

EUROPEAN LANGUAGE LEARNING MATERIALS
SURVEY

Ireland National Report

by

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On behalf of

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1 Introduction

This is a summative survey which details only part of what was the initial focus of the original ELLMS. The main emphasis in this part of the survey was contact with focus groups and completion of the questionnaires by providers of the EU languages outlined in the Methodology and Approach document as received. A special effort was made to outline information on the demand for Irish as foreign language in EU countries and on materials being sought by providers. As the Preliminary Study carried out by four partners, UK, Germany, Spain and Portugal focused on the provision of and needs for materials for learning French, and as English materials were the subject of a special study carried out by ICC in Germany these two languages are not included.

1.1 Publishers in Ireland

Materials for the main EU languages that are published in the UK are available in Ireland. There are a small number of publishers in Ireland that produce and distribute MFL materials (see Appendix 1)

1.2 Materials for Less Widely Used and Taught Languages

Ireland would be in a similar position to the UK in that there is a small supply of materials for the LWUTL. Where such material does exist it has been developed specifically by individual providers to cater for a defined need. This has been done in the case of languages for vocational purposes where material has been prepared by partners working together to further both their home based requirements and the needs of language programmes in Ireland e.g. one provider cited materials developed programmes by Dutch /Irish partners and Danish/Irish partners

Languages in the survey which are not in general demand from providers in Ireland are Finnish, Greek, Norwegian and Letzeburgisch. Some self-access material exists and linguistic information about these languages is also available.

1.3 Materials for More Widely Taught and Used Languages

The EU languages being looked at in this survey which are most widely taught in Ireland are German, Spanish and Italian. Because these languages are available as subjects for school-goers and are examined in the final school examination – the Leaving Certificate Examination - there is a pool of materials, teachers and providers for these languages. This is not true for other EU languages. However most materials are aimed at beginners and intermediate levels. According to several course providers there is a general shortage of language learning materials for the non-compulsory post-16 education sectors for general purposes and particularly for specific vocational purposes.

(Irish as a foreign language is looked at separately - see page 12)

1.4 Primary Language Learning

A pilot project has been underway in Ireland for the last two years with the final aim of offering French, German, Spanish and Italian in the last two years of Primary school. All the teachers involved have produced language specific materials but for the moment none of these have been published.

A new curriculum has just been introduced in Primary Schools. The teaching methods and materials being used in the teaching of Irish are now closer to those used in the teaching of a foreign language in Primary School e.g. communicative approach, emphasis on the process of acquiring a language etc.

2 Demand for EU languages and materials needs outlined

(Irish as a foreign language - see page 12)

2.1 Needs analysis and consultation with focus groups

A needs analysis was carried out with **focus groups and experts** from the FE,AE,HE non-specialist language providers and Vocational training providers (Appendix 11).

The consultation sessions took the form of a postal questionnaire with follow-up phone call or an email questionnaire with follow-up phonecall.

The focus groups identified the following needs across the different sectors and levels.

2.2 Adult Education - Language for General Purposes

a) Beginners Level

Of the languages surveyed, the following **three** languages were identified as most in demand, in rank order:

1. Spanish
2. German
3. Italian

The respondents were **generally satisfied with materials**. The types of materials in use were mainly those that suited part time Adult Education learning i.e. printed material /audio cassettes/TV . Other types of material such as CALL would require changes in the mode of delivery currently in use.

b) Intermediate Level

The same **three** languages were identified as being in demand at Intermediate level.

Again these were in general rank order:

1. Spanish
2. German
3. Italian

Again most respondents felt that the materials satisfied teaching/learning needs at intermediate level, although a greater variety of materials targeting *adult* learners would be welcome.

There was almost no demand for Advanced Level language courses in this sector.

2.3 Further Education & Vocational Training :Languages for Vocational Purposes

As this is an area with direct contact with industry there was a mixed response to the question of materials.

Some providers had installed multimedia laboratories for the express purpose of training students to a high degree of linguistic proficiency. In most of these cases the programmes offered also included compulsory residence in the country of the target language. This is particularly the case with training for the teleservices industry (a defined growth area) where trainees are expected by industry to show an advanced level of linguistic competence in the languages required.

a) Beginners Level

In general, the **three** languages most in demand are the following, in rank order.

1. German
2. Spanish
3. Italian

[Dutch and Danish were mentioned once each because materials had been developed in partnership for a specific programme.]

