



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

The Nordic-Baltic Region

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PRESIDENT's Note



Sigurborg Jónsdóttir, Iceland

We're very happy to present you with the second Newsletter this winter filled with interesting articles on the following topics: Our members have been busy hosting meetings, seminars and workshops. The articles on their activities make an interesting reading and provide us with new ideas and food for thought. We are all striving for excellence in our profession and the seminars and workshops support us in our endeavour.

Seminars and conferences are being planned, both by the monolingual and the multilingual Associations for spring or early summer introducing new methods or reviewing the ones already introduced. The biggest one being the NBR Conference taking place 7-8 June in Vilnius and organized by the Lithuanian Association. We invite you all to come and participate. It promises to be another great and exciting NBR event. The theme being "Teaching and Learning Languages in the 21st Century: Linguistic, Educational and Cultural Aspects". Changes in education are coming at an ever faster pace. The digital revolution brings new wonders almost daily. Are we ready? How will the traditional methods fare alongside the booming digital revolution?

Languages continue to fight for space in the curriculum and constantly need to justify their existence both to politicians and to the public. Yet the advantages of being able to communicate in different languages as our societies are becoming more and more plurilingual becomes clearer every day.

Christmas with holidays and festivities lies ahead. We wish you peace, joy and a happy new year.



ESTONIAN FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION: NEWS AND COMING EVENTS



Ene Peterson, the Chair of the ESTONIAN FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHERS
ASSOCIATION

Estonian foreign language teachers have a tradition of organizing autumn conferences. We are making preparations for our 3rd autumn conference which takes place on 24- 25 November in Kohtla-Järve. Apart from that we have hosted international conferences. This autumn Estonia hosted the 10th CertLingua network annual conference in Tallinn at the hotel Euroopa on 21- 22 September. CertiLingua schools are in Austria, Belgium, the Czech Republic, Estonia, France, Germany (12 regions), Italy, Russia (the region Perm), Sweden. This time 53 CertiLingua programme coordinators and language teachers took part in the annual conference.

The CertiLingua Label of Excellence was initiated by North Rhine-Westphalia and the Netherlands, developed further with European partner countries and tested in a two year pilot phase, from 1st August 2007 till 31st July 2009. The first candidates were awarded the label in summer 2008. The excellence label is awarded to pupils in addition to their university entrance diplomas on the condition that they have written and oral command of at least two foreign languages on level B2 of the Common European Framework for Languages, that they have successfully used at least one of these languages as their learning and working language in one or more CLIL courses, and that they have given evidence of their knowledge about Europe and their intercultural ability to act by their participation in a European / international cooperation project. Meanwhile more

than 300 schools throughout Europe are participating at CertiLingua, and more than 800 certificates have been awarded.

The Annual Conference is convened and conducted by the International Steering Group. The International Steering Group consists of: Dr. Beatrice Schmitz, chairwoman, North Rhine-Westphalia, Belinda Steinhuber, Austria, Ruth de Sy, Belgium (German-speaking community) Carine Chancelade, France, Gisella Langé, Italy Prof. Hartmut Ebke, Germany.

On the first day of the conference brief country reports were presented. Intensive work on the project documentation and the CertiLingua Compendium was done during both days. The first day ended with a walking tour in Old Tallinn followed by a dinner in the restaurant "Maikrahv". Maikrahv is a romantic restaurant with medieval ambience, delicious food and friendly service, located right in the heart of the old town, the Town Hall Square.

On the second day we could listen to Prof. David Marsh (Helsinki /Finland) on the topic "Realizing innovation stories in the field". We, the organizers of the conference, received CertLingua website: www.certilingua.net/.

The next annual conference takes place in Hannover in 2018. The 3rd Foreign Language Teachers Autumn Conference

Estonian Foreign Languages Teachers Association (EFLTA) organizes its 3rd autumn conference "Challenges and possibilities for the digital age school" on 24 - 25 November at TUT Virumaa College in Kohtla-Järve.

The conference topics include: peculiarities of the digital age school, teacher effectiveness and professional development, language programmes and projects, digital tools and good practices, assessment and testing (incl national examinations, e-testing) Kirkham and Katarzyna Ścibor They conduct also workshops.

