



International Federation of Language Teacher Associations  
Fédération Internationale des Professeurs de Langues Vivantes

# The Nordic-Baltic Region

## Electronic Newsletter No.3.

### (September 2019)

## PRESIDENT's Note



**Sigurborg Jónsdóttir, Iceland**

**We are very happy to share with you our latest Newsletter and welcome you back to work, hopefully refreshed and in good spirits after the Summer holidays. Now it's time to try out the good practices you learned about during summer at seminars or conferences organized by your Associations. As we read in the Finnish article from SUKOL, many challenging changes are being made to the curriculum, but that is not just in Finland. Now it's all about teaching what is important according to politicians. One of**

the first subject to suffer because of this, are second and foreign languages. But why is it, that politicians who talk enthusiastically about the importance of having a good knowledge of foreign languages, when giving a speech at language teachers conferences, seem to forget it the minute they walk away. We, the language teachers know that foreign languages are the key to good relationships with people from other countries. How can we make the public more aware of this and get their help in preventing this ill-considered development? This is one of the themes at the upcoming NBR conference in Reykjavík, 11.-12. June 2020. How can we unite and form a strong, influential force in policy making?



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**FIPLV / NBR Conference**

**Future of Languages**

**June 11 - 12, 2020**



# Call for Papers

The conference Future of Languages will take place in Reykjavík, Iceland, in 2020. The venue is at the University of Iceland, "Veröld - the home of Vigdís" building, named after Iceland's former president, Madame Vigdís Finnbogadóttir, the first and only UNESCO Ambassador of Languages. The program will be partly theoretical and partly practical as we join forces to learn from each other's experiences and practices, while simultaneously gaining knowledge about future perspectives and challenges. Panels will be organized in different languages, even if English will be the main language of communication.

The daily program will open and close with a plenary lecture, while numerous parallel sessions will operate simultaneously within the same building. Suggestions for outstanding speakers are still welcomed (send to [holmfr@hi.is](mailto:holmfr@hi.is)).

## Schedule

- October 15                    - Last day for submitting abstracts ([infovigdis@hi.is](mailto:infovigdis@hi.is)/  
Subject: NBR abstract)
- November 15                - Last day for notification of acceptance
- January 30                 - Draft Program / Registration / Practical Details
- March 30                    - Final Program / Practical Details
- May 15                      - Last Circular Letter
- June 11/12                 - Conference Dates

## Regarding "Future of Languages"

For decades scientists have confirmed that at least half of the world's population is bilingual (Grosjean, 1984/2010) - while a third is considered multilingual. Simultaneously, one of the world's 7000 language goes extinct every other week. The case of Iceland and its population of 340.000 inhabitants falls somewhere in between, making it quite fitting that the NBR conference on the Future of Languages be organized in on the island. The official language, Icelandic, is spoken daily by most, the school system from pre-school to

university is conducted primarily in Icelandic, the language of administration, arts and sciences is Icelandic, while English has been gaining grounds in higher education and business the last few years.

The conference will give teachers of languages and others interested in its theme an opportunity to simultaneously evaluate the past, re-evaluate the present and consider the future of languages, language learning and teaching, as well as policy making - keeping the Baltic and Nordic educational authorities particularly in mind.

## Abstracts

Proposals for presentations should be submitted prior to October 15, 2019. Please include: Name, affiliation, title and language of communication, followed by a short description of content. Maximum 200 words. Please send to: [infovigdis@hi.is](mailto:infovigdis@hi.is)/ Subject: NBR abstract.

Topics of interests

What are the roles of systematic language learning and teaching?

What languages to teach in near future / long term?

Means to promote language learning and cultural literacy?

How to teach languages / to whom / where and when?

What are the main challenges / what are we good at?

How can language teachers contribute to ...:

- Educational and school authorities...?
- Society / community / humanity 😊

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1. Please see: <https://vigdis.hi.is/en/verold/>

2. For more information, see: <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Vigdis-Finnbogadottir>

3. For more information, see: <http://www.hup.harvard.edu/catalog.php?isbn=978067453092>

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## **ECML 25th Anniversary Conference:**

# **Languages at the Heart of Learning: 25 Years of Inspiring Innovation**

On Thursday 5 and Friday 6 December 2019 the European Centre for Modern Languages of the Council of Europe will organise a high-level conference to celebrate its 25th anniversary (as well as the Council of Europe's 70th anniversary) and reflect on the important contribution made by the Centre to the field of language education. The event will also showcase the results of the ECML's current programme - Languages at the heart of learning - and launch the next programme 2020-23 - Inspiring innovation in language education: changing contexts, evolving competences.

