



The world's top 60 countries in English according to the EF English Proficiency Index

Scandinavian countries continue to lead rankings, as Asia races ahead of Latin America and the Middle East in English ability

Hong Kong – November 5, 2013 – [EF Education First](#), the global leader in international education, today published the results of this year's EF English Proficiency Index (EF EPI) – the world's most comprehensive ranking of English ability. In addition to ranking 60 countries and territories by their English skills, the EF EPI for the first time includes an analysis of English proficiency trends over a six-year period that has seen intense investment in English language learning. The EF EPI also finds correlations between the English skills of a nation's workforce and the country's economic outlook.

"Comparison of countries with their neighbours, trading partners, and rivals provides a fascinating study in divergent national priorities and educational policies worldwide," said Dr. Christopher McCormick, Head of EF's Academic Affairs and Research Network. "We found that by engaging in a national dialogue about English, stakeholders can help align goals, improve incentives, and focus on teaching English for communication. The economic impact of such a coordinated program is clear."

This year's country rankings are based on tests taken by 750,000 adults from 60 countries in 2012. The analysis of evolving English proficiency over a six-year period (2007 to 2012 inclusive) uses test data from nearly five million adults.

Key findings include:

- Some Asian countries, in particular Indonesia and Vietnam, have transformed their English proficiency over the six-year period. China has also improved, although less dramatically. Japan and South Korea, despite enormous private investments, have declined slightly.
- Across the board, English language skills are improving in the BRIC countries (Brazil, Russia, India, and China). This year, India and Russia have moved ahead of China, and Brazil is closing in fast.
- While the rest of Europe is already proficient in English or steadily working towards that goal, France is on an entirely different trajectory. The seven countries with the strongest English are all small European nations, whose size compels them to adopt an international outlook.
- The Middle East and North Africa are the weakest regions in English. These oil-rich nations have staked their futures on developing knowledge economies before their oil production peaks. An exception to the region's lackluster performance is the United Arab Emirates, which has improved significantly.
- Turkey has improved the most of any nation over the six-year period. This is a positive trend, coming as the country continues to develop according to a number of economic factors.
- Poland and Hungary have made tremendous progress in learning English. These new English skills are an important step towards building the knowledge economies they aspire to have.
- Poor English remains one of the key competitive weaknesses of Latin America. Brazil, Colombia, Peru, and Chile have improved, but they still lack the large base of competent English speakers necessary for a globalized workforce. Some countries in the region, including Mexico and Guatemala, have declining English proficiency.

Published by EF Education First, the world's leading international education company, the EF English Proficiency Index is the largest ranking of English skills. The full EF EPI ranking for 2013 is below. Additional analysis and graphs are available at: www.ef.com/epi/



Future editions of the EF EPI will feature data from the [EF Test of English](#) – the world’s first free standardized English test available online to any English learner.

EF Education First (www.ef.com) was established in 1965 with the mission to break down barriers of language, culture, and geography. With 460 schools and offices in over 50 countries, EF specializes in language learning, educational travel, academic degrees, and cultural exchange programs. EF served as the Official Language Training Supplier of the Beijing 2008 Olympic Games and is currently the Official Language Training Supplier of the Sochi 2014 Winter Olympics.

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Rank	Country		Country
1	Sweden	34	China
2	Norway	35	France
3	Netherlands	36	United Arab Emirates
4	Estonia	37	Costa Rica
5	Denmark	38	Brazil
6	Austria	39	Peru
7	Finland	40	Mexico
8	Poland	41	Turkey
9	Hungary	42	Iran
10	Slovenia	43	Egypt
11	Malaysia	44	Chile
12	Singapore	45	Morocco
13	Belgium	46	Colombia
14	Germany	47	Kuwait
15	Latvia	48	Ecuador
16	Switzerland	49	Venezuela
17	Portugal	50	Jordan
18	Slovakia	51	Qatar
19	Argentina	52	Guatemala
20	Czech Republic	53	El Salvador
21	India	54	Libya
22	Hong Kong SAR	55	Thailand
23	Spain	56	Panama
24	South Korea	57	Kazakhstan
25	Indonesia	58	Algeria
26	Japan	59	Saudi Arabia
27	Ukraine	60	Iraq
28	Vietnam		
29	Uruguay		
30	Sri Lanka		
31	Russia		
32	Italy		
33	Taiwan		