



Things are moving fast. Major reviews are taking place – into the curriculum, GCSE, A Level – which could set the future of languages education. There are continuing concerns about the coherence of the languages offer. The [Language Rich Europe](#) report and the recent [Eurobarometer](#) have highlighted both the failings and the possibilities for multilingualism in our country. In the words of the press release we are “language rich” but “linguistically poor”.

All of this adds urgency to our work. We are therefore delighted to have launched a [new website](#) which will become a key campaign tool. We have also joined forces with the British Council and other partners in the Language Rich Europe project to promote debate and develop proposals for change. Critical for the success of such initiatives will be the engagement of key players from outside the languages world. We have made a start with two recent business-focused events in the past month. Over the autumn we aim to develop some clear actions to underpin our broad objectives and take the campaign to a new level.

**Lid King – Chair, Speak to the future**

## Website launch

In June we launched a brand new website at [www.speaktothefuture.org](http://www.speaktothefuture.org). This new platform makes it easier to see what the campaign is about, who's involved and how to play your part. We explain [why languages](#) are important – pulling together evidence which can be used to promote the cause. There's an [activist toolkit](#) with lots of handy information and resources, and you can easily share your love for languages through the Twitter button, and by [making your pledge](#).



*New website: making it easier to get involved*

We'd like to thank the European Commission Representation in the UK who have generously supported the development of the new website.

## Take their word for it ...

We would say that languages are important, wouldn't we? That's why we're recruiting individuals to speak up for languages and record their support for the campaign.

[Lizzie Fane](#), entrepreneur: *“Language skills enable you to have an exciting, varied career involving foreign travel, work abroad and international business. My work is aimed at inspiring students to study languages at university so they (and the UK) can reap the benefits.”*



*Lizzie Fane*

[Larry Lamb](#), actor and author: *“As a working-class lad from North London, learning French opened up the world for me ... If ordinary children are discouraged from learning languages, it weakens our society.”*

Read about all our [ambassadors](#) on the *Speak to the future* website.

## Talking business

Businesses lose at least £7 billion a year due to under-investment in languages, according to a 2011 report by the Education and Employers Taskforce. In a CBI survey, 72% of businesses said they value foreign language skills. Yet the perception remains that English is enough. Following a [breakfast meeting in April](#), big players from the world of commerce including CBI, London Chambers of Commerce, Herbert Smith and Bank of America Merrill Lynch are coming together under the leadership of Richard Hardie, Chair of UBS Ltd, to agree a plan for employers to speak up for languages. Watch this space and the [businesses](#) area of our website for more.



*72% of businesses say they value foreign language skills*

We're also building links with the Education and Employers Taskforce and their [Inspiring the future](#) scheme – launched by Nick Clegg and Joanna Lumley this July. Employee volunteers can record their language skills and be invited by schools and colleges to share their experience through career talks.

## Progress towards our objectives

Each of our campaign [objectives](#) – for all languages, for primary, for secondary, for higher education and for specialist linguists – has a working group behind it. Formed of leading figures in the languages field, they have been lobbying to push languages up the agenda.

### 1 Every language valued as an asset

This working group, led by Terry Lamb, is producing a briefing for headteachers and school governors, containing a rationale for developing a wider range of languages within the curriculum, and also for recognising and supporting learning taking place in the complementary schools. On behalf of the group, Teresa Tinsley responded to [an article in the Express, which had criticised the teaching of community languages](#). The group is striving to change public attitudes towards this tremendous asset, highlighted by the finding in the [2012 school census](#) that over 1 million students in England now speak a language at home in addition to English.

### 2 A coherent experience of languages for all children in primary school

In May 2012, we published the [‘Speak to the future view on teaching primary languages across the whole of Key Stage 2’](#) – and were delighted when, in June, the government announced [reforms](#) that will make languages compulsory from this stage – age 7. A step in the right direction, although working group leader Nikki Perry recognises that there is much work to be done: the [primary languages consultation](#), completing in September, gives another opportunity to inform government's plans.