The conference will focus on key political challenges related to language education and particular aspects of language education, including the range of tools and capacity-building activities organised by the Centre to help bridge the gap between policy and practical implementation.

Through keynote speeches, panel discussions and interactive presentations, the role of quality language education in fostering a culture of democracy will be addressed - why it matters and what it looks like. There will be discussion of key policy developments such as the Council of Europe's Parliamentary Assembly Recommendation on protecting and promoting sign languages in Europe and the Council of the European Union's Recommendation on a comprehensive approach to the teaching and learning of languages, as well as consideration of the ECML's role as the interface between policy, research, teacher education and practice.

In addition to participants funded by the Council of Europe and/or nominated by National Authorities, the conference will be open to the wider public on a self-financing basis. You will be able to register online at [www.ecml.at](http://www.ecml.at) from Tuesday 1st October 2019. Places will be allocated on a first come first served basis.

Download the conference description and participation procedure: English - French:

<https://www.ecml.at/Portals/1/gazette/Gazette%2048%20Sept2019/conference%20description%20final%20FR%20header.pdf>

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**From STÍL (Association of Language Teachers),  
Iceland**



**STÍL – SAMTÖK  
TUNGUMÁLAKENNARA  
Á ÍSLANDI**



**Hólmfríður Garðarsdóttir, President of STÍL**

Fall presents itself like an avalanche in the life of a teacher. One group of students after the other march into our schools and educational institutions. Personal stories and private circumstances of these multicultural and plurilingual communities need to be attended to and accommodated. Where we left off in the summer now needs reformulating, rescheduling and re-evaluating. Furthermore, every fall requires that every teacher redefine her/his collaboration with colleagues within the institution where we work and - if we take our professional development seriously - we also engage in what seems like endless offers of educational, academic and cultural activities. Personally, I am quite convinced that it is due to these manifold fusions of personal and professional activities that make most of us love our work and keep coming back year after year.

In Iceland, with our tight knit social community, news travel fast and the flow of information, through facebook events, twitter accounts and homepages, the activities of STÍL for the coming months are lining up.

#### Practical Work-Shop Series.

To kick-start the new academic year, STÍL (Association of Language Teachers), in collaboration with the Vigdís Finnbogadóttir Institute and the Languages Centre, both at the University of Iceland, has launched its work-shop series on language teaching and learning. Once a month (except December and January) language teachers, at different school levels, are invited to participate in practical training sessions on a given topic. The principal aim is twofold, on the one hand to enhance personal and professional competences and, on the other, to share, mingle and learn from colleagues from different educational institutions and languages. Topics such as; identity construction and language learning, technology and new trends in teaching, creative writing in a foreign language, to name but a few, will be tackled these coming months.

#### The European Day of Languages, 26 September 2019.

STÍL, in collaboration with the Vigdís Finnbogadóttir Institute of foreign languages, has organized two events for that day. First, students from the most diverse primary school in the centre of Reykjavík, capital of Iceland, are invited to Veröld - the house of Vigdís, the building that hosts the Faculty of Languages and Cultures and the Vigdís Finnbogadóttir Institute, for a multilingual game

session. Secondly, in the afternoon, two experts offer talks on the topic of how to enhance competences in pronunciation, particularly of Danish and French, for Icelandic speakers. Following, their talks the group will disperse to discuss, in different language groups, the challenges faced by Icelandic learners, as well as by foreign learners when studying Icelandic as a foreign language.

