

26 September 2024 – European Day of Languages!



With just around 3 months to go until 26 September, we are very pleased to inform you about preparations for this year's European Day of Languages (EDL): the materials available, the new ideas, features, competitions, and initiatives which we hope will help to support your work as National Relays for the Day.

We were delighted with the response received to the EDL initiatives last year, with some 1 900 posters submitted for the "[Languages in my classroom](#)" initiative – a choice selection is currently decorating the ECML premises in Graz and if you have time you can view all of them online! There were also an impressive range of very creative entries for the "[Beauty of languages](#)" initiative (with a selection also online). As ever, we are hoping to be even bigger and better than last year and break through the ceiling of 1 500 EDL events registered on the site and 1 million visitors on the Day!

What is new in 2024?

With war on the European continent as well as conflicts on Europe's doorstep, we have decided to propose the motto of "**Languages for peace**" for EDL 2024 – focusing on how languages can play a role in the process of achieving and maintaining peace for the generations to come.

A host of new and/or updated features and resources are currently under development on the EDL website for this year's Day. Here are just some examples that will be appearing on the homepage over the summer:

Lara's next journey – through Europe's Regional and Minority Languages – developed as a follow-up to "Lara's Language Journey Across Europe" (currently available in 26 language versions), Lara is taking on a new challenge and journey, this time to explore the world of regional and minority languages, many of which are likely to be unfamiliar to readers. The new brochure puts a spotlight on the diversity of the European linguistic landscape, presenting a selection of 38 regional and minority languages (RMLs), such as Walloon, Faroese, Meänkieli and Papiamentu – which did not feature in the original brochure. We would be very grateful for your support in translating the final version of this new resource.

<https://edl.ecml.at/languagejourney>

Language tree poster – covering 84 of Europe's languages which are presented in the two Lara brochures, this stand-alone language tree provides an excellent way of mapping the languages present within a class or school in visible way and in highlighting just how close or far apart languages are from one another.

<https://edl.ecml.at/languagejourney>

The “20 things you may not know about languages” poster series continues! In its 4th year we are almost – but not quite – running out of titles! For 2024 we proudly present “**Yet another 20 things you may not know about world of languages**”!

<https://edl.ecml.at>

Learn to pronounce Irish names! Do you know how to pronounce the name Ruaidhrí? Even for those coming from the Emerald Isle of Ireland, it is not always 100% obvious how certain first names are pronounced. This year we have developed the perfect guide to help you negotiate some of the more tricky ones!

<https://edl.ecml.at/irishnames>

Based on a previous year's initiative “In how many languages can you make someone laugh?”, we have finally compiled a **Multilingual joke book**. This resource offers the perfect antidote to any classroom tension or stress...

<https://edl.ecml.at/jokebook>

A **Language board game** – in a world increasingly dominated by technology we have decided to take a step in the other direction and develop a language game to be played in a deliberately offline format. Provisionally, we have called this “bizarro” (the Spanish word originally meaning 'brave'). A pilot version of the game is being developed from an initial concept and will be ready to play (with a template to print out) for September. We would greatly welcome feedback for building this into a world beater in years to come!

On the other hand, for those who do love smartphones (!) there is also the updated version of **The Secret agent's language challenge app**, available in 31 languages – developed with the support of the National Relays and the European Commission. The app encourages users, aka secret agents, to take on a range of challenges, to rise up through the ranks and eventually become a ‘master secret agent’. Newly ‘qualified’ agents are able to reward themselves with a certificate testifying to their advanced skills!

<https://edl.ecml.at/app>

The **Word of the Year**. In this feature on the website we look around Europe to showcase words that have been designated as words of the year by publishers and other media channels from different countries and representing different languages. These tend to reflect key events or changes (both positive and negative) which have occurred over the past year. On this occasion, we will also be inviting visitors to the site to propose their “Word of the Year” for 2024.

<https://edl.ecml.at/wordoftheyear>

2024 Initiatives

We are suggesting two challenges to celebrate this year's Day of Languages that could be included within almost any event being organised (with further details to be posted shortly on the EDL homepage):

Languages for peace – Create a poster illustrating the theme of ‘Languages for Peace’. This can use symbols, quotes and artwork to convey messages of unity and understanding across different languages and actively contribute to the use of languages as a vehicle for reaching across linguistic and cultural divides. Send us a photo or pdf of the poster you produce to be showcased on the EDL website. There will be prizes for the top 5 most creative entries and up to 30 of the posters will proudly decorate the European Centre for Modern Languages!

Most difficult letter/word/phrase to pronounce! For example, the letter 'Ř' (a 'raised alveolar non-sonorant trill'!) from Czech is reputed to be one of the most difficult letters to pronounce in the world – except (of course) if you are Czech! Can you come up with something just as difficult to pronounce or even more so – either in your own language or in the one you are learning? If so, send us a short video illustrating this challenging piece of oral dexterity and why it is challenging! We will select a winner of Europe's most difficult utterances to then be featured on the EDL website.

Competitions



EDL t-shirt design contest: there was again a huge response to the contest to design the 2024 EDL t-shirt – with over 2 000 entries submitted. The artistic winning design was created by Eloise Recio Jarda from Spain. The t-shirt and a tote bag with the same design are now [available for sale](#). Designs can already be submitted [here](#) for the [2025 EDL t-shirt design contest](#) (with the contest closing on 31 December 2024).

The **2023 most innovative European Day of Languages' event** was also won by the Portugal's Departamento Curricular de Línguas, Alcobaça, – with the series of events taking place in under the title of "[Message in a bottle](#)". The most innovative European Day of Languages' event competition for 2024, with a small reward, will be open for voting from 20 September to 20 October). <https://edl.ecml.at/edlevents>

In the build up to the Day, we will also be running an online poll on '**What is the best advice you can give someone starting to learn a language?**' on the homepage of the website – with the results to be announced on 25 September. <https://edl.ecml.at/poll>

EDL promotional materials



We have again adapted and expanded the range of [promotional items](#) available this year to:

- **'Write with me!' paper pens** in 8 different language sets and colours
- **EDL wristbands** made from fabric – with one design reflecting solidarity with Ukraine;
- **'Talk to me!' stickers** and **EDL language journey sheets of stickers** linked to the **Language journey booklet** with 'Hello', 'How are you?', 'Thank you' in 40 languages.
- **'Read with me' bookmarks** produced in 10 different language combinations.

Social media:

On a dedicated [EDL Facebook page](#) – we are running a series of posts promoting the Day in the build up to the 26 September – and on [X](#), using the hashtags #coeEDL and #EDL2024 to publicise activities and initiatives.