

PUKE MAMA ΠΑΤΕΡΑΣ **MĀTE** MONIKIELISYYS
 ДОРОГА PUPPE
 REGENBOGEN **МЯЧ ИГРА** VUODE KVADRĀTS
 AUTO ПАРОВОЗИК **CHILD LERNEN** ДЕТИ ΔΡΟΜΟΣ
 ΣΠΙΤΙ LIMBĂ JOCURİ LEIKKIÄ ΜΗΝΟΓΕΖΙЧИЕТО
 ПРОЦЕС ВЪЗПИТАТЕЛ **ΜΑΘΑΙΝΟΥΝ**
 CIRCLE **ДЕЦА** KINDERGARTEN



VIA LIGHT

Newsletter 6, June 2013

VIA LIGHT: NEWSLETTER No. 6 June 2013



Table of contents

1. Online education platform of the VIA LIGHT project
was launched in a test mode 3
2. Fourth conference of the VIA LIGHT project in Riga 5
3. Courses, seminars and exams in partner countries: an overview 7
4. The VIA LIGHT project was presented
at the VII German-Russian festival in Berlin 9



Dear colleagues,
dear readers,
ladies and gentlemen,

we are pleased to present to your attention
a sixth newsletter of VIA LIGHT international project's newsletter!

The period between April and June 2013 was full of interesting activities and important events in the life of the project participants. First, it should be noted that our online education platform was launched in a test mode. This event was followed by numerous meetings to share experiences among the project partners as well as by core courses, seminars and lectures, which were organised to improve skills of kindergarten and school teachers working with bilingual children. Finally, a regular conference of the VIA LIGHT project's participants took place in Riga. More details on the above-mentioned events can be found in the sixth issue of our newsletter.

1. Online education platform of the VIA LIGHT project was launched in a test mode

Online education platform as a foundation of modern education is an important part of professional development courses for teachers working in the field of bilingual upbringing and education. This platform has been functioning in a test mode since April 2013 and will be launched in full very soon.

How does this platform work?

