

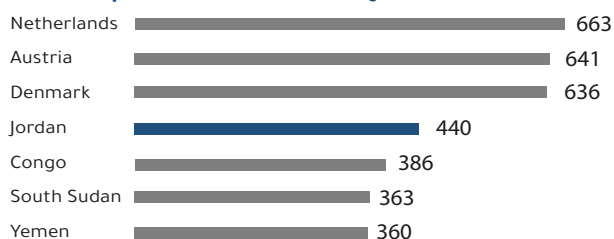
The 2021 English Proficiency Index: Where Does Jordan Stand? Why it is Important?

“EF Education First” is a Swedish institution, founded in 1965, which focuses on language, cultural exchange, and educational travel programs. The mission of EF is to “open the world through education”.

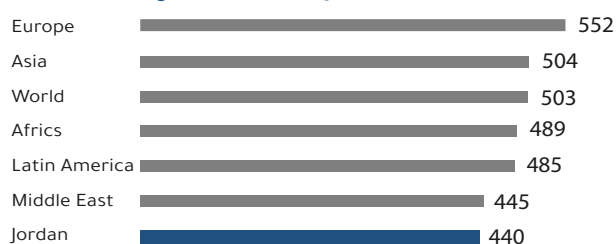
Since 2011, EF has been publishing what is called the “EF English Proficiency Index”. The index is based on testing the English proficiency of adults in 117 countries where English is considered a foreign language. The 2021 report has been published. To rank the 117 countries, the EF’s team tested the English proficiency of about 7 million people who took a test in 2020. Below, we outline few observations.

1. There is a huge difference between the top score of Netherlands (663 out of 800) and the bottom score of Yemen (360 out of 800). It is unfortunate to note that Jordan’s score (440) is closer to the bottom 3 countries. Jordan’s score is even lower than the mean score of the Middle East countries.

**The 2021 English Proficiency Index (Out of 800)
Top & Bottom 3 Scores & Jordan's Score**



**The 2021 English Proficiency Index (Out of 800)
Regional Score & Jordan's Score**



2. Lebanon ranks 34th globally and 1st regionally. Jordan ranks 90th globally, and 11th regionally.

Country	Score	Rank	Country	Score	Rank
Lebanon	536	34	Egypt	455	85
Tunisia	510	52	Syria	445	89
UAE	480	69	Jordan	440	90
Morocco	477	71	Oman	417	102
Bahrain	476	72	Saudi Arabia	404	104
Algeria	474	75	Iraq	399	107
Qatar	467	79	Libya	390	108
Kuwait	458	84	Yemen	360	112

3. It is interesting to note that while Jordan’s national score is equal to 440, the score for people in Amman is equal to 460. Jordan’s score at the “national” level, and the “capital” level are close to each other.

IN A NUTSHELL, English is the primary language of communication across the globe. Proficiency in English boosts job opportunities and improves the quality of higher education. Indeed, English is a prerequisite for good jobs, such as those related to information technology. In addition, some of the best universities in the world provide their education in English as most of them are located in the United Kingdom and the United States of America. It is also known that learning another language opens many horizons for learning and cultural exchanges as well as entertainment, and even enhances cognitive abilities. This is especially true if one learns and masters the English language as it is the most widely spoken among countries in the world, and the highest published and used on the Internet.

It is unfortunate to note that the 2021 English Proficiency Index ranks Jordan among the “very low proficiency” countries. Relevant stakeholders should ensure that “English is taught only by people who speak the language well enough to instruct in it”, “consider the hours available in the curriculum” and “allow TV shows and movies to be shown in their original language, with subtitles rather than dubbing”.

In brief, while nations elevate their languages and national identities, and preserve them while developing, the importance of learning another language, especially English, should not be underestimated to keep pace with knowledge and openness to the world.