

Malta confident despite Spanish slump

Malta has revealed that English language enrolments were up by nearly a third last year on 2006 figures, thanks in part to a rise in students from Spain because of the government grants available (see LTM, August 2008, page 25).

Despite fewer Spanish students taking up the grants this year – reports indicate 42,000 applications were made this year, out of 100,000 available grants, not all of which will be approved – Malta is confident that business for the current year will be good again.

Schools' association, Felton, predicts up to 5,000 Spanish grant holders this summer, down from 8,000 who enrolled last year, but with a new teacher scholarship available, other Spanish business might be in the pipeline. Meanwhile, the latest statistics reveal that Asian and South American students are slowly increasing in number.

Overall, in 2007, 86,593 students studied English in Malta. With an average stay of 2.4 weeks per student, total volume was

just over 212,000 student weeks. Most students were aged between 16 and 17 years and over 70 per cent were from Western Europe, notably France, Spain, Germany, Italy and Russia. Seven out of every 100 incoming tourists were language students last year, rising to 11 during the summer.

Last summer, the huge increase in students caused problems such as overcrowded accommodation and unruliness and many members of the public want the Maltese authorities to exert greater influence over language schools regarding the conduct of students. Maltese Tourism Minister, Mario de Marco, told one online newspaper that Malta was nearly excluded from the list of destinations available to Spanish grant holders this year because of Spain's concerns over the complaints received from the Maltese public.

This year, a guidebook is being prepared by Felton to issue to all foreign students, giving them advice on appropriate behaviour. ●

Sunshine Coast in Australia launches its own association



A GROUP of international educators based in Australia's Sunshine Coast region has formed an association to promote the benefits of studying in the Queensland locale and to work collectively to grow market share.

Comprising over 20 members working in the English language, vocational and higher education sectors, Sunshine

Coast Education (Suned) officially launched in May at an event attended by the local mayor (pictured below, left).



Kim Edwards of Sea English Academy International in Maroochydore, QLD, a member of Suned, said, "Liaising closely with government on local, state and federal levels, Suned's mission is to support, promote and grow the region's industry in a global environment." She added that members were committed to "showcasing the region's education industry to the worldwide international education market". ●

Two new brands at LAL

THE LAL Malta school in Sliema will no longer operate as part of the LAL Group of schools, which also comprises LAL Torbay in the UK, LAL Fort Lauderdale in the USA and LAL Cape Town and Durban in South Africa, as well as summer centres and partner schools.

Chris Nolan, Marketing Director at LAL, told *Language Travel Magazine* that the decision was taken because "the different parts of the business require two distinct strategies – hence the creation of two separate commercial entities and two independent brands".

LAL Malta will revert to its original name of Institute of English Language Studies (IELS) under the management of Brian Mizzi, with Clive Cordina joining the team as General Manager of Operations (see page 10). The ownership structure remains a 50/50 split between LAL's holding company, FTI in Germany, and the Mizzi Organisation in Malta.

Meanwhile, LAL has re-branded its remaining schools. ●

UK mobilises immigration crime teams

THE UK is promising to be tough on immigration crime, with those not fulfilling the terms of their visa, working illegally or overstaying likely to be tracked down by local immigration teams. In a report, *Enforcing the Deal*, published in June, the UK Border Agency (UKBA) promised a shake-up of its staff, with up to 80 local immigration teams being formed of 7,500 officers – charged with working to identify offenders.

Over 1,000 extra immigration staff will be focused on enforcement duties, action will be taken against employers and serious offenders will be automatically deported. UK Home Secretary, Jacqui Smith, said, "The UK's immigration system is undergoing the biggest shake-up for a generation and these changes [to UKBA staff organisation] will ensure our frontline officers can continue to implement these reforms."

Priorities include, among others, holding individuals, businesses and colleges that break the law to account. Up to five thousand operations targeted at identifying and penalising organisations are promised for 2008/2009.

These reforms are part of the wider Points-Based System, parts of which are already in operation. The Tier 4 category, relating to students, is expected to begin in spring 2009. ●



FPP Edu-Media Expo Brazil Roadshow
Date: September 4-14
Venue: various, Brazil
j.ronchetti@fppmediacorp.com
www.fppmedia.com

The Alphe UK Workshop
Date: September 5-7
Venue: London, UK
jane@hothousemedia.com
www.hothousemedia.com

The LTM Star Awards
Date: September 6
Venue: London, UK
jane@hothousemedia.com
www.hothousemedia.com

The ICEF Higher Education Workshop
Date: September 7-9
Venue: Antwerp, Belgium
info@icef.com
www.icef.com

StudyWorld London
Date: September 8-10
Venue: London, UK
info@studyworldfair.com
www.studyworldfair.com

Annual Conference of the EAIE
Date: September 10-13
Venue: Antwerp, Belgium
eaie@eaie.nl
www.eaie.nl

MEI-Relsa Mini Workshop
Date: September 12
Venue: Athlone, Co. Westmeath, Ireland
info@mei.ie
www.mei.ie

WYSTC 2008
Date: September 13-17
Venue: Brooklyn, NY, USA
mailbox@wystc.org
www.wystc.org

Camp Beaumont in UK sold to bank's private equity arm

THE KINGSWOOD Educational Group, which incorporates UK summer camp operator Camp Beaumont, and Kingswood's sister company, School Travel Group (STG), have been sold to DLJ Merchant Banking, the private equity division of Credit Suisse, in a UK£100 million (US\$200 million) deal.

