

Teaching English as a Foreign Language: 2023

NR092/2024 Release Date: 20 May 2024

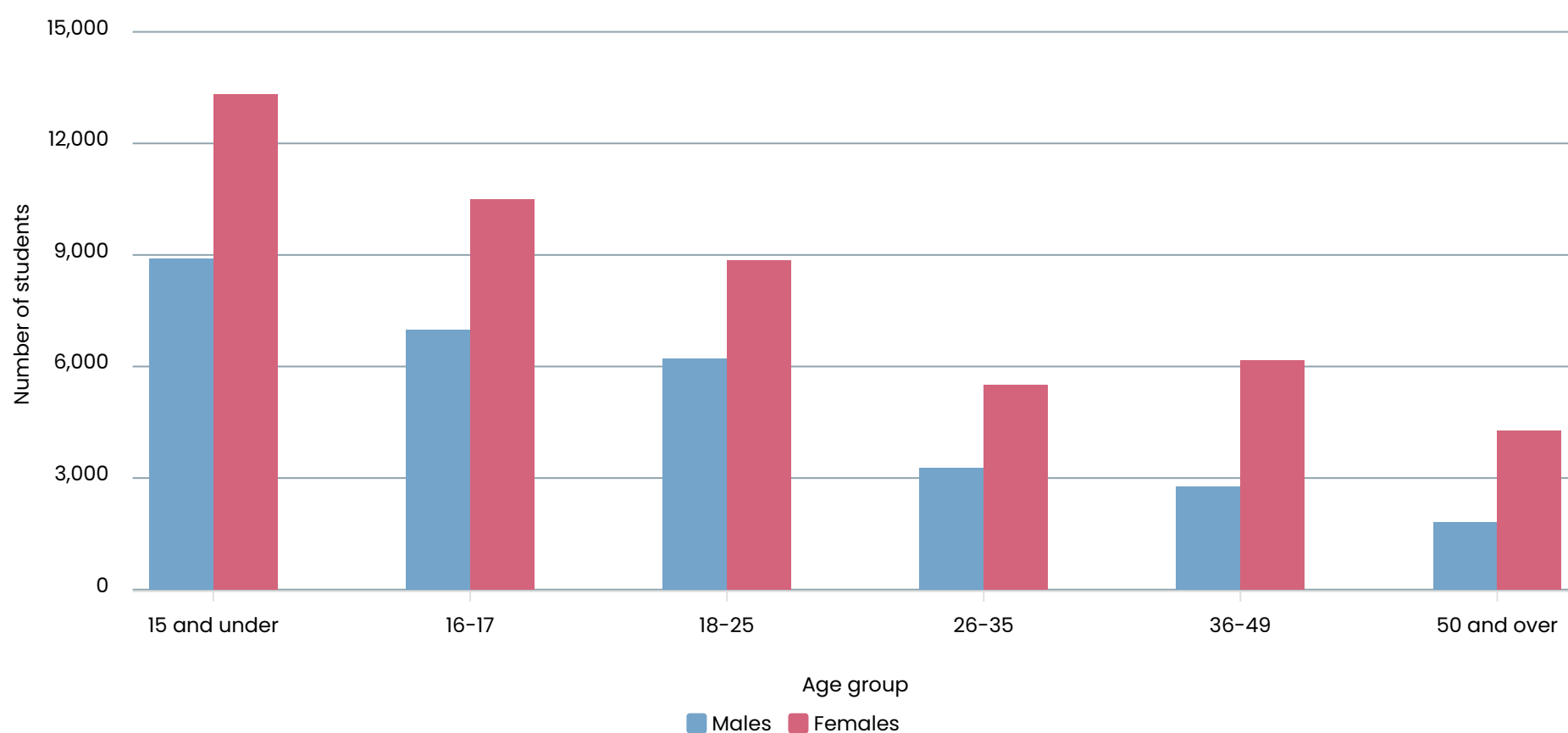
In 2023, foreign students attending English language courses at local licensed English Language Teaching (ELT) schools amounted to 78,567, marking an increase of 21,892 over 2022.



The majority of students attending English language courses in Malta came from Italy (27.8 per cent), followed by Germany (10.4 per cent) and France (9.0 per cent). Overall, 73.9 per cent of total students came from an EU country (Table 1).

The largest share of English language students were aged 15 and under, accounting for 28.3 per cent of the total students following ELT courses. Students aged 50 and over were in the minority and numbered 6,080. Female students outnumbered males, accounting for 61.9 per cent of the total ELT student population (Tables 2 and 3, Chart 1).

