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Executive Summary

Over the past two and a half years, we have learned to appreciate connection: the ties that bind us to family and friends, but also chatting with colleagues and neighbors, feeling part of the wider world.

Language enables these connections, and when it comes to connecting beyond borders, English often takes center stage. It lets us work on multinational projects, enjoy media from abroad, travel, engage with new research, participate in global communities... the list goes on.

Perhaps this is why relationships with English can be so fraught. Frustration with the language is not uncommon. Elition too, from a student receiving a coveted university acceptance letter to a waiter serving their first table of tourists, a young person understanding the lyrics of a hit song to an executive negotiating their first contract with a supplier abroad.

Organizations and governments invest massively in English instruction. So do individuals, at their own level. For if English is the language is not uncommon. Organizations and governments invest massively in English instruction. So do individuals, at their own level. For if English demands to be its capital, and many cities do not appear to drain English speakers from their regions. Individual English speakers are better equipped to collaborate internationally with partners and within their own organizations.

The largest cities don’t always have the best English. Capital cities and other metropolises have higher average levels of English proficiency than the country as a whole in almost every case; however, it is relatively rare for a country’s top performing city to be its capital, and many cities do not appear to drain English speakers from their surrounding regions. Of the 500 cities included in this year’s index, 150 do not outscore their region and another 150 barely do. This finding is relevant for companies considering where to recruit talent at a reasonable cost, particularly given the massive shift towards remote and semi-remote working arrangements.

In Europe, lower-proficiency groups are catching up. Europe has the highest level of English proficiency of any region. It has also made consistent progress since 2011. Adults over 40 have improved far more quickly than other age cohorts in Europe, but contrary to other regions, younger adults have not lost ground. Recently, large, lower-proficiency countries that border the European Union have contributed most to the rising regional average as progress within the EU has slowed. But there is potential for improvement in the EU as well, as France, Spain and Italy, three of the region’s largest economies, still lag behind their neighbors.

Little progress in the Middle East. Despite well-publicized investments in improving educational outcomes, the level of English in the Middle East has not changed much in the past decade. Indeed, the region has the lowest level of skill variation between age cohorts, indicating that neither schools nor workplaces are helping to improve people’s English. There is one piece of positive news, however: the gender-related proficiency gap is narrowing somewhat in the region.

Languages connect us. They are the medium by which we share ideas, preserve knowledge and create culture. This is true of any language, but English, because so many people speak it, has the potential to be a powerful driver of dialog, diversity and inclusion over the coming decade, if only everyone has an equal opportunity to learn it.
### Rankings of Countries and Regions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proficiency Bands</th>
<th>Countries</th>
<th>Scores</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very High Proficiency</td>
<td>01 – 15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>16 – 30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>31 – 45</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>46 – 60</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Low Proficiency</td>
<td>61 – 111</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Very High Proficiency
- Netherlands: 661
- Singapore: 642
- Austria: 628
- Norway: 627
- Denmark: 625
- Belgium: 620
- Sweden: 618
- Finland: 615
- Portugal: 614
- Germany: 613
- Croatia: 612
- South Africa: 609
- Poland: 600
- Greece: 598
- Slovakia: 597
- Luxembourg: 596
- Romania: 595
- Hungary: 590
- Lithuania: 589
- Kenya: 582
- Bulgaria: 581
- Philippines: 578
- Czech Republic: 575
- Malaysia: 574
- Latvia: 571
- Estonia: 570
- Serbia: 567
- Nigeria: 564
- Switzerland: 563
- Argentina: 562
- Hong Kong (China): 561

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- Netherlands: 661
- Singapore: 642
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- Hungary: 590
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- Kenya: 582
- Bulgaria: 581
- Philippines: 578
- Czech Republic: 575
- Malaysia: 574
- Latvia: 571
- Estonia: 570
- Serbia: 567
- Nigeria: 564
- Switzerland: 563
- Argentina: 562
- Hong Kong (China): 561

#### Moderate Proficiency
- Georgia: 524
- Albania: 523
- Honduras: 522
- Ukraine: 521
- El Salvador: 519
- Peru: 517
- India: 516
- Dominican Republic: 514
- Lebanon: 513
- Uganda: 512
- Tunisia: 511
- Armenia: 506
- Brazil: 505
- Guatemala: 502