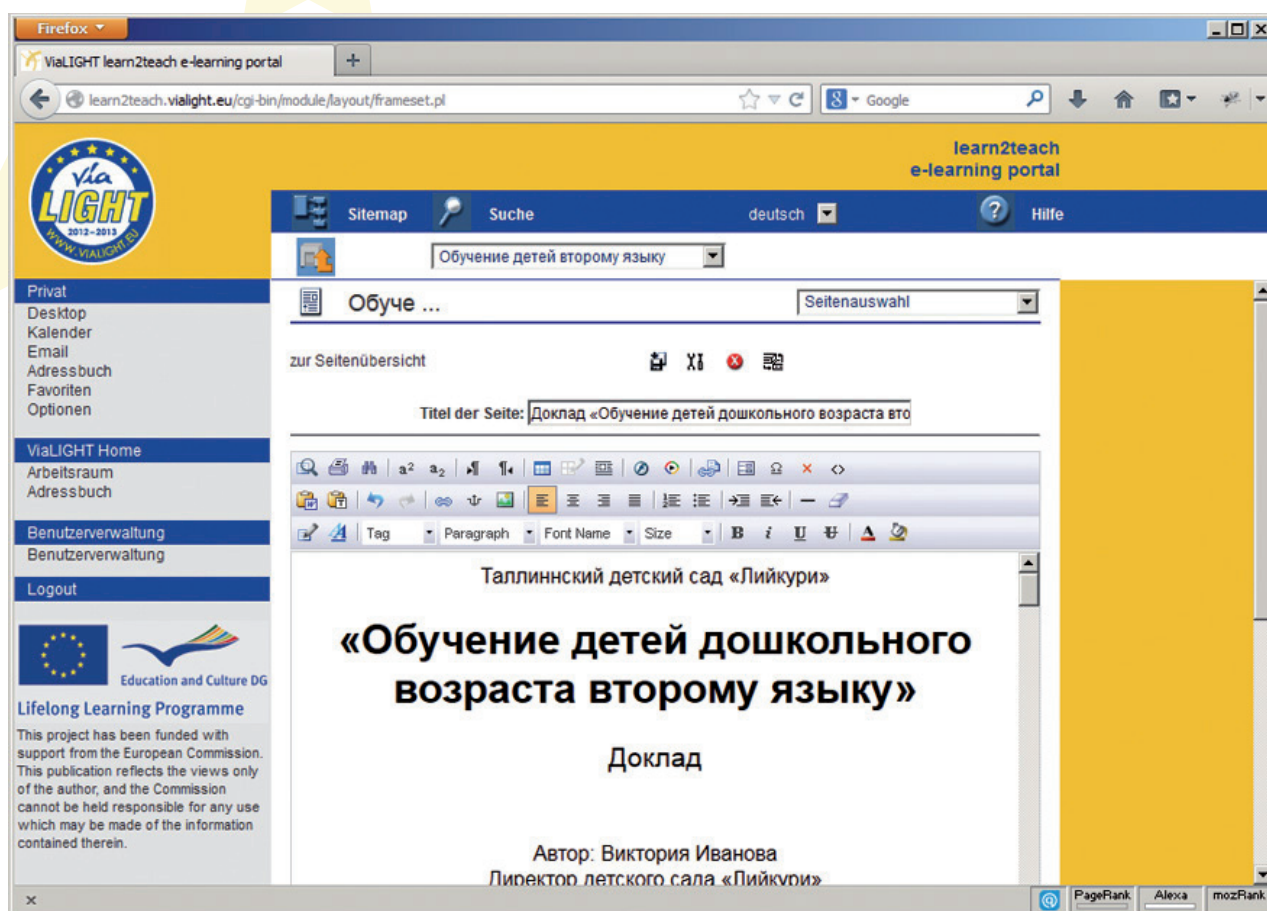
Virtual education platform VIA LIGHT is based on the programme Vcat (due to technical reasons, a previously installed Russian language-based Bitrix programme was replaced by a German programme Vcat). It is installed on the server of our partner SCHLEICHER-FARM.COM, which monitors and supports the programme.

What can this platform do?

The main functions of the education platform are:

- presentation of educational materials: courses in html and PDF formats; chat, forum, photos and video about each course;
- online library (common for all the courses);
- chats, forums (common for all the courses);
- tests;
- personal tools: calendar, newslines, address book, e-mail box, private messages to other participants of the platform, etc.

Information about several seminars (including those of Tallinn kindergarten „Liikuri“) has successfully been placed on our virtual education platform. During the fourth international meeting of the project partners (Riga, May 2013), a representative of SCHLEICHER-FARM.COM conducted relevant trainings for the project colleagues. In the coming future it is planned to place full courses on the virtual education platform of the VIA LIGHT project.





