students?

Almost 2/3 of the respondents would like such events to be organized, especially:

- the events bringing together the Polish and international students
- days of their national culture
- concerts of foreign bands (from the students' countries of origin)
- multicultural events
- the events promoting Polish culture
- the events promoting the history of Lublin
- dance events
- film/ theatre festivals
- the events promoting national cuisine of the foreign countries
- the events related to national/religion holidays of the foreign countries
- city tours with the Polish students as guides

21. Would you like to participate in organization of cultural events in Lublin?

Half of the respondents said "yes". They would like to get involved in organization of:

- concerts and music events
- theatre events
- contemporary dance events
- film festivals
- the events bringing the students together
- The Night of Culture
- Jagiellonian Fair
- showing foreign tourist groups around Lublin
- International Film Festival "Crossroads of Europe"

22. Does a language barrier impede your access to the cultural events in Lublin?

Half of the students find it problematic, especially the Medical University and Erasmus students.

23. Do you take Polish language course?

Most of the respondents take such course (mainly the students from the Medical University, Erasmus programme and The Polish Language and Culture Centre)

24. Do you think you need such course?

The majority of the students said "yes".

25. Do you know any forum for foreign students?

The respondents listed the following:

- [svoi.pl](http://svoi.pl)
- [vkontakte.ru](http://vkontakte.ru)
- [traveladvisor.com](http://traveladvisor.com)
- [studera-utomlands.com/forum](http://studera-utomlands.com/forum)
- Association of Norwegian Student Abroad – ANSA
- [odnoklassniki.ru](http://odnoklassniki.ru)
- e-kul

- fjp2.opoka.pl/lublin
- lublinter.com/bbs
- Erasmus Student Network – ESN

### **The foreign students' suggestions about things that need to be changed to make their stay in Lublin more satisfying:**

- The students want better organization of the studies (clearer schedule of classes, information where the buildings and classrooms are situated) – INFORMATION FOR THE MEDICAL UNIVERSITY
- They complain that the university authorities are unavailable for them – INFORMATION FOR THE MEDICAL UNIVERSITY
- During their first days in Lublin, the students would like to be informed how to find oneself in the city, where the most useful institutions are or where to seek help in case of emergency – INFORMATION FOR THE MEDICAL UNIVERSITY/THE CITY AUTHORITIES
- According to the students, the city guides published in English would be a useful tool (not simply a tourist guidebook but a guide which would include practical information/contact list, e.g. where to find sports facilities, medical care with English speaking staff, how to make sure that a taxi driver does not charge too much, what to pay attention to when renting a flat, etc.) – INFORMATION FOR THE MEDICAL UNIVERSITY AND ERASMUS COORDINATORS/THE CITY AUTHORITIES 19
- The fact that the police officers do not speak English makes many students feel unsafe in Lublin – INFORMATION FOR THE POLICE
- The respondents would feel safer in Lublin, if there were more police patrols on the streets – INFORMATION FOR THE POLICE
- The students complained about lack of English speaking staff in the administration offices. They mention one place in particular: the office where they apply for the residence card. Besides, the procedure for obtaining the residence card is long and the documents are available only in Polish. The students wish they could complete these documents in English – INFORMATION FOR LUBLIN AUTHORITIES
- The respondents find it difficult to read the bus and train timetables, as these are available only in Polish. Communication in English in the train station or at the information desks is difficult as well – INFORMATION FOR PKP RAILWAY SERVICE AND MPK BUS SERVICE
- The respondents suggested that the cultural institutions should provide information about their events in English and such information should be posted at the universities. Furthermore, it would be an advantage, if the events were prepared for English speaking audience (e.g. subtitles for films or theatre performances) – INFORMATION FOR THE CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS
- Many people indicated also a need for 24-hour bus service over the whole week – INFORMATION FOR LUBLIN AUTHORITIES/ MPK BUS SERVICE
- The respondents would welcome the idea of renting a bicycle in Lublin.
- The students wish that Lublin citizens (especially young ones) were more tolerant and respectful towards foreigners – INFORMATION FOR LUBLIN AUTHORITIES

### **Summary:**

The project „Lublin is friendly” was aimed at the foreigners studying in Lublin. The authors of the project (Culture Department of Municipality of Lublin City and Homo Faber Association) wanted to know their opinion on how they find studying and living in Lublin. The authors wanted to ask about the problems and needs the students have (especially cultural needs), what they like about the city and what should be changed. An important aim of the research was to check to what degree the foreigners participate in the cultural life of the city, whether they are interested in the cultural events or want to get involved in organization of such events

The main research tool was a survey form consisting of 25 questions, including:

- Do you feel safe in Lublin?
- Have you encountered any acts of intolerance towards you or other foreigners in Lublin?
- What kind of changes would make your everyday life easier here?
- What do you usually do in your free time in Lublin? What places do you visit?
- Do you participate in the cultural events in Lublin?
  - a. yes, what kind of events?
  - b. no, why?
- Would you like to participate in organization of cultural events in Lublin?
  - a. yes, what kind of events?
  - b. no

The survey form was prepared in Polish and in English.

