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RoboBraille Film Transcript

Scene: The European Union flag and the e-Inclusion logo is shown during an introductory song.

To give the ambience of Denmark the traditional red mailboxes are shown, along with a mill, the Little Mermaid and buildings from Copenhagen.

We then see a young man named Edis Adilovic walking on the street with his white cane.

Afterward we see Edis sitting at a table next to a computer reading through a Braille display.

Narrator:

Scandinavia's smallest country, Denmark, has a big reputation for its quality of life and here in Copenhagen the mood is vibrant. The country has a reputable welfare state in which citizens like Edis Adilovic, who is visually impaired, are offered equal opportunities. He's not been able to see since he was two, but an innovative Danish invention has offered him and many others greater independence and self-sufficiency. It's called RoboBraille and was developed by the Danish Centre for Visual Impairment Syncenter Refsnæs in region Sjælland. Pioneered by Lars Christensen it translates electronic documents into Braille or speech.

Scene: The inventor of the RoboBraille service, Lars Ballieu Christensen, is explaining the process of using the service by pointing at a diagram.

Lars Ballieu Christensen:

"The user attaches a document that can be virtually anything, like an HTML file, a Word document, a PDF file, a scanned image submitted as an e-mail to an e-mail account. It's received on the server and then the result is returned to the user by means of an e-mail and everything happens in a matter of minutes."

Scene: Again we now see Edis sitting at a table next to a computer reading through a Braille display.

Narrator:

That's great news for Edis who, like many, is a regular user of the service which is free to non-commercial users. Translated documents can be read through his tactile Braille display or simply downloaded as an MP3 file and played through his PC.

Edis Adilovic:

"It's not that difficult to learn and it's very accessible for blind people, as it should be. We read a lot in the school, so sometimes I get tired of reading, so I get it returned in "speech".

Scene: We now see Rikke Syberg, a project manager of the RoboBraille team, sitting at her desk working.

Narrator:

Rikke Syberg is one of the project managers working on ways of further developing the RoboBraille service.

Rikke Syberg:

"It helps them to access a lot of documents that wouldn't be accessible without RoboBraille, and I would say especially the PDF files that we introduced is something new."

Scene: We watch Lars writing on his computer.

Narrator:

Depending on the document size, translations can happen swiftly. As an example Lars sends a press release via e-mail for translation into speech. Within seconds it's returned.

Scene: Lars is now listening to a document that he has sent to the service that has been returned to him as an mp3-file.

Afterwards we see Rikke's computer showing the official RoboBraille website.

Then we watch consultant Svend Thougaard writing Braille on a Perkins machine.

Speech synthesizer:

"Today, the Danish-led RoboBraille Consortium announced that it had added support for French speech to its RoboBraille service. The addition takes the number of supported languages to seven."

Narrator:

At present some thousand documents are translated each day, but the mission is to reach a capacity of some fourteen thousand. Consultant Svend Thougaard has been with the project since its inception. He has an accomplished understanding of the many different types of Braille and has helped develop the system which can even translate whole books, including a request for the latest "Harry Potter".

Svend Thougaard:

"It was about five hundred pages converted into RoboBraille. And when RoboBraille sent it back; this auto-report, it took forty two seconds to contract the latest "Harry Potter" book.

Scene: We see the square in front of City Hall in Copenhagen central and we watch Rikke looking at the official RoboBraille website.

Sensus

Specialister i tilgængelighed

Narrator:

While the developers will continue to offer the service for free to individuals, they create income through commercial applications of the product.

Scene: Now we are looking at wind mills in an industrial area of Copenhagen.

Lars Ballieu Christensen:

"It's the pharmaceutical sector, they need to put Braille on their boxes now – that's a European Directive from the Commission that actually maintains that. So, also we are seeing requests from financial institutions in order to be able to produce bank statements and annual statements and so on, in Braille."

Scene: Again we see the square in front of City Hall in Copenhagen central, a street in Copenhagen and the e-Inclusion award statue.

Narrator:

Denmark is rightly proud of its home grown invention. And, as a winner of the European Commission's e-Accessibility Award, the project's value has been recognised at the highest levels, including in the government, which has offered the project grants to help meet the need of the dyslexic, immigrants and others who need help with reading.

Scene: We now watch the Danish minister of welfare, Karen Jespersen, in her office.

Mrs. Karen Jespersen:

"I think that the value is enormous because it is very simple and with a few tools it can help a lot of people to improve their daily life."

Scene: Again we watch a landscape and a busy street with pedestrians in Copenhagen.

Narrator:

The RoboBraille project was also given high praise for its commitment to digital literacy by the European Commission.

Scene: We are seeing Katarzyna Balucka-Débska from the European Commission in her office.

Katarzyna Balucka-Débska:

"Technology can in itself be even off-putting. But what the Awards' winners were able to do was to grasp the technology, put it where it's really needed and help the people with their everyday lives. And that's the real value."

Scene: We are now watching the trains at Vesterport train station in Copenhagen and afterwards a Braille printer producing documents.

Narrator:

And it's not just the citizens of Denmark. The project's future lies in exploring the document conversion technology beyond, particularly in continents where there are low literacy levels.

Scene: We see Lars in front of the logo of Synscenter Refsnæs.

Lars Ballieu Christensen:

“The need for service like RoboBraille is even bigger when we venture into the developing world like the Arab countries or countries like Ghana, Mozambique, South Africa and so on.

Scene: Edis is reading through his Braille display and checking the time on his tactile watch.

Narrator:

The future lies in making RoboBraille commercially sustainable by attracting more institutional uses. At the same time it’s continuing to provide an invaluable tool for people like Edis.

Scene: We see the E-Inclusion logo and The European Union flag during a finishing song.