Some needs were identified for materials that were:

- Adult - oriented
- Communicative
- Suited to distance learning

- Aimed at listening and speaking skills
- And more resources such as
- Audio cassettes
- Teacher resource packs,
- CALL
- CD Rom

b) Intermediate Level

The following **three languages** were identified as in most demand at Intermediate level ,
in rank order:

1. German
2. Spanish
3. Italian

The types of materials for which particular needs were identified were:

- Communicative.
- Distance learning
- Teachers resource packs
- Business materials (particularly in Spanish)

c) Advanced Level

Vocational language trainers identified demand for **three languages** at Advanced level:

1. German
2. Spanish
3. Italian

The majority of providers offering this level had already developed materials and offered exchange programmes. Most of these providers were preparing people for the teleservices industry.

2.4 Higher Education –Non-specialist language programmes

Languages for General Purposes & for Vocational Purposes

Many institutions develop their own language learning materials to meet the specific needs of their courses e.g. languages for specialist vocational areas such as engineering and science. All the correspondents commented on how time consuming it is to prepare specific material from authentic sources for class use.

Most language centres offered self access facilities across the range of EU languages.

The major need identified by HE practitioners is for specific materials that are of interest to the students because of the interface with their own subject. They were also interested in materials to develop skills in autonomous language learning and materials to support learning in self-access language centres..

a) Beginners level

The demand at beginners level for the languages covered by this survey varied from institution to institution, although the first two languages German and Spanish were common across all the institutions.

[There was a general demand for the first three with only one institution looking for Dutch and Irish as a foreign language.]

1. German
2. Spanish
3. Italian/Portuguese
4. Dutch
5. Irish as a foreign language

While some centres felt the needs of many of these languages were met, others felt materials were needed.

The particular types of language specific materials needed were identified as:

German

Modern- up to date commercial German textbooks

Videos – with special emphasis on business

Textbooks reflecting changes in the language of the IT industry

Health Sciences materials for communicative classroom work

Listening

General materials for Science and Engineering

Spanish

All types of materials aimed at business, science and technology and agriculture.

Italian

All types of materials for specific subject areas – particularly architecture and history of art.

Portuguese

General purposes materials such as

Basic coursebooks, textbooks, vocabulary exercises

Listening, speaking, reading skills

Audio cassettes, videos

b) Intermediate Level

There is a general demand for the following **four** languages at this level as follows:

1. German
2. Spanish
3. Italian
4. Portuguese

The types of materials needed were similar to those for beginners.

German

All types of up to date commercial German material

Videos – with special emphasis on business

IT focused material – texts and software

Health Sciences materials for communicative classroom work – texts and video material especially mentioned.

General materials for Science and Engineering

Self Study materials,

CALL - all types

Spanish

All types of materials for business

All types of materials for science and technology.

Self Study materials,

CALL - all types.

Italian

All types of materials for specific subject areas – particularly architecture and history of art.

c)Advanced level

There is a demand for **two** languages at this level, German and Spanish in all the institutions surveyed with one exception where only German was taken at Advanced level.

1. German
2. Spanish

Some institutions felt that there was a need for more materials at this level. They highlighted the following needs:

German

All types of up to date commercial German material

Videos – with special emphasis on business

IT focused material – texts and software

Health Sciences materials for communicative classroom work – texts and video material especially mentioned.

General materials for Science and Engineering

Self Study materials,

CALL - all types

Spanish

All types of materials for business

All types of materials for science and technology.

Self Study materials,

CALL - all types.

3. Irish as a Foreign Language

3.1 Irish as a foreign language in the EU

i) Northern Ireland

There are courses in Irish throughout Northern Ireland. They are run in the Universities and in places like the Linen Hall Belfast, in centres in Newry, Omagh, Mullaghbawn etc. About 3000 people are attending these courses. Of this number approximately 25% are starting Irish for the first time, approximately another 30% might have learnt Irish before as teenagers in summer schools, and another 30% are quite good at the language and attend to keep up their knowledge of the language. About 5% or a little more have not had the opportunity for various political or cultural reasons to have any contact with the Irish language before this.

In Northern Ireland there are courses from Beginners to Advanced

ii) UK

In the UK there are courses in Irish as a foreign language in the following areas

Scotland : Glasgow and Edinburgh Universities and Irish Centres in both cities

England : Liverpool, Manchester, Birmingham, Cambridge and in London in several places.

Wales : There is just one course in Bangor.

