

**27th July 2010**

## **Online hub celebrates Scottish connections with eastern and central Europe**

First, second and third generation Scots are being encouraged to share their experiences by uploading photos, images and stories to Scottish Connections ([www.scotlandagainstracism.com/connections](http://www.scotlandagainstracism.com/connections)) - a new online hub to promote Scotland's links with central and eastern Europe.

The online hub is part of the Scottish Government's One Scotland anti-racism campaign and has already received support from top Scottish Premier League footballers Dusan Pernis of Dundee Utd, Marian Kello and Marius Zaliukas of Hearts; and Lukasz Zaluska and Milan Misun of Celtic. The footballers, along with first, second and third generation Scots have stepped up to reflect and share on their experiences of migrating to and from Scotland.

Scottish Connections is dedicated to sharing information, real stories, images and thoughts on heritage from those connected to the central and eastern European countries, who are either:

- Scots whose parents or grandparents came here from eastern or central Europeans countries in the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century
- Czechs, Estonians, Hungarians, Latvians, Lithuanians, Poles, Slovaks, Slovenians, Romanians and Bulgarians living in Scotland
- Scots who have emigrated to eastern and central Europe

Scots have had a positive, historical relationship with these countries for many years however racist attitudes can sometimes prevent our nation from recognising the value and contribution that migrants bring to our economy and our culture.

The new hub will seek to honour this relationship by emphasising that eastern and central Europeans migrating to Scotland is not a new trend and by highlighting that everyone is contributing to a better Scotland.

Examples of famous Scots over generations that have connections with these countries include Bonnie Prince Charlie whose mother was Polish and former Scottish footballer and manager Billy McNeill who is part Irish part Lithuanian descent.

Catherine Emslie is a second-generation migrant living in Aberdeen, she said "Scotland's connections with Poland and other central European countries go back a long, long way and many people don't realise. My father was a Polish soldier - he came to Scotland during World War 2 but sadly left when I was three and I never saw him again.

"I consider myself Scottish-Polish however and have recently included my Polish family name on my door along with my own. This is because I want to celebrate my heritage and to remind people that there are so many links to Poland all around us."

Danny Rab is a Hungarian from Budapest living in Glasgow, he said: “Three years ago I moved to Scotland to learn to play the bagpipes. I came to stay for a year and I’ve never left - I really do think that I’m here to stay. I started working at the National Piping Centre and began playing the bagpipes solo – I loved it! I wear my kilt – I don’t have my own tartan but I wear the Robertson tartan. Scotland is a really welcoming place. I love the people, I love rugby and of course I like the whisky”.

Sally Wood from Edinburgh moved to Romania, she said: “Romanians are very cultural, very well educated people. After the Netherlands they have the highest population of English speakers in Europe. I loved the country from the very beginning. Transylvania is not unlike Scotland – it is a really beautiful country. You can experience the Alps, the Swiss Lakes and the Black Forests of Germany – all from one country.”

To read these stories and others in full and to upload your own go to [www.scotlandagainstracism.com/connections](http://www.scotlandagainstracism.com/connections)