### The upcoming conference - Future of Languages.

Preparations for our upcoming international conference - Future of Languages, 11-12 June 2020, organized on behalf of NBR/FIPLV, are going well. A home-page has been constructed (see: <https://vigdis.hi.is/en/events/fiplv-nbr-conference/>), a budget drawn, funds requested from many different local sources, while preparation for applications to Nordic sources are underway. Possible key-note speakers have been approached, the call for abstracts extended and housing secured. STÍL expect to welcome many teachers and others interested in the topic, from all around the world, to the island, as June is the most wonderful time of the year to visit Iceland. Therefore, I use this opportunity and urge the ones that plan to attend the conference to start looking into housing (we will send more information on the issue shortly), as tourism in Iceland has increased over the past years and prices are generally relatively high. The conference will take place at the University of Iceland, so area quotes 101 and 107 Reykjavík would be fitting and within an easy walking distance from the venue.

To keep up with news on the conference and its preparations please see: <https://vigdis.hi.is/en/events/fiplv-nbr-conference/>

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**Evrópski tungumáladagurinn,  
Málþing í Veröld - húsi Vigdísar  
26. september 2019, kl. 16:30 - 18.00**



Stofnun Vigdísar Finnbogadóttur í erlendum tungumálum og STÍL (Samtök tungumála-kennara á Íslandi) standa fyrir málþingi í tilefni af Evrópska tungumáladeginum.

Málþingið verður í Veröld - húsi Vigdísar þann 26. september næstkomandi, kl. 16:30. Dagskráin er styrkt af Mennta- og menningarmálaráðuneytinu. Á málþinginu verður sjónum beint að framburði og framburðarkennslu.

Dagskrá í aðalsal Veraldar:

Marc Daniel Skibsted Volhardt: Sérhljóðahlaðborð dönskunnar

Hvernig er danska hljóðfræðilega ólík mörgum nágrannamálanna og hverjar eru helstu áskoranirnar fyrir íslenskumælandi fólk sem lærir dönsku?

Ásta Ingibjartsdóttir: Að fá lánuð orð

Notkun leiklistar til stuðnings framburði og tjáningu á erlendu tungumáli.

### Dagskrá í alrými fyrir framan aðalsal Veraldar:

Að erindum loknum verður dagskráin færð í alrýmið fyrir framan salinn þar sem fram fara umræður um framburðarkennslu ólíkra tungumála á sérmerktum borðum. Tungumálin sem um ræðir eru: danska, enska, franska, íslenska, spænska og þýska. Umræður um öll tungumál fara fram samtímis og er því hægt að velja sér borð eftir því sem við á. Á hverju borði verða borðstjórar sem stjórna umræðum.

Boðið verður upp á veitingar í lok málpings.

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## The Future of Foreign Language Teaching in Finland - Looking forward to the Academic Year



Outi VILKUNA, The Federation of Foreign Language Teachers in Finland SUKOL ([https://www.sukol.fi/in\\_english](https://www.sukol.fi/in_english)). Member of the Board.

Education in Finland is undergoing changes. To some it may seem that change has become more or less the new normal. So far we have trusted that when everything else changes, the educational

system and its' goals will remain in all that turmoil. Now it seems that National Education via the National Curricula has become the stage of major change: every new government is looking to leave its' imprint on how young minds are formed. To some of us in the eye of all this turmoil it at times seems that left hand does not know what right hand is doing and the pace of change is such that we barely have had time to go through teaching all courses of the now past new curricula as there is a new one already on its' way. Quite difficult to evaluate the pros and cons of its' predecessor as one is expected to jump on the new train that already left the station. All is grand and global and exponential and... Maybe just too much of emphasis on Mathematics and Science and then too little on Foreign Languages and Humanities.

As Researcher and Professor of Education Theory Tuukka Tomperi stated in an interview already in February 2018 : " It is disastrous to emphasize know-how over civilisation"("On tuhon tie korostaa osaamista sivistyksen sijaan") <https://yle.fi/aihe/artikkeli/2018/02/23/tutkija-tuukka-tomperi-on-tuhon-tie-korostaa-osaamista-sivistyksen-sijaan> As it now seems the newest National Curricula for Upper Secondary is tending to embrace such a vast field of knowing-how that the actual understanding may remain trivial. What a controversy. At the same time the system of approval to Higher Studies at Universities has been renewed and is now much based on the results of the Matriculation Examination but built on a system of points by a given exam. This has led to Advanced Maths hype regardless of the actual field of study a student is aiming at. And at the other end of the scale as language skills are not seen of equal importance, we see drastically falling interest in eg. studying Foreign Languages and Civics or History. English is stated to be enough. Thus we also witness that the past government's aim to initiate early onset language learning in primary School has led not to increase of students studying various Foreign Languages but the even more imminent domination of English language. This was not the objective but it is the outcome as in was not in the final draft stated in law that the A1-language should be other than English. Millions of euros well spent? The Federation of Foreign Languages Teachers in Finland has also been collecting data on the diminished numbers of students of other Foreign Languages in Upper Secondary studies and has presented this data to our main media and to the Minister of Education and Culture in order to alert the authorities on the rapidly deteriorating knowledge of other Foreign Languages than English, including Swedish.

