



# **NATIONAL REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EUROPEAN LANGUAGE LABEL**

**DENMARK**



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## DANISH NATIONAL REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EUROPEAN LANGUAGE LABEL

### 1 Introduction

The aim of the present report is to give information about the implementation of the European Language Label in Denmark. This national report of the Danish European Language Label (ELL) Award consists of a summary of the projects awarded with the ELL, features of successful projects and information on the procedure of the European Language Label Award in Denmark. In this report you will find statistics on awarded projects, educational areas and languages. You will also find reports on the impact and exploitation of the ELL and recommendations for future applicants from award winning promoters.

### 2 The European Language Label in Denmark

#### 2.1 Implementation and handling

The European Language Label Award (ELL) is presented annually in Denmark entitled “Den europæiske sprogris” for innovative projects that have contributed to develop the teaching and learning of foreign languages.

In Denmark the ELL is managed by the Center for Internationalisation at the Danish Agency for Universities and Internationalisation. When deciding on the ELL Award the administrator at the Center, presently Mr Lars Kolind Jensen, form a group together with two program colleagues and a representative from the Norwegian National Agency.

The implementation of the ELL is part of the language programs of the Center for Internationalisation, which they promote at information meetings, presentations around the country and through electronic media.

The ELL Award is a certificate that is signed by the European Commissioner for Multilingualism, and the permission to use the ELL logo in materials and campaigns. With the Danish ELL there is also a travel grant.

#### 2.2 Criteria for the ELL Award

The ELL is an encouragement to projects that show new ways and methods of language learning, and thereby contribute to communication and cultural understanding and better opportunities for education and work. The ELL does not include only the official languages in the European countries, but all languages that contribute to the European Community and to Europe as part of the world.

The ELL Award is open to a very wide perspective of language learning and teaching. Initiatives in all educational levels and in all contexts where there is learning of languages can be awarded. Schools, institutions, organizations and individuals who work with language learning, in formal as well as informal learning environments can apply. Every year the Danish Agency for Universities and Internationalisation decides certain fields of priorities for the award (see below under Priorities)

Besides relevance to every year's priorities, the projects and initiatives should also meet with some general criteria. They should be

- ✓ Innovative (new methods, approaches, materials or tools).
- ✓ Effective (evaluation must show that the project is successful, that it has a beneficial effect on language learning). New projects that have not been implemented long enough to evaluate the impact of language education will not be considered.
- ✓ Transferable (should serve as a source of inspiration to other language providers and should be easy to transform to be used in other countries, languages and contexts).

The criteria used for selecting the award winning projects are the same for all European countries. The European criteria are:

- ✓ Comprehensive approach. Every element of the language initiative should ensure that the needs of the students are identified and met.
- ✓ Added value. Initiatives should provide a tangible improvement in the teaching and learning of languages in their national context.
- ✓ Motivation enhancement. Initiatives should motivate the students and teachers to improve their language skills.
- ✓ Innovation. Initiatives should be original and creative. They should introduce previously unknown approaches to language learning, but also make sure they are appropriate to the students concerned.
- ✓ European emphasis. Initiatives should be adapted to Europe's linguistic diversity and make use of this advantage. The initiatives should actively improve understanding between cultures by promoting language skills.
- ✓ Transferability. Initiatives should potentially be a source of inspiration for other language projects in different countries.

### 2.3 Applying for the ELL Award

The Danish Agency for Universities and Internationalisation, Center for Internationalisation, publish the application form on their web site. In addition to a description of the project and its consistency with the European criteria and yearly priorities there should also be a motivation why the applicant should receive the award. The description should include target languages, main focus, European dimension, funding as well as evaluation of the project. Produced educational material, learning methods, guidelines, videos, home pages should be presented.

The deadline for applying is in August every year.

## 3 The Label Campaigns

The Label Campaign is announced on the official web site of the Danish Agency for Universities and Internationalisation and promoted at information meetings, presentations around the country, social media and other media contacts.

## 4 Priorities

### 4.1 European Priorities

The European Commission proposes every year specific priorities for the European Language Label Award. For 2012-2013 the priorities defined by the European Commission were:

- Language learning based on the new technologies
- Multilingual classrooms

For the years 2010-2011

- Language Learning in the Community: Foreign workers or students, tourists and immigrants often come to local communities with a limited proficiency in the national or regional language. Communities need to help these groups to access service and ensure their smooth integration in the life of their neighbourhood.
- Language skills as a preparation for work: Linguistic and intercultural skills increase the chances of obtaining a better job. Multilingual people can choose between a wider range of job offers, including jobs abroad.