Chart 1. Foreign students following courses¹ in local licensed ELT schools by age group and sex



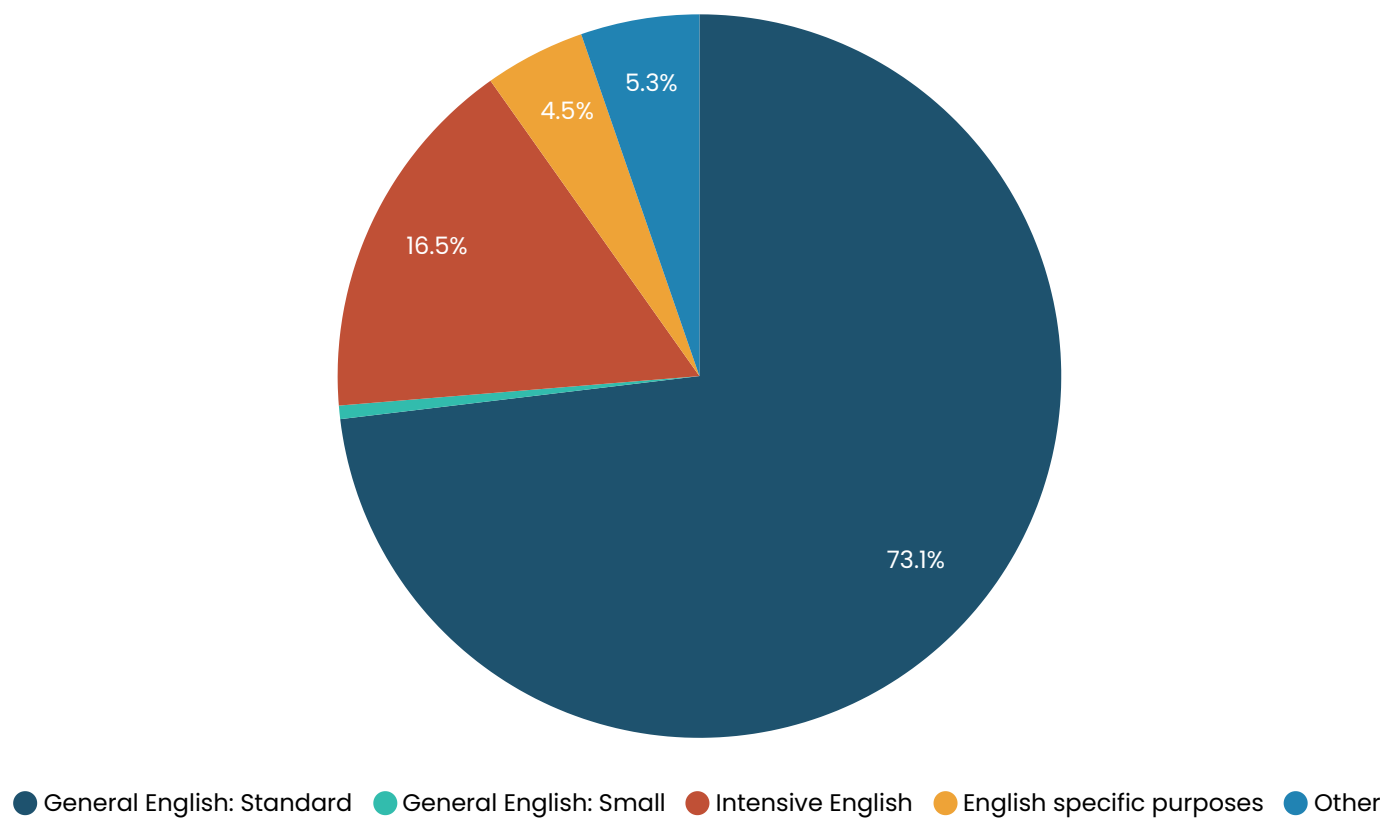
¹ Some courses were held remotely.

July was the busiest month for local licensed ELT schools in terms of course attendance, accounting for 17.1 per cent of the annual total. August and March followed with 13.4 and 10.5 per cent respectively (Table 4).

The most popular course uptake in local licensed ELT schools was 'General English: Standard', whereby a total of 57,384 students, or 73.1 per cent opted for this course. This was followed by the 'Intensive English' courses, with 16.5 per cent of total students (Table 5, Chart 2).

Chart 2. Percentage distribution of foreign students following courses¹ in local licensed ELT schools by type of course





¹ Some courses were held remotely.