20

Very important elements of the project, apart from the survey, were the meetings organized for the foreign students. There were 4 such meetings.

One of them took place in The Polish Language and Culture Centre. Along with the representatives from the Culture Department of Municipality of Lublin City and Homo Faber Association, there were also members of the Volunteer Centre in Lublin and the Culture Animation Centre from The Centre for Culture.

The representative from the Culture Animation Centre participated also in the meeting organized for the Erasmus exchange students.

The remaining two meetings took place at the Medical University.

What is more, the survey form was sent to the students via the internet (mainly the Erasmus and the Medical University students) or handed in person to the students in the residence halls (the MCSU and The Catholic University of Lublin students).

An approximate number of the foreign students at Lublin universities in the spring semester 2008/2009 is 878 (only the students of full-time bachelor and master degrees and the foundation course at The Polish Language and Culture Centre).

The biggest number of foreigners, 355, studies at the Medical University (mostly from the US, Norway and Taiwan). The Catholic University of Lublin has 235 foreign students, mainly from Belarus and Ukraine. As much as 146 people from abroad study at the MCSU (mostly Ukrainians and Byelorussians). There are about 100 students of the one-year Polish language course at The Polish Language and Culture Centre and most of these people come from Ukraine and Belarus. There are 33 foreign students at the Lublin University of Technology and 9 at the University of Life Sciences in Lublin. Some of them come here just for one or two semesters (Erasmus), while others stay for the whole course.

As many as 270 people completed the survey forms: 108 from the Medical University, 82 from The Polish Language and Culture Centre, 39 from the Catholic University of Lublin, 24 from the MCSU, 16 Erasmus exchange students from the MCSU and the Catholic University of Lublin and one person from the Lublin University of Technology. Most of those who took part in the research come from Ukraine (53), Taiwan (43), Belarus (36) and the United States (31). However, the survey forms were also completed by the people from: Norway, Canada, Sweden, Germany, the Czech Republic, Kazakhstan, Russia, Italy, Belgium, Spain, France, Cyprus, the Lebanon and Georgia.

Analyzing the data provided by the survey, the students can be divided into two groups – the Medical University with the Erasmus exchange students and the rest of the foreigners. The main difference between the groups is the language they use at the university. The Medical University and the Erasmus exchange students have classes in English, while the rest of the respondents in

Polish. That is why one of the biggest problems the Medical University and the Erasmus exchange students encounter is the impossibility of communication in English in various situations (mostly the Medical University students). They wish the service in English was available in the administration offices (especially where the residence card is issued), the police stations, hospitals, post office, buses and bus stops, the train station or the cultural institutions. Particularly nagging problem is that the police officers do not speak English. That is why, the students of the Medical University do not feel safe in Lublin. Lack of information in English about the cultural events is the reason why the foreigners from the Medical University do not participate in the cultural life of the city.

The problems with obtaining the residence card concern not only the Medical University students, but also those from the MCSU, the Catholic University of Lublin or The Polish Language and Culture Centre. The respondents would like the procedures to be easier and faster.

Most of the respondents (regardless the university) also mentioned the following changes to be introduced: 24-hour bus service over the whole week, more police patrols on the streets and more integration initiatives with the Polish students. Integration and bringing together the foreign and the Polish students could be an attempt to solve the problem of discrimination and intolerance (especially among young people) mentioned several times by the students of the Medical University.

1/3 of the respondents stated in the survey that they participate in the cultural events in Lublin. The rest of the students do not find time to do that or do not receive enough information about the events. They also complain that the events are only in Polish. However, 2/3 of the respondents wish there was more cultural events in Lublin organized especially for the foreign students. Such events could bring the foreign and the Polish students together, foster Polish culture and Lublin's history or promote national cuisine of a given foreign country. These could also be outdoor events, possibly of a sports nature.

Half of the respondents would get involved in the organization of the cultural events in the city, especially the events bringing the students together, as well as music, dance, film or theatre initiatives.

The survey results prepared by: Dorota Huszcza

The report edited by: Magdalena Kawa

Proofread by: Joanna Stachyra

Contact:

Roman Jaborkhel

Culture Department

Cultural Project and Development Division

City of Lublin

Plac Łokietka 1

20-950 Lublin

e-mail: [rjaborkhel@lublin.eu](mailto:rjaborkhel@lublin.eu)

tel: 081 466 37 23