



## DEBATE PACK

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# Investment in the provision of English for speakers of other languages

By Sue Hubble  
Nerys Roberts, Paul Bolton, Hannah Wilkins, Alexander Bellis, Selena Steele, Bess Jap

## Summary

English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) is the term used for English language courses taken by people whose first language is not English and who need English to communicate in daily life.

This debate pack, focusing on England, explains Government funding of ESOL over time, including the introduction of fees from 2007 onwards. Figures on ESOL enrolment over this period are also included. The paper also describes the recent Government commitment to publish a new national strategy for the English language, as Scottish and Welsh Governments have done.

Various news articles, parliamentary content, and further reading is also provided to illustrate stakeholder opinion, research and policies in elsewhere in the UK.

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The House of Commons Library prepares a briefing in hard copy and/or online for most non-legislative debates in the Chamber and Westminster Hall other than half-hour debates. Debate Packs are produced quickly after the announcement of parliamentary business. They are intended to provide a summary or overview of the issue being debated and identify relevant briefings and useful documents, including press and parliamentary material. More detailed briefing can be prepared for Members on request to the Library.

# 1. Background

English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) is the term used for English language courses taken by people whose first language is not English and who need English to communicate in daily life.

Library briefing paper, [Adult ESOL in England](#), 25 April 2018 provides policy information and statistics on ESOL for learners aged 19 and over in England.

## 1.1 ESOL policy

ESOL funding and provision has undergone a prolonged period of change and restriction. Up until August 2007, ESOL courses were eligible for automatic fee remission<sup>1</sup> and, during this time, demand for and expenditure on ESOL increased substantially. Since this time, a number of changes have been made to ESOL funding, including:

- Automatic fee remission was withdrawn from 2007-08 and fees were introduced for ESOL courses. Only people in receipt of certain means-tested benefits (and their unwaged dependents) and asylum seekers who had been waiting over six months for their asylum claim to be processed qualified for full funding. Other eligible learners were co-funded (meaning they had to make a 50% contribution to the cost of the course themselves).
- From 2011-12 full-funding for ESOL courses was further restricted to individuals in receipt of Jobseekers Allowance or Employment Support Allowance (and in the Work Related Activity Group) and funding for ESOL in the workplace was withdrawn. Other eligible learners continued to be co-funded.
- Following changes to the requirements placed on Jobseeker's Allowance claimants, £30 million of ESOL Plus Mandation funding was allocated in 2014-15.<sup>2</sup> The funding was allocated to providers in areas that had been identified as likely to experience increased demand for ESOL as a result of the changes.
- Following the 2015 Summer Budget, ESOL Plus Mandation funding was withdrawn from 2015-16. The indicative allocation for 2015-16 had been £45 million.

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<sup>1</sup> i.e., reduction/ removal of charges to the learner.

<sup>2</sup> This funding was linked to a requirement for JSA claimants with poor spoken English to undertake ESOL.

Over the period of policy change **participation in ESOL fell from 179,000 in 2009-10 to 114,000 in 2017-18**. Trends are illustrated opposite. Data on entry in 2008-19 (up to January) indicate a modest increase of around 1.5% in entrants.<sup>3</sup>

In a survey of ESOL providers carried out by the National Association for Teaching English and other Community Languages to Adults (NATECLA) in 2014, 80% of responders said their institution had "...significant waiting lists of up to 1,000 students..."; 66% said that lack of funding was the main cause of this.<sup>4</sup>

## Funding

Government-funded adult ESOL is funded by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) through the **Adult Education Budget (AEB)** in the same way as other further education courses.

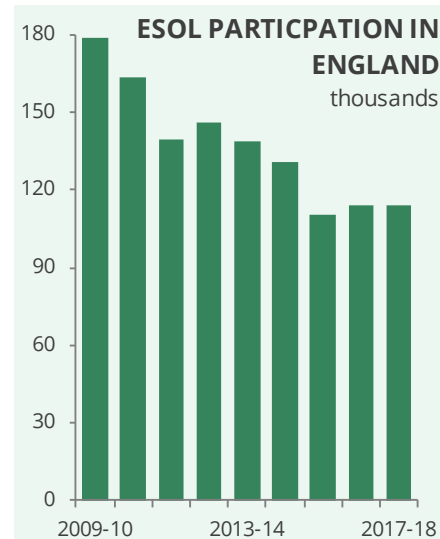
The ESFA will fully fund ESOL learning delivered in the classroom up to and including Level 2 for eligible learners aged 19 and over who are unemployed and in receipt of certain benefits. All other eligible classroom-based adult ESOL learning is co-funded by the ESFA. There is no funding provided for ESOL in the workplace.