In the UK there are courses at Beginners and Intermediate levels

iii) Germany

There are courses in Bonn, Berlin, Frankfurt, Stuttgart, Hanover and Munich. These courses are in Universities and in other centres.

In Germany courses are mainly at Beginner level – with some possibly at Intermediate level.

iv) France

There are courses in Rennes and in Paris in the College des Irlandais.

In France courses are mainly at Beginner level – with some possibly at Inter level.

v) Holland

There are courses at Beginners level in two centres in Amsterdam.

vi) Belgium

There are courses at Beginners level in the Universities of Antwerp and Brussels

vii) Spain

There is a course at Beginners level run in the University of Madrid. It is not run by the University but uses their accommodation.

viii) Italy

There are courses at Beginners level in Rome

ix) Sweden

There is a course at Beginners level in the University of Upsala

3.2 Identified needs for Irish materials

Materials of “all types” are needed at all levels especially materials prepared with an emphasis on communication.

One provider mentioned a need for certain materials in particular

- Distance learning
- Web-based learning
- Class materials and independent learning
- Pronunciation practice
- Separate and Integrated skills
- Textbooks / workbooks/ coursebooks (communicative focus)
- Audio cassettes/CDs (Words for songs included with music tapes/ CDs)
- Simple stories for adults
- Dual language books
- Videos
- CD software
- TV supported resources
- Teacher resource material

4. Conclusions of Needs Analysis

1) In Further and Adult Education sectors – providing language for general purposes

The three languages listed **German, Spanish, Italian** were taken by beginners. A very small number of providers (20%) saw a demand for continuing courses at Intermediate level.

Many providers commented on a change of emphasis in this sector. Courses in various aspects of IT are now more popular with this adult sector than language courses.

2) In Further and Vocational Education – providing language for vocational purposes

The three languages listed here are German Spanish and Italian.

In specific training areas language materials had been developed to support the particular lack perceived by the industry.

The material that was developed in these partnerships often served a dual purpose. The mother-tongue partner used the materials for work experience programmes and the other partner used the materials for language learning.

Other respondents reported that general language training was requested by some industries - particularly those providing work placement where specific language could be acquired on-site during work exchanges e.g construction work/ engineering placement. This indicated a complete lack of any previous specific material suited to their requirement.

3) In the HE sector – providing language for both general and specific purposes

Specific materials of all types are needed for beginners and intermediate learners in the four languages listed German, Spanish, Italian and Portuguese. At advanced level, specific materials are needed for Spanish and German.

4) Irish as a foreign language

A main provider of courses such as those listed in commented on materials needs. There are gaps in the provision of materials for Irish as a foreign language particularly because Irish until recently was seen from mother tongue perspective.

Because of an increasing interest not only in EU countries but especially in North America general class materials have been developed recently at Beginner level. There are also Internet based courses but they tend to be quite disorganised.

There is an Irish-language television channel and materials can be prepared for class using this authentic source. However as with other areas of language teaching (i.e. special purposes material) the time required to do this is just not available to most teachers.

The most outstanding general need identified at the moment is a good class-based communicative course for adult beginners.

Gael-Linn and ITE will be filling this gap in early 2001

APPENDIX 1

ELLMS Short Published Materials Survey in Ireland

Materials for EU languages

[additional to materials that would be available in the UK are the following]

Abacus are providers and distributors of CD materials. This company already identified a gap in multimedia materials and is now about to move to on-line materials.

Their catalogue can be accessed at www.language-software.com

They distribute materials in five of the EU languages listed for this survey

Portuguese(Beg-Inter), Spanish (Beg-Adv.),Italian(Beg-Adv.), German(Beg-Adv.), and Dutch(Beg-Adv.).

Authentik Language Learning Resources prepare and distribute a language paper in three of the languages listed for this survey- Spanish, German and Italian.

They can be accessed at www.authentik.com .

Their resource bank aims to cover needs in Spanish and German up to Intermediate level of the Common European Framework. And it includes 16+ in Further Education and Adult Education as part of its target audience.

Materials for Irish as a foreign language [information supplied by ITE]

1 *Cogar*. Communicative, radio-based self-instructional course, now on tapes, with Learner Notes. RTÉ/Gael-Linn. Level: Adult, Intermediate.

2 *Anois agus Arís*. Communicative, self-instructional, originally for TV, now available in book, cassette and video. RTÉ. Level: Adult, Intermediate.