For the years 2008-2009

- Inter-cultural dialog: underlining the importance of intercultural dialogue: presenting various cultural aspects in the language classroom, using language learning to remove social barriers and further an inclusive society.
- Language and business: A study carried out by the European Commission during 2006 by CILT shows that thousands of European companies lose business and miss out on contracts as a result of their lack of language skills. There is an enormous potential for small business in Europe to increase their total export if they invest more in language and develop coherent language strategies.

### 4.2 Danish Priorities

Complying with these priorities The Danish Agency for Universities and Internationalisation, Center for Internationalisation decided about the national priorities in Denmark.

For 2012 projects should concern ICT or multilingualism:

- Language learning based on new technology: ICT based language learning initiatives as virtual and distance education has been proved to enhance learning of foreign languages. The use of social networks in an educational context can also help to promote multilingualism and contacts across borders, and they further interaction and learning foreign languages.

This priority corresponds with the winning project: Videnscenter for integration (Centre for Integration), which has developed a computer game that promotes language learning in the national language centers.

- The multilingual classroom: "The multilingual classroom" has in recent years become a widely known concept. It refers to classes with students or students from different countries who do not have the same mother tongue. Students can be very different in their behaviour and culture, and it can cause problems - but it can also be used as a resource. At the same time it can be a challenging task for teachers to adapt their teaching methods to students' diverse needs, while focusing on the primary purpose of giving students the best possible skills in the target language.

For 2011 the appointment of the winner "High School Plus" meets very well with the priorities of the European Commission Language skills as a preparation for jobs, giving the students the opportunity to get a professional career in addition to their studies at Højskolen Østersøen.

For 2010 the priority was Language Learning in the Community – thus corresponding with the priorities of the European Commission. Winner was Lærdansk Århus/Sprogcenter Viborg for the development of a language program that teaches foreign doctors the Danish language as well as gives them a job in hospitals in Denmark. The title of the project is “YLVA” (Young Doctors' Training Activities for foreign doctors).

In 2009 the additional Danish focus was on early language learning and transnational cooperation on language learning. The award winner was:

- The Regional Office for Region South Jutland-Schleswig for Early Language Learning project "Professor. dr. ABC" with focus on making preschool children from the region close to the border between Denmark and Germany interested in the neighbouring language.
- The transnational cooperation project “Nordic Language Pilots” managed by Lis Madsen from the Foundation for Danish-Norwegian cooperation for developing a training program to educate Nordic school teachers to undertake training in Nordic languages.

In 2008 there was a focus on language learning as a preparation for work. The award winners were researchers from the University of Southern Denmark for the development of the “Digital Pronunciation Trainer”. It is a pronunciation tool for learners of Danish as a foreign language that can be used in classroom as well as for individual studies.

In 2007 there was a focus on diversity in language learning. The award winner was the project "Our Common Language". The initiative is a series of grammar books where the learner should be able to read about Danish grammar in his/her mother tongue.

In 2006 the focus was on educational training of teachers. The two winners have developed particularly innovative materials.

- CICED v / CDE Copenhagen and Nordsjælland for the development of the material “The image of the other/Ten Letters”, a teaching material for international, computer based teaching of foreign languages
- Merete Olsen, for the development of a special material for early English learning and training courses for English teachers.

In 2005 the focus was on early language learning and content and language integrated learning (CLIL). There were two winners, one with each respective focus

- Amtcenter for Undervisning, Teachers' Resource Centres in Roskilde, for producing “The English Corner”, suitcases of teaching materials developed for early language learning in primary school (3rd-5th grade)
- Egebjerg Equipment A / S and Formidlingshus Odsherred for developing a course in Danish designed for factory employees with a different ethnic background than Danish.

In 2004 there was a focus on adult language learning and the three projects were selected because they are good examples of creative initiatives that strengthen participants' motivation to learn foreign languages.