As funding for adult ESOL courses is demand-led, there are no future budgets set for their level of funding. Data on past funding levels (not including community learning) has been provided in response to parliamentary questions, but 2016-17 are the latest figures. These show that **funding from the AEB fell by 56% in real terms between 2009-10 and 2016-17**.<sup>5</sup>

Control over the Adult Education Budget (the biggest element of adult education funding) will transfer to the six Mayoral Combined Authorities (MCAs) and the Greater London Authority (GLA) from 2019-20. Once control over the AEB has been transferred to MCAs and the GLA, they will be responsible for funding residents of their areas. The ESFA will continue to be responsible for funding residents of non-devolved areas.

## 1.2 Access to ESOL

Access to ESOL provision has been an issue for a number of years. The [Casey Review](#) into opportunity and integration published in December 2016 stated that good English skills were fundamental to integrated communities. The Review recommended the provision of additional funding for area-based plans and projects to address: promoting English language skills; empowering marginalised women; promoting more social mixing; particularly among young people; and tackling barriers to employment for the most socially isolated groups.<sup>6</sup>



<sup>3</sup> [Further education and skills: March 2019](#), DfE

<sup>4</sup> See: NATECLA press release, '[Migrants on huge waiting lists for English courses as government funding is cut again](#)', 22 May 2014.

<sup>5</sup> [PO 59503](#), 17 January 2017; [PO 131906](#), 20 March 2018. 2016-17 prices, using March 2018 GDP deflators.

<sup>6</sup> Department for Education research report, [English for speakers of other languages: Access and progression](#), June 2019 p15

Writing in August 2018, the IPPR think tank argued that ‘historic under-funding’ of ESOL, alongside general austerity measures has:

curtailed the ability of mainstream public services to support integration and disproportionately affected services that migrants rely on for integration support. Funding for further education, a critical provider of English language support, has seen cuts of 35 per cent since 2009 (University and College Union 2015), and legal aid funds, which many migrants rely on, has seen cuts of just under 50 per cent (The National Council for Civil Liberties 2018). Only by reversing this situation and raising levels of investment will migrants be able to contribute fully to the UK economy.<sup>7</sup>

IPPR argued that a language barrier impedes migrants’ ability to access better work: as a result, many migrants are overqualified for their roles. IPPR have outlined their preferred approach to greater integration of migrants into the workforce: this would include the “full funding for ESOL courses for those on other means-tested benefits” and ending the restriction on workplace-based ESOL funding.<sup>8</sup> They have also called for employers to take more responsibility for teaching English to migrant workers that they sponsor, and incentivising education institutions, particularly universities, to improve integration outcomes.<sup>9</sup> Further details can be found in their reports [Measuring the benefits of integration: the value of tackling skills underutilisation](#) (June 2019) and [The integration compact: a strategy for maximising the benefits of immigration](#) (August 2018).

A Department for Education research report, [English for speakers of other languages: Access and progression](#), (June 2019) stated that demand for English Language courses is high and providers said demand was difficult to meet:

Almost three-quarters (73%) of survey respondents reported a ‘significant demand’ for English language learning provision in the communities they serve, while a quarter (25%) stated that there was a ‘fair amount of demand’. The majority of survey respondents said their organisation struggled to meet demand for English language learning. Over half (53%) said their organisations found it ‘fairly difficult’ to meet the demand and one in eight (13%) found it ‘very difficult’.<sup>10</sup>

The report also gives an overview of the current type of ESOL provision:

The findings showed variation in provision depending on available funding and the type of provider. Survey findings mirror government data and showed that Further Education (FE) providers were most likely to offer accredited/classroom provision starting from pre-entry and going up to level 2. Learner numbers and the availability of courses decreased as the educational level increased. Case study visits with providers showed that some FE providers also offered non-accredited funded language courses