#### Low Proficiency
- Nicaragua: 499
- China: 498
- Tanzania: 496
- Turkey: 495
- Nepal: 494
- Bangladesh: 493
- Venezuela: 492
- Ethiopia: 490
- Iran: 489
- Pakistan: 488
- Sri Lanka: 487
- Mongolia: 485
- Qatar: 484
- Israel: 483

#### Very Low Proficiency
- Panama: 482
- Morocco: 478
- Colombia: 477
- Algeria: 476
- United Arab Emirates: 476
- Japan: 475
- Indonesia: 469
- Ecuador: 466
- Syria: 461
- Kuwait: 459
- Egypt: 454
- Mozambique: 453
- Afghanistan: 450

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www.ef.com/epi
EF EPI 2022 City Scores

Proficiency Bands
- Very High
- High
- Moderate
- Low
- Very Low

Very High Proficiency
- Amsterdam 673
- Copenhagen 664
- Stockholm 637
- Zagreb 637
- Helsinki 635
- Oslo 635
- Vienna 632
- Bruxelles 632
- Warsaw 622
- Belgrad 598
- Sofia 598
- Barin 592
- Athens 587
- Nairobi 585
- Paris 585
- Seoul 580
- Kuala Lumpur 579
- Buenos Aires 578
- Madrid 572
- Manila 567
- Belgrade 566
- Rome 566
- Hong Kong 561
- Lagos 559
- San José 558
- Moscow 550
- Santiago 550

High Proficiency
- Beijing 549
- Shanghai 549
- Mumbai 546
- Ha Noi 545
- Saint Petersburg 542
- Kiev 541
- Minsk 541
- Lima 539
- Asunción 538
- Havana 536
- Rio de Janeiro 536
- Tirana 535
- Tbilisi 533
- São Paulo 532
- Tegucigalpa 532
- Montevideo 530
- San Salvador 529
- Tunis 528
- Accra 527
- Santo Domingo 523

Moderate Proficiency
- Delhi 523
- Jakarta 523
- Tokyo 522
- Guatemala City 517
- Addis Ababa 514
- La Paz 514
- Dhaka 512
- Erevan 512
- Bakuir 509
- Caracas 509
- Dubai 508
- Colombo 507
- Ho Chi Minh City 507
- Kathmandu 507
- Mexico City 507
- Ankara 506
- Dar Es Salam 506
- Panama City 504
- Bogota 503
- Managua 502

Low Proficiency
- Istanbul 499
- Karachi 499
- Quito 495
- Ulaanbaatar 492
- Tehran 490
- Algiers 486
- Casablanca 484
- Kampala 484
- Bangkok 483
- Doha 474
- Tel Aviv 472
- Cairo 471
- Baku 469
- Damascus 469
- Arman 460
- Yangon 460
- Bishkek 459
- Maputo 458
- Kabul 455
- Nur-Sultan 455
- Phnom Penh 453

Very Low Proficiency
- Tashkent 446
- Kuwait City 443
- Tripoli 428
- Riyadh 423
- Port-au-Prince 422
- Khartoum 421
- Muscat 420
- Baghdad 418
- Dushanbe 415
- Douala 412
- Kinshasa 397
- Kigali 389
- Mogadishu 385
- Abidjan 374
- Kinshasa 370

English proficiency scores for over 1200 regions and cities, as well as national and regional gender and age data, are available at www.ef.com/epi.
EF EPI 2022 Facts and Figures

Who are the test takers?

2.1M
Total Test Takers

55%
Female

97%
Under 60 years old

45%
Male

25
Median Age

How do gender and age affect English proficiency?

Global Gender Gap
EF EPI Score

Global Generation Gap
EF EPI Score

10
Participate in the EF EPI: take the free EF SET at efset.org

EF EPI 2022 regional trends

Europe
Asia
Africa
Latin America
Middle East

Highest Score
Netherlands
Singapore
South Africa
Argentina
Lebanon
661
642
609
562
513

Lowest Score
Azerbaijan
Laos
Democratic Republic of the Congo
Haiti
Yemen
440
364
367
421
370

Improved Band
(countries or regions)
2
3
0
3
1

Declined Band
(countries or regions)
3
1
0
0
1

EF EPI 2022 regional scores

Europe
Asia
Latin America
Africa
Middle East

World Average Score: 502

Participate in the EF EPI: take the free EF SET at efset.org

Proficiency Bands
Very High
High
Moderate
Low
Very Low

Proficiency Bands
Very High
High
Moderate
Low
Very Low
English and the Economy

International trade benefits from smooth communication, and in a globalized world, opportunities for trade abound. Although simple measures of wealth and exchange do correlate to English proficiency, those relationships aren’t as strong as the ones with more complex indicators of economic balance, productivity, and potential. In this way English is much like other skills in a modern workforce: English alone doesn’t drive trade or increase wages, but English proficiency goes hand in hand with growing economies and efficient workforces.