- The project “dsa-com”, is a web based learning program for teaching and learning Danish as a second language.
- The project “Euomail.com” enhance knowledge of foreign languages and cultures through exchange of letters and emails between students in different countries.
- The project “Language Production” has developed a "communicative workshop" in Danish and history for immigrants.

In 2003 there was a focus on language promotion activities and environments and the winners were

- Shenja Rosenberg for her project “French Learning in Cyberspace”, a virtual internet conversational collaboration between pupils at schools in Europe, Canada and Africa
- Jette Risgard for her digital network project “Language Across Borders”

In 2002 there was a focus on language learning in primary school and the lower secondary school.

- Køge Private Real School for “Early Language Learning” of three foreign languages- English, French and German in the 1<sup>st</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> grade of the primary school
- Stouby School for early language learning in preschool in the project “Marmaduke”, a suitcase full of teaching materials
- Nyborg Friskole for the project “Life in our Region”, which includes three different way of working; projects with partner schools abroad, storyline and ICT based language learning programs
- Løvvangsskolen for the project “Dramadage” where pupils work whole days with drama in the foreign languages French, English or German
- School- og Kulturforvaltningen, Aalborg Kommune for the project “Reality” – preparation for internship abroad, a teaching material in five different languages.

In 2001 there was focus on adult education and the winner was VCU Østhimmerland for the project Cultural Awareness, which consisted of cooperation between boarding schools in English in the folk high school.

In 1999 there was a focus on secondary school sector. Winner was Frederiksberg Technical High School for the project “Gemeinsames Project der Zusammenarbeit Celle – Copenhagen”, where students from Celle and Copenhagen worked together in a project with practical, physical and health tasks.

## 5 Awarding the European Language Label

### 5.1 The ELL Award

The ELL Award is presented yearly in September – December. In the years from 1999-2012 a total of 23 projects have been awarded. There have been approximately three or four applicants every year. In 2002 no ELL winner was appointed.

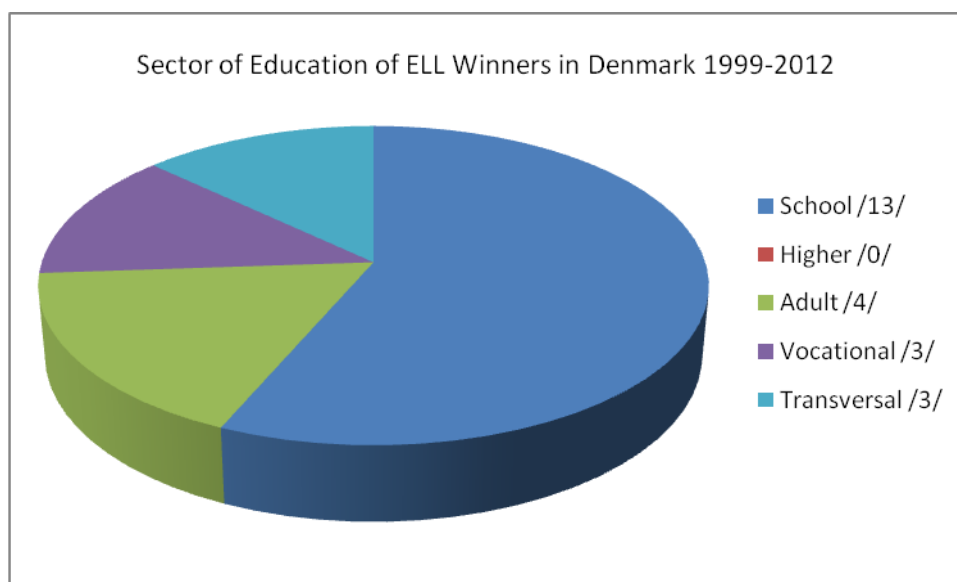


Fig.1. The graphic above shows the representation of the four different sectors of education for the ELL Award.



As shown in the graphic above there has been no winner from the Higher Education. However, all three winners from the Vocational Sector are training programs for university educated professionals, such as doctors and teachers. Also one of the winners from the Transversal Sector can be referred to as a post-university project.