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<sup>7</sup> [The integration compact: a strategy for maximising the benefits of immigration](#), IPPR, August 2018, p12

<sup>8</sup> [Measuring the benefits of integration: the value of tackling skills underutilisation](#), IPPR, June 2019, pp11-2

<sup>9</sup> [The integration compact: a strategy for maximising the benefits of immigration](#), IPPR, August 2018, pp17-18

<sup>10</sup> John Higton et. al. for the DfE, [‘English for speakers of other languages: Access and progression’](#), June 2019, p10.

(known as bridging courses) to learners who were performing below the standard requirement.

Findings from case study visits with English language providers showed that although local authority provision followed a similar structure to FE college provision there were differences: local authorities had a greater focus on 'adult community learning' and tended more towards a mix of formal and informal, and accredited and non-accredited provision. Findings from case study visits also showed that local authority provision would usually take place in venues within local communities.

During case study visits, third sector providers said they would generally target learners at pre-entry/entry levels. A small minority of third sector providers offered accredited level 1 provision subject to demand and funding. Senior leaders from the third sector said their provision was typically non-accredited and was delivered in informal settings. Learning was usually focussed on equipping learners with English for 'everyday life' such as shopping, speaking to the school teacher, visiting the doctors, etc.

A variety of funding sources for supporting English language learning were identified in the research evidence. The survey showed four-fifths of providers (80%) offered provision funded by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) through the AEB. Two-thirds of providers said some or all of their English language learning provision was not funded through the AEB (63%).

Most local authority and third sector providers reported they were reliant on mixed funding streams and more likely to access multiple streams of funding compared to FE providers. Other sources of funding included the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme (VPRS) (19%), which is managed by local authorities, European Social Fund (11%) and Controlling Migration Fund (11%).<sup>11</sup>

### 1.3 English language support for refugees

The [Refugee Council](#) works with local councils offering the support to all resettled refugees, including education and English language classes. However the provision of English classes is deemed by critics to be inadequate.<sup>12</sup> Research by Refugee Action in 2017 found refugees were waiting up to three years to start learning English.<sup>13</sup>

#### June 2019 *Refugee Action* report: Turning words into action

In June 2019, the charity, *Refugee Action* published a report, [Turning words into action](#), part of Refugee Action's '[Let Refugees Learn](#)' campaign. This calls on the Government to provide more resources for ESOL for refugees. The report found:

<sup>11</sup> John Higton et. al. for the DfE, '[English for speakers of other languages: Access and progression](#)', June 2019, pp8-9.

<sup>12</sup> See, for example: Sussex Centre for Migration Research, '[Optimising refugee resettlement in the UK: a comparative analysis](#)', undated (accessed 1 July 2019); Refugee Action, '[Safe but alone: The role of English language in allowing refugees to overcome loneliness](#)', October 2017

<sup>13</sup> Refugee Action, '[Safe but alone: The role of English language in allowing refugees to overcome loneliness](#)', October 2017

- Participation of adults in ESOL classes had declined by nearly 40% between 2008 and 2018.
- 91% of UK adults sampled in a survey thought it important that refugees learned to speak English.
- Almost two thirds of providers surveyed by Refugee Action in July 2017 felt that the amount of ESOL they could offer was inadequate, and a majority felt that their ability to provide high-quality classes had declined in the last 5 years (to 2017).<sup>14</sup>

Recommendations included:

- Creating a **scheme to give refugees a minimum of eight hours' formal accredited tuition a week**, for the first two years in the UK. The estimated cost is around £42 million per year, which Refugee Action estimates would be reimbursed in the first eight months of an individual working for the national average wage.
- Publishing an **ESOL strategy**.
- A focus on **addressing barriers to participation** in ESOL – for example, caring responsibilities, that disproportionately affect women.
- **Providing ESOL from the point of an individual claiming asylum**.
- Facilitating a **national framework** for community-based language support.<sup>15</sup>

Refugees who are resettled through the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme (VPRS) have access to £10m worth of funding for ESOL classes.<sup>16</sup>

## 1.4 *Integrated Communities*

In March 2018 the Government published its Integrated Communities Strategy green paper. [Chapter 4](#) relates to improving English language skills. On **refugees** it stated:

### **Support for vulnerable persons and children**

Local authorities which resettle refugee families under the Vulnerable Person Relocation Scheme (VPRS) or the Vulnerable Children's Relocation Scheme (VCRS) are required to ensure that those families receive English language support.