2. Fourth conference of the VIA LIGHT project in Riga

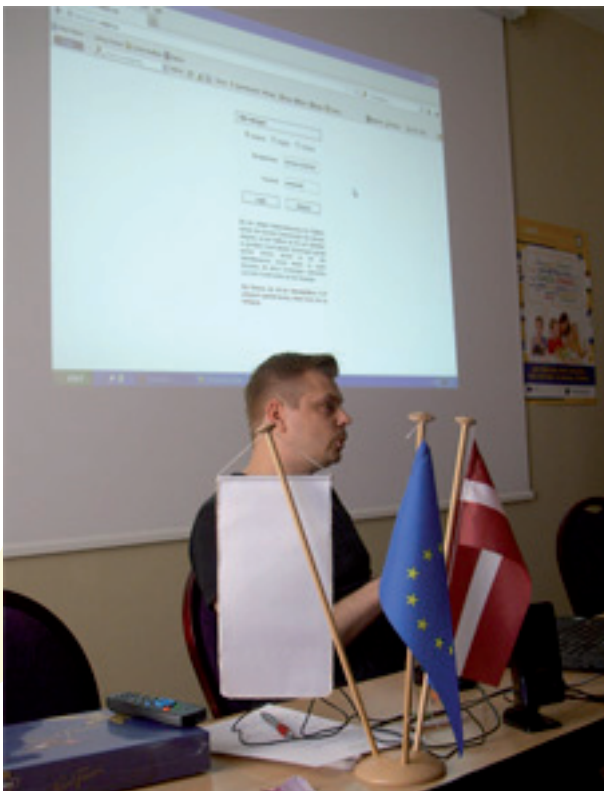
The Fourth International Conference in the framework of the VIA LIGHT project was held in Riga (Latvia) from the 5th to the 8th May, 2013. It was organised by the private school „Classics“ (head - Svetlana Shybko-Shibkovskaya). The conference participants reflected on the results of the work done in the period of the year and a half and talked about the progress made.



The first half of the year 2012 was mainly devoted to organizational and theoretical problems of bilingual upbringing and education. In late 2012 - early 2013, an active phase of testing of the partners' methodological "know-hows" started through seminars, special professional development courses for kindergarten and school teachers working in bilingual educational institutions and various trainings in schools.



Project partners demonstrated their unique “know-hows” in the sphere of bilingual upbringing and education, which considered their national legislation and specific work conditions. During the “round table” with participation of the MEP Tatyana Zhdanok, at a press conference in the “House of Europe” and in the course of discussions with representatives of local education authorities in the Latvian parliament, conference participants demonstrated their own vision of the real implementation of the EU slogan “Unity in diversity” to colleagues, opponents and journalists.



In Riga there also was held a training for all participants about the online education platform.

Additionally, project partners discussed perspectives of their future cooperation in the sphere of professional development courses for kindergarten and school teachers as well as opportunities to develop the next phase of VIA LIGHT after the completion of its current project in December 2013. Final conference of VIA LIGHT was held in Berlin in October 2013.

3. Courses, seminars and exams in partner countries: an overview



Professional development programme for teachers in the framework of the VIA LIGHT project has been tested in a Riga preschool educational institution

From January to April 2013, a professional development programme for teachers entitled “Child, family and teacher in a multicultural environment” was tested at Riga-based preschool institution no. 275 “Austrina”. The programme was organised in the framework of the VIA LIGHT international project that envisages training of kindergarten and school teachers as well as their professional development to be able to work in European multilingual space. This programme was agreed upon by the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Latvia. The course (load of 24 hours) was developed by Dr. Z. Anspoka, practical psychologist L. Liberté, Latvian university lecturer E. Lanka and teachers of the private school „Classics“.

According to the authors, the tested programmes are relevant and valuable for diasporas abroad, which face situations when it is necessary to learn the language of a specific country, at the same time retaining a native language and culture. They also hope that the programme aimed at professional development of teachers called “Child, family and teacher in a multicultural environment” will be implemented for a wider audience.

Educational seminar in the framework of the VIA LIGHT project was held in Cyprus

On 19-23 April 2013, seminar entitled “Organisation of educational and upbringing activities in bilingual kindergartens” was held at the “Umka” kindergarten (Nikosiya) in Cyprus. The seminar’s programme included lectures by Viktoriya Ivanova and Elena Lofitskaya (both M.A.) from the “Liikuri” kindergarten (Tallinn, Estonia) as well as methodical recommendations and practical exercises.

As reported by the event organizers, teachers of the “Umka” kindergarten received didactic and musical material to assist their work with children, including books and manuals published by Estonian colleagues.



According to the head of the “Umka” kindergarten Svetlana Mardapitta: “We became interested in the technique of teaching second language through various types of theatre activities, which was presented to us by our Estonian colleagues. We are also grateful to our colleagues for the donated collections of mobile games developed by specialists from the “Liikuri” kindergarten as well as for other original teaching materials”.