3 *Now Your Talking*. Communicative, self-instruction, originally for TV, now available in book, cassette and Video. BBC/RTÉ/Gael Media. Level: Adult Beginner

- 4 *Teach Yourself Irish*. Diarmuid Ó Sé and Joe Sheils. Self-instructional, book and cassette. Hodder & Stoughton. Structural. Adult Beginner
- 5 *Learning Irish* Micheál Ó Siadhail. Yale University Press. Book, cassettes. Structural. Adult beginner.
- 6 *Muzzy*. Galway, .TeleGael, Videotapes and book. Structural. Children, beginners
- 7 *SpeakWrite*. Book and CD. Structural, computer-based. Nostik Learning Systems, University College Galway. Adult beginners.
- 8 *Cúrsa Closamhairc Gaeilge* Risteard Mac Gabhann. Ogmios, Derry. Book and tapes. Self-instructional, Audiovisual. Adult Intermediate
- 9 *Buntús Cainte*. T. Ó Domhnalláin, Dublin, Government Publications. Structural. Adult intermediate.
- 10 *Irish is Fun* Aodán Mac Póilín (Based on *Welsh is Fun*) Talybont, Y Lolfa. Structural. Adult beginners
- 11 *Irish-Gaelisch Wort für Wort*. Verlag Peter, Rump GmbH. Book and tapes. Self-instructional, structural. Adult beginner
- 12 *Drochlá Ruairí*. Dingle, Co. Kerry, Fios Feasa, CD. Structural, self-instructional. Children, beginners.

Institutions that are involved in Education –either directly or as sources of educational research also produce materials e.g. ITE / Comhar Na Muinteoiri Gaeilge

APPENDIX 11

Focus Groups and Experts consulted

Further and Adult Education

15 groups

Newpark Centre for Lifelong – Adult and Continuing Education
Adult Education Section – Co.Clare VEC
Adult Education Section – Co.Offaly VEC
Adult Education Section – Co.Kilkenny VEC
Adult Education Section – Co.Tipperary (SR) VEC
Adult Education Section – Co.Cork VEC
Adult Education Section – Co.Mayo VE
Adult Education Section – Co.Carlow VEC
College of Commerce, Cork
Dun Laoire Community Education Services
Adult Education Section – Colaiste Chiarain Co. Kildare
Adult Education Section – St. Patrick’s Comprehensive, Shannon , Co Clare
Adult Education Section – Portmarknock Community School.
Adult Education Section – Carrigaline Community School
Adult Education Centre – Letterkenny, Co. Donegal.

Further and Vocational Language Training

40 groups

27 Centres for Provision of Teleservices Courses

FAS National Training Authority
CERT State Tourism Training Authority
Further Education Section, Department of Education and Science
College of Further Education Dundrum, Dublin 16
Waterford Institute of Technology
Tralee Institute of Technology
Cork Institute of Technology
Dundalk Institute of Technology
Dublin Institute of Technology
Carlow Institute of Technology
Co. Kilkenny Vocational Education Committee
Co Tipperary (SR) Vocational Education Committee
Co. Carlow Vocational Education Committee

Higher Education Providers of Programmes with Language Courses

6 groups

Applied Language Centre, University College Dublin

The Language Centre University College Cork

Language Resources Centre University of Limerick

Language Services Dublin City University

Trinity College Dublin

University College Galway, Language Resources/Providers

APPENDIX 11a
Questionnaire used for Focus Group/Expert Consultation

European Language Learning Material Survey

Language providers in Ireland are taking part in a large European project funded by the European Commission. The purpose of the project is to survey the needs for and provision of language learning materials in the non-mainstream educational sectors ie. Further Education, Adult Education, non-specialist Higher Education Programmes and Vocational Education. It is hoped to thus identify ‘the gaps’ in provision, which will then inform the Commission’s future strategy for encouraging the development of language learning materials.

