

BILIUM – II Meeting
held at RusSchool.nl (Rotterdam)
26.-27. January 2013

The second meeting of the partners of the BILIUM Project, supported by the EU Leonardo da Vinci Life Long Learning Programme, took place on the 26th and 27th January 2013 in the Dutch city of Rotterdam. The meeting was coordinated and presented by Olga Shterenshis, Director of the RusSchool in Rotterdam, who welcomed partners from Austria, France, Germany, Sweden, Switzerland, Netherlands and the UK.

The first presentation was given by a representative of **Utrecht City Council** on the recent findings of the Council's research into multilingualism in Utrecht, the background for which is, amongst other things, the EU's intention that all EU citizens should speak at least three languages.

This was followed by a presentation by Olga Bramley, Director of the first bilingual (Russian–English) School in the UK - **The London School of Russian Language and Literature**, who summarised the key findings and recommendations from the recent EU Grundtvig research project “Art: a basic human need: Neurodidactic answers to increasing social challenges”, in which the School was a key partner. This project involved research into the development of the brain in the learning process, how memory works, and the main differences between male and female brains and their functions in the learning process, with the intention of introducing the important new knowledge acquired into school systems.

The third presentation was given by **Prof. Guus Extra of Tilburg University**: “Responding to Increasing Linguistic Diversity in Multicultural Europe”, who aimed to give a summarised analysis of the increasing complexity and diversity of the languages spoken in EU countries, their status in the countries where they are spoken and within Europe, how far European states support tuition in the mother tongue of its citizens, and the importance of this linguistic diversity for the identity of Europe and its citizens. His study presents a strong case for major investment and funding to find solutions for some of the shortfalls and problems facing large numbers of European citizens.

The afternoon session was spent on discussing the preparation of the planned publication of a compendium of the collected materials by all partner organisations on research carried out into multilingualism by schools and universities, the legislation concerning multilingualism and how the subject is handled in the media in their respective countries. The publication is planned for May 2013 and is being coordinated by Dr. Ekaterina Kudrjavceva-Hentschel of the **Foreign Languages and Media Centre at the University of Greifswald**, Germany, who is also coordinating the BILIUM Project itself.

The next meeting is to take place in April in Gothenburg, Sweden, and will be hosted by Inna Khromova-Plekhanova of the **Russo-Swedish Cultural Society**.