

WOMEN'S CENTRE

Friendly faces making sure everybody is welcome in city

Centre has been helping Dundee's new arrivals for nearly 50 years

NADIA VIDINOVA

What would you do if you had to swap the cosy familiarity of your home for a foreign country? A place you know little about and whose language you don't speak?

It's a classic "sink or swim" scenario, one which catapults people out of their comfort zones and forces them to reevaluate everything they know and take for granted.

This process can be hugely rewarding but without the right support it can also be lonely, confusing, scary and frustrating.

For the past 47 years, the Dundee International Women's Centre has been working to help newcomers to the city and country by providing English classes, social and recreational activities, job training and advice to women from more than 80 countries.

Marta Wlodarczyk grew up in Warsaw, Poland.

She says: "I moved to Dundee in 2005. My husband got a job here so we made the hard decision to migrate.

"To overcome the language barrier, I started learning English in the centre.

"I have been here for 10 years and I like it. People are very open and welcoming. But I do miss my family."

Marta always knew she wanted to work with children.

"Thanks to the centre I now have a job here with the mobile creche," she says.



Fatima Ramzan and Marta Wlodarczyk, below, have found help through Dundee International Women's Centre.

Fatima Ramzan was born in Pakistan but her parents moved to Bradford in 1968 when she was six months old.

"Following partition my family lost everything and the East India Trading company were seeking migrant workers for reconstructing Britain after the Second World War," Fatima explains.

Although she experienced some bullying at school, she didn't let anyone come between her and her dreams.



"In 2004 I enrolled for a degree in psychology at Abertay University and was also involved in community work projects," she says.

Her passion for education for women led her to complete her postgraduate study in community learning and development and she is now working at the centre.

"I absolutely love it," she smiles.
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AROUND THE WORLD

Poland and Pakistan

● Burek is the most popular name for a dog in Poland.

● Poles are generally the youngest to marry in the EU.

● Polish astronomer Nicolaus Copernicus was the first person to propose that the Earth was not the centre of the universe.

● The name of the country originates from the tribe Polanie, meaning "people living in open fields".

● The name Pakistan, Pak (pure) and stan (land) means "land of the pure" in the Persian and Urdu languages.

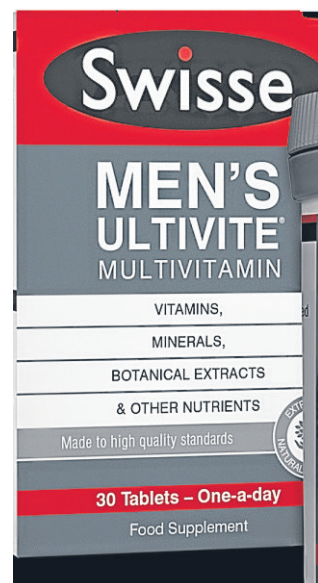
● The country's national sport is field hockey, although cricket is the most popular.

● The national drink of Pakistan is sugarcane juice called "roh".

● Karachi is its largest city, home to more than 13 million people. It is also the financial hub of the country and a major seaport.

● Pakistan shares a land border with Afghanistan, China, India and Iran.

Facts thanks to www.slavorum.org and www.sciencekids.co.nz



Giveaway: Win three months' supply of Swisse multivitamins

CAROLINE LINDSAY

For some of us, New Year means yet more cold months, dark mornings and a serious case of the January blues. The Christmas tree comes down as the kids go back to school and the adults go back to work.

However, January doesn't need to be a month of low spirits, forgotten resolutions and winter colds. It is the time to set new goals and reach new heights, be it in your career, family life or personal ambitions.

New Year should be approached with

a fresh mindset to allow us to achieve more and be more.

And that's where a good quality multivitamin comes in handy.

Swisse products have been specially formulated to provide support for our busy daily lives.

The vitamins can help energy production and mental performance, so we can start the New Year feeling energised.

In addition, they can help with immune, muscle, cognitive and heart functions, healthy bones, skin and nails and red blood cell formation.

Swisse Vitamins have given us two three months' supply of Ultivite Multivitamins for men and two of the same for women.

To be in with a chance of winning, send your name, address, postcode and phone number, with Swisse Vitamins Giveaway in the subject field and stating whether you'd like the men's or women's multivitamins, to clindsay@thecourier.co.uk

The first four names chosen after the closing date of January 16 will win the three months' supply of the vitamins.