



# **UN I & UN II Language Exam Pilot Report**

## **An innovation project**

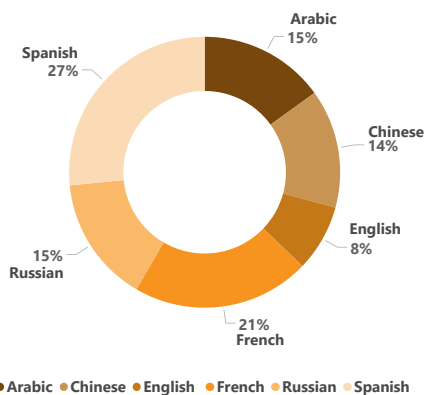
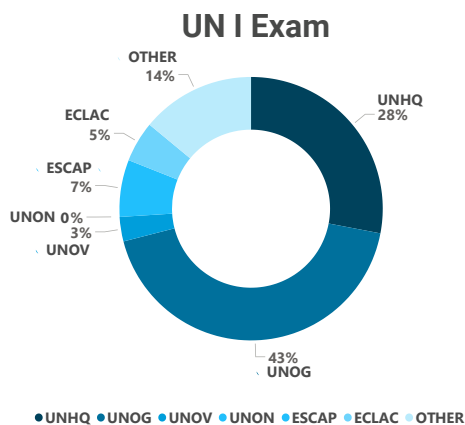
Language Training Programme – UNOG  
Language and Communications Training Unit – UNHQ

# WHAT WE DELIVERED



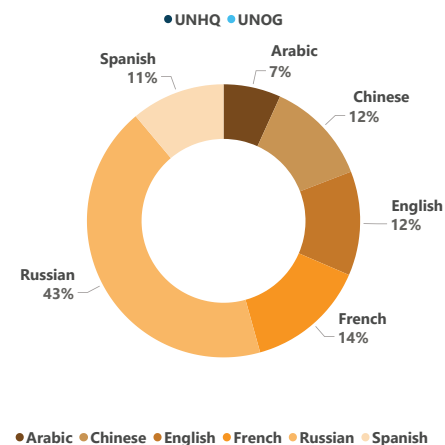
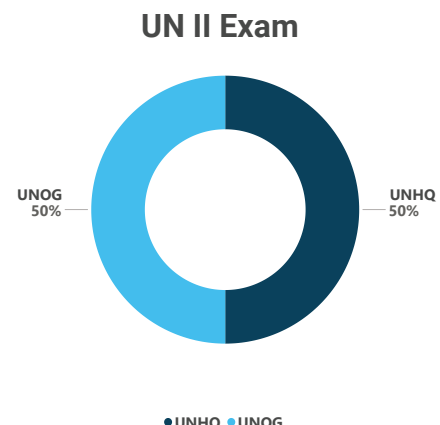
## The pilot exams for the UN I and UN II levels

- aligned to the UN Language Framework
- constructed in the six official languages
- offered online to candidates around the world



AR: 13 candidates  
 CH: 12 candidates  
 EN: 7 candidates  
 FR: 18 candidates  
 RU: 3 candidates  
 SP: 23 candidates  
**TOTAL: 76 candidates**

The UN I Exams in the six languages were delivered in Spring 2021



AR: 5 candidates  
 CH: 9 candidates  
 EN: 9 candidates  
 FR: 10 candidates  
 RU: 3 candidates  
 SP: 8 candidates  
**TOTAL: 44 candidates**

The UN II Exams were delivered in Fall 2021, except for Arabic and English – Winter 2022

# WHAT WE DELIVERED



## The documents based on which the exams are designed, conducted, or taken



### Online exams

Six exams for UN Level I  
Basic language competence  
Six exams for UN Level II  
Intermediate language competence



### Exam specifications

Instructions on how to construct exams  
in terms of task objectives, text types and  
lengths, item types and numbers, etc.



### Booklet for examiners

Instructions on how to make appointments  
with candidates, conduct the oral exams,  
record and save the recordings, etc.



### Booklet and scoring grids for graders

Instructions on how to score the spoken  
and written productions and interactions



### Booklet for candidates

Information about the structure and  
components of the exam, its duration, the  
technical requirements, etc.



### Task sheets

for candidates



### Sets of instructions

for examiners

# WHAT WE LEARNED

---



## How we did

Survey respondents provided overwhelmingly positive feedback regarding exam content and delivery.

The vast majority of **candidates** considered the topics covered in the exams interesting and relevant to UN staff, and the tasks similar to what they might do at or outside work. Most found the instructions easy to follow and the oral exams easy to schedule.

---

*"I enjoyed the overall experience [of the exam] – the motivation it gave me to prepare, the organization of the information shared, the exam itself."*

---

---

*"The exam was well structured, and it helped [me] to self-assess knowledge so far."*

---

**Examiners** and **graders** underlined how formative their experience had been. The expertise and collaborative skills developed through training in constructing, delivering, and grading exams bolstered team spirit and aspirations.

---

*"I definitely benefitted from the entire process, as I can [have] a better picture of the levels and the exams. I am more familiar with the Curriculum and the Framework too. I am interested in pursuing my work as part of the team."*

---

# WHAT WE LEARNED

---



## How we can improve

The feedback received from the team in charge of coordinating the exam construction and delivery helped gain insight into three main areas where improvement is needed for future exam editions.

- **Exam construction:** Exam templates as well as task/item banks would save time and resources. So would the support of veteran exam constructors. Many of them have actually expressed interest in further contributing to the project.
- **Logistics:** Streamlined communication would be needed to automate the major steps of the process, such as recruiting and screening candidates, organizing candidate data, updating exam documents, communicating exam results, etc.
- **Technological support:** A support line dedicated to ensuring a smooth exam delivery would ease candidates' and constructors' tasks. The assessment platform should be technologically functional to meet the exam requirements (e.g., controlling pop-up windows, managing recording setting, switching keyboards, etc.)

A stylized illustration of a mountain range. The mountains are rendered in shades of gray and blue. The sky is light gray with several white, fluffy clouds. The text 'HOW WE CAN IMPROVE' is overlaid on the right side of the illustration.

HOW  
WE  
CAN  
IMPROVE

# WHAT WE ENVISION

---



An Organization that values languages, honoring the investment of time and resources in the ability to overcome linguistic barriers, not only demonstrates its commitment to fostering multilingualism: it places diversity and inclusion at the heart of its mandate and recognizes languages as enabling skills for organizational impact.

By establishing the UN I and UN II exams, we, the Language Training Programme at UNOG and the Language and Communications Training Unit at UNHQ, will provide the means to acknowledge staff language skills at different levels of proficiency.

WHAT  
WE  
ENVISION