In vocational education the studying of Foreign Languages has also diminished considerably and the level required is not what it used to be. This is partially due to the economical cutbacks in the funding of Vocational training: Foreign Languages teaching was an easy target to make savings.

We are not giving in. We will do all in our power to raise awareness.

You can search for and find education statistics in Vipunen <https://vipunen.fi/en-gb/>

the education administration's reporting portal. These projects may also be interesting: <https://growingmind.fi/project/>

# News from Latvian Association of Teachers of English (LATE)



Ina Andija, a board member, Vidzeme region coordinator.

There is an extremely important event in August which is always marked as a must in the calendar of LATE members and it is the annual conference. This year LATE celebrated its 27th anniversary and the conference took place on the 22nd-23rd August at Riga Teika Secondary School, Latvia. The conference was entitled "Competence Based Teaching and learning: Challenges and Opportunities". This was the next event in the series "Educating Today's Learners for the 21st Century World: Competence-based Teaching and Learning".



LATE Annual Conference 2019 Main Hall.

There were both local and international speakers' plenaries and workshops offered. The most exciting plenary sessions were held by Lauren Anderson (U.S. State Department, English Language Fellow in Riga) "Using Content and Language Objectives in the Classroom", Daniela Clarke from Macmillan with a plenary session "Tradition or Innovation? Which way to go in the ELT classroom?" and "Energising Teens with Games, Music and Video". Here I must add that LATE is extremely happy to co-operate with Macmillan after several years' break. Tatjana Ginzburg from Express Publishing shared ideas on "Implementing CLIL in a primary classroom". Keith Kelly (British Council) presented "Soft skills - a bridge between content CLIL and language CLIL" as well as sharing some ideas about the topic in two workshops. The local presenters Vita Kalnbērziņa (University of Latvia) informed the teachers about the "Development of the new secondary school curriculum: Optimal B2 Level versus Advanced level (C1), curriculum versus syllabus" while Tatjana Kunda discussed the results of State Examinations, and Janis Zeimanis gave some recommendations to teachers for preparing the students for the exam. Of course, there were other fantastic workshops offered for the participants. For the first time in LATE's history, we had a marvellous presenter Iryna Lebid from Human College of Education and Humanities, Ukraine, with a workshop entitled "Let's Teach Outside the box!". She pointed out that teaching and learning competencies in the 21st century are impossible without developing creative and critical thinking, using literature, music and art. She invited us to bring some humour into the class!



LATE Annual Conference 2019. Workshops.

For more detailed information one can have a look at LATE's website at [www.late.lv](http://www.late.lv)

LATE is grateful to the following organisations like the British Council, "Globuss" and "Jānis Roze" bookshops, "Express Publishing", "Macmillan", "National Geographic Learning", "Oxford University Press", and "Pearson" publishing houses, as well as the US Embassy for their continued support, sponsoring the presenters, conference giveaways and donations of lottery prizes.

At the conference a new LATE Board was elected. Inga Linde continues to do the President's duties, while Robert Buckmaster remains as Vice-President. Other board members for the period 2019-2021 are Nora Kalnača, Ina Andiņa, Ilona Ustinova (from the previous board) and four newly elected members: Laima Takere, Irina Griņevska, Indra Kalniņa and Aija Gudza.

The next study year will be fruitful for LATE with a series of events planned. LATE Board is working hard to bring several ideas into life. The closest ones are the regional conferences in Daugavpils on the 22nd October (run by LATE Latgale coordinator Ilona Ustinova), and in Liepāja on the 23rd October (run by Kurzeme regional coordinator Indra Kalniņa). LATE has started working on several other projects. One of them is the HMC Project which will help place talented children on scholarships at private schools in the UK. More information about the project can be found at [www.late.lv](http://www.late.lv). Vidzeme regional coordinator Ina Andina is arranging another joint seminar for Vidzeme region (Latvia) teachers and Valga Municipality teachers (Estonia) in cooperation with Pearson in November. LATE is also planning two webinars and a training day in January.