The Home Office and Department for Education have jointly provided a £10m fund spread over five years, to enable local authorities to make more tuition available, build their capacity and make childcare provision to open access to English classes for those with young children. Some of this funding can be used to build capacity, such as training more teachers, buying equipment, or renting classroom space.

The Home Office has also provided money to local authorities to increase childcare provision so that adults with young children can access English classes. A further Home Office fund has also created a new network of regional coordinators who are

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<sup>14</sup> Refugee Action, [Turning words into action](#), June 2019, pp2- 4.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, p11.

<sup>16</sup> [PQ 265552](#) [on English language: refugees] 20 June 2019

responsible for mapping English language service provision, identifying gaps, sharing good practice, and helping local authorities to build capacity.

In *Integrated Communities*, the Government also announced its intention to create a **community-based English language programme**, and in September 2018, the Department for Housing, Communities and Local Government (DHCLG) invited providers to bid for a share of this £4.5 million initiative. An additional £1.2 million is being allocated to develop new co-ordination models.<sup>17</sup>

The aims of the programme are to:

- Focus provision on communities where there are large numbers of people – particularly women - who do not speak English.
- Use a highly localised, community-based model of teaching.
- Reach learners at pre-entry and entry level 1 – i.e., those with limited English language knowledge.
- Build learners' confidence to interact more widely in their local communities.

DHCLG [announced](#) the successful bidders in February 2019.<sup>18</sup> They included Redbridge Institute of Adult Education, FaithAction, Manchester Adult Education, TimeBank and eight local authorities.

## 1.5 A new English language strategy

Several commentators have argued for an ESOL-specific strategy from the UK Government.

In its August 2018 report, the All Party Parliamentary Group on Social Integration recommended that the Government introduce a new national strategy for the promotion of English language learning.<sup>19</sup> The APPG took the view that enrolment on English language classes ought to be compulsory. It referred to the Casey Review's finding that regressive family and cultural norms and practices often prevent vulnerable members of certain communities, and women in particular, from learning English.

The APPG believed "The ability to speak English should be viewed as a right extended to everyone in our society no matter what their background or income level." In addition to calling for direct investment in language classes, its report suggested the introduction of "an income-contingent advanced learning loan system for English language programmes, through which programme participants could defer payments until they begin to earn a salary above a certain threshold".<sup>20</sup> It also proposed incentivising employers to support English language classes.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>17</sup> See: DHCLG, '[Integrated communities English language programme: prospectus](#)', September 2018.

<sup>18</sup> DHCLG press release, '[Thousands to benefit from new English language programmes](#)', 28 February 2019.

<sup>19</sup> APPG SJ, '[Integration not demonisation](#)', page 65

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., p68

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., p70

The government response to the [Integrated Communities Strategy Green paper](#) published in February 2019 stated that there would be a **new national strategy for English language** with improved access to courses and information and provision for beginners:

The Government has confirmed its proposal to publish a new national strategy for English language in 2019. As we work with partners to develop this, we will further explore the issues raised through the consultation. These include giving people access to clear information about courses and resources to help them improve their English, as well as making sure that courses are accessible and teach the skills people need. This is particularly important for people from marginalised groups, who often face the biggest barriers to accessing the English language support they need. We will also seek to ensure there is a fair balance of investment and responsibility between individuals wanting to learn English and the taxpayer. Businesses also have a role in English language learning, to ensure that employees can fulfil their potential and benefit business and the economy as a whole.