Les Kirkham, independent consultant, has worked in English language education as a teacher and manager for about 40 years. He has spoken at conferences in Australia, Azerbaijan, China, Switzerland, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Pakistan, Georgia, the UAE and Uzbekistan. He deals with teacher effectiveness in his plenary speech. He focuses on perceived characteristics of effective teachers,

especially language teachers, from the point of view of students, colleagues and administrators and what this means for each of us as individual, unique teachers.

Katarzyna Ścibor is an international teacher trainer who besides presenting also coordinates Pearson teacher training activities in over 30 countries of Central and Eastern Europe taking immense joy in and inspiration from contacts with teachers from all educational sectors. The plenary Let's run it up the flagpole... In search of the magic educational wand. The presenter raises the question: If there was a magic learning wand our students might have their biggest dream fulfilled. They'd learn faster, with less effort and better results. If teachers had the wand... but maybe we do!

After lunch on both days it is possible to participate in workshops and listen to presentations /talks made by teachers, university lecturers, teacher trainers, foundation InnoVe language specialists, publishers and the representatives of language teacher networks.

In the evening of the conference first day the bus takes all participants to Kukruse manor where the reception takes place. The hospitable manor awaits us with its exciting exposition, delicious food and the possibility to have time travel to the past- an excursion with a guide, during which old-fashioned costumes are tried on; ink and pen is used for writing a letter, which is formed into an historical document and sealed with a real stamp.

The sponsors of the conference are the Estonian Ministry of Education and Science, Allecto AS, Pearson Education, bookshop Krisostomus.



News from EATE



Erika Puusemp, Chair of the Estonian Association of Teachers of English

EATE had its 26th annual autumn event on 27 October 2017 at Miina Härma Gymnasium in Tartu, where participants could again listen to interesting talks and partake in workshops on the theme of "21st century skills".

The biggest ongoing project is in cooperation with the British Council that started during the EATE Summer Seminar, involved online study for half a year, and commences with a face-to-face meeting in February. Read more about this in the article by Michael Connolly.

Upcoming in 2018:

- In cooperation with the American Embassy in Tallinn, a two-day seminar for teachers of English at vocational schools on 1-2 March in Tartu.
- EATE Summer Seminar on 22-23 August in Pärnu.
- The deadline for contributing articles to the EATE professional magazine OPEN! - 15 March 2018 (send contributions to erika.puusemp@gmail.com).

Effective Professional Development for Teachers



Michael Connolly,

Head of British Council English for Education Systems in the European Union.

English for Education Systems focusses on teacher education and development, alongside our work in Higher Education, English skills for employability, and language for resilience, our work with refugees, migrants and marginalised communities. At the moment, we are working with partners in Estonia on a professional development programme for teachers focussed on 21st century skills, digital literacy, ICT skills in the classroom, and other aspects of pedagogy and methodology identified of importance to English language teachers in Estonia.

I have been lucky enough in my career with the British Council to work on a variety of such programmes: from working with refugees in Jordan and the Palestinian Territories, to programmes promoting language and digital literacy for out of school girls in India, to English teacher development programmes with

state school teachers in Europe. A consistent theme has been that English skills are often a vital factor in access to higher education and for employment opportunities, and that good teacher education, which leads to good teaching and learning, is an efficient means in improving learner English proficiency and for achieving better learning outcomes in general.

This may seem obvious, but professional development for teachers is frequently neglected or limited to isolated events, whilst the ever changing nature of educational and societal needs in the digital age requires a sustained and continuous approach to teacher development.

The British Council asked Dr Simon Borg of the University of Leeds to review current research into the field and he argues that Continuing Professional Development (CPD) is 'a critical element in successful educational systems, enhancing teacher quality, organisational effectiveness and student outcomes' (Brog, 2015).

So what is 'good' CPD and does it differ from our own experiences? Borg states that 'CPD can achieve positive and sustained impacts on teachers, learners and organisations when:

- it is seen by teachers to be relevant to their needs and those of their students
- teachers are centrally involved in decisions about the content and process of CPD
- collaboration and the sharing of expertise among teachers is fostered
- CPD is a collective enterprise supported by schools and educational systems more broadly
- expert internal and/or external support for teachers is available
- CPD is situated in schools and classrooms
- CPD is recognised as an integral part of teachers' work
- inquiry and reflection are valued as central professional learning processes
- teachers are engaged in the examination and review of their beliefs

- student learning provides the motivation for professional learning
- CPD is seen as an ongoing process rather than a periodic event
- there is strategic leadership within schools.'