Wish us good luck and read about the events in future articles!



# **The Estonian Association of Foreign Language Teachers (EAFLT)**



Ene Peterson, Chair of the Board of the Estonian Association of Foreign Language Teachers.

## **10th anniversary of the EAFLT, 22-23 November 2019**

The Estonian Association of Foreign Language Teachers (EAFLT) celebrates its 10th anniversary on 22 and 23 November 2019.

The Estonian Association of Foreign Language Teachers was founded on 5 December 2009. The founding members were the Association of Teachers of Estonian as a Second Language, the Association of Teachers of German and the Association of Teachers of Finnish. During the last five years three more language associations have joined our umbrella organization: the Association of Teachers of Russian, the Estonian Association of Teachers of English and the Estonian Association of Teachers of Swedish joined our association.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UzuJeGj8PNM&feature=youtu.be>

**Our motto - together we are stronger, together we have more possibilities.**

**The aim of our umbrella organizations is to support linguistic diversity, popularise language learning, and improve language skills; develop higher esteem for the profession of foreign language teachers; support, systematically and continuously, the professional development of language teachers. The 2019 has been full of activities devoted to our 10th anniversary: two round tables, an annual meeting, a language fair and the preparation of a video clip to encourage foreign language teachers to join one of our member language associations.**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UzuJeGj8PNM&feature=youtu.be>

**The tradition of autumn conferences started in 2015. From 2015 until 2018 the topics of the conferences included the peculiarities of the schools in the digital age, the 21st century skills that as teachers as students need, the introduction of non-traditional methods that motivate students.**

**Conference topics in 2019**

- **The current situation of teaching foreign languages and the preparation of foreign language teachers.**
- **The possibilities of supporting the professional development of foreign language teachers.**
- **Variety of a language classroom activities.**
- **Innovative and effective language learning materials, tools and methods.**
- **CLIL: challenges and possibilities at different levels of education.**
- **2019 -the year of the Estonian language**



# NEWS from the Russian Language Teachers Community of Estonia (RTCE)

**Летние дни VÕS – тепло, которое мы сохраним на весь  
учебный год**



Aleksandra Novashevskaja. Kallavere secondary school Russian as a foreign language teacher, Chairman of Russian Language Teachers Community of Estonia (RTCE).

**Каждое лето члены Общества преподавателей русского языка и литературы Эстонии собираются вместе, чтобы поделиться с коллегами опытом и впечатлениями, накопленными за прошедший учебный год. Летние встречи особенно ценятся учителями за редкую возможность пообщаться друг с другом в неформальной обстановке и за насыщенную программу, включающую в себя не только образовательную составляющую, но и культурные мероприятия.**

**В этом году Летние дни Общества прошли 26-27 августа на одной из красивейших и уютных мыз Эстонии – Мязтагузе. Выбор места не случаен и полностью соответствует концепции Летней школы 2019 года: спрятаться подальше от шумных городов и погрузиться в атмосферу созидания и творчества; послушать и услышать своих коллег; найти общие интересы и идеи для сотрудничества.**

Мастер-классы для учителей проводила уже знакомая многим членам нашего Общества преподаватель русского языка как иностранного Елена Танцева (Москва). Главным вопросом первого дня обучения был: можно ли учить и падежи и глаголы движения с удовольствием? Ответ, разумеется, был положительным. Елена поделилась с нашими преподавателями своими идеями и наработками, показала нестандартный подход к структурированию грамматического материала и обратила наше внимание на то, что может затруднять понимание темы. Кроме того, лектор показала интересные программы, игры и другие инструменты, позволяющие визуализировать сложные тексты или грамматические структуры, а также повышающие внимательность и интерес учащихся к изучению иностранного языка.

На второй день мы обратились к инновационным технологиям в обучении русского языка как иностранного, например, научились превращать обычный мультфильм в потрясающе интересное пособие по изучению глаголов движения и значению приставок. Даже в свободное время, прогуливаясь по парку или отдыхая в СПА, учителя, конечно, говорили только о работе и обсуждали, как полученные знания можно применить на практике.

