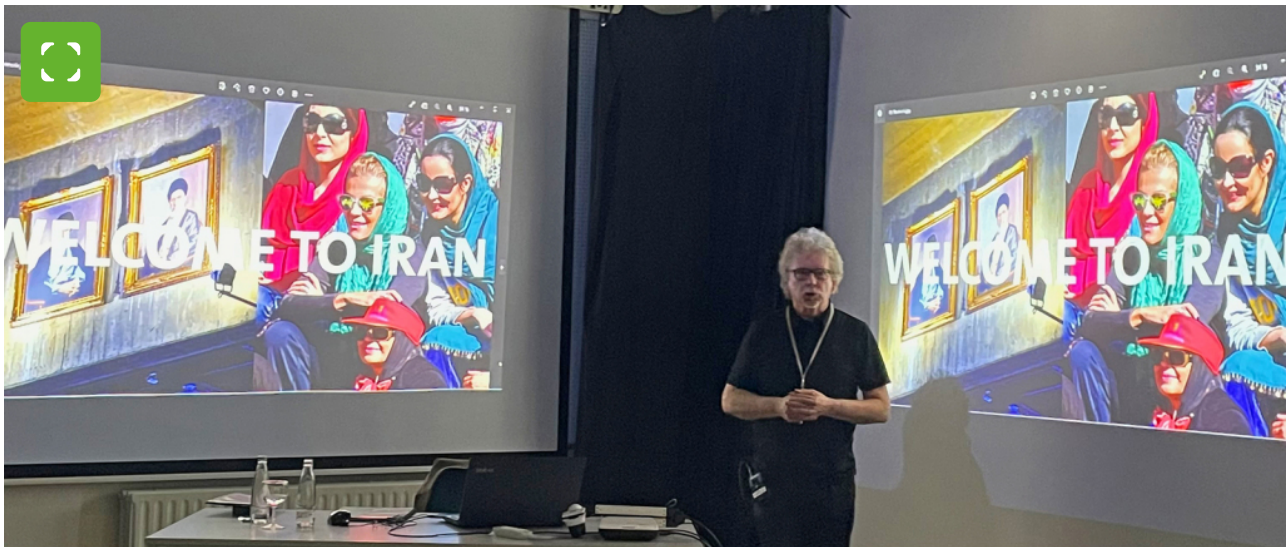


24. March 2023

Integration Council

## Bernd G. Schmitz brings his audience closer to the culture of Iran



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About 30 interested people from Bocholt with and without international family history followed the multimedia lecture "Welcome to Iran" by author Bernd G. Schmitz. Accompanied by different pieces of well-known, special and country-specific music, the photo, film and media educator from Cologne presented his impressive photo series of the multi-ethnic state of Iran.

He brought the audience closer to the diversity of Iran's culture through personal stories and anecdotes from encounters with Iranians. The difference between urban and rural life in Iran came up.

The audience was immersed in Iranian culture, for example, when sequences of an Iranian power house were played, in which men practised weight training, the so-called Zurkaneh, together with a live drum.

## Listeners at the lecture evening on Iran in Bocholt

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### **Lively discussion**

In the discussion that followed, things got political: Bernd G. Schmitz currently advises against travelling to Iran, but states that the picture of the protests in Iran painted by some media does not apply to Iran as a whole. "There is no civil war-like situation, rather the protest against the regime flares up briefly in individual cities and the brutal approach of the state causes fear and terror among the population. But there are also reports of protests, which friends of mine could not confirm via Skype call," said Schmitz.

At the end, Fatma Boland from the Volkshochschule Bocholt-Rhede-Isselburg called on the audience to remain "sensitive, approachable and interested" so that "Bocholt continues to remain colourful".

"We will certainly be able to welcome Bernd G. Schmitz again in Bocholt in the near future," announces Bruno Wansing, Integration Officer of the City of Bocholt, who supported the event.