Looking at this list helped me reflect upon my own experience of good, and less good, professional development experiences. In my early career as a teacher, I noticed that training courses were often very repetitive, examining the same areas year after year with little sense of progression and not closely enough linked to the issues I was facing in the classroom. This relates to the first two points: the training was 'provided' rather than linked to my needs and I wasn't involved in what and how it would be delivered.

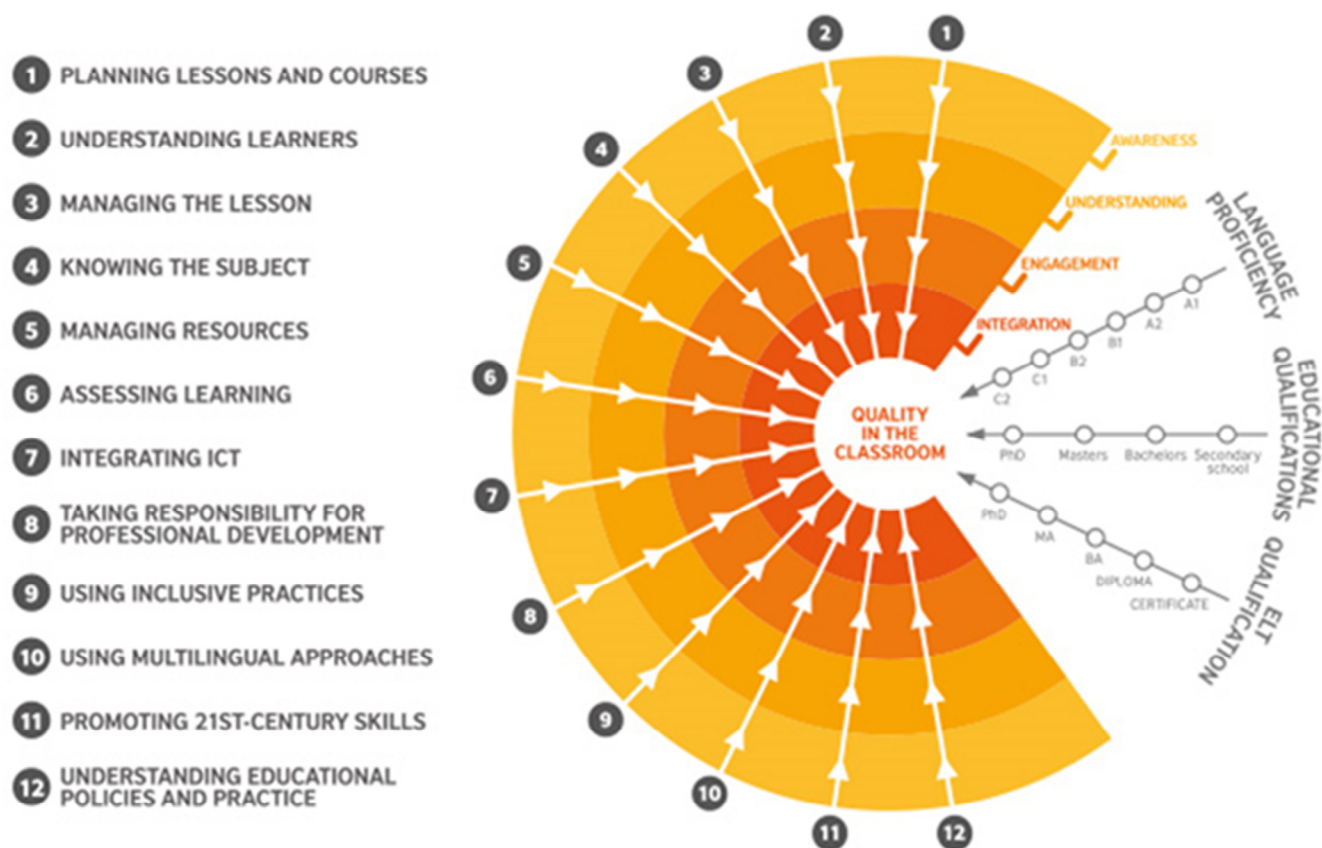
Sometimes I felt the training, even when high quality, was 'going in one ear, and out the other': the one off nature of many workshops and training programmes with limited follow up meant it was difficult to sustain and build upon learning. In contrast, working with other more senior teachers – in retrospect, I might think of them as 'mentors' – was hugely beneficial. We'd discuss specific problems and solutions, not abstract or general topics. On occasion they would observe my lessons, or I would observe theirs, and focus on a particular area of concern in feedback.