В последние и необычно теплые августовские дни трудно было усидеть в аудитории, и мы отправились в Тойла. В парке Тойла нас ждала экскурсия, в ходе которой мы познакомились с историей парка, прошли по Северянинским местам и даже побывали у дома знаменитого русского поэта. Надо сказать, что поэзия Серебряного века русской литературы совсем иначе звучит в тенистых аллеях парка!

Мы уже ждем новых встреч, и члены Общества все предлагают и предлагают идеи для следующих Летних дней и делятся своими впечатлениями. Вот лишь один из отзывов:

«Для учителя мотивация к работе не менее важна, чем мотивация ученика к изучению предмета. Поэтому хочется выразить слова огромной благодарности правлению Vene Keele Õpetajate Selts за организацию очередного выезда учителей русского языка в Эстонии. В этот раз мы побывали на мызе Мязтагузе. Здесь были и мастер-классы нашего любимого и талантливейшего преподавателя из Москвы Еленой Танцевой, и круглые столы с коллегами из разных школ Эстонии, и экскурсия по Тойла – месту, где жил и творил замечательный русский поэт Игорь Северянин со своей

женой Фелиссой Круут, благодаря которым мы можем читать не только замечательные стихи поэта, воспевающего красоту Эстонии, но и стихи многих эстонских поэтов в переводе на русский язык. Подобные два дня зачастую дают учителю для повышения квалификации больше, чем полгода аудиторных курсов в стенах залов и классных аудиторий!»

## Summer Seminar of the Estonian Association of Teachers of English (2019)



Ilmar Anvelt, EATE Committee member

This year's Summer Seminar of the Estonian Association of Teachers of English was held on 22-23 August in the resort town of Pärnu on the Baltic coast. The customary venue of EATE Summer Seminars is the Pärnu College of the University of Tartu. The general theme of the Seminar was "The English language as a life skill". There were approximately 200 participants from all over Estonia. A number of presenters were from Estonian schools and universities, but there were also guest speakers from abroad who had come with the help of the British Council, the US Embassy and several publishing houses. It might be

interesting to note that one of the presenters was storyteller Nikky Smedley who is best known for her role in the BBC children's show Teletubbies.

As a novel feature, the programme of this time's seminar included learning of Scottish folk dances under the supervision of Eike Urke and Kristi Jalukse.

There was also a discussion led by Pilvi Rajamäe and Ilmar Anvelt where the participants could share their memories about the time of their studies at the University of Tartu, which is the place where a great number of English teachers in Estonia have received their education. The moderators of the discussion are collecting material for writing a book on the history of teaching English at the University of Tartu.

EATE also sent an appeal to the Ministry of Education and Research where we expressed our dissatisfaction with the Ministry's plan to abolish exams at the end of Form 9, so-called 'basic school' in Estonia.

The next EATE event will be its Autumn Seminar on 25 October 2019. Erika Puusemp continues as Chair of EATE.



Voting for EATE Committee. Learning Scottish folkdances. Sharing memories about studies at the University of Tartu.

LITHUANIA:  VIKC

**DID YOU NOW THAT ...?**

## **European Language Maze 2019 in the very heart of Vilnius**



Audronė Auškelienė, Director of Public Service Language Centre, Institutional member of Association of Language Teachers of Lithuania

**Did you know that during his first visit to Europe a famous Columbian writer Gabriel José de la Concordia García Márquez had an interesting insight: „Portugese, French and Italian languages are nothing else but in one or another way mulitated Spanish language“? According to him, while travelling on a European train you can discover that Portugese language is nothing different but Spanish spoken through the nose, French language is Spanish spoken with the roof of your mouth, and how about Italian then? How is Italian spoken according to Marquez? Any idea? No? The correct answer is: “Italian language is Spanish spoken „with the hands“.**

**Did you know that in Georgian language some words are really very different from most of European languages, e.g. in many European languages the words „mum“ or „mother“ contain at least one letter „m“ (mamma, mutter, mother, mama), whereas in Georgian language it is „deda“? Any idea what is “father” in Georgian? Funny you might think, but it is „mama“!**

**Do you know what the names - Thom Mann, Günter Gras and Elfriede Jelinek - have in common? You must have guessed that the answer is: “They all were**

writers who wrote in German language and all three were nominated for the Nobel Prize Award".

