

Ireland Feedback

Agent usage among Ireland-bound students was much higher this year with students less reliant on the Internet. Meanwhile, Western European students continue to dominate the nationality mix.

Ireland feedback at a glance

Total number of students: (female 55, male 43, unknown 5) **103**

Average age in years: **26.5**

Average length of programme in weeks: **12.4**

Average number of students in class: **9.5**

Average number of hours of language tuition per week: **21.0**

% of students who found out about their course through an agent: **38**

% of students who booked through an agent or adviser: **69**

% of students who had been on another language programme: **43**

% of students who would recommend their school: **95**

Student nationality

According to this issue's Feedback survey, English language schools in Ireland continue to attract a healthy amount of Western Europeans. Spain remains in pole position with a 22 per cent share of the student base while Germany (10 per cent), Italy (10 per cent), France (seven per cent), and Switzerland (six per cent) were also well represented. However, Latin American students, who made a real impact in our 2007 poll (see LTM, October 2007, pages 16-17), made up just eight per cent of the student body this year (a drop of nine percentage points), with Brazilians (second most populous nationality

last year), relegated to sixth place. Meanwhile, the Asian contingent – made up of Korean (13 per cent), Japanese (four per cent) and Chinese (three per cent) students – was down for a second successive year (from 26 per cent to 20 per cent). This drop in numbers could well be a direct result of costlier long-haul airfares and comparatively high living costs.

Student motivation

Forty per cent of feedback respondents said that they were already utilising their English for work purposes while 37 per cent said they were currently using English at school or university (13 per cent indicated they

presently use English for both). However, many of our Feedback respondents (49 per cent) were students and learning a language for future or current work proved to be a big motivator, although this had declined slightly on last year (52 per cent compared with 64 per cent). Interestingly, more students were interested in continuing their education in Ireland this year with six per cent of respondents claiming that they would use their English skills for this reason, compared with two per cent previously.

Student enrolment

There has been a sudden drop in the number of students sourcing



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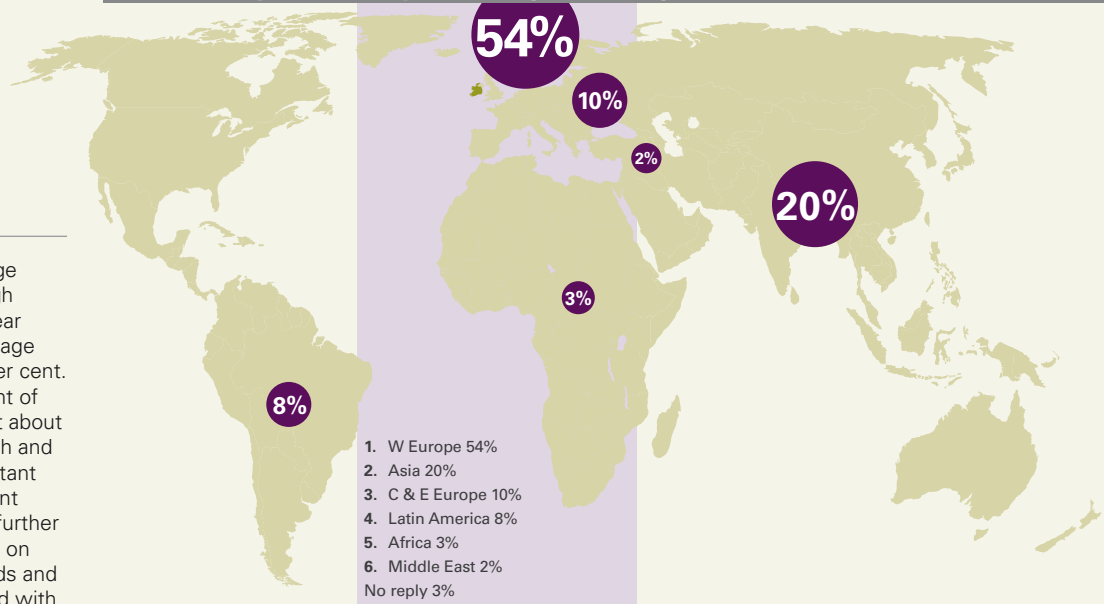
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Student respondents by world region of origin



a school or language programme through the Internet this year – down 13 percentage points to just 23 per cent. Instead, 38 per cent of students found out about their school through and educational consultant (up from 35 per cent previously) with a further 33 per cent relying on the advice of friends and relatives (compared with 24 per cent last year). The number of respondents who actually booked via an agency grew from 37 per cent to a massive 69 per cent.

Standard of the schools

More students were impressed by the standard of academic programming this year; 90 per cent deemed it excellent, good or satisfactory, compared with 75 per cent previously. Consequently, 95 per cent of the student base said they would happily recommend their school to others, compared with 78 per cent last year. However, 13 per cent of respondents said that there were too many students who spoke the same language (a majority of which were Spanish) and 12 per cent said there were too many students from one other country.

Living in the Ireland

Seventy two per cent of students found the cost of living to be higher than in their home countries, a marginal increase on last year's result of 70 per cent. Twenty-eight per cent were Spanish in origin and a further 14 per cent were Korean. Elsewhere, there was a marked increase in the number of students who found it very easy (14 per cent) to practise their language skills with local people. Last year, none of the students polled deemed this to be easy.

Top nationalities

22%

1. Spanish

13%

2. Korean

3. German 10%
3. Italian 10%
5. French 7%
6. Brazilian 6%
6. Swiss 6%
8. Japanese 4%
9. Chinese 3%
10. Czech 2%

How did you find your programme?

38%

1. Recommended by an agent

33%

2. Recommended by a friend/relative

3. I found it on the Internet 23%
4. I saw it advertised 3%
- No reply 3%

In my class there are...

55%

1. The right amount of students

16%

2. Too many students

2. Too many students who speak my language 13%
4. Too many students from one other country 12%
- No reply 4%

How easy is it to practise English with native speakers?

51%

1. Quite easy

26%

2. Quite hard

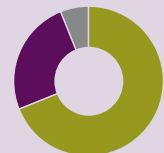
3. Very easy 14%
4. Very hard 5%
- No reply 4%

Student reasons for school selection included:

"I think it is a good school in it supplies good accommodation in single rooms"
 "Because I was looking for a country that wasn't so popular with students of the same nationality as me"
 "Because of the facilities, accommodation and price"
 "Because there aren't many Koreans and it is cheaper than any other English speaking destination"
 "It is well known in Korea"

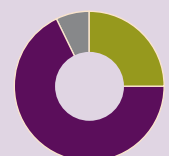
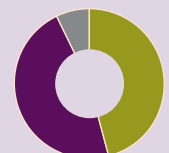
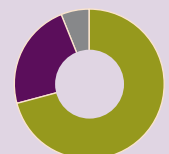
Did you book your course through an agent or an educational advisor?

- Yes 69%
- No 25%
- Unknown 6%



Before looking for your course, did you know where you wanted to study?

- Country**
- Yes 71%
 - No 23%
 - Unknown 6%
- City/town**
- Yes 46%
 - No 47%
 - Unknown 7%
- School**
- Yes 25%
 - No 67%
 - Unknown 8%



Thank you to the following schools for participating in our survey: Aisling Ireland, Dublin; Alpha College of English, Dublin; Atlantic Language Galway, Galway; Centre of English Studies, Dublin; Cork English College, Cork; English in Dublin, Dublin; Galway Language Centre, Galway; Kaplan Aspect, Dublin; London College Dublin, Dublin; Pace Language Institute, Bray; Yeats Language School, Sligo.

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