In my more recent work in education systems, I have noticed the importance of working with a variety of stakeholders in order for professional development to work. It's not just about teachers: head teachers and other school leaders, administrators and policy makers all have a role to play. It is important for teachers to take control of their own professional development, but equally very difficult for them to do so without working within an enabling environment, which might include provision of opportunity, time, funding or other incentives to pursue their CPD goals.

At the British Council, it is our aim to work with local partners to help teachers be high-performing, motivated, committed, and innovative, to take responsibility for their own professional development, and ensure the best outcomes for their learners. We have developed an approach to teacher education and development, Teaching for Success, which seeks to bring together the concepts outlined by

Borg with experience from the field in the UK and globally. A central feature of our approach is CPD frameworks for teachers, teacher educators and school leaders. These frameworks help individuals and school systems identify specific development needs, map available courses and resources to particular professional practices, plan professional development activity and monitor the impact of that development in the classroom.

Please visit our website www.teachingenglish.org.uk for more information on our approach as well as a huge range of resources and research for English language teachers.



LITHUANIA: MIGRANTS AND LANGUAGE EDUCATION



Vilma Bačkiūtė, Ministry of Education and Science, Lithuania

Lithuania has a small population of about 1.1 % of foreign residents. Most common grounds for migrants who seek a residence permit in Lithuania are business, studies, work, or personal reasons. According to Statistics Lithuania, the majority of immigrants to Lithuania are returning Lithuanian citizens (about 80 %). About 10 % are from Belarus, Russia and Ukraine; and up to 3 % are from EU countries, mostly from Latvia, Poland and Germany.

Work migrants from non-EU countries increased significantly in 2016. According to the Lithuanian Labor Exchange, long distance drivers, metal ship hull assemblers, metalworking machine operators and tailors are in demand. Some new immigrants choose to work in ethnic businesses, for example, Chinese or Indian restaurants, Turkish kebab kiosks or Thai massage parlors.

In 2016, there were 425 applications for asylum. Most requests were received from citizens of Syria (38 %), Russia (14 %), Iraq (9 %) and Afghanistan (8 %).

Lithuanian language courses for asylum seekers are organised by reception centres for refugees and continued on the municipal level by the authority ensuring integration. According to the Integration Procedure, the length of a free Lithuanian language course is 190 hours completed with an examination. There is a possibility to get an additional course of up to 100 hours, if a person fails the examination.

According to a project report prepared by a group of researchers (V. Pilinkaitė-Sotirovič, L. Biekša, I. Ivašauskaitė, K. Žibas, 2016), illiterate refugees with poor educational backgrounds report that language courses are not useful, because they are targeted to learners with higher levels of education and the teaching time was insufficient. The report states that "<...> Some refugees having started their own business shared their good experience saying that as soon as they developed their social network (friends, acquaintances and customers), they got more language practice and greatly improved their linguistic skills as compared to learning with a teacher and a textbook (UNHCR, 2014; Žibas, 2013)."

In accordance with the Law on Education, all children under 16 years of age, both nationals and foreigners with permanent or temporary residence permit, must be enrolled in compulsory education. Prior to attending a school, children with no proficiency in Lithuanian have an opportunity to learn the Lithuanian language in a special levelling class to bridge the language gap. School-age children from migrant families receive an additional 30 % funding in the student basket, which is the budget allocation per student earmarked by the state and distributed by municipalities. This additional funding for migrant children should cover the expenses of assistance for the student's faster integration, including language learning.

Though Lithuania is still very homogeneous with 85 % of the population Lithuanian, national minorities are multiple and linguistic and cultural diversity of the society is increasing. According to the population census 2011, the Polish are 6.7 % of the population that is concentrated in Southeast Lithuania, and Russians are second largest group (5.9 %), that is concentrated in Vilnius and Klaipėda. Belarussians formed 1.2 % and Ukrainians 0.5 % of the population.