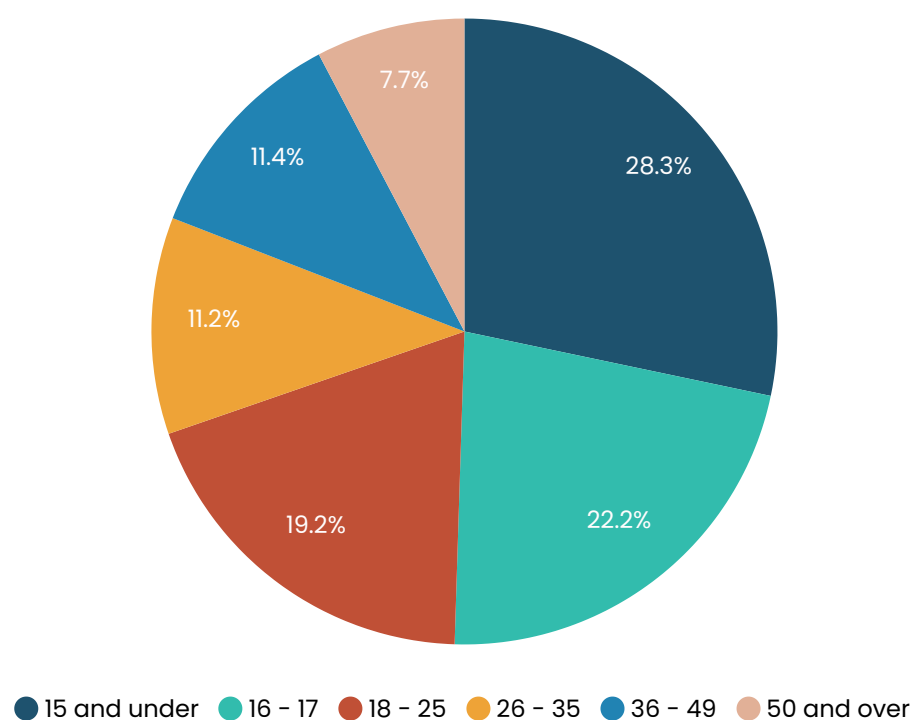
Notes:

1. English specific purposes courses include business English.
2. 'Other' includes exam preparation courses, one-to-one lessons, combination of courses, and other courses.
3. Totals may not add up due to rounding.

Foreign students enrolled in local licensed ELT schools accounted for 273,131 student weeks. The absolute majority of courses (99.0 per cent of total student weeks) were held physically, with online courses accounting for only 1.0 per cent. The average number of student weeks during the year under review stood at 3.5, a decrease of 0.9 weeks when compared to the previous year (Table 7). With an average of 14.7 weeks, students from Colombia recorded the highest number of student weeks, followed by Chilean and South Korean students with average student weeks at 13.3 and 10.7 weeks respectively (Tables 8 and 9).