*Languages compulsory from 7*

### 3 A basic working knowledge of at least two languages including English for every child leaving secondary school

Recent evidence has been damning in relation to secondary school language learning: a [European survey](#) suggested that only 9% of 14-15 year old pupils in England can use their first foreign language independently (the average for other countries is 42%). The [Language Rich Europe](#) project found that more learners in England abandon languages at 14 than in any other country. Group leader Bernardette Holmes is working actively with Language Rich Europe whose findings will help to spark debate and inform policy in secondary and other phases during events over the coming months.

#### 4 Every graduate qualified in a second language

Earlier this year, UCAS applications data highlighted the challenge for higher education: applications to European languages courses fell by 11.2 percent and to non-European languages by a staggering 21.5 percent. Our working group led by Pam Moores is studying ways of reversing this trend by providing information to school students and by reaching influential audiences such as parents, working closely with partners including the Higher Education Academy, [thirdyearabroad.com](http://thirdyearabroad.com) and Routes into Languages. Read more about the challenge in an article in [The Linguist](#).

#### 5 An increase in the number of highly-qualified linguists

We need translators and interpreters to support business meetings and translate market intelligence; we need people in business, science, industry and government who can operate 'locally' and engage with their counterparts in Europe and the BRICS countries; we need highly-qualified linguists to provide services and ensure that tourists are made welcome and want to return. Across the EU, there is an acute need for qualified English native interpreters and translators, given the importance of English as a medium of communication, particularly with the smaller languages. Working group leader Tim Connell looks at the scale of the problem and potential solutions in an article in [The Linguist](#).

### Inspiring Projects

There are already so many inspiring things happening in support of languages, we just want to make sure everyone knows about them. Here are two very different examples: you can read about more [Inspiring Projects](#) on our website.

#### The Language Factor

The Language Factor Song Competition, co-ordinated by Capital L Routes into Languages, aims to promote language learning among young people in London. In the final held in June, 25 students aged 14 to 19 presented beautiful ballads, raps and pop songs, written by themselves in French, Spanish, Japanese, Thai and Nepalese. [Read more](#).

#### Waltham Forest Bilingual Group

Organised and set up by parents who wanted to share experiences of raising children bilingually, Waltham Forest Bilingual Group is based in East London. The group holds monthly drop-in and play sessions, has developed workshops to help parents talk through issues, and has a library of books about multilingualism for parents to borrow. [Read more](#).



*Sharing experiences of raising children bilingually*

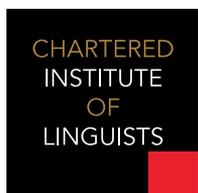
### Get involved! What will you do?

- Our ambassador [Hadleigh Roberts](#) addressed the Labour Party conference in September 2011 on the case for languages.
- [Adam Dewhirst](#), an A Level student from Yorkshire, wrote to local newspapers and to Shadow Education Minister Stephen Twigg to raise awareness of the *Speak to the future* campaign.
- Native Turkish speaker Betul Ozcan of the Anglo-European School in Ingatestone, Essex, got her schoolfriend Jodie Chandler-Leatt to take part in a singing competition as part of the Turkish Olympiad. Betul helped Jodie with her Turkish language and pronunciation, and her protégée won the UK final! [Read more](#).

If you need more ideas, try our [activist toolkit](#) for lots of great information sources and tools. You can also get involved on [Twitter](#) by following us or using the hashtag [#lovelanguages](#); you can like us on [Facebook](#) to get regular updates; or you might like to join the debate on [LinkedIn](#). If you haven't already, you can [make a pledge](#) and tell us what you will do to make a difference.

## Our sponsors

We're delighted this year to announce new sponsors Language Education & Partnerships, Sanako, the National Association of Language Advisers (NALA), the Higher Education Academy and the European Commission Representation in the UK. We would like to thank them and all our other sponsors for providing vital support to the campaign.



We would also like to thank the many other people and organisations who have offered their time, premises, ideas, contacts and prizes to help build the campaign. Our supporters are listed on our [website](#). [Contact us](#) if you too would like to help out.