The importance of provision for beginners, in particular those who may not be literate in their own language and those who have limited experience of formal education, was highlighted in responses. To address the points raised, we will develop resources and best practice guidance for practitioners delivering provision for these learners, in order to help learners progress to accredited ESOL provision. This will have a particular focus on the needs of refugees. There is a wide interest in ensuring existing provision is joined-up locally so that learners can access the best provision for them. We have commissioned guidance and case studies to support a variety of local stakeholders to work together more effectively in coordinating ESOL provision.<sup>22</sup>

## 1.6 Scotland and Wales

Education is a devolved matter, and both Scotland and Wales have developed their own strategies for teaching English to migrants and refugees.

The Scottish Government has a website on [English for speakers of other languages](#), which explains their Government policy. The Scottish Government has also published the [New Scots refugee integration strategy 2018-2022](#): language is one of its seven key themes.

For more background on ESOL provision in Scotland, see:

- [Summary of English for Speakers of Other Languages \(ESOL\) activity from funding reports 2016-2017](#), Education Scotland, December 2018
- [Funding for English for Speakers of Other Languages \(ESOL\) Provision](#), COSLA, December 2018

Welsh Government policy documents can be found on their website, [English for speakers of other languages \(ESOL\): policy statement](#). The Welsh Government has also developed a strategy called [Nation of Sanctuary – Refugee and Asylum Seeker Plan](#), which aims to “challenge discrimination faced by refugees and asylum seekers, ensure equality of

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<sup>22</sup> HM Government, [‘Integrated Communities Strategy Green Paper. Summary of consultation responses and Government response’](#), February 2019, p16.



opportunity (where this is possible within UK immigration law) and promote good relations between these groups and others in society.” ESOL-related policies are outlined on page 23 of the plan.

## 2. News articles and press releases

[Invest in refugees, Synod motion proposes](#)

Church Times, 27 June 2019

[Refugee Week: The government is engaged in shameful hypocrisy over 'integration'](#)

Left Foot Forward, 21 June 2019

An article by Afzal Khan, Labour MP for Manchester Gorton.

[Refugees let down after £100,000,000 cut from funding for English lessons](#)

Metro, 20 June 2019

[Ministers must match talk on English lessons with action](#)

Times, 14 June 2019

[New research shows refugees suffering from lack of English classes, despite strong public support for action by government](#)

Refugee Action, 12 June 2019

[Non-English speakers could get free language lessons under West Midlands jobs plan](#)

Coventry Observer, 7 June 2019

[Welsh lessons for migrants and refugees 'neglected'](#)

BBC News, 24 May 2019

[Post BREXIT clarification for ESOL learners from MP](#), NATECLA, 16 May 2019

NATECLA is the National Association of Teaching English and Community Languages to Adults.

[Plans revealed for Londoners to receive free ESOL courses up to entry level 3 from next year](#)

FE Week, 15 April 2019

[Esol strategy 'to be published by the autumn'](#) (Subscription required)

TES, 12 February 2019

[Experts call for better language provision to help non-English speakers into work](#)

The University of Manchester, 15 October 2018

This is an article about a report published by the University of Manchester: Huw Vasey et al., [ESOL at Manchester Adult Education Service \(MAES\): experiences of entry 3 and level 1 learners](#), 2018

[Brexit: Teachers concerned over Esol funding](#) (Subscription required)

TES, 02 October 2018

[Language class problems deny women refugees 'new life'](#)

BBC News, 30 June 2018

[ESOL is chronically underfunded – this must change](#)

FE Week, 26 March 2018

['We've got the momentum to put Esol back on the map'](#) (Subscription required)

TES, 29 June 2018

## 3. Parliamentary material

### 3.1 Parliamentary questions (PQs)

[Education: Refugees](#), HL16314, 26 Jun 2019

**Asked by:** Lord Lexden

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the report by Refugee Action Turning Words into Action: why the Government must invest now to let refugees learn, published in June.

**Answering member:** Lord Agnew of Oulton | **Department:** Department for Education

The government recognises that learning English is essential in enabling refugees to rebuild their lives. We are working across government to develop a new strategy for English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) in 2019. The strategy will provide a shared vision for all publicly funded English language provision and it will include addressing the needs of refugees. We will explore what needs to be done to enable good local solutions and to support greater access to English language provision. We will consider the 'Turning Words into Action' report, attached, as we develop the strategy.