English and Innovation

Innovation flourishes when ideas and information can flow freely, when findings can raise new questions and solutions can find new applications. While it is primarily technology that underpins our ability to communicate instantly, a worldwide lingua franca doesn’t hurt. Today, over two billion people speak English and so much research is published in the language, English has become the default medium of communication, both written and oral, in multinational labs, offices and universities around the world.
Over the past decade, our data increasingly shows that adults are developing their English proficiency in the workplace. Jobs that require English motivate ambitious professionals to study, and competition pushes forward-thinking companies to train. And for those who have some English, contact with the language at work provides daily practice – the essential component so often missing from English classes in school. Although this virtuous cycle is raising average proficiency levels in adults over 30 and homogenizing the level of English across seniorities, it may also be deepening inequality in places where many are left out of the labor market or have work that doesn’t allow for international collaboration.

Modern businesses are increasingly non-hierarchical with borderless teams and an emphasis on agility and innovation. When professionals lack the English skills they need to evolve into new roles, their career development is curtailed. For their employers, the result is structural inefficiency. With ever more rapidly evolving business needs, a company’s ability to reskill and upskill becomes key to its competitiveness. English should be a driver of inclusion rather than a barrier for career progression.

About a quarter of our test takers share information about their jobs, and based on that data set, English proficiency in many workplaces is too low for the average employee to collaborate efficiently across borders. That would require Moderate proficiency or higher. Although many industry scores have declined over the past ten years, this is primarily a consequence of our broadening geographic sample which today more accurately reflects industries at the global level.
Like many skills which can be acquired in school, English proficiency enables social mobility; however, education can only perform that function when everyone has access to it. Our data is not alone in pointing to the inequality-reducing properties of a good education, fairly distributed. Countries with entrenched or emerging inequalities, whether between genders, races or social classes, will find raising their average English proficiency level difficult without addressing the underlying imbalances.

Learning another language opens up new areas of knowledge and cultural understanding. English is unique only in the oceans of information which humanity encodes in it. Plunging into our understanding of science, joining the international fight for environmental justice, reading uncensored accounts of history and current events; these experiences and others like them are essential to ensuring a peaceful and liveable future on this planet.
**EF EPI Trends**

English proficiency in Europe continues to rise at an average rate of 6 points per year, making it the most improved region since 2011 despite starting from a relatively high base. This year’s increase was driven by large Low and Moderate proficiency countries such as Italy, Russia, Turkey and Ukraine. The rate of improvement within the EU was slower.

Note: regional averages are population weighted.

**Gender Gap**

The skill gap between men and women widened slightly this year in Europe, although both groups’ English proficiency improved. In 12 countries, the gap is significant (over 20 points), and men outscored women in all but 6 countries. However, a few large countries (France, Italy, Russia and Ukraine) have almost no gender gap.

**Generation Gap**

Adults are the drivers of rising English proficiency in Europe, undermining the commonly held belief that people learn most of their English in school. Since 2015, young graduates in Europe have had stable scores, while every other age group has improved significantly. Adults over 40 have gained nearly 100 points.
EF EPI Rankings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>EF EPI Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Singapore</td>
<td>642</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>578</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Malaysia</td>
<td>574</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>Hong Kong (China)</td>
<td>561</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>South Korea</td>
<td>537</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52</td>
<td>India</td>
<td>516</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60</td>
<td>Vietnam</td>
<td>502</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>62</td>
<td>China</td>
<td>498</td>
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<tr>
<td>65</td>
<td>Nepal</td>
<td>494</td>
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<tr>
<td>66</td>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
<td>493</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70</td>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>488</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>71</td>
<td>Sri Lanka</td>
<td>487</td>
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<tr>
<td>72</td>
<td>Mongolia</td>
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<td>78</td>
<td>Japan</td>
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<td>Uzbekistan</td>
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<td>Kyrgyzstan</td>
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<td>Cambodia</td>
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<td>Thailand</td>
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<td>Kazakhstan</td>
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<td>106</td>
<td>Tajikistan</td>
<td>397</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>111</td>
<td>Laos</td>
<td>364</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Proficiency Bands: Very High, High, Moderate, Low, Very Low