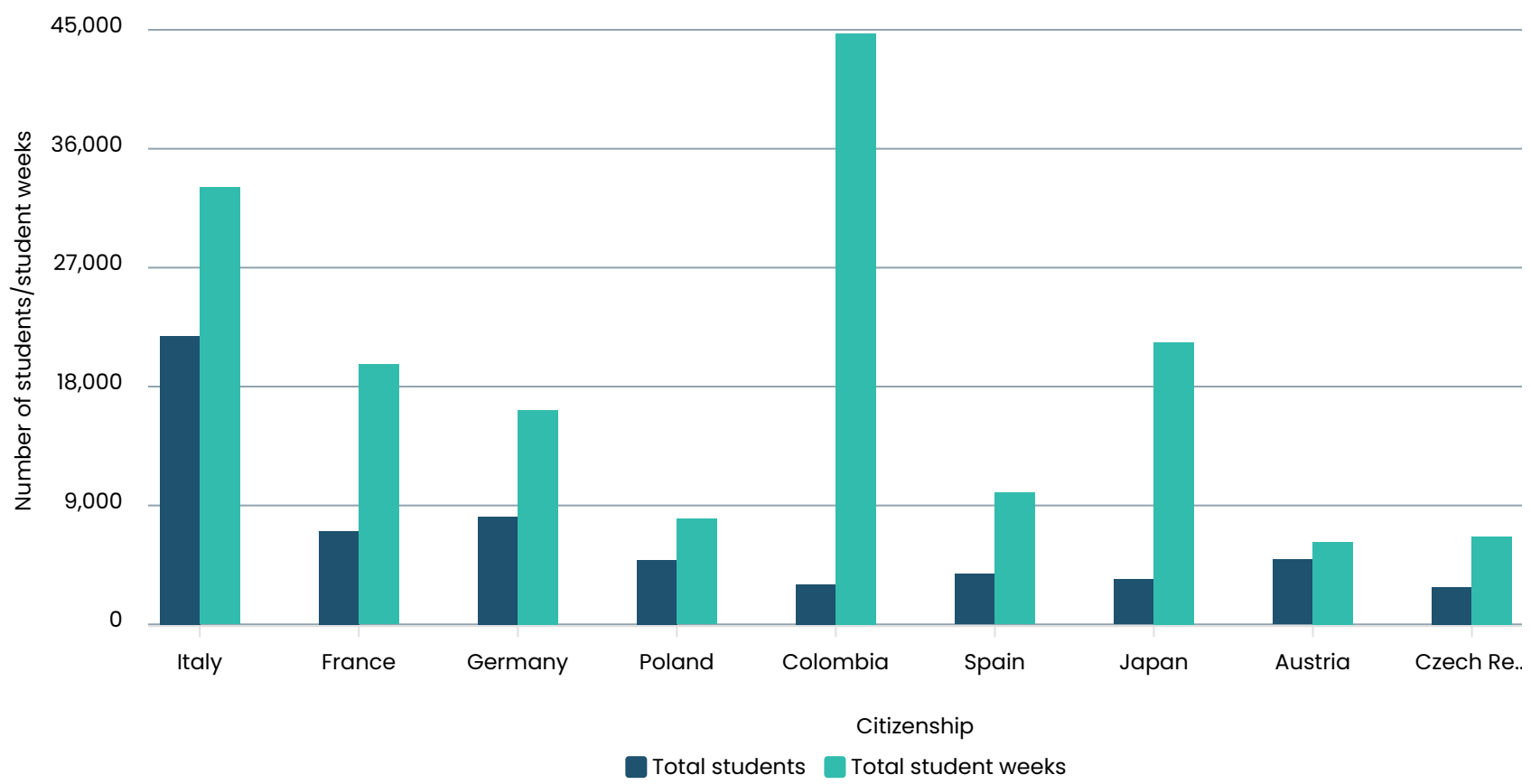
In 2023, teaching and academic staff in local licensed ELT schools numbered 620, with the largest proportion (25.0 per cent) being in 55 and over age group. Female teachers accounted for 70.3 per cent of the total (Table 10). Non-teaching staff amounted to 603, of whom 69.2 per cent were employed on a full-time basis (Tables 10 and 11).

Chart 3. Percentage distribution of foreign students following courses¹ in local licensed ELT schools by age group



¹ Some courses were held remotely.

Chart 4. Number of foreign students and student tuition weeks by the top 10 countries of citizenship



Note: Totals may not add up due to rounding.