Would you try to answer a few more Quiz questions? These are about towns:

What is the name of the city, the translation of which in English is "January River"? Sure! It's Rio De Janeiro (translated from Portugese - Rio + Janeiro).

Could you translate „rich harbour" into Spanish? Of course! It's Puerto Rico.

A famous XX Century Lithuanian poet Paulius Širvys called it the second homeland for Lithuanians, while Indians called it še-kang-ong - „wild onion". What is it? You are absolutely right! It's Chicago.



European Language Maze 2019. The above and similar Quiz questions were asked by the professional master of Brain Battles Robertas Petrauskas and answered by 12 teams of sixteen-year-old students from 10 different towns of Lithuania who with their teachers gathered to the final of the Battle of Brains "European Language Maze 2019" at the Town Hall - the very heart of Vilnius (Lithuania). These 12 teams of sixteen-year-olds without any doubt turned to be the smartest and the brightest what heated the battle for the grand prix of the contest - a trip to the European Parliament - even more! What made it unforgettable and vibrant was the continuation of the game as three teams had

scored the same number of points, which meant there were three winners of the first place in the final!

After the continuation of the game the Grand Prix winners were the team from Gymnasium of Kaunas University of Technology (KTUG) - they won the trip to the European Parliament this year.

Grand Prix winners - Gymnasium of Kaunas University of Technology (KTUG) team.



European Day of Languages is a chain of events. Traditionally, since 2001 when it was proclaimed by the Council of Europe, 26th September has been celebrated as The European Day of Languages. It is the day when all Europeans remember how multilingual Europe is and aim to promote multilingualism as one of the major values and uniqueness of the European Union, nourish tolerance among cultures and encourage learning languages at school, university and lifelong. Every year in Lithuania a chain of events take place in different venues in the city: Opening of the Exhibition of Children's Paintings "Multilingual Europe", Workshops of Languages, and the Quiz of Languages, called The Battle of Brains "European Language Maze".

The Exhibition of children's paintings opened the European Day of Languages at the Parliament of Lithuania: the winners and the laureates of the paintings' contest were awarded by the Speaker of the Parliament who presented a huge

cake for the participants of the event and took all on the excursion in the Parliament.

Another exciting experience was Workshops of Languages where children and adults were invited "on a date" with less widely used languages. This year the participants "dated" with Armenian, Czech, German, Greek, Hungarian, Irish, Japanese, Moldovan, Polish and Turkish languages. The Workshops of Languages were run by foreign diplomatic missions residing in Lithuania.



Public Service Language Centre together with the Association of Language Teachers of Lithuania have been organizing the events of the European Day of Languages since 2010. Every year students from Vilnius College (VIKO) volunteer in organizing various events on the European Day of Languages and help encourage learning languages, especially less widely used ones. Partners of the European Day of Languages are Directorate-General for Translation of the European Commission, the Ministry of Education, Science and Sports and the Lithuanian Children and Youth Centre.

We wish all the teachers of languages and their students never to stop learning languages that help us discover new horizons and cultures, meet and make friends for life. Never stop learning! P.S. Want one more Quiz question? Here

you go: 

I have an end but no beginning, a home but no family, a space without room. I never speak but there is no word I cannot make. What am I?



If you know the answer you are welcome to send it to Audronė by e-mail:  
[audrone.aus@gmail.com](mailto:audrone.aus@gmail.com)



**Foreign Languages Centre at Vilniaus kolegija/  
University of Applied Sciences, Institutional  
member of Language Teachers Association of  
Lithuania, is 5 years old!**



Jūrate Patackaitė, Chair of FLC at VIKO, vice president of Language Teachers Association of Lithuania

**On September 1, 2014, after the Department of Foreign Languages was reorganized, the Centre for Foreign Languages was established in Vilniaus kolegija/ University of Applied Sciences (VIKO). The main field of activity of**

the Centre's teachers is training of a special, professional and business foreign language, the use of new teaching / learning methods, the development of electronic modules and the provision of the necessary knowledge for professional and research activities in a multilingual, multicultural environment. FLC pays its special attention to the diversity of foreign languages. VIKO students have the opportunity to improve their already learned English, German, French and to study business and specialty subjects in these languages as well as to learn new ones: Spanish, Italian, Chinese, Russian, Danish, Norwegian, and Swedish.