The department funds ESOL through the Adult Education Budget (AEB), which is allocated to providers on an annual basis. Colleges and adult learning providers have the freedom and flexibility to determine how they use their AEB allocation to meet the needs of their communities. This includes planning, with local partners, the ESOL courses that they will deliver locally. The Home Office and the Department for Education have provided £10 million to enable refugees resettled through the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme to access additional classes.

From the start of the 2019/20 academic year approximately 50% of the AEB will be devolved to 6 Mayoral Combined Authorities (MCAs) and to the Mayor of London through the Greater London Authority (GLA). The MCAs and GLA will be responsible for commissioning and funding AEB provision, including ESOL, for learners resident in their areas.

We know that there are many examples of good practice to overcome barriers for learners with childcare needs. Through the ESOL strategy, we will explore what else needs to be done to enable good local solutions and to support greater access to English language provision.

The Member is referring to Refugee Action's publication, [Turning Words into Action](#) (June 2019)

[English Language: Education](#), HL16235, 25 Jun 2019

**Asked by:** Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government what progress they have made on their commitments given to co-ordinate and fund community-based English language provision made in their Integrated Communities Action Plan published in February; whether they intend to respond to Refugee Action's campaign Let Refugees Learn and the recommendations in its report Turning words into action, published in June; and what assessment they have made of the importance of refugees learning English as a driver for integration and in combatting social exclusion.

**Answering member:** Lord Agnew of Oulton | **Department:** Department for Education

Following the commitments set out in the cross-government Integrated Communities Action Plan [...], the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) established a new Integrated Communities English Language programme, worth £4.5 million, in April 2019. It will deliver community-based English language learning in 2019-20 for over 19,000 learner places. In addition, MHCLG has committed £1.2 million to support 8 local authorities to deliver coordination models through the Integrated Communities English Language Coordination Fund.

The government recognises that learning English is essential to enabling refugees to rebuild their lives. We are working across government to develop a new strategy for English for speakers of other languages in 2019. This strategy will provide a shared vision for all publicly funded English language provision and this will include addressing the needs of refugees. We will consider the 'Turning Words into Action' report as we develop the strategy.

[English Language: Refugees](#), PQ 263875, 21 Jun 2019

**Asked by:** Gill, Preet Kaur

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what plans his Department has to improve access to ESOL provision for (a) refugee women and (b) refugee women who have childcare and caring responsibilities.

**Answering member:** Anne Milton | **Department:** Department for Education

The government recognises that learning English is essential in enabling refugee women to rebuild their lives. We are working across government to develop a new strategy for English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) in 2019, which will include addressing the needs of refugees.

The department funds ESOL through the Adult Education Budget, which is allocated to providers on an annual basis. Colleges and adult learning providers have the freedom and flexibility to determine how they use their Adult Education Budget allocation to meet the needs of their communities. This includes planning, with local partners, the ESOL courses that they will deliver locally. The Home Office and the Department for Education have provided £10 million to enable refugees resettled through the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme to access additional classes.

We know that there are many examples of good practice to overcome barriers for learners with childcare needs. Through the ESOL strategy, we will explore what else needs to be done to enable good local solutions and to support greater access to English language provision.

All 3 and 4 year olds in England are entitled to 570 hours a year of funded early education over no fewer than 38 weeks of the year (which equates to 15 hours a week for 38 weeks of the year) irrespective of the immigration status of the child or their parent(s).

Local authorities have a duty to provide information, advice and assistance for parents and prospective parents on the provision of childcare in their area. Parents can contact their local Family

Information Service for details of local childcare and early years provision in their area.

For those who come to the UK under the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme, additional funds are made available for childcare to ensure this is not a barrier for mothers and carers to learn English.

[Refugees: English Language](#), PQ 263841, 18 Jun 2019

**Asked by:** Green, Kate

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment his Department has made of the potential long-term (a) economic and (b) social merits of ensuring that refugees' command of English enables them to be ready to work; and if he will make a statement.

**Answering member:** Caroline Nokes | **Department:** Home Office

The Government published the cross-government Integrated Communities Action Plan in February 2019. In the action plan we have committed to ensuring all refugees are empowered to integrate and rebuild their lives in the UK, focusing on improving support for English language, employment, mental health, and orientation to life in the UK.