EF EPI Score Change from Last Year

EF EPI Score Change from Last Year

Gender Gap
Asia has the widest gender gap in the world this year, driven primarily by China and India moving to opposite ends of the spectrum. Chinese women, already ahead last year, increased their lead to 48 points—the largest gender gap in the world. India’s gender gap is also wider than last year: 29 points in favor of men.

Generation Gap
In Asia, English skill differences between age groups are significant, although in many individual countries these gaps are narrower. Young adults in China, Indonesia and Japan have particularly low levels of English when compared to people over 30. China’s decline in score this year was driven exclusively by the country’s youngest cohort.
**Latin America continued to improve its English proficiency this year with scores rising in almost every country. The region’s remarkable progress over the past decade has transformed it from a Very Low proficiency region to a largely Moderate proficiency one. Even Mexico saw a small rebound after five years of decline.**

**Gender Gap**

Men outscored women in Latin America again this year, although the gap has narrowed slightly and both groups improved. The regional gender gap is unusually homogenous, with men’s scores between 10 and 25 points higher than women’s in a majority of countries. Only Haiti and Uruguay have small proficiency gaps in favor of women.

**Generation Gap**

As in Europe, rising levels of English proficiency in Latin America are driven by workplaces, not schools. Since 2015, Latin American adults over 25 have made significant gains with those in their 30’s improving the most. During the same period, the 20-25 cohort has had stable scores and the 18-20 cohort has declined by 60 points. This leaves the region with the largest age-related proficiency gap in the world.
Africa’s English proficiency remained steady this year with no countries changing proficiency band. Of the countries which have been in the index at least five years, only Algeria, Nigeria and Tunisia have made significant gains. After years of steady improvement, English proficiency in North Africa seems to have reached a plateau.

Men’s English caught up to women’s in Africa for the first time this year, but the regional average masks the fact that a majority of countries still have a significant gender gap (over 20 points). Ethiopia, Nigeria, Rwanda and Ghana have among the widest gender gaps in the world in favor of women, while Uganda and Tunisia have among the widest in favor of men.

Age is not an indicator of English proficiency in Africa as a whole, however, as with gender, the regional average doesn’t reflect national variation. Ethiopia, Ghana, Libya and Sudan have a score spread of over 70 points between age groups; the spread in Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia is only slightly narrower.

EF EPI Rankings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>South Africa</td>
<td>609</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Kenya</td>
<td>582</td>
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<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>564</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41</td>
<td>Ghana</td>
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<td>55</td>
<td>Uganda</td>
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<td>56</td>
<td>Tunisia</td>
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<td>63</td>
<td>Tanzania</td>
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<td>Ethiopia</td>
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<td>Morocco</td>
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<td>Algeria</td>
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<td>Egypt</td>
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<td>Mozambique</td>
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<td>Sudan</td>
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<td>Cameroon</td>
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<td>Somalia</td>
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<td>104</td>
<td>Côte d’Ivoire</td>
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<td>105</td>
<td>Angola</td>
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<td>107</td>
<td>Rwanda</td>
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<td>108</td>
<td>Libya</td>
<td>390</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>110</td>
<td>Democratic Republic of the Congo</td>
<td>367</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Proficiency Bands: Very High, High, Moderate, Low, Very Low

EF EPI Trends

Gender Gap

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Generation Gap

Age is not an indicator of English proficiency in Africa as a whole, however, as with gender, the regional average doesn’t reflect national variation. Ethiopia, Ghana, Libya and Sudan have a score spread of over 70 points between age groups; the spread in Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia is only slightly narrower.
The regional average for the Middle East did not change this year and no country made significant gains. Over the past decade, the region has improved its English at less than half the rate of Europe and Latin America. Only Qatar and the UAE have seen their scores rise more than 20 points during that period.