Needs Analysis of Language Learning Materials

Through consultation with focus groups/ practitioners, we are hoping to identify

- i. the scale of demand for different languages among potential learners*
- ii. in particular, the type of language learning materials which are currently needed for the learning of these languages.*

Notes for Guidance in completing the survey

Level Please complete a separate sheet for each level

Definition of Levels used in this Survey

- A = Beginner (Entry – Level 1 National Language Standards/GCSE Basic)
(A1 to A2 of the “Common European Framework”)
- B = Intermediate (Levels 2 – 3 NLS / GCSE Higher- A Level)
(B1 to B2 of the “Common European Framework”)
- C = Advanced (Levels 4 – 5 NLS / Degree - native speaker)
(C1 to C2 of the “Common European Framework”)

I. Focus group Educational sector

Please cross the appropriate box to indicate the sector(s) your response covers:

*further education *vocational education * adult education *higher education (non specialist)

II. Orientation/Purpose of language learning

Please cross the appropriate box to indicate whether your response refers to

‘general language learning’ or ‘language learning for vocational /special purposes’

(one only box; if necessary, use a separate questionnaire if you are responding for more than one area)

III. Materials needed for the Eleven Languages covered by this questionnaire

Language	Abbreviation	Language	Abbreviation
Danish	DAN	Italian	ITA
Dutch	NED	Letzeburgisch	LET
Finnish	FIN	Portuguese	POR
German	GER	Swedish	SWE
Greek	GRE	Spanish	SPA
Irish	IRI		

European Language Learning Material Survey

Questionnaire - Level A - Beginners

1. Focus group Educational Sector

further education adult education vocational education higher education
(non specialist)

II. Orientation general vocational/special purposes

III. Materials Needed

Identifying demand for learning different languages

In the grid below, please

- a) number the languages 1 – 11 with respect to perceived demand, 1 being the language with the highest demand
(ignore languages for which there is no concrete demand)
- b) put a cross in the corresponding box (YES/NO) to indicate whether the present material provisions match demand

Nr	Language	Yes	No
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			
7.			
8.			
9.			
10.			
11.			

European Language Learning Material Survey

Questionnaire - Level B – Intermediate (GCSE-A level equiv)

1. Focus group Educational Sector

further education adult education vocational education higher education
(non specialist)

II. Orientation general vocational/special purposes

III. Materials Needed

Identifying demand for learning different languages

In the grid below, please

- c) number the languages 1 – 11 with respect to perceived demand, 1 being the language with the highest demand
(ignore languages for which there is no concrete demand)
- d) put a cross in the corresponding box (YES/NO) to indicate whether the present material provisions match demand

Nr	Language	Yes	No
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			
7.			
8.			
9.			
10			
11			

European Language Learning Material Survey

Questionnaire - Level C– Advanced (Degree equiv.)

1. Focus group Educational Sector

further education adult education vocational education higher education
(non specialist)

II. Orientation general vocational/special purposes

III. Materials Needed

Identifying demand for learning different languages

In the grid below, please

- e) number the languages 1 – 11 with respect to perceived demand, 1 being the language with the highest demand
(ignore languages for which there is no concrete demand)
- f) put a cross ☒ in the corresponding box (YES/NO) to indicate whether the present material provisions match demand

Nr	Language	Yes	No
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			
7.			
8.			
9.			
10.			
11.			

RESOURCE MATRIX

	Competence			
	Beginner	Intermediate	Advanced	Any
<u>Learning/Teaching Approach</u>				
Communicative				
Structural (grammar/translation)				
Project-based				
Open & Distance Learning				
Self Study				
Web-based learning				
None of the above				
Learning Context				
Class				
One-to-one				
Workshop/semi-independent				
Independent learning				
Intensive/accelerated				
Exchange/Ed.Visit/Tandem				
Learning Objective				
Language for General Purposes				
Language for Specific Purposes				
Language for Mobility (for temporary work/study abroad)				
Needs Analysis/Assessment				
Exam/Accreditation-focussed				
Grammar				
Vocabulary exercises				
Pronunciation Practice				
Creativity Enhancement (eg. drama, creative writing, psycho drama)				
Language games				
Mediation (Basic Interpreting)				
Cultural Studies				
Intercultural & Language Awareness				
Language Skills Development				
Listening				
Speaking				
Reading				
Writing				
Integrated Skills				
Autonomous language learning				
Teaching & Learning Tools				
Textbook, student/teacher books				
Workbooks				
exercise/workbooks (independent of coursebooks)				
Audio cassettes/tapes/CDs				
Video				
TV & radio (+digital TV)				
Satellite TV				
Learner magazines/papers/readers				
Teacher resource pack/OHT/photocopy masters				
Visuals eg. flashcards, maps				
<i>CALL</i>				
Learning Software-available locally, not on-line (CDRom, DVD, discs etc)				
On-line activities				

Authoring tool (e.g., WIDA software)				
<i>Reference Resources</i>				
Dictionary				
Grammar				
Student support eg. tutor on-line				
Glossary/phrasebook				