



An Roinn Gnóthaí Eachtracha agus Trádála
Baile Átha Cliath 2

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
Dublin 2

Mr Gordon Deegan

Our Ref: FoI/Req/2014/060

15 October 2014

Dear Mr Deegan

I refer to your application under the Freedom of Information Acts 1997 and 2003 for access to information held by this Department, amended as follows:

[With reference to Parliamentary Question PQ30097/14]

- 1. A breakdown of the € 172,020 spent on language tuition - how much was spent on providing tuition for each language and can you also name the language in each case.*
- 2. The top ten earners in Ireland from the language tuition.*
- 3. The range of hourly rates charged by the tutors for one-to-one lessons in Ireland.*
- 4. The amount spent by the Department on language tuition over the preceding three years and if the Department can provide separate figures for 2013/12, 2012/11 and 2011/10.*
- 5. An update on efforts by the Department on selling its wine collection. Can you provide invoices of any wine sales by the Department in 2014. Internal reports on the progress of the wine sales.*

I am the deciding officer for your request. I have decided to grant you access to all existing information.

Language Tuition

1. The expenditure of €172,020 in the period 1 September 2013 to end June 2014 relates to tuition provided for the following 29 languages: Arabic, Bulgarian, Chinese, Danish, Estonian, French, German, Greek, Hebrew, Hungarian, Irish, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Latvian, Lithuanian, Maltese, Norwegian, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, Sign Language, Slovak, Slovene, Spanish, Swedish, Thai, Turkish, Vietnamese.

It is not possible to provide you with a breakdown of spending per language, as this information is not captured by our financial management system.

2. The top ten (by payment) tutors and language schools in Ireland in 2013 are as follows:

Alliance Francaise
Cathy Hartung
Confucius Institute for Ireland (UCD)
En Francais
German Language Centre
Instituto Cervantes
Languages Unlimited
Marie-Therese Saffre
Sandford Language Institute
Trinity College Dublin

3. The hourly rates charged by tutors/language schools for one-to-one tuition in Ireland range from €30 to €67.50.
4. Expenditure on language tuition in the years 2010 – 2013 was as follows:

2010	€214,030
2011	€182,849
2012	€156,435
2013	€191,666

Wine stock

5. The stock of wine facilitates provision of wines suitable for official events at a significant discount from the cost of purchasing them from caterers at the time they are required. Following a review of wine stock held by the Department in 2013, it was decided that the possibility of selling the higher value wines would be explored. Following this review and expressions of interest received, the Department negotiated the sale of a package in December 2013 for 4 labels with a view to recouping the original outlay by the Department. The wine was sold to a single wine merchant based in Ireland.

In January 2014, the Department again approached wine merchants regarding the market value of its wine stock, however no wine was sold then or since.

As regards internal reports on the progress of the wine sales, the following update was sent to the Secretary General earlier this year:

“Sale of wine stock

Following agreement by the former Secretary General to our proposal to circulate wine merchants in January 2014 with a list of wines over the €35 mark, we duly circulated 11 wine merchants. Of those circulated, only 4 responded. [REDACTED – Section 27 (Commercial Information)] noted that they did not have any further interest in the wine collection now that the Chateau Lynch Bages had been sold and did not wish to be further circulated. Only one merchant provided offers for the full list. We did not receive any suitable offers for the wines offered and in some cases the offers were risible. Although we had proposed that we would approach wine merchants thereafter on a quarterly basis, I believe there is an extremely low likelihood of receiving suitable offers in the short-term and therefore I would propose that we do not seek further offers until September 2014 (we noted last year, for example, that there was more of a market for certain wines in the period coming up to Christmas).”


Since this progress note issued, the situation has not changed. A further approach to wine merchants is planned for the near future.

Right of Appeal

Should you wish to appeal this decision, you may do so in writing to the Freedom of Information Unit, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 76-78 Harcourt Street, Dublin 2. A fee applies for an appeal, with the exception of an appeal against the imposition of a fee; the level of this fee has been set at €75. Payment should be made by way of bank draft, money order, postal order or personal cheque made payable to the Secretary General, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

You should make your appeal within 4 weeks (20 working days) from the date of this notification. However, the making of a late appeal may be permitted in appropriate circumstances. The appeal will involve a complete reconsideration of the matter by a more senior member of the staff of this Department.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Julie O'Brien'.

Julie O'Brien
FOI Officer