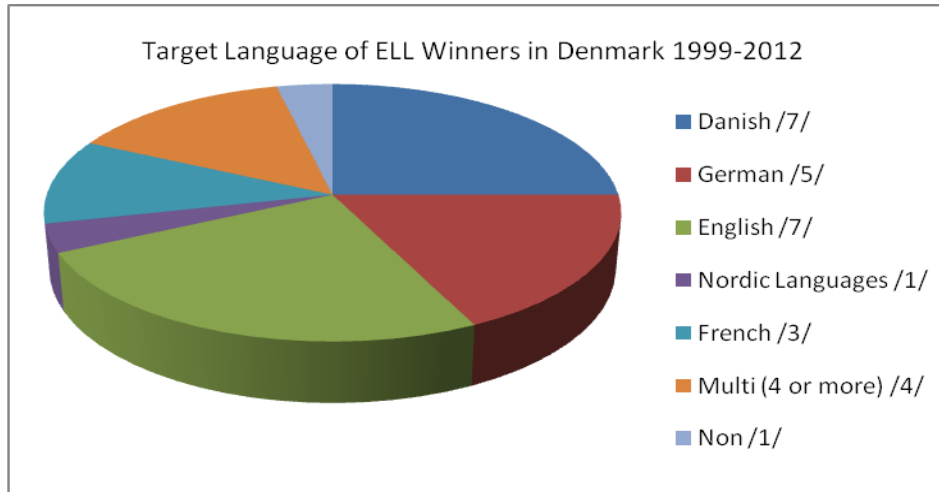


Fig. 2. The graphic above shows the main target languages of the awarded projects.

Some of the projects have more than one target language, for example Danish-German. The projects with Danish as the target language can all be referred to either as Danish as a foreign language or Danish as a second language. Danish and English represent the main language, followed by German.

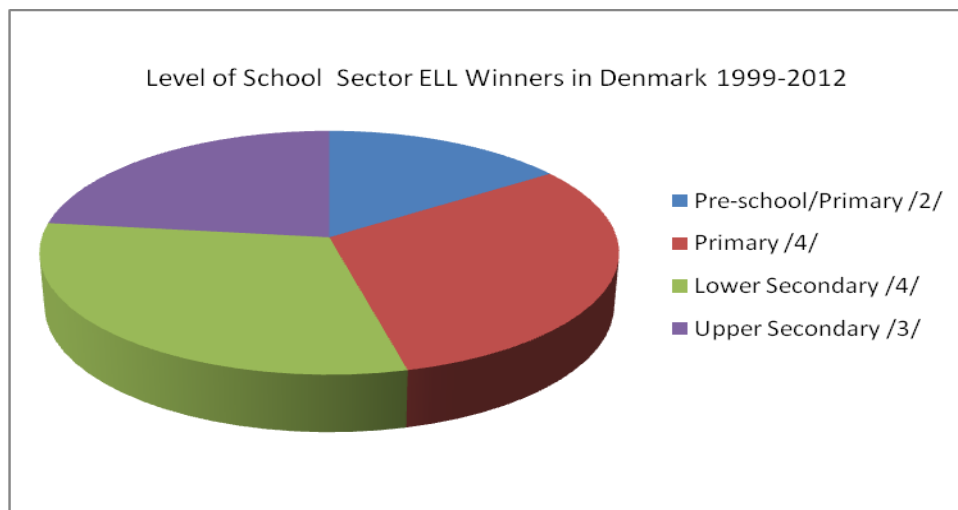


Fig. 2. The graphic above shows the level of the school sectors of the ELL winners

A majority of the winning projects, 13 out of 23, can be referred to as school project.

## 5.2 Travel Grant

With the Danish ELL Award there is also a travel grant that is intended to support travelling abroad to gain new knowledge and inspiration to the benefit of language teaching in Denmark. It can be used as a support to attend conferences, study visits, meetings and training abroad.

The winner of the travel grant could be asked to write a short report or article about the conference, study visit, meeting or training that has been funded by the travel grant.

## 6 Evaluation carried out by the NELLIP team

The Danish Agency submits a Yearly Report to the European Commission on program implementation, including on ELL. The ELL Award aims to contribute to the implementation of the current political priorities of the European Commission as well as promoting good examples of projects and initiatives in the field of language learning in Denmark.

The Danish Agency for Universities and Internationalisation also write an article about the winning project to be published on the website as well as in media. The winner of the ELL Award 2012, the Danish Simulator, was announced and presented in the news report of the Danish Tv2.

