

EDITORIAL:

In our last issue, we drew the attention of our readers to the "European Language Year" arranged by the EU and the European Council. A vital element of this project was the proclamation of 26 September, 2001, as "European Language Day". Because of this it is already possible to measure the success of the Language Year by the number of events which, so far, have taken place all over Europe.

As it happens, hundreds of projects have been carried out in the various countries with the support of ministries, local authorities along with local public as well as private institutions. To these can be added 185 projects, both at regional and national level, which were selected and subsidised by the EU to the tune of 6 million Euros. A close look at the 185 projects¹ does show, as one might expect, that the teaching and acquisition of foreign languages, at all levels and by all ages, constitute the most common recurring theme. Many of the projects emphasize aspects of culture connected to language, such as literature, film, drama, music, folklore and so on. Also represented is an entire range of topics of general interest along with more or less specialist topics such as bilingualism, multilingualism, regional languages, minority languages, sign language, the integration of immigrants, philosophy, sociology, intercultural understanding and, of course, multimedia and the internet. What might cause a few raised eyebrows is that out of this multitude of projects only six or seven deal specifically with Language for Special Purposes:

- Belgium: "A Tour of Eleven Languages" which was a translation competition for secondary school pupils organized by the Ecole d'Interprètes Internationaux,
- Germany: conference held by the Freie Universität Berlin for representatives of European universities and representatives of the labour market with a view to promoting a multilingual university,
- France: conference organized by the Centres d'Études des langues de la Chambre de Commerce et d'Industrie de Paris for students, teachers and representatives of business and industry in order to promote understanding of the language skills and competence levels required by the labour market,
- Italy: activities organized by 1) the Province of Trento (Provincia Autonoma di Trento) in order to further workers' understanding for the need for good language skills and 2) the Italian Confederation of Farmers of the Province of Umbria (Confederazione Italiana Agricoltori

¹ see the website: <http://www.eurolang2001.org/eyl/common/content/R1+R2ListmultiRev.pdf>

dell'Umbria) with a view to convincing its members of the usefulness in being able to communicate in French, Dutch and English with their business partners,

Finland: a seminar, to be held in November, at Tampere as well as various activities with a view to making the general public, business organizations and teachers aware of the significance of languages in the labour market and promoting the teaching of Language for Special Purposes,

Denmark: an "Open House" arrangement organized with our participation by 14 business related organizations and institutions: a language fair for trade and industry, the first of its kind in Denmark, with 35 exhibitors and 20 lectures. The aim was to encourage companies to develop a language policy for their employees and the target group was people working in sectors with a great demand for language qualifications.

Judging by the high level of interest generated by the Danish project which received approximately 2000 visitors that day, it seems that it would have been desirable that a greater number of European projects had availed themselves of the Language Year in order to place Language for Special Purposes on the agenda. It is our sincere hope that the few examples outlined above will provide inspiration in the years to come for those countries that missed a splendid opportunity to place the focus squarely on LSP.

The Editorial Board

DEADLINES

Any contribution to be published in the International Journal "LSP and Professional Communication" should reach us within the following deadlines:

April (Vol.2, No.1, April 2002): **December 1st 2001**

October (Vol.2, No. 2, October 2002): **May 1st 2002**

*For more details, please consult our web-site: <http://www.dsff-lsp.dk>
(rubric: International LSP Journal)*