



Press Information

18 February 2008

European Survey of Language Competences

Cambridge ESOL is part of a consortium which has been awarded a contract by the European Commission to develop a Europe-wide survey of languages.

The European Survey of Language Competences aims to be a key tool for European governments to use in developing language-learning policies and is part of the European Commission's aim to 'improve the mastery of basic language skills in Europe' and 'establish a linguistic competence indicator'. It will help governments to understand existing levels of second language proficiency and how those levels compare to other countries. It will also provide information on how language proficiency relates to demographic, social, economic and educational variables. Information in the survey can then be used to influence policy and improve national standards.

The survey will compare second language learning for pupils in the final year of lower secondary education across using the scales of the Common European Framework of References for Languages (CEFR). It will focus on the two most popular foreign languages studied in each of the participating countries from English, French, German, Italian and Spanish.

The *SurveyLang* consortium comprises internationally-recognised expert organisations in the fields of language assessment, surveys and sample design and psychometrics. *SurveyLang* consists of (in alphabetic order):

- Centre international d'études pédagogiques (CIEP) - France
- Gallup
- Goethe-Institut - Germany
- Instituto Cervantes - Spain
- National Institute for Educational Measurement (Cito) - The Netherlands
- University of Cambridge ESOL Examinations - UK
- Universidad de Salamanca - Spain
- Università per Stranieri di Perugia – Italy

Cambridge ESOL will co-ordinate the work of the *SurveyLang* consortium.

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Notes to Editors:

About Cambridge ESOL

University of Cambridge ESOL Examinations is part of the Cambridge Assessment Group, a not-for-profit organisation and a department of the University of Cambridge. It is part of the Cambridge Assessment group, which is Europe's largest assessment agency. We provide examinations in English language for over 2 million people every year, in more than 130 countries, as well as a range of qualifications for language teachers.

Our examinations are developed on the basis of a long-term process of academic and practical research, to ensure that they are accurate, fair, reliable and relevant, and that they encourage learners to develop the skills they need to use English effectively in the real world.

University of Cambridge ESOL Examinations is a founder member of the Association of Language Testers in Europe and works closely with testing organisations, schools and academics throughout the world to support the development of language testing in theory and practice

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