Smaller traditional minorities in Lithuania are the Jews, Germans, Tatars, Latvians, Karaims and Gypsies. Other minorities largely consist of new immigrant communities, e.g. Turks and Chinese. In 2011, there were 154 ethnicities represented in Lithuania.

In 2007-2009, a group of researchers conducted a survey of home languages (Project Title: Language Usage and National Identity in Urban Areas of Lithuania (Cities and Languages) in three largest Lithuanian cities Vilnius, Kaunas and Klaipėda. The survey data showed that though Lithuanian is the most widely used and prevailing in different spheres of life and at home, Lithuanian cities are multilingual. School children in the survey mentioned 37 languages as home languages that they practice at home.

The survey results show the increasing usage and importance of English, which is becoming a sign of social and economic status in Lithuania. Respondents with higher status claim better proficiency in English. Importance of English is recognized by respondents of different ages, different ethnicity and different economic status, but it is seen as prestigious especially by younger respondents.

There is a risk that multilingualism is seen as a danger to the state language, but the added value of a multilingual society is obvious and should not be overlooked when forming language teaching and education policies. In terms of language teaching, it is important to recognize different home languages of individual students and create opportunities for practicing them, encouraging the linguistic diversity and multilingualism.



**International FIPLV Nordic-Baltic Region (NBR)
Conference held 7 – 8 June, 2018 in Vilnius,
Lithuania.**



Dr. Roma Kriaučiūnienė, President of LKPA

On behalf of the conference organizers the FIPLV Nordic-Baltic Region (NBR), Language Teachers' Association of Lithuania (LKPA), and the Institute of Foreign Languages of Faculty of Philology, Vilnius University we invite you to the International FIPLV Nordic-Baltic Region (NBR) Conference 2018 "Teaching and Learning Languages in the 21st Century: Linguistic, Educational and Cultural Aspects" that is going to be held on 7 – 8 June, 2018 in Vilnius, Lithuania.

The aim of the conference is to bring language policy makers, language teaching professionals and researchers together for a discussion about the mission of teaching in 21st century, about the needs and perspectives of teaching /learning languages in multicultural environment for the promotion of democratic citizenship, social cohesion, and intercultural dialogue as well as to share information, knowledge and experience on teacher training and the development of teachers' competences, and acquire a better understanding of teaching the New Generation of students.

The conference is going to cover a number of themes:

Language Policy and Language Education Policy

Teacher Training and Development of Teachers' Competences (general, professional, intercultural, moral)

Teachers' Profession: reality and future challenges

Teaching New Generation

Language Learning and Teaching

Learning and Teaching Less Widely Taught Languages

Multilingualism and Intercultural Research

Linguistic Research (Cognitive Linguistics, Sociolinguistics, Pragmatics, Corpus Linguistics, etc.)

Call for Contributions is open - deadline for abstract submission is till 5 April 2018. Registration fees should be paid by 20 April 2018.

We would be grateful if you could share the invitation with your colleagues.

Detailed information is available here:

<http://www.lkpa.vdu.lt/category/conferences/>

Looking forward to seeing you in Vilnius.



Christmas tree in the centre of Vilnius (2018).

Some Insights to the Future of Foreign Languages Teaching in Finland ; Part II



Outi VILKUNA, The Federation of Foreign Language Teachers in Finland SUKOL,
Member of the Board. https://www.sukol.fi/in_english

The Federation of Foreign Language Teachers in Finland SUKOL celebrated its' 60 years anniversary on the weekend of October 6-7th 2017 at Hanasaari Culture Center in Helsinki. The festivities began with an evening party and gala dinner and the main program was on the following day with interesting key note speakers from different walks of life. Also present were representants of the Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture and Mr Juhani HINTIKKA from Comptel Digital Solutions <http://www.comptel.com/> shared his experience of language and culture competences importance and enablement in work life for opening positions and options as well as building bridges. Mrs Peppi TAALAS from the Centre of Applied Language Studies at the University of Jyväskylä <https://www.jyu.fi/hytk/fi/laitokset/solki/en> pondered the question of the future of teaching languages with most interesting visions on how it will be as globalisation, increasing mobility, labour market changes and fast technological development have transformed society, making it multicultural, multilingual and multimodal. Education - and here above all language education - is at the centre of most societal activities and should be able to react to the changes quickly and flexibly. However, the changes in education are normally slow, and the views of