Chart 5. Number of foreign students and tuition weeks

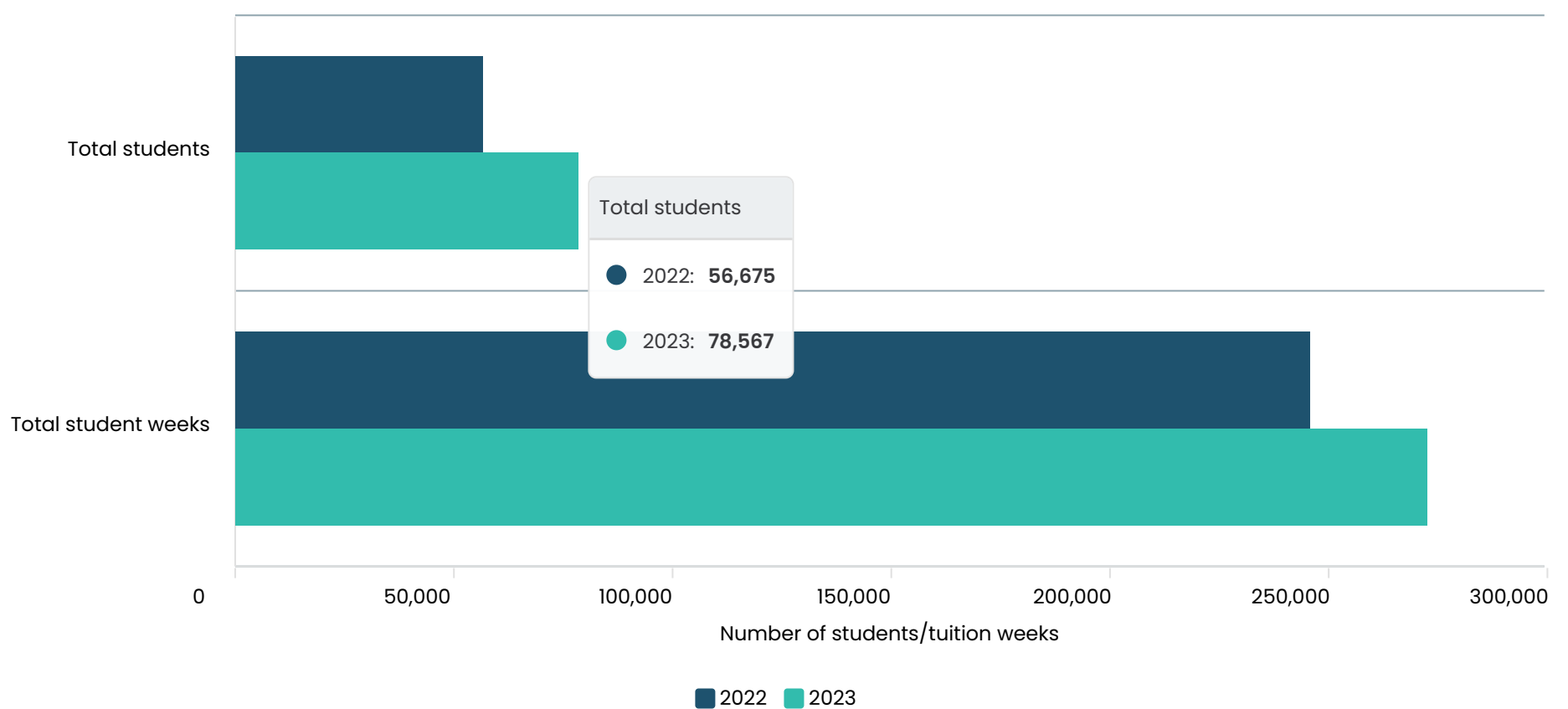


Table 1. Foreign students following courses¹ in local licensed ELT schools by year, sex and country of citizenship

Country of citizenship	2022			2023		
	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total
Italy	3,829	5,416	9,245	8,838	12,970	21,808
France	2,782	4,645	7,427	2,633	4,448	7,081
Poland	1,237	3,041	4,278	1,355	3,504	4,859
Germany	2,770	4,399	7,169	3,268	4,906	8,174
Spain	1,291	1,820	3,111	1,629	2,178	3,807
Czech Republic	626	1,464	2,090	847	1,982	2,829
Belgium	169	364	533	202	338	540
Austria	936	1,389	2,325	2,093	2,815	4,908
Slovakia	261	473	734	282	563	845
Hungary	310	511	821	374	702	1,076
Other EU countries	555	1,662	2,217	638	1,502	2,140
Total EU	14,766	25,184	39,950	22,159	35,908	58,067
Japan	916	2,113	3,029	968	2,439	3,407
Switzerland	588	797	1,385	608	922	1,530
Colombia	1,583	2,040	3,623	1,321	1,715	3,036
Turkey	893	567	1,460	1,070	779	1,849
South Korea	240	904	1,144	210	730	940
Russia	235	430	665	239	424	663
Brazil	669	1,419	2,088	1,477	3,146	4,623
China	132	162	294	165	264	429
Chile	106	184	290	139	195	334
Ukraine	139	293	432	230	357	587
Other Non-EU countries	1,084	1,231	2,315	1,378	1,724	3,102
Total Non-EU	6,585	10,140	16,725	7,805	12,695	20,500
Total	21,351	35,324	56,675	29,964	48,603	78,567

¹ Some courses were held remotely.

Table 2. Foreign students following courses¹ in local licensed ELT schools by age group and country of citizenship for the top 10 countries and other countries: 2023

Country of citizenship	Age group						Total
	15 and under	16-17	18-25	26-35	36-49	50 and over	
Italy	10,018	7,840	1,730	525	738	957	21,808
France	1,894	1,711	1,737	427	713	599	7,081
Germany	2,334	1,291	1,392	699	1,166	1,292	8,174
Poland	1,455	842	184	368	1,350	660	4,859
Colombia	27	113	905	1,395	527	69	3,036
Spain	701	945	1,119	315	454	273	3,807
Japan	334	258	1,918	533	195	169	3,407
Austria	1,923	2,083	670	55	80	97	4,908
Czech Republic	707	478	427	220	645	352	2,829
Brazil	109	131	1,213	1,846	907	417	4,623
Other countries ²	2,722	1,783	3,774	2,402	2,159	1,195	14,035
Total	22,224	17,475	15,069	8,785	8,934	6,080	78,567

¹ Some courses were held remotely.

² Includes unspecified country of citizenship.

