

## **First "International Language Week including Intercultural Communication" at Aschaffenburg University of Applied Sciences**

Last week, at the invitation of the Language Centre, the "International Language Week including Intercultural Communication" took place at the university for the first time. Prof. Dr. Renate Link, the initiator and coordinator of the week, and Prof. Dr. Sylvana Krauße, who runs the Language Centre together with her deputy Prof. Dr. Link, are pleased about the very good response: 17 guest lecturers from current and future partner universities in Denmark, Finland, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Austria, Russia, Slovakia and Hungary accepted the invitation. The visitors taught languages and/or intercultural communication themselves, gave lectures about their home universities and thus brought international flair into the lecture halls - "internationalisation at home", as it is called in New German. During so-called "speed dates", the students from Aschaffenburg had the opportunity to exchange ideas with the guest lecturers and to get a taste of a semester abroad. In addition, the guests' agenda also included excursions into pre-Christmas Aschaffenburg, such as an English-speaking guided tour of the city and a visit to the Christmas market.

The varied social programme also offered the guest lecturers the opportunity to further educate themselves in lectures and workshops on current trends in language didactics and intercultural communication so that they can pass this knowledge on to students in Aschaffenburg and abroad in the future. In today's global and virtual job market, not only in-depth language skills but also intercultural competences are essential. The ability to deal with cultural "otherness" and to successfully communicate and interact with people from foreign cultures is crucial. Due to the current immigration movements in Europe, these intercultural skills are gaining a socio-political dimension.

During the "International Language Week", representatives of Aschaffenburg UAS were also able to hold promising preliminary talks with the Upper Austrian University of Applied Sciences and the University of Economics in the Slovakian capital Bratislava, so that the International Week also serves as a marketing instrument for the further international networking of the university. The next "International Language Week including Intercultural Communication" is planned for the winter semester 2017. The university is already looking forward to meeting again with the visitors of this year's International Week, the majority of whom have already signalled their interest in participating again and in the meantime will intensify the mutual exchange by sending exchange students from their home universities to Aschaffenburg.