

PRESS INFORMATION

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Esperanto - a worldwide community

The Esperanto Association of Britain (EAB) exhibited at this year's Language Show at London Olympia last month.

The language of Esperanto was conceived in 1887 by a Jewish doctor, Ludovic Zamenhof as a universal second language that people could use whilst still retaining their national identities.

Visitors to the show included language learners of all abilities, teachers, linguists, job seekers and people with a passion for foreign travel, dance, culture and cuisine. Stephen Thompson, Publicity Officer for the EAB, said: "We're really keen to spread the language of Esperanto to more than just teachers and pupils - it can be a tool for so much more.

"As the global village becomes smaller and communication becomes faster and easier, it's vital that we can communicate with each other on an equal playing field.

"A universal second language is essential, both in terms of business and social networking," he continued.

Esperanto is said to be five times as easy to learn as Spanish or French, 10 times as easy as Russian, and 20 times easier than Arabic or Chinese.

Whilst no country has officially adopted the language, there's been a community of up to two million speakers in 90 countries for the past century, and there are more than 25,000 books written in Esperanto in circulation.

Speakers of Esperanto were recently surprised by a Littlewoods advert in which dialogue was spoken in the language. Advertising bosses liked the flow and the sound of Esperanto and said it went well with the style of their clothes.

There has been an Esperanto organisation in Britain for more than 100 years, and the latest incarnation, the EAB, was set up in 1976. It works with partners, including academic institutions, to raise awareness of the language to young people, teachers, pupils, academic institutions and relevant government bodies.

More information can be obtained from www.esperanto-gb.org, or by calling Esperanto House on 0845 230 1887.

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