



Culture in one place





Are we changing?

Nikol Kowalik

Changes in culture before and after accession to the European community.

Polish point of view

We not felt any significant change and this interfering with the tradition. The only difference was the introduction of the arrangements for determining criteria for regional products. For example “oscypek”.

Guidelines reserving this polish cheese is characteristic for Tatra region. Otherwise nothing has changed.

Cyprus point of view

Cyprus culture is deep and influenced by many nations due do the constant occupation of the island by so many conquerors by the course of time, One of the first aspects of the Cyprus culture experienced by foreigners to Cyprus is the warm welcome. Cypriots are known worldwide for the genuine and sincere hospitality and friendliness. The words 'Kalosorisate' (You are well Welcome!) and 'Kopiaste' (Come join us!) are frequently called to locals and foreigners alike. Unfortunately this days this warm hospitality that we are well known for it has started to fade a little bit us our country has started to get older and been a part of a big family the European union many benefits had come to her but also some negatives that effect our ways of managing the external effect that multinationalism had brought to us. I suggest that we incorporate some cultural preservance lessons into our

schools so our children learn respect and keep our values intact.

Slovakia point of view

Preserving Culture of our country throughout time. Slovakia is small country with big cultural heritage. Each region, city has unique folklore (costumes, music, customs, traditions, dances, dialects etc.)

For preserve folk customs organizes folklore festivals in many towns. The fear of the unknown, as well as an attempt to achieve health, happiness or beauty was the main causes of myths, legends, superstitions. Christianity replace some old customs (for example winter solstice change into Christmas).

Let's celebrate

Many customs are preserving. We will describes eleven customs.

Carrying of Morena symbolises the end of winter and the arrival of spring. Young girls carried Morena (in the form of a straw effigy dressed in woman's clothing) to a local stream, undressed it on the bank, set it on fire and threw it in a stream.

Three Wise Men (January 6th), boys go from door to door dressed up as the three Wise Men, singing carols and performing the Twelfth Night play, describing the visit of the three Wise Men after the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem, following a star. It symbolizes the end of the Christmas

Shrovetide is a season of entertainment, feast and carnival. Shrovetide ended with a "burial of a contrabass", a parody of an actual burial. After Shrovetide, Christians observe Lent (simple foods, no entertainment, etc.) leading up to Easter.

Easter - Young girls decorate Easter eggs for young boys on Monday. Easter Monday is traditionally connected with whipping and water pouring - young boys go from door to door, pour girls with water, and gently whip them with a birch rod. In return, they receive painted Easter eggs and colored ribbons on their rods.

1st May - boys erected maypoles for young girls whom they wished to court. The maypole was usually a spruce without bark, whose top the boys had decorated with colored ribbons.

Midsummer Night (the night of June 23rd-24th) young people still burn bonfires on the hills overlooking villages and jump over them, singing and dancing. This is customs to protect themselves against evil forces.

All Saints' Day (November 2nd) people visit graveyards to remember the dearly departed. They lay wreaths on the graves and burn candles for the souls of the deceased.

St. Nicholas day (December 6th) - on this day St. Nicolas visits households accompanied by the devil, gives sweets or toys to children who were good and onions or coal to children who were naughty.

St. Lucy's Day (December 13th) is particularly associated with prophecies about love. Girls would write a different male name on each of twelve slips of paper, with the thirteenth slip being left blank and folded. They burned one each day. On the Christmas Eve morning they burned the second to last slip, and in the evening opened the last one. The name on this slip of paper was believed to be the name of the man whom the girl would marry. If the piece of paper was blank, it was assumed

that the girl would not marry in the next year.

Christmas - The first course at Christmas dinner is composed of Christmas wafers with honey with garlic, so that those eating it would be healthy all year. An apple cut in half - when the seeds form a regular five-pointed star it means good health. Other parts of dinner depends on the region. In the end is usually served Cabbage soup followed by fish and potato

salad. After dinner the family unwraps the gifts under the tree, sing carols or watching Christmas tales.

Sylvester's day (December 31st) During this night evil forces could do the most harm. People drove them back by cracking a whip, sounding trumpets loudly, etc. Today we let off fireworks instead, and at midnight we celebrate the arrival of the New Year with a toast. •



United cultures of Europe

Vlado Pavlik



In our big interview, we talked to our friends participating at the United Nations of Europe project about the values and culture of their country.

1. What values do the EU countries share in your opinion?
2. What values are unique for your country?
3. Do you think that the other EU countries know your culture?
4. If you should present just one cultural element from your country, which one would it be?

CYPRUS - Mr. Big

I think we share some basic advantages such as free mobility and passage through the countries. We have job opportunities, so if I wanted to work, for example in Slovakia, I could. We share also some spiritual values and we have

3. Cyprus has a fortunate and at the same time unfortunate geographical position. We are close neighbor of Greece and we share many things, including language. So many people know Cyprus as we have common culture with Greece. On the other

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some common laws, which help us to behave in other countries more easily.