The Centre provides advice on foreign language proficiency testing and has developed various levels of English, German, French, Russian and Business English and German Diagnostic Tests in VIKO Virtual Learning Environment: Foreign language proficiency tests. In order to objectively evaluate and recommend foreign students to study at VIKO, linguists also test applicants' knowledge orally through various programs. The Centre's English, German, and Russian language specialists advise VIKO units and faculties on document translation issues.

The teachers of the Foreign Language Centre pay their great attention to the content of language teaching / learning and there was carried out a research "Opportunities for Improving the Content of Foreign Language Teaching in VIKO". The aim of this research was to find out and recommend forms and methods for effective language teaching / learning, as well as to propose measures that would achieve the diversity of foreign languages and the equal scope of modules in all study programmes.

But the main asset of the Foreign Language Centre is the teachers! They are foreign language specialists who are not afraid to change and share their experience with linguists of higher education institutions of Lithuania and other countries. Teachers of the Foreign Language Centre share their insights and research results and get new ideas at the annual conferences of the Language Teachers' Association of Lithuania (LKPA). The Centre for Foreign Languages, located in the Faculty of Business Management, has been the seat of the Language Teachers' Association of Lithuania since 2007, and VIKO linguists are willing and active in its activities. In 2012, the Head of Foreign Language Centre, a German language lecturer Jūratė Patackaitė was awarded the "Baltic Philologist Coffret", in 2014, Milda Antanuskienė, the French language lecturer of the Centre, was awarded a certificate for professional language training, active work in the LKPA Council and dissemination of the Association's activities in Lithuania; in 2017, Halina Klupšienė, Lecturer of English, was nominated for the award for her professional approach to consulting business partners and colleagues, for her helpful assistance to the Association in organizing events. The team of foreign language teachers at VIKO has twice been nominated for the LKPA Award: in 2012 and 2013 - for the most useful assistance in business, for the fruitful cooperation of linguists. In collaboration with linguists from the Lithuanian University of Health Sciences, the Centre also organises the international conference "Learning Languages in Higher Education".



Since the spring of 2015, linguists of the Centre for Foreign Languages began to organise courses and proposed ten programmes to improve foreign language skills. Programmes for studying English, German, French, Russian and Italian languages aroused the greatest interest. English and German are improved by teachers, VIKO staff, students and graduates. The Centre for Foreign Languages and

students organise traditional events for VIKO community: the European Languages Day, German and English Days, and Christmas Language Evening in December. These events are welcome and always receive a lot of attention, because foreign language teachers love their work, the languages they teach, and the culture of their countries, trying to convey this by means of every lesson or event.



## Handbook of Language Challenges and Initiative for the European Day of Languages



A new feature for this year is the Handbook of Language Challenges (<https://edl.ecml.at/languagechallenge> ). We are inviting everyone to participate

in a language challenge around the European Day of Languages! The 51 challenges contained within the handbook encourage learners to go a little outside their comfort zone and take advantage of the plentiful opportunities available to practice or learn more about a language beyond a classroom context. You can choose easy challenges that don't involve much time - such as "count from 1-10 in 3 different languages within one minute" to ones that are a bit more demanding "together with a friend, write the words to a song/rap in a foreign language". There should be something for everyone and you may discover that you actually know more than you think about languages!

By the time of the Day, the handbook will be available in over 20 languages (so far, the ones available are: Albanian, Belarusian, Bosnian, Croatian, Montenegrin, Danish, German, English, Estonian, Greek, French, Hungarian, Italian, Lithuanian, Luxembourgish, Macedonian, Slovene, Slovak, Swedish).

Participants managing over 20 challenges can reward themselves with a certificate that can be generated on the site.

<https://edl.ecml.at/Activities/Languagechallenge/tabid/3207/Default.aspx>



**The Electronic Newsletter is issued by:**

**NBR President Sigurborg Jónsdóttir, Iceland;**

**NBR Secretary Eglė Šleinotienė, Lithuania;**