Teachers and educators of bilingual kindergartens in Estonia and Cyprus shared experiences

Teachers of the “Umka” kindergarten (Nicosia, Cyprus) visited Tallinn (Estonia) to study the experience of bilingual preschool education in this country. On the 9th May 2013, guests from Cyprus visited “Liikuri” kindergarten, attending there lessons with children and discussing problems of bilingualism with colleagues. Participants noted such meetings being helpful for a better understanding of the multifaceted problem of upbringing in a multicultural environment and peculiarities of bilingualism in different EU member states.

“We were unanimous in our intention to carry out the exchange of teachers for practical workshops,” - said Victoria Ivanova, head of the “Liikuri” kindergarten. According to her, that would undoubtedly enrich mutual educational experience.

VIA LIGHT partners from Germany conducted seminars in Cyprus

On the 18th and 20th May 2013, there were held seminars under the common title “Experience of bilingual kindergartens in European countries” at the bilingual “Umka” kindergarten (Nicosia, Cyprus). The given seminars were organised for kindergarten educators in Nicosia and Limassol by German partners, Marina Burd and Dr. Alexander Ott.

According to the educator - psychologist of the “Umka” kindergarten Elena Ioannu, as a result of the attended seminars it was interesting for her to learn about the change of education paradigm, in particular, about the active involvement of parents in the educational process through joint workshops. “From a psychological standpoint, this kind of approach certainly brings an educator closer to parents as they both have one common aim, which in our case can be defined as multilingual upbringing of a child; and that aim can be achieved as a result of cooperation between kindergarten and family“-Ioannu said.

In her turn, head of the „Umka“ kindergarten Svetlana Mardapitta emphasized importance of the conducted seminars, as a result of which participants “were able to compare various forms of bilingual preschool institutions in two countries as well as to learn about support of such institutions in Germany”.

Final seminar called “Working in a multicultural team” was held in Helsinki

On the 24th May 2013, final seminar of the VIA LIGHT project called “Working in a multicultural team” was held in Helsinki. It was organised in the premises of the Union of Finnish Civil Associations by a social worker, an expert on multiculturalism Anita Nowitskaya. Educators and teachers of the “Kalinka” kindergarten also participated in the work of the seminar. According to Elena Kopalin, a kindergarten educator, they “have discussed common ‘rules of the game’ and proposed behaviour models in difficult situations for about eight hours”. According to her, the particular attention during the seminar was paid to various techniques that could help providing for cooperation in spite of the language and cultural barriers. There were used the following methods and techniques during the seminar: analysis and discussion of homework; dialogue; lectures; work in small groups.

4. The VIA LIGHT project was presented at the VII German-Russian festival in Berlin

Over 150,000 participants of the German-Russian festival (<http://www.drf-berlin.de>), held on 14-16 June 2013 in a beautiful park of the Berlin-Karlshorst hippodrome, got opportunity to get acquainted with the European educational project VIA LIGHT. Representatives of RIA Novosti (Russia) and MITRA (Germany) distributed brochures and flyers, which presented objectives of bilingual upbringing and education as well as the need for training qualified personnel to work with bilingual children. The project objectives fully met both the overall concept of the festival, which became the final accord of the thematic year “Russia and Germany: building the future together“, and the ideas of European integration. The majority of participants in this annual celebration present so-called “mixed families” with Russian, German and other roots. Participants and guests of this festival are the target audience of the European educational project VIA LIGHT. Finally, it should be noted that a RIA Novosti representative informed the festival’s VIP guests about the project’s implementation and possibilities for its further development.



Dear friends and readers,

We appreciate your interest in the VIA LIGHT project! Please also visit our web-site on the following address: www.vialight.eu. You will find there a lot of interesting information about developments of our project as well as photos and video records made in the course of it.

Your VIA LIGHT project's team

