



Appointment sessions by day, dinner in a palace by night: all part of building relationships at the English UK Fair, Budapest

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Question: what combines a gypsy band serenade, a competition to find Ronald Reagan in Budapest and 24 appointment sessions over two days?

Answer: the annual English UK Fair for Central, Eastern and Southeastern Europe. As always, the workshop was very popular, attracting 48 agents from 15 countries, 33 English UK members and five service providers, to the Kempinski Hotel Corvinus in Budapest.

“It went really well: we’ve had lots of positive feedback from everyone about their meetings and also the amazing service in the hotel,” said Annie Wright, Deputy Chief Executive (Business Services), English UK.

“Some of the educators did elevator pitches for English UK special interest or regional groups, and those got very competitive, but the agents got lots of information they wanted. Our educators also got some insider market information on the region, as we had three local British Council representatives, as well as someone from the British Chamber of Commerce in Hungary.”

The fair followed English UK’s unique format of being open only to limited numbers of screened agents and accredited English UK member centres, supplementing two full days of formal workshop sessions with a lively social programme and seminars, so that everyone had plenty of opportunities to get to know each other.

There was plenty of praise for the event among participants. Kate Hargreaves, of Living Learning English, at her fifth fair, said the agents were “a very well-selected, varied group... [it’s] a first-class event, superbly organised and an absolute pleasure to attend. I am confident of very positive outcomes to my meetings and the professional but friendly atmosphere of the English UK fairs is very much valued.” David Jones of ETC International College, a first-timer, said it was “probably the best fair I have attended... it’s hard to find fault - it’s very well organised.” He was also pleased with the range of markets represented. Bosnian agent Djukica Mirkovic, of the Center of Foreign Languages ‘Big Ben’, attending for the third time, said: “I’ve met many English schools which seem to be good for my candidates. All these representatives are very professional.”

First-timer Rose Gulnihal Aydin, of the Futureducation Career & Education Consultancy in Turkey, said the fair was “extremely useful for networking with educators and also fellow agents, since agent-to-agent relations are equally important. The elevator pitches were perfect: they empowered the agents with knowledge.” For Joe Aquilina of Clubclass, it was “really good quality and good value for money,” good for agent partnerships and “an extremely useful place to build educator-to-educator relationships and share knowledge.”

The service providers exhibiting at the fair also found it productive. First-time exhibitor David Girecourt, of Guard.me International Insurance, found “It’s a great opportunity to meet both educators and agents in a friendly, relaxed (but still professional) environment. The balance is just right.”

The fair began with a spectacular drinks reception high above the Danube and a welcome with speeches from English UK Chief Executive Eddie Byers and Vazul Toth, chairman of the British Chamber of Commerce.

A seminar programme included market information tailored to both agents and educators before appointments sessions began. Formal work done for the day, the delegates were put into teams for a networking scavenger hunt across Budapest (with clues including the Ronald Reagan statue) before dinner accompanied by a gypsy band. A second full day of appointments sessions ended with a farewell dinner at the ornate Wenckheim Palace, where the party was greeted by a trumpet fanfare.

Notes to Editors

1. English UK is the world's leading language teaching association, with over 470 accredited centres in membership. It covers university and further education college language departments, international study centres in independent schools, educational trusts and charities, and private sector colleges. English UK is a UK registered charity (www.englishuk.com).
2. The English UK Fair, Budapest, took place at Kempinski Hotel Corvinus from 3-6 March 2015. Study abroad agents attended from Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Turkey and Ukraine.
3. Also attending the fair were representatives from the British Council in Russia, Poland and SIEM Europe, and a representative from the British Chamber of Commerce, Hungary. Exhibitors were Cambridge English, the British Council, Guard.me, White House Guardianships, and EAQA – the European Association of Quality Agents.
4. English UK organises the English UK Fairs, supported by the British Council. We organise four a year, each in a different region of the world and always in a luxury resort hotel. The next English UK Fair will be held in Santiago in April 2015.
5. For more information, please contact Roz Rozidor (International Manager, English UK) on roz@englishuk.com. More information on the fairs programme is available at www.englishukfairs.com.