

English Learners in the U.S.

TESOL International Association (www.tesol.org)

- TESOL is a global education association representing 13,000 English language educators in over 150 countries, with 5,000 members in the US.
- TESOL is the largest organization focused exclusively on teaching English to speakers of other languages.

English Learners and their schools and communities

English learners are not all immigrants:

Individuals identified as “limited English proficient” ages 5 and older in the United States: Over 50% of the English learners in the United States are U.S. Citizens¹:

- 5,381,804 are U.S. born
- 9,221,241 are naturalized citizens
- 13,044,724 are noncitizens (note: noncitizens may have lawful status, such as permanent residency, temporary labor, or academic/scholarly study, to name but a few)

English learners in public education:

- English learners represent 10.6% of the U.S. elementary and secondary education system’s population, at 5.3 million students in fall 2021².
- About 65% of all public education teachers had a least one English learner in their classroom³.
- The number of certified licensed English learner instructors in the U.S. is decreasing, with 370K in the 2019-2020 school year. Nationwide, 76K additional English learner educators are needed³.

Adult English learners in federally funded programs:

- Almost 60% of adult participants are English learners⁴ - over 600,000.
- Less than 12% of the adult education instructors have TESOL certification⁵.
- Data is lacking on the total need for adult education for English learners but we do know that over four million naturalized citizens and six million noncitizens, ages 25 and up, possess less than a high school diploma¹.

International students in English language programs:

- Of the 1.12 million international students in the United States at higher education institutions, 69,386 study in English language programs⁶.
- These students directly contribute \$371 million to the economy through tuition and living expenses, supporting almost 3,000 jobs in the U.S. economy⁷.

¹ <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/data/state-profiles/state/language/US#>

² <https://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/indicator/cgf/english-learners-in-public-schools>

³ <https://ncela.ed.gov/sites/default/files/2023-06/ELsTeachers-Infographic-20230616-508.pdf>

⁴ <https://nrs.ed.gov/rt/reports/aggregate/2022/all/table-3>

⁵ <https://nrs.ed.gov/rt/reports/aggregate/2023/all/table-7>

⁶ <https://opendoorsdata.org/data/intensive-english-programs/>

⁷ <https://www.nafsa.org/policy-and-advocacy/policy-resources/nafsa-international-student-economic-value-tool-v2>