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Report on INSPIRE Strategic Partnerships Project

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Within the British Council INSPIRE project on Strategic Partnership between the University of Birmingham (UK) and the Kazakh-British Technical University Dr Svetlana Zhanabayeva visited the UoB between 19 and 30 March 2011. The main purpose of the visit was the final round of training of the UK PG students in the Kazakh language. Classes were held during two weeks three sessions per week.

On March 28, 2011 at the University of Birmingham, the Kazakh Cultural Center at the University of Birmingham (formed by the project leaders) organized a celebration of Nauryz, the Spring Festival or a New Year holiday. It was attended by over 80 students from Kazakhstan and British students who study or have an interest in Central Asia. Among the guests there were officials from the Embassy of the Republic of Kazakhstan in London, and Kazakhstani students from other universities in Midland.

Among the speakers were Dr Derek Averre, Director of Centre for Russian and East European Studies, the UoB, Mr Kuat Karbuzov, Attaché on education affairs of the Embassy of Kazakhstan in the UK, Dr Galina Yemelianova, INSPIRE UK lead (University of Birmingham) and Dr Svetlana Zhanabayeva, ISPIRE Kazakhstan lead.

British students studying the Kazakh language at the University of Birmingham made speeches and welcomed the guests in the Kazakh language, prompting applause from the audience. Their speeches were accentuated by the Kazakh national costumes they were wearing. In turn, the Kazakh students studying at the Birmingham University presented Kazakh national dances, Kazakh folk music and playing the Kazakh musical instrument *dombyra*, Guests and participants of the event were treated to traditional dishes of Kazakh cuisine cooked by Svetlana Zhanabaeyeva and Kazakh students.

In April 2011 three PG students and one PhD student from the University of Birmingham visited the KBTU for a period of 3 weeks as part of the project exchange programme. They were hosted by the Department of the English language of KBTU.

In Almaty they conducted field-work for their respective research topics which involved interviewing local people. They also significantly improved their Kazakh language by attending the Kazakh and English language classes, took part in extra-curriculum activities together with Kazakhstani students: visit to the dzhailyau, (a place to graze livestock), a trip to the mountains and a visit to the Abay Opera and Ballet theatre. British students were active participants of the celebration of Nauryz at KBTU: acted and spoke Kazakh in a festive presentation of the department, congratulated all those present in the Kazakh language.

At the end of April 2011 Dr Yemelianova visited Kazakhstan. During her visit she had talks with the KBTU senior management on further development of staff and student exchange between the universities. Dr Yemelianova also visited the Institute of Oriental studies in Almaty and held talk with Prof Ashirbek Muminov, a deputy director of the Institute and a leading Central Asian scholar on Islam. They agreed on joint research on Sufism (mystical Islam) in Kazakhstan. The application for their joint project proposal was submitted to the Leverhulme Trust on 30 August 2011.

Dr Yemelianova, together with Dr Zhanabayeva, visited Taraz. She gave a lecture on studying opportunities at the UoB to students and members of staff at the Taraz State Pedagogical Institute. She, together, with Dr Zhanabayeva, held talks with Dr Saule Tazhibayeva, Vice-Rector on Science of the university, on diversification of INSPIRE project to include Taraz-based academics and students. They also visited several mosques and spoke to imams and other representatives of the Muftiiate of Kazakhstan. In Taraz.

The British students and together with Dr Yemelianova and Dr Zhanabayeva visited the British Council office in Almaty and discussed activities and future plans on the INSPIRE project with Ulzhan Kanzhigalina, Deputy Director of the British Council office and Dilyara Woodward, Higher Education Projects Manager

On April 7, 2011 the English Department of KBTU organized a round-table for the British students and 1st and 2nd year Kazakh students. The students exchanged their their university experiences.

Photos

Meeting UoB International Department Officer Yvonne Haines

British students learning speaking Kazakh at the celebration of Nauryz in Birmingham

Derek Averre, Head of CREES and Kuat Karbuzov, Attaché on education issues of the RK Embassy in UK at the celebration of Nauryz in at UoB

Kazakhstani students of UoB at the celebration of Nauryz in Birmingham

British students celebrating Nauryz at KBTU

Meeting Vice-Rector of Taraz State Pedagogical Institute Saule Tazhibayeva

Meeting at the British Council office in Almaty.

At the lecture of Dr Yemelianova at Taraz State Pedagogical Institute

With cooleagues from Taraz State Pedagogical Institute

Герман тілдері және ГТОӘ

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