the parties involved in the various levels of education as to the changes and their consequences do not always correspond. In Finland we witness the fast turnover to digitalization in education and at times and in various subjects maybe just at too fast a pace losing the true benefits digitalization could give to more traditional pedagogical practices. Also at times and especially lately we foreign language teachers have been greatly concerned by the rapidly decreasing numbers of students at all levels taking up studying foreign languages and the inequalities in the possibilities to even make such choices. English is named in different publications as the most popular foreign language studied in Finland....the truth is it is the only possible choice as an A-(advanced) language offered in many parts of Finland. Thus it was really a great pleasure to have the Foreign Languages Department of the city of Hyvinkää awarded for their joint effort to promote foreign language learning - Vuoden kieliteko

[https://www.sukol.fi/ajankohtaista/vuoden_kieliteko_-_](https://www.sukol.fi/ajankohtaista/vuoden_kieliteko_-_palkinnon_historiaa.1707.news)

[palkinnon_historiaa.1707.news](https://www.sukol.fi/ajankohtaista/vuoden_kieliteko_-_palkinnon_historiaa.1707.news) Journalist Elina HIRVONEN told from personal experience on languages as medium for building bridges between people and indeed we should not forget that understanding one another is the key to cooperation and tolerance between individuals and nations especially in these times when millions are forced to leave their homes and familiar language and culture environment as refugees and as political rhetoric globally is harsh and devout. Language associations offered all their own workshops and myself I attended the Spanish Flamenco workshop combining foreign language learning to music and choreography - most interesting!! The celebration seminar closing speech was given by journalist, author and well-known media personality Mr Mark Levensgood (photo) <http://www.marklevengood.se/> as a personal story of language and cultural differences.

For your information: a report on the state and development needs of Finland's language reserve was published on December 13th, 2017

http://minedu.fi/en/article/-/asset_publisher/selvitys-suomen-kielivarannon-tilasta-ja-kehittamistarpeista-julkaistu



NEWS from STIL, ICELAND



Petrina Rós Karlsdóttir, President of STÍL

STIL, the Icelandic Association of Language Teachers has been organizing in cooperation with The Vigdís Finnbogadóttir Institute of Foreign Languages in

Veröld - Vigdís' house, diverse conferences on teaching. Our seminar was on the 9th of November, by Marilyn Lambert-Drache, York University Canada. The title was "Language Studies in a context of Internationalization: Challenges and Opportunities". M. Lambert-Drache was mainly focusing on the increasingly part of universities into the teaching/learning, research and all service functions of the universities. How the internationalization suggests an ability of preparing students to develop global competence that requires intercultural understanding and knowledge and become global citizens. Asking some questions as "What are the learners' and instructors' motivations and expectations? Does the language curriculum foster global understanding and does it offer enough opportunities to explore cultural diversity and complexity so that it can effectively promote global engagement and citizenship? How do study abroad programs support such objectives?"

During the stay of Marilyn Lambert-Drache, STIL organized another conference, in cooperation with the French Teachers Association, Alliance française and the Canadian Embassy on "Linguistic Diversity and Modern Language Teaching in Canada An Overview". The Official Languages Act, ratified in 1988 and amended in 2005, makes French and English the two official languages of Canada. In this linguistic landscape, teaching French and modern languages is an essential component of Canadian citizenship. After a brief historical overview, we will make a presentation of French-language programs in Canada as well as programs of foreign languages and heritage languages (Heritage Language Program). It was a very interesting conference.





Some photos from the events.

STIL is now preparing the training seminar for next summer on 7- 8 June 2018 in Iceland, ECML Workshop on ARC (Action research communities for language teachers). The title is "Intercultural learning in the language classroom: back to the roots & into the future." From roots to the future: Comparative learning in the classroom. Lectures and workshop management will be conducted in Icelandic, English and German.

Hopefully this will be a great opportunity for teachers who teach in different languages to join a single project that concerns stands on its own level.

USEFUL SITES TO VISIT BEFORE CHRISTMAS

<https://europeisnotdead.com/video/broadcasts-of-europe/european-new-year-traditions/>



<https://europeisnotdead.com/audio/melodies-of-europe/european-christmas-carols/>



The Electronic Newsletter is issued by:

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NBR Secretary Eglė Šleiniotienė, Lithuania;