Table 3. Foreign students following courses¹ in local licensed ELT schools by year, sex and age group

Age group	2022	2023	Change	Percentage change
	Males			
15 and under	5,344	8,902	3,558	66.6
16-17	3,838	6,983	3,145	81.9
18-25	5,382	6,217	835	15.5
26-35	3,036	3,276	240	7.9
36-49	2,315	2,774	459	19.8
50 and over	1,436	1,812	376	26.2
Total	21,351	29,964	8,613	40.3
Females				
15 and under	8,324	13,322	4,998	60.0
16-17	6,210	10,492	4,282	69.0
18-25	8,051	8,852	801	9.9
26-35	4,735	5,509	774	16.3
36-49	4,801	6,160	1,359	28.3
50 and over	3,203	4,268	1,065	33.3
Total	35,324	48,603	13,279	37.6
Total				
15 and under	13,668	22,224	8,556	62.6
16-17	10,048	17,475	7,427	73.9
18-25	13,433	15,069	1,636	12.2
26-35	7,771	8,785	1,014	13.0
36-49	7,116	8,934	1,818	25.5
50 and over	4,639	6,080	1,441	31.1
Total	56,675	78,567	21,892	38.6

¹ Some courses were held remotely.

Table 4. Foreign students following courses¹ in local licensed ELT schools by year, sex and month²

Month	2022	2023
	Males	
January	247	606
February	467	1,636
March	779	3,333
April	1,574	2,921
May	1,417	2,368
June	1,436	2,243
July	4,374	4,749
August	3,554	3,819
September	1,916	2,496
October	1,980	2,307
November	1,163	1,360
December	2,316	2,011
Remote learning	128	115
Total	21,351	29,964
	Females	
January	308	839
February	785	2,624
March	1,113	4,952
April	2,377	4,717
May	2,008	3,507
June	2,501	3,581
July	7,887	8,706
August	6,346	6,695
September	3,211	4,229
October	3,523	3,755
November	1,961	2,122
December	3,125	2,734
Remote learning	179	142
Total	35,324	48,603
	Total	
January	555	1,445
February	1,252	4,260
March	1,892	8,285
April	3,951	7,638
May	3,425	5,875
June	3,937	5,824
July	12,261	13,455
August	9,900	10,514
September	5,127	6,725
October	5,503	6,062
November	3,124	3,482
December	5,441	4,745
Remote learning	307	257
Total	56,675	78,567

¹ Some courses were held remotely.

² Refer to methodological note 4.

Table 5. Foreign students following courses¹ in local licensed ELT schools by type of course and country of citizenship: 2023

Country of citizenship	Type of course					Total
	General English: Standard	General English: Small	Intensive English	English specific purposes ²	Other ³	
Italy	17,824	49	1,333	2,184	418	21,808
France	4,904	21	1,693	101	362	7,081
Poland	3,123	68	1,076	127	465	4,859
Germany	4,269	136	2,592	442	735	8,174
Spain	3,052	22	492	33	208	3,807
Japan	2,690	7	562	45	103	3,407
Switzerland	819	40	555	12	104	1,530
Colombia	2,175	1	509	140	211	3,036
Czech Republic	1,743	50	754	55	227	2,829
Turkey	1,449	3	287	22	88	1,849
Belgium	320	2	201	8	9	540
South Korea	714	3	123	17	83	940
Austria	4,709	9	137	9	44	4,908
Slovakia	545	5	168	14	113	845
Hungary	499	12	332	12	221	1,076
Sweden	299	5	64	2	5	375
Netherlands	250	1	100	10	34	395
Denmark	154	0	12	2	12	180
Russia	405	7	169	15	67	663
Portugal	155	0	99	2	24	280
Other countries ⁴	7,286	69	1,713	267	650	9,985
Total	57,384	510	12,971	3,519	4,183	78,567

¹ Some courses were held remotely.

² Includes business English.

³ Includes exam preparation courses, one-to-one lessons, combination of courses, and other courses.

⁴ Includes unspecified country of citizenship.

**Table 6. Foreign students following courses¹ in local licensed ELT schools by sex and type of accommodation:
2023**

Type of accommodation	Males	Females	Total²
Hotel	7,150	10,552	17,702
5 Star	4	9	13
4 Star	3,197	4,745	7,942
3 Star	3,948	5,796	9,744
Hostel / Residence / Guesthouse	6,940	11,660	18,600
Host family	5,859	9,896	15,755
Holiday Furnished Premises (HFP)	1,171	1,833	3,004
Accommodation not provided by the school	8,217	13,402	21,619
Other	-	-	-
Unknown	627	1,260	1,887
Total	29,964	48,603	78,567

¹ Some courses were held remotely.

² Refers to bookings made.