DLJ acquired the two companies from Bowmark Capital, which had built up the divisions as part of the umbrella Education & Adventure Travel (EAT) Group, since acquiring STG in 2004 and Kingswood last year.

Camp Beaumont sells to an international clientele, offering English language courses as part of residential activity camps. Kingswood is the UK's second largest provider of residential and adventure activity courses for UK children.

Terry Williamson, Joint-Chief Executive of EAT, told a newspaper that with a new injection of capital, the group could continue to grow both in the UK and in Europe. "It is a difficult economic climate at the moment but we are looking to grow 10 per cent per annum in the next three years," he told *The Argus*.



BC told to work with private schools



A RECENT value-for-money report into the activities of the British Council has signalled that despite running a successful English language teaching operation, the British Council's teaching business has a high cost-base, charges premium prices and has limited reach outside of overseas capital cities.

The UK's National Audit Office (NAO) recommends in its report, *The British Council: Achieving Impact*, that the organisation should pursue a target of delivering at least one-third of its English tuition in partner premises. Other recommendations include broadening its offerings online and recruiting teachers that may not be native English speakers in order to "meet demand and enable the Council to recruit locally".

Dialogue with private sector UK organisations is advised to explore ways to cooperate in developing overseas markets and to avoid unfair competition on the part of the Council. The Council was also advised to consider the BBC's model in teaching English while ensuring fair competition.

The report reveals that the UK£181 million (US\$361 million) English language teaching and examinations operation of the British

Council is financially successful, with markets such as Hong Kong and Spain particularly profitable and responsible for supporting centres in less established markets. Moreover, "its best centres operate in a manner comparable with good business practice in major private sector language schools".

In 2006/2007, the British Council received UK£195 million (US\$389 million) of public money and earned a further UK£350 million (US\$699 million) through its own enterprises, principally by teaching English, delivering examinations overseas and managing client-funded contracts.

New school premises for Actilingua and Sprachcaffe

TWO language schools in different parts of the world are upgrading their school premises to appeal to ever-discerning language travellers.

In Austria, Actilingua Academy in Vienna opened its newly renovated school in an art nouveau-style house in May this year. The school boasts many student resources, including a multimedia library and workspace as well as a student lounge and light, airy classrooms and has Wi-Fi in the whole building (see right).

In Mexico, Sprachcaffe Language Plus is building a new school in Playa del Carmen, 200 metres from the beach, which is scheduled to open in November (see artist's impression left). With 60 studio flats all equipped with en-suite bathrooms and a capacity of 180 beds, the school will offer



on-site study facilities and accommodation combined.

Alberto Sarno at Sprachcaffe commented, "The design of Sprachcaffe's newest venture combines classical features with typical Mexican architecture: arched balconies surround the central courtyard, which houses the open air swimming pool and al fresco dining possibilities." Other facilities will include a bar and fitness centre as well as the language school.

Currency

1xUS\$ =currency*

Argentinean	Pesos	3.023
Australian	Dollar	1.045
Brazilian	Real	1.604
British	Pound	0.500
Bulgarian	Leva	1.239
Canadian	Dollar	1.015
Chilean	Pesos	524.40
Chinese (PR)	Yuan RMB	6.856
Czech	Koruny	15.16
Danish	Kroner	4.726
Egyptian	Pound	5.329
EU	Euro	0.633
Hong Kong	Dollar	7.797
Hungarian	Forint	149.47
Icelandic	Kronur	79.81
Indonesian	Rupiah	9,182.7
Israeli	New Shekels	3.335
Japanese	Yen	105.46
Mexican	Peso	10.304
New Zealand	Dollar	1.312
Norwegian	Kroner	5.070
Pakistan	Rupees	68.150
Polish	Zloty	2.130
Russian	Rubles	23.45
Singaporean	Dollar	1.359
Slovakian	Koruny	19.125
South African	Rand	7.886
South Korean	Won	1,051.35
Swedish	Kronor	5.990
Swiss	Franc	1.017
Taiwanese	NT Dollar	30.362
Thai	Baht	33.433
Turkish	New Lira	1.237
Venezuelan	Bolivar	2.147

*Rates are subject to change and should be used as indications only. 01/07/08.

FPP Edu-Media Expo Latin America Roadshow

Date: September 17 - October 8
Venue: various, Latin America
j.ronchetti@fppmediacorp.com
www.fppmedia.com

The AAIEP Agents Workshop

Date: October 4-5
Venue: Washington DC, USA
info@csglobal.net
www.csglobal.net /
www.bmimedia.net

Quality English Mini Workshop

Date: October 7
Venue: Kiev, Ukraine
info@quality-english.com
www.quality-english.com

Foreign Languages Plus

Date: October 6-13
Venue: Moscow, St Petersburg - Russia
abroad@study.ru
http://plus.study.ru

Study Abroad and Language Fair

Date: October 7
Venue: Busan, Korea
kamc@korea.com
www.kamc.com

Australian International Education Conference

Date: October 7-10
Venue: Brisbane, Australia
conference@iip.com

Scope on the Globe

Date: October 8-11
Venue: Utrecht, Netherlands
s.vdaakster@aromedia.nl
www.scopeontheglobe.com

Quality English Mini Workshop

Date: October 9
Venue: Warsaw, Poland
info@quality-english.com
www.quality-english.com

MEI-Relsa Tokyo & Osaka Workshop

Date: September 12
Venue: tbc
info@mei.ie
www.mei.ie

International Education Fairs of Turkey

Date: October 12-19
Venue: Ankara, Izmir, Bursa, Istanbul - Turkey
info@ieft.net
www.ieft.net