The gender-related skill gap in the Middle East narrowed this year. Although men still outperform women in a majority of countries, Saudi Arabian women scored better than men for the first time. Jordan and Iraq, however, tied for the second largest gender gap in the world in favor of men (37 points).

English proficiency is remarkably homogenous between generations in the Middle East at both the regional and national level: not a herald of change. Of the 12 countries with sufficient data, only Iran and Iraq have gaps of over 60 points between the most and least proficient age cohorts. In both cases, the youngest adults have the best English.
Conclusions

English is the most widespread medium of information exchange the world has ever known. At no previous time in history has a third of humanity shared a language nor have we had the technology to pool knowledge in a manner independent of geographic constraints.

These two ingredients—a medium and a method—could usher in an era of global community in which we come together to tackle climate change, share resources equitably and guarantee peace. Or not. Humans may not be biologically capable of feeling a sense of community with such a large group and tackling long-term problems has never been our strong suit. But regardless of the cohesiveness of the so-called “global community,” learning English (when combined with access to the Internet) undoubtedly opens opportunities for individuals to work, acquire information and share their experiences more widely. Broadening access to those opportunities is an inherently worthy goal. The question then is how to do it.

English teaching grows up

Teaching English better at school is inevitably part of the solution. In particular, many countries need more teachers who speak English well and strategies to entice those teachers to work in rural and low-income schools. Too often, teacher training is targeted on to education reform as an afterthought. That’s backward thinking. Teachers need robust training before they can effectively use new methodologies and tools in the classroom.

In addition to teacher training, some education systems still need to shift from memorization to communication-based approaches for language acquisition. Schools relying on English as the sole medium of instruction when pupils speak other languages at home would do well moving to a multilingual model, as children need to learn how to read and write their native languages.

Children who are not taught to read and do math will find those skills difficult to acquire as adults, but schools often get too much credit (and blame) for adult English proficiency. In every language they use frequently, adults acquire vocabulary throughout their lives, and in English, they’re making real progress.

Today in most countries, working adults speak English better than young people finishing secondary school. Learning a language takes time and practice, hundreds of hours of practice, and workplaces are the perfect place for it. Professionals who acquired some English during their education consolidate and build upon those skills thanks to daily contextualized contact with the language. Those who didn’t get much English in school are motivated by the task of mastering a language (motivation is a key factor in successful language acquisition).

Workplace training schemes are contributing by building on the structural advantages of multilingual working environments. They help develop specific skills in particular professions, address individual shortfalls and remove hurdles for those who would otherwise be intimidated by the task of mastering a language unaccompanied. The fact that so much of this training has moved online has only made it more appealing to busy professionals and their employers.

Remote possibilities

Online learning has been put through its paces since 2020. We all now understand its limitations, especially for children. We also understand its potential, not only to educate during a crisis, but more broadly to reduce inequality by delivering (potentially) excellent training to any location at scale. Adults who did not learn English in school, or not enough, have more ways than ever before to study online autonomously, with a teacher, or a mix of the two, for an affordable price and at times that suit their schedules.

The cutting edge digital learning spaces of today are unrecognized compared to the offerings even five years ago. New immersive technology allows learners to role play in situ and complete collaborative tasks using authentic documents. Personalization engines prompt them to review a skill at the ideal time for retention. Huge data sets allow for AI training to predict engagement and adjust a course to maximize it, summoning a teacher or coach well before a learner can drop out.

Thanks to the ever-growing number of online degree programs and remote job offers, geography is not the barrier it once was to developing skills and using them to earn a living, especially for those who speak English. While some companies have summoned employees back to the office full time and many essential workers never left, a less rigid perspective on when and where we work is one of the pandemic’s lasting legacies.

Testing times

The spread of globalization and, in tandem, the adoption of English parallel the resurgent populism, isolationism and xenophobia sadly evident in so many countries over the past decade. In the past two years, we have not only experienced a pandemic; war has returned to Europe and China has begun to close in on itself. The resulting supply chain disruptions have had companies scrambling to find local suppliers, integrate vertically and stockpile inventory.

If the trend continues beyond the current turbulence, looking closer to home for both suppliers and customers will signal a significant change in how globalization works, assuming it does not veer into insularity. The subsequent impact on the demand for English remains to be seen, but over time, regional languages (or the language of the largest economy in a region) stand to rise in popularity.