Table 7. Number of student weeks by sex, year and month¹

Month	Number of student weeks			Average number of student weeks per student ²		
	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total
	2023					
January	4,678	6,736	11,414	7.7	8.0	7.9
February	6,319	9,613	15,933	3.9	3.7	3.7
March	9,280	13,573	22,853	2.8	2.7	2.8
April	9,133	13,412	22,546	3.1	2.8	3.0
May	9,701	14,432	24,133	4.1	4.1	4.1
June	9,820	14,610	24,430	4.4	4.1	4.2
July	15,977	25,005	40,982	3.4	2.9	3.0
August	12,955	19,459	32,414	3.4	2.9	3.1
September	8,513	12,922	21,435	3.4	3.1	3.2
October	9,223	14,026	23,249	4.0	3.7	3.8
November	7,349	10,620	17,969	5.4	5.0	5.2
December	5,570	7,534	13,104	2.8	2.8	2.8
Remote learning	1,221	1,450	2,671	10.6	10.2	10.4
Total	109,740	163,391	273,131	3.7	3.4	3.5
	2022					
January	3,409	4,312	7,721	13.8	14.0	13.9
February	4,415	6,075	10,490	9.5	7.7	8.4
March	6,118	8,267	14,386	7.9	7.4	7.6
April	7,479	10,552	18,031	4.8	4.4	4.6
May	7,930	11,842	19,772	5.6	5.9	5.8
June	8,676	13,467	22,143	6.0	5.4	5.6
July	14,519	24,242	38,760	3.3	3.1	3.2
August	12,185	19,451	31,636	3.4	3.1	3.2
September	8,478	13,176	21,653	4.4	4.1	4.2
October	9,340	14,684	24,024	4.7	4.2	4.4
November	8,149	12,022	20,172	7.0	6.1	6.5
December	6,679	9,042	15,721	2.9	2.9	2.9
Remote learning	737	1,068	1,805	5.8	6.0	5.9
Total	98,115	148,199	246,314	4.6	4.2	4.3

¹ Refer to methodological note 4.

² Based on student figures as presented in Table 4.

Note: Totals may not add up due to rounding.

Table 8. Number of student weeks by age group and country of citizenship: 2023

Country of citizenship	Age group						Total
	15 and under	16-17	18-25	26-35	36-49	50 and over	
Italy	12,489	10,442	4,802	2,086	1,624	1,632	33,075
France	3,537	3,896	8,415	1,653	1,244	925	19,671
Poland	2,337	1,326	422	680	2,109	1,103	7,976
Germany	4,113	2,641	3,791	1,357	2,090	2,240	16,232
Spain	1,394	1,702	3,568	1,409	1,243	637	9,953
Japan	716	779	13,866	4,079	1,180	716	21,337
Switzerland	489	866	2,196	441	625	725	5,342
Colombia	237	1,907	13,250	21,129	7,454	736	44,713
Czech Republic	1,403	1,177	1,441	630	1,374	646	6,671
Turkey	544	408	10,305	4,373	1,354	269	17,254
Belgium	184	537	801	188	95	69	1,876
South Korea	216	49	4,517	3,357	1,346	546	10,031
Austria	2,342	2,391	953	138	227	193	6,244
Slovakia	512	300	263	173	422	210	1,879
Hungary	437	325	247	267	577	392	2,245
Sweden	527	182	190	19	47	14	978
Netherlands	65	481	758	23	35	20	1,381
Denmark	272	71	47	8	18	5	421
Russia	518	203	529	733	744	228	2,955
Portugal	25	86	423	275	158	67	1,034
Other countries ¹	3,483	3,831	16,792	22,851	11,587	3,321	61,865
Total	35,838	33,600	87,578	65,867	35,554	14,695	273,131

¹ Includes unspecified country of citizenship.

Note: Totals may not add up due to rounding.

Table 9. Number of student weeks by sex and country of citizenship: 2023

Country of citizenship	Number of student weeks			Average number of student weeks per student ¹		
	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total
Italy	13,598	19,476	33,075	1.5	1.5	1.5
France	7,898	11,773	19,671	3.0	2.6	2.8
Poland	2,427	5,549	7,976	1.8	1.6	1.6
Germany	6,597	9,635	16,232	2.0	2.0	2.0
Spain	4,136	5,817	9,953	2.5	2.7	2.6
Czech Republic	2,138	4,533	6,671	2.5	2.3	2.4
Belgium	690	1,186	1,876	3.4	3.5	3.5
Austria	2,642	3,602	6,244	1.3	1.3	1.3
Slovakia	666	1,213	1,879	2.4	2.2	2.2
Hungary	888	1,357	2,245	2.4	1.9	2.1
Other EU countries	1,912	4,044	5,956	3.0	2.7	2.8
Total EU	43,593	68,185	111,777	2.0	1.9	1.9
Japan	6,435	14,902	21,337	6.6	6.1	6.3
Switzerland	2,178	3,164	5,342	3.6	3.4	3.5
Colombia	19,344	25,369	44,713	14.6	14.8	14.7
Turkey	10,409	6,845	17,254	9.7	8.8	9.3
South Korea	2,400	7,631	10,031	11.4	10.5	10.7
Russia	1,032	1,923	2,955	4.3	4.5	4.5
Brazil	8,012	15,569	23,581	5.4	4.9	5.1
China	1,232	2,305	3,537	7.5	8.7	8.2
Chile	1,807	2,630	4,437	13.0	13.5	13.3
Ukraine	847	1,395	2,242	3.7	3.9	3.8
Other Non-EU countries	12,452	13,474	25,926	9.0	7.8	8.4
Total Non-EU	66,147	95,206	161,354	8.5	7.5	7.9
Total	109,740	163,391	273,131	3.7	3.4	3.5