Among the current priorities, the ones mostly referred to by the Danish National Agency in the selection of the ELL winners often focus on the promotion of new tools for language teaching and learning, language learning for specific purposes, teaching material and internet communication for language learning.

In the Nellip project we have matched the current political priorities from the European Commission with the European Language Label Award criteria in Denmark. Several of the presented projects were interviewed on more than one occasion. The promoters of the projects which we performed case studies on were also involved in the creation of the actual Case Study and gave feedback before we posted the information on the Nellip portal.

## 7 Impact and Exploitation of the European Language Label as assessed by the NELLIP Team

### 7.1 Why the European Language Label

During the performance and analysis of the Case Studies the project providers state that they decided to submit their application to the European Language Label in order to:

- to obtain validation and recognition for the project
- to obtain recognition of the innovative character of the project
- to prove that using the internet in language teaching is the right way to go
- to share a good practice
- to prove that good language learning methods and projects can be simple and still work very well
- to get confirmation of working with the right focus
- to obtain an official and European recognition
- to make the project inspire educators and learners in Denmark as well as across borders
- to be guaranteed a better sustainability of the project
- to use it for marketing purposes

There are also motivations such as: opportunity to create transnational contacts or that students like to communicate on the Internet. Winning the ELL Award gives the promotor good chances to participate in conferences, national and international.

## 7.2 Impact and Exploitation if the European Language Label

The appointment of the ELL Award has been significant and important for the continuation of the winning project in many cases. In the examples below some of the impact of the award is described.

The 2003 ELL winner “French learning in Cyberspace” produced three cd’s on European identity, on Hans Christian Andersen and on picture illustrations for the web site.

The 2004 ELL winner “Euromail.com” is now an integrated part of the language teaching in two of the original participating schools and more schools have been added. The project is still ongoing and given new features. The students now use other media; films, YouTube, Facebook etc.

The 2005 ELL winner “English Corner” has been a great success. There have been positive qualitative evaluations from conferences and seminars giving students and teachers inspiration and eagerness to use the material. The award also has encouraged project manager Hanne Thomsen to design a Danish version of the European Language Portfolio.

The 2007 ELL winner “Our Common Language” states that ever since the award was presented the number of visitors on the web site has increased. Receiving the award made a difference in the project’s sustainability and they have established more international contacts.

The 2009 ELL Winner “Professor Dr. ABC” states that the school part of the project did not really get going until they received the ELL, and since then there have been several tours of “Professor dr. ABC” in the preschools of the region. The ELL Award was an important quality label. It helped to get new participants, get funding for continuation and put Region South Jutland-Schleswig on the European map.

To the 2008, 2011 and 2012 winners “Digital Pronunciation Trainer”, “Alphabet Keyboard” and “Danish Simulator” the ELL Award has been valuable for marketing purposes of these innovative and original Language Learning tools.

The ELL award has in many cases inspired and engaged winners to take part in seminars and conferences, both national and international.

## 8 Best Practices

The Best Practices from Denmark have been selected from four different sectors.

“The Nordic Language Pilots” refers to higher education as well as vocational language teaching and learning being a training concept for teachers’ training in Nordic languages.

“Professor Dr. ABC” refers to the preschool/primary school being a teaching material for children from kindergarten and primary school classes.

The “Alphabet Keyboard” as a tool for learning is the only selected project from Denmark that has no specific target language, although it is has been developed on a Danish keyboard. It is transversal in the respect that it is used and tested in preschools and primary classes and has also proved to help several other groups of learners; bilingual persons, adults, dyslexics and people with diagnoses of ADHD.

The “Digital Pronunciation Trainer” is a pronunciation ICT tool for adult learners of Danish as a second language.

The Best Practices not only meet with several of the European criteria, but are special and innovative in terms of successfully addressing the needs of specific target groups:

- ✓ “The Nordic Pilots”: teachers of the Nordic languages
- ✓ “Professor Dr. ABC”: young children living in the region of the borderline between Denmark and Germany
- ✓ “The Alphabet Keyboard”: introducing the use of pc’s to young children as a tool for learning to read and write
- ✓ “The Digital Pronunciation Trainer”: adult learners of Danish as a second language

All four Danish Best Practices has a proved sustainability since they are all ongoing, two of them since more than ten years. The “Nordic Language Pilots” found funding and partners to ensure its continuity. The “Professor Dr. ABC” is managed by a Region Office, which also can guarantee sustainability.