For autocracies intent on controlling a population, English may look like a threat. People who speak English have access to more information from a broader range of sources than those who don’t, and they can document their experiences and share them with a far wider audience. They may also work outside their national economies and have more social contacts abroad.

When seen from that perspective, limiting access to the internet and limiting access to English instruction are similar strategies. In practice, this might include reducing the hours of English instruction in schools, removing it from national exams, making it harder to operate an English tutoring business, spreading negative propaganda about English and a host of other measures to reduce supply and dampen demand.

But aside from the impact on individual freedom, proactively lowering English proficiency in the working population is likely to have an economic impact. The correlations between English proficiency and international trade, income and productivity are well-established.

English for everyone

The adoption of English by an estimated 2.5 billion people and counting isn’t due to any inherent value in the language itself. It’s a meeting of history and circumstance, economics and technology. The current momentum is a classic example of a network effect: the more people speak English the more useful it becomes, resulting in a positive feedback loop.

But learning a language isn’t like buying a telephone. If it were easier to learn English, everyone would already speak it. It is only by improving the quality and distribution of English instruction in schools, opening access to a diversity of training methods for adults and recognizing the essential role of the workplace in driving English acquisition that leaders can leverage the true potential of a global lingua franca to build connections, spread information exchange and tap into the wider world.
Recommendations

Most organizations and individuals are convinced of the advantages of English proficiency. However, not everyone knows how to get there. Here are our recommendations:

For companies
- Set realistic goals that take into account the hours needed to close the gap between current and target proficiency levels for each individual.
- Build a culture of internationalism and mobility, including in branch offices.
- Use platforms that facilitate frequent contact between teams in different countries.
- Build diverse, multinational teams in all functions, including the back office.
- Test the entire workforce to identify strategic weaknesses in English.
- Train employees using a role-specific English curriculum.
- Leverage technology to bring flexible learning at scale.
- Set minimum standards of English proficiency for different roles, and test that those standards are being met.
- Reward employees who invest time in improving their English.
- Encourage executives and managers to lead by example and share their experiences as English learners.
- Prioritize access to English learning for all employees.
- Assess the English skills of all public servants and provide training as necessary, not only for their current jobs, but also for their careers.
- Provide English language instruction in job centers and unemployment reduction programs.
- Give adults access to lifelong learning programs and include English training in the provision.
- Ensure that government-funded adult language courses are long enough and intensive enough for learners to meet their goals.
- Develop standardized micro-credentials that certify course quality and improve skill portability.
- Set a minimum level required to teach English, test instructors regularly, and train those who miss the mark.
- Teach children to read and write in their own native language.

For governments and education authorities
- Consider the hours available in the curriculum and the proficiency level achievable for each major educational milestone.
- Use large-scale assessment of both teachers and students to set benchmarks then track progress over time.
- Adjust entrance and exit exams so that they evaluate communicative English skills.
- Include English in the training regimens for all new teachers.
- Re-train English teachers in communicative teaching methods if they were initially trained using other methods.
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For teachers, schools, and universities
- Teach English using a communication-based methodology.
- Reward successful acts of communication rather than focusing on mistakes.
- Engage students outside the classroom with English-language media and encourage them to share their favorites.
- Give students frequent opportunities to speak English through activities like English clubs, theme days, classroom twinning, school trips, and guest speakers.
- Provide a forum for teachers to share best practices and get advice about teaching English effectively.
- Give teachers of all subjects a straightforward path to improve their English and time in their schedule to do so.
- Include English language requirements for all university majors.
- Allow subject classes to be taught in English if both the students and the professor meet the requisite English level.
- Create a remedial English program to help those who have fallen behind.

For individuals
- Play the long game: plan for the hundreds of hours it takes to move from one proficiency level to the next.
- Be aware of growing competence at different stages and celebrate your successes.
- Study English every day, even if only for a few minutes.
- Study in sessions of 20-30 minutes rather than for hours at a time.
- Set specific, achievable goals and write them down.
- Memorize vocabulary relevant to your job or field of study and begin using it immediately.
- Practice speaking, even if it's just reading a book aloud.
- Engage with content you enjoy in English when you need a break.
- Watch TV, read, or listen to the radio in English.
- When traveling to an English-speaking country, speak as much as possible.
- Use social media in English and set computers and apps to English to get more built-in exposure to the language.
APPENDIX A

About the Index

Methodology

This edition of the EF EPI is based on test data from more than 2,300,000 test takers around the world who took the EF Standard English Test (EF SET) or one of our English placement tests in 2021.