¹ Based on student figures as presented in Table 1.

Note: Totals may not add up due to rounding.

Table 10. Staff¹ employed in local licensed ELT schools by sex, type of employment and age group: 2023

Age group	Males	Females	Total
	Teaching/Academic staff		
16-17	-	-	-
18-24	26	101	127
25-34	53	101	154
35-44	39	73	112
45-54	22	50	72
55 and over	44	111	155
Total	184	436	620
	Non-teaching staff		
16-17	6	8	14
18-24	68	115	183
25-34	61	110	171
35-44	34	63	97
45-54	34	40	74
55 and over	33	31	64
Total	236	367	603
	Total		
16-17	6	8	14
18-24	94	216	310
25-34	114	211	325
35-44	73	136	209
45-54	56	90	146
55 and over	77	142	219
Total	420	803	1,223

¹ Refer to methodological note 5.

Note: For type of employment, teaching and non-teaching staff definitions see methodological note 8.

Table 11. Staff¹ in local licensed ELT schools by sex and type of employment: 2023

Type of employment	Teaching/Academic staff			Non-teaching staff			Total		
	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total
Full-time	36	56	92	149	268	417	185	324	509
Part-time	65	122	187	33	37	70	98	159	257
Casual	83	258	341	54	62	116	137	320	457
Total	184	436	620	236	367	603	420	803	1,223
Full-time	19.6	12.8	14.8	63.1	73.0	69.2	44.0	40.3	41.6
Part-time	35.3	28.0	30.2	14.0	10.1	11.6	23.3	19.8	21.0
Casual	45.1	59.2	55.0	22.9	16.9	19.2	32.6	39.9	37.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

¹ Refer to methodological note 5.

Note: For type of employment, teaching and non-teaching staff definitions see methodological note 7.

Methodological Notes

1. Data used in this News Release is based on information collected by the Ministry for Education, Sport, Youth, Research and Innovation which was subsequently analysed by NSO.
2. Data was collected by the ELT Council during the period December 2022-February 2023. All local licensed English Language Teaching (ELT) schools operating in 2023 responded to this questionnaire. A full list of ELT schools can be accessed [here](#).
3. Breakdowns by country are based on the students' citizenship as provided by the student. Thus, figures for foreign citizens are not directly comparable to other tourism figures published by the NSO.
4. Since 2021, following disruptions and unprecedented scenarios due to COVID-19, foreign students who attended English Language schools could choose both physical courses in Malta, as well as online courses.
5. For the scope of this release 'teaching/academic staff' includes all ELT permit holders. Staff employed with different schools carrying out the same role are counted once.
6. Figures on type of course followed and type of accommodation cannot be compared with data of previous years due to methodological enhancements held in 2020.

7. Definitions:

ELT schools refer to institutions which provide English-related courses for foreign students. More information can be accessed [here](#).

Teaching/Academic staff refer to professional personnel directly involved in teaching students, including teachers, assistant teachers, ELT instructors and other ELT permit holders.

Non-Teaching staff refer to persons employed by educational institutions who have no instructional responsibilities, and do not hold an ELT permit. Examples are school management staff, front office staff, group leaders, administration staff, sales, marketing and reservations staff.

Full-time employment: includes employed persons on a full-time basis.

Part-time employment: includes employed persons whose normal hours are less than those of comparable full-time workers.

Casual employment: includes temporary workers, working irregular hours, who are employed on a part-time basis.

8. Number of student weeks by foreign students is calculated as follows:

$$\frac{\text{Total number of days}}{7}$$

9. Average number of student weeks per student is calculated as follows:

$$\frac{\text{Total number of weeks}}{\text{Total number of students}}$$

10. References to this news release are to be cited appropriately. For guidance on access and re-use of data please visit our [dedicated webpage](#).
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