The strength but also the weakness of the “Professor Dr. ABC” project in the school part i.e. visiting school classes, is diploma pedagogue Claus Sax Hinrichs’ great effort as the confused Professor dr. ABC. He is the living professor that never reveals his true identity.

## 9 Recommendations

Among the recommendations from the Case Studies Projects to future applicants of the ELL Award can be mentioned

- It is valuable to achieve knowledge about European and national priorities. This gives strength of your own ongoing working methods as well as encouragement to apply and get an official recognition of your language teaching initiatives. The Danish National Agency publish information on their web-site about the Labels that have been awarded.
- Nominate or encourage other language providers working with good language learning methods and project to apply for the ELL. Nominated project providers describe this as a great honour.
- To involve institutions in the region can be a reassurance that the project has a regional support.
- "Go for it." And you will see that you can do more than you realise and collaborate with others around innovation and development in language learning.
- It is always good to believe that something can be changed. If you have good ideas, you must of course be open to pass them on to others. You will not be disappointed.

Some of the promoters mention that Danish media have not shown too much interest in the ELL Award. This year’s news report on Award winner 2012 Danish Simulator on Danish tv was a valuable step for the promotion of the ELL Award in Denmark.

## 10 Conclusions

The Danish Agency for Universities and Internationalisation publish information about the projects that have been awarded on their web site in order to encourage new applicants for the ELL Award. Any project or initiative is free to apply even projects that already have the support of a Language Learning Program or any other programs that are administrated by the National Agency. There are, in spite of this, a limited number of applicants for the award, around 3-4 every year.

Most of the winners have been encouraged, nominated or recommended by other ELL applicants to apply. Probably a more active promotion or marketing of the award could increase the number of applications. The news report of the 2012 winner will hopefully help to increase the interest and willingness to apply for the award.

As mentioned in paragraph 4 Denmark has in addition to the European criteria its own yearly priorities. Consequently this could perhaps have an inhibitory effect on the number of applications, since the providers could feel that their project does not correspond with the yearly priorities.

It is important that the information about the ELL Award also includes a detailed description of the benefits related to the award. In this aspect the highlighting of the travel grant on the web site has a decisive effect. The Case Studies and the Best Practices presented by the NELLIP Network could also be used to promote the ELL.

The open labour market within the European Union and the fall of the Berlin wall have opened up new business possibilities and given enormous potential for small business in Denmark and Europe to increase their trade market. There is also an increase of migration of labour to and from Denmark and establishment of international enterprises in Denmark and Danish enterprises in Europe. This is also reflected in several of the ELL Award winning projects:

- “Danish Simulator” – Learning Danish as a second language
- “High school Plus” –
  - Young adults find jobs in Austria and Germany. This year after Christmas 2012, 33 students will to go to Austria to work.
  - Over the years the project has provided nearly 80 German doctors for the Danish healthcare system.
- “Nordic Language Pilots” – Training of teachers of the Nordic Languages. Until now 134 school teachers have been trained as Language Pilots
- “Our Common Language” – Grammar books for Danish as a second language
- “Danish for Employees in a Production Enterprise” – Learning Danish as a second language
- “YLVA” – Training program in Danish as a second language for young foreign doctors working in Denmark

Denmark has, in comparison with the Sweden, a bigger number of ELL winners that have produced materials or tools for language learning.

- “Danish Simulator” – virtual on line program for Danish as a second language
- “Alphabet keyboard” - a tool to facilitate the introduction and use of pc’s, to learn to read and write in preschool and primary school
- “Professor Dr. ABC”
  - web based materials in the neighbour languages Danish and German for kindergarten and primary school.
  - class visits of Professor Dr. ABC
- “Our common Language” – grammar books where you can read about Danish grammar in your native language

- “The image of the other/Ten Letters” – Material that is divided into ten letters with different themes, to be downloaded from the internet
- “The English Corner” – suitcases of English materials to be used in primary school
- “Digital Pronunciation Trainer” – a pronunciation tool for Danish as a second language to be used on computers

## 11 References

The Danish Agency for Universities and Internationalisation, Center for Internationalisation

<http://www.iu.dk/programmer-og-tilskud/europa/livslang-laering/tvaergaaende-program/den-europaeiske-sprogpris>