The EF Standard English Test (EF SET)
The EF SET is an online, adaptive English test of reading and listening skills. It is a standardized, objectively scored test designed to classify test takers’ language abilities into one of the six levels established by the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR). The EF SET is available to any Internet user for free. For more information about the research and development of the EF SET, visit www.efset.org/about/

EF EPI 2022 scores have been found to correlate strongly with TOEFL iBT 2020 scores (r=0.75). These correlations show that, while these tests have different designs and test taker profiles, they reveal similar trends in national English proficiency.

Test Takers

Although the sample of test takers for the EF EPI is biased toward respondents who are interested in pursuing language study and younger adults, the sample is roughly balanced between male and female respondents and represents adult language learners from a broad range of ages.

• Female respondents comprised 41% of the overall sample, male respondents 33% and respondents who did not provide gender information 25%.

• The median age of respondents who provided age information was 25. 87% of those respondents were under the age of 35, and 97% were under the age of 60. 25% of respondents did not provide their birth date.

• The median age of male respondents was 26, slightly higher than the median age of female respondents, which was 25.

Only cities, regions, and countries with a minimum of 400 test takers were included in the Index, but in most cases the number of test takers was far greater.

Sampling Biases

The test-taking population represented in this Index is self-selected and not guaranteed to be representative. Only those who want to learn English or are curious about their English skills will participate in one of these tests. This could skew scores lower or higher than those of the general population. However, there is no incentive for test takers to inflate their scores artificially on these low-stakes tests by cheating, as the results are purely for personal use.

The EF SET is free and online, so anyone with an Internet connection can participate. Almost all of our test takers are working adults or young adults finishing their studies. People without Internet access would be automatically excluded. The EF SET site is fully adaptive and 35% of test takers complete the exam from a mobile device. In parts of the world where Internet usage is low, we would expect the impact of an online format to be strong.

This sampling bias would tend to pull scores upward by excluding poorer and less educated people. Nevertheless, open access online tests have proven effective in gathering very large amounts of data about a range of indicators, and we believe they provide valuable information about global English proficiency levels.

Score Calculation

To calculate an EF EPI score, we used weighted components which include the EF SET and the EF EPI of the previous two years. Inclusion of the previous indices helps to stabilize scores year over year, but test takers from the previous years are not counted in the total test taker count for the current year. Regional averages are weighted by population.

Based on score thresholds, we assign countries, regions, and cities to proficiency bands. This allows recognition of clusters with similar English skill levels and comparisons within and between regions. EF EPI scores have been found to correlate strongly with TOEFL iBT 2020 scores (r=0.81) and IELTS Academic Test scores (r=0.75). These correlations show that, while these tests have different designs and test taker profiles, they reveal similar trends in national English proficiency.

Other Data Sources

The EF EPI does not aim to compete with or contradict national test results, language polling data, or any other data set. Instead, these data sets complement each other. Some are granular but limited in scope to a single age group, country, region, or test taker profile. The EF EPI is broad, examining working-aged adults around the world using a common assessment method. There is no other data set of comparable size and scope, and, despite its limitations, we, along with many policymakers, scholars, and analysts, believe it to be a valuable reference point in the global conversation about English language education.

The EF EPI is created through a different process from the one used by public opinion research organizations such as Euromonitor and Gallup, or by the OECD in skills surveys such as PISA and PIAAC. Those studies select survey participants using age, gender, level of education, income, and other factors. Their survey panels tend to be small, with at most a few thousand participants. Because they have been composed using complex sampling methods, they are considered representative of the entire population. Unfortunately, no such survey of English skills has ever been performed at an international level.

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CEFR</th>
<th>EF EPI Score</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C2</td>
<td>700–800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C1</td>
<td>600–699</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B2</td>
<td>500–599</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B1</td>
<td>400–499</td>
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<tr>
<td>A2</td>
<td>300–399</td>
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<tr>
<td>A1</td>
<td>200–299</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pre-A1</td>
<td>199+</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

• The Very High Proficiency band corresponds to CEFR level C1.
• The High and Moderate Proficiency bands correspond to CEFR level B2, with each EF EPI band corresponding to half of the CEFR level.
• The Low Proficiency band corresponds to the upper half of CEFR level B1.
• The Very Low Proficiency band corresponds to the lower half of CEFR level B1 and A2.

