

Our visit on Bulgaria Embassy

Interview with His Excellence Mr. Latchezar Petkov



Why did you start with this job, is it because of travelling, languages or culture?

To be completely honest, yes. When I was at school I was extremely interested in humanistic subjects and then when I joined my university in Sofia I went into international relations and I was interested in languages as well. I also speak Spanish and French. I truly like that kind of job where you can go to places and do things, so I am quite happy that I chose it.

On the other hand, it is a profession where you don't really see the direct results. You can feel it but you can't see it, if you know what I mean. Politically you see the results a few years later. It is also interesting, that more and more women are in politics. Because a few years earlier it was just for men, not for women, but it is good because women are more responsible and very good diplomats.

What do you think about Czechs as a nation, because you said, that you are here for quite long time, so if you compare us with people in Bulgaria?

I would say, that there are a lot of similarities and there are differences as well. I divide it into the South and the North, because people in the North, they work more than people in the South. They work, but you know, they take it easy. The mirror fact is that if it is summer time and you go to Bulgaria, Spain, etc. the restaurants are full and they drink, speak for hours, but you never see this in the North. In the north, they go for dinner, get a glass of

wine and then they go home, because the next day, they have to go to work. Also people here are little more reserved. For example in Bulgaria when you meet someone you kiss them on cheeks twice, but when I asked here they told me: „Don't do that“, just shaking hands is enough. What I truly like is, that most of people in weekend go to their villas, but there is something that people in Bulgaria don't do, they do a lot of sports and I love that. Food is also different, people in the Czech Republic eat more meat and in Bulgaria we eat more vegetables.

Do you like Czech beer?

I love it.

Which one?

Velkopopovický Kozel is my favourite one.

Can you tell us something about your family?

We have two kids, my wife and I. We have a daughter, she lives in Warsaw and we have a son who lives in Germany in Dusseldorf. He has a family and wife, so I have grandkids. A boy Filip and a girl named Sofia. My wife is a film director and a film producer and she comes every second weekend. She made a wonderful document recently. It is about Roma children, who have been adopted. So the idea of the movie is, when you get yourself off the ghetto this way, you can totally be a different person.

What is your opinion on refugees and how does your country feel about it?

The biggest problem is, that Europe was not prepared for this, nobody was prepared and nobody thought that it would be that complicated. Another problem is that we didn't make a difference between the refugees and economic migrants. We should accept refugees but just those who want to stay. Trafficking people in these days is a big business, it's better than trafficking drugs. The thing is that those refugees, they don't want to stay here, they want to Germany and stay there, because of the social benefits, but I think that Angela Merkel should think about it. My point of view is little bit different from hers, because she should realise, that those people are different. We are working on it, seriously, but it is a sad story.

Have you ever visited some Czech schools?

No I haven't.

So, you don't know what it is the difference between Czech and Bulgarian education, do you?

I have some ideas.

Can you share them with us?

The system is a little bit different in the sense of classes, because in Bulgaria they separate every class in different trends, like biology and I think it is the same here, but I am not sure.

You say, that you are interested in education, can you tell us more about that?

When I came to Prague, me and one classmate of mine, we made an award for two people every year and the name of the award is Five days in Prague. So, every year it is an award for different achievements. First year was for sport achievements, so the boy who came from my school, he was an ice hockey player, really good one and the girl was an athlete. Last year there were two extraordinary painters. This year it will be for artistic achievements, because every year my school has an event called Shakespeare's days and they always show a Shakespeare's play. My friend who is a business man pays the tickets and I pay them the rest like dinners and entertainment.

Is the in Bulgaria any sport which is very popular?

Yes, something we were extremely good was weight lifting, but after the changes it is not that good anymore. We have some very good athletes and we have a wonderful tennis player. I was doing a lot of sports on myself when I was at school. I really like ice hockey and I was also swimming a lot, I was pretty good.

Do you know any Czech ice hockey players?

Yes, of course.