2. I would say hospitality. If you are a tourist in Cyprus, you are always treated kindly and politely, if you enter a tavern, people greet you with a warm heart. Cyprus is also an interesting blend of more cultures, we have a lot of ancient cultural heritage which we appreciate and are proud of.

hand, they are not familiar with our country in detail. They do not know about our everyday life or our problems.

4. Definitely hospitality. Many nations are hospitable, but we have a language advantage too. As a former English colony, many people know English, so there is no language gap between Cypriots and the tourists.



POLAND - Jędrzej

We share the ideals of freedom – freedom to travel, to choose where do we want to live, study or work. The Poles have also the feeling for Christian heritage, although in Poland it is slowly decreasing, which can have both good and bad effects.

2. We are very proud of our nationality. In the past, for 123 years there was no Poland as a state, just Polish people strongly connected with their roots. And thanks to this strong connection with the nation, we were able to renew Poland after all the years of oppression.

3. No, not at all. Some people know our famous representatives, but in general, many people think that Poland and Russia are the same. People

think everything is cold, we have bears in the streets and everybody is drunk. One guy from another country asked me, whether we know Nutella :-). In my opinion, the west countries are sometimes focused on themselves too much and they cannot see we have a lot to offer in many areas. However, thanks to the projects like this one, the situation is getting better. It is not going to change in a year, but it will change eventually.

4. We have a saying – The guest in my house is like a God in my house. Because of the negative historical experience, Polish people are sometimes afraid of the foreigners, but once we see you are a normal person, you will feel like home in Poland.

TURKEY - Esra and Jonca

European countries share some common history and in this aspect, Turkey as the Ottoman Empire in the past was part of this history too. It is good that there is English as a language we can all communicate with. But many things are different in our country. We are still in the process of development. Turkey is a bridge between two cultures - European and Arabic. And we have the aspects and values from both these cultures.

2. We care a lot about family. We have a great respect for the elders and the family ties are very strong. If somebody is missing at the dinner for example, we wait until he comes to the table. One of the disadvantages is that our parents are sometimes overprotective :-)
People in Turkey also appreciate tradition a lot - many women

wear the scarf for example, and they don't even know why - they just consider it as a part of the culture.

3. There are many stereotypes about Turkey and we have even some bad personal experience. But there are people who love Turkey too. We attend projects like this to break the stereotypes - to explain that we do not really wear hijab. To point out that for travelling we use cars, buses and planes, not camels.

4. Many people don't know Turkish food in all the variety we offer. Turkey is bigger than most of the European countries and it is reflected in the richness of our cuisine. Our favourite meal is Sarma for example - rice wrapped in grapeleaves with spices and lemon slices.



CZECH REPUBLIC - Vasek and Martina

One of the common values is the willingness to cooperate and help each other. The European Union also wants to keep the peace and democracy. Unfortunately there are some anti-values common to all the nations too, such as corruption.

2. We have a lot of optimism. Especially young people are able to make fun and not to take everything so seriously.

3. If beer is considered to be the Czech culture, then definitely yes :-) But also

in general, I think many people, especially from eastern and central Europe know Czech Republic. Many have visited Prague, they know our food and drinks

4. Beer. It is delicious of course, but it has also the cultural aspect. It connects people and it is also a great topic to start a conversation if you want to make some new friends from abroad :-)

*We are a perfect country for tourists – we are in the middle of Europe, we are cheap and of course Czech republic is a beautiful country.
So I think people like us.*

ITALY - Antonio and Angelina

Of course, we all share the values of democracy. Without democracy it is impossible to think about the European Union. Nobody wants wars as well, all the people want to live in peace.

2. We have a particular deep sense of family. Some people do not leave their family house until they are 40 and even after marriage they are strongly connected and meet at least for the Sunday lunch. However, it is weaker than it used to be in the past, because people need to move to find job opportunities.

3. There are lots of stereotypes - we are considered to be lovers, cooks or even

mafians. I also think our politicians are not taken very seriously outside our country, because they are typical for changing their opinions. But in general, people from around the world like us. There is a saying in some parts of the world which says that an Italian person is a good person. For example some Romanians consider us as their cousins, I don't even know why.

4. Our food. To prepare a good food you need to put some love and passion into cooking. And Italians are very passionate and happy people. And we have a good taste too.

SLOVAKIA - Michaela

I think that all the countries share the same values in general - liberty, democracy, equality. We respect each other, we follow the rule of law and respect the human rights.

across the Europe don't even know, where it is. Quite often they confuse us with Slovenia too. On the other hand, many young people can travel these days and Slovakia is recognized more than before.

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2. We are very hard-working people, we always have to do something, otherwise we feel useless. Sometimes we are a little bit careless about the law - we try to bend it according to our needs :-) And of course, we are very proud of our country, especially the beautiful nature.

3. Slovakia is very small country and many people from

4. We have a very rich culture so it is hard to choose one. But I think, in Slovakia we have many beautiful and unique castles. If you visit them, you can touch the history, see how people lived in the past and as a bonus - to have a beautiful view at Slovak mountains.