Other Data Sources

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Another source of data about English proficiency comes from national education systems. Many schools test the English skills of every high school student or university applicant using a standardized national assessment. The results may or may not be made public, but educators and government officials use the data to assess the efficacy of education reform and pinpoint areas for improvement. Unfortunately, those national assessments are not comparable to each other, and they are not administered to adults, so while they give a good indication of English proficiency among high school students in one part of the world, they cannot be used for international comparisons, nor can they tell us much about adult English proficiency levels.

EF Education First

EF Education First (www.ef.com) is an international education company that focuses on language, academic, cultural exchange, and educational travel. Founded in 1965, EF’s mission is “opening the world through education.” Millions of students, companies and organizations have participated in an EF program. The EF English Proficiency Index is published by Signum International AG.
### EF EPI Proficiency Bands

**About EF EPI Proficiency Bands**

The EF English Proficiency Index places the surveyed countries and territories into five proficiency bands, from Very High to Very Low. The bands make it easier to identify countries and regions with similar skill levels and to draw comparisons between and within regions.

In the chart on the right, we give examples of tasks an individual could accomplish at each proficiency band. The selection of tasks is not meant to be exhaustive, but it is a useful reference for understanding how skills advance across the bands.

It is important to keep in mind that a proficiency band merely indicates the level of the “average” person. The EF EPI seeks to compare countries and territories, which necessitates overlooking individual strengths and weaknesses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proficiency</th>
<th>Sample Tasks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very High</td>
<td>Use nuanced and appropriate language in social situations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Read advanced texts with ease</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Negotiate a contract with a native English speaker</td>
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<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Singapore</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>Make a presentation at work</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Understand TV shows</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Read a newspaper</td>
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<tr>
<td>Argentina</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>Participate in meetings in one’s area of expertise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russia</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Navigate an English-speaking country as a tourist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Engage in small talk with colleagues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Understand simple emails from colleagues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkey</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Low</td>
<td>Introduce oneself simply (name, age, country of origin)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Saudi Arabia</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Thailand</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### CEFR Levels and Can-Do Statements

**Proficient User**

- C2
  - Can understand with ease virtually everything heard or read.
  - Can summarize information from different spoken and written sources, reconstructing arguments and accounts in a coherent presentation.
  - Can express him/herself spontaneously, very fluently, and precisely, differentiating finer shades of meaning even in more complex situations.

- C1
  - Can understand a wide range of demanding, longer texts, and recognize implicit meaning.
  - Can express him/herself fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions.
  - Can use language flexibly and effectively for social, academic, and professional purposes.
  - Can produce clear, well-structured, detailed text on complex subjects, showing controlled use of organizational patterns, connectors, and cohesive devices.

**Independent User**

- B2
  - Can understand the main ideas of complex text on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in his/her field of specialization.
  - Can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible without strain for either party.
  - Can produce clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects and explain a viewpoint on a topical issue, giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.

- B1
  - Can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters routinely encountered in work, school, leisure, etc.
  - Can deal with most situations likely to arise while traveling in an area where the language is spoken.
  - Can produce simple connected text on topics that are familiar or of personal interest.
  - Can describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes, and ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans.

**Basic User**

- A2
  - Can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to most relevant areas (e.g., very basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment).
  - Can communicate during routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar matters.
  - Can describe in simple terms aspects of his/her background, immediate environment, and matters in areas of immediate need.

- A1
  - Can understand and use familiar everyday expressions and very basic phrases aimed at the satisfaction of needs of a concrete type.
  - Can introduce him/herself and others and can ask and answer questions about personal details such as where he/she lives, people he/she knows, and things he/she has.
  - Can interact in a simple way provided the other person talks slowly and clearly and is prepared to help.

*Quoted From the Council of Europe*

All countries and regions in the EF EPI fall into bands corresponding to levels A2-C1.
A look at changes in English skills over the past year:

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<td>628</td>
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<td>El Salvador</td>
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<td>519</td>
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**APPENDIX D**

**EF EPI Country and Region Rankings**

A look at changes in English skills over the past year:
Visit www.ef.com/epi to download previous editions of the EF EPI.