The Government recognises that learning English is essential to empowering refugees to rebuild their lives and move towards self-sufficiency and integration. We are working across government to develop a new strategy for English for speakers of other languages in 2019. The strategy will provide a shared vision for all publicly funded English language provision and this will include addressing the needs of refugees.

[Health Services: Refugees](#), PQ 238413, 02 Apr 2019

**Asked by:** Carden, Dan

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, pursuant to the Answer of 14 March 2019 to Question 232640, what steps he is taking to ensure that refugees who don't speak English are able to access statutory support for interpreters; and what steps he is taking to recruit additional interpreters.

**Answering member:** Jackie Doyle-Price | **Department:** Department of Health and Social Care

The Government believes that it is right for commissioners locally to ensure they secure the best possible care and services, balancing demand with supply, for the benefit of their patients and local populations. This is in addition to NHS England's guidance for commissioners 'Interpreting and Translation Services in Primary Care'. Public Health England is working to improve healthcare professionals' awareness of the needs of refugees. The Government is also developing a new strategy this year for English for speakers of other languages, following publication of the Integrated Communities Strategy Green Paper.

[English Language Skills: Employability](#), HC deb 20 Dec 2018, 651 c975

**Asked by:** Jim Shannon (Strangford) (DUP)

I offer best wishes for a merry Christmas to you, Mr Speaker, and to everyone in the House, from me as the Member of Parliament for Strangford, and from all my Strangford constituents who are very much involved in these issues.

Will the Minister outline whether funding is available for already trained teachers to be trained in either TESOL, the teaching of English to speakers of other languages, or CELTA, the certificate in teaching English to speakers of other languages, to teach English within communities and community centres?

**Answered by:** Anne Milton | **Department:** Women and Equalities

I will have to get back to the hon. Gentleman to ensure that I give him a precise answer. We are undertaking a trial this year and fully funding adults who earn less than the pay threshold of the Social Mobility and Child Poverty Commission—just under £16,000. Encouraging women to get on English language courses and improve their skills is an important area to focus on. We are talking about women who are just in employment and on very low wages and who, of course, face significant difficulties if they lose their jobs—their progress will be limited by that.

[English Language: Education](#), HL11755, 07 Dec 2018

**Asked by:** Lord Murphy of Torfaen

To ask Her Majesty's Government what data they monitor and assess on students studying English as an additional language.

**Answering member:** Lord Agnew of Oulton | **Department:** Department for Education

The department monitors and publishes various sets of data relating to pupils in state-funded primary and secondary schools in England who are classed as having English as an additional language (EAL). The most recent statistics on the number of EAL pupils, as identified through the January 2018 school census, are included in the "Schools, pupils and their characteristics" statistical publication, available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/schools-pupils-and-their-characteristics-january-2018>.

Published statistics also show the academic performance of pupils whose first language is other than English in national assessments during year 1 and at the end of key stage 1, which are available here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/phonics-screening-check-and-key-stage-1-assessments-england-2018>.

Published statistics collected at the end of key stage 2 are available here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/national-curriculum-assessments-key-stage-2-2017-revised>.

Published statistics collected at the end of key stage 4 can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/revised-gcse-and-equivalent-results-in-england-2016-to-2017>.

In addition, data on pupil entries to qualifications in English for speakers of other languages are included in the key stage 4 qualification data that can be downloaded from the school performance tables webpages here: <https://www.compare-school-performance.service.gov.uk/download-data>.

The department also publishes data on the number of adults who are accessing English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) courses, based on Individualised Learner Record data supplied by further education providers and can be found in table 6 here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/further-education-and-skills-november-2017>.

The data sets and analysis found at the above links contain many tables and documents that we are, therefore, unable to attach.

[Asylum: English Language](#), HL10007, 13 Sep 2018

**Asked by:** Lord Roberts of Llandudno

To ask Her Majesty's Government what advice they provide to asylum seekers aged 19 or older who are eligible for a 50 per cent contribution to the costs of English language classes through the adult education budget about where they can obtain funding for the remaining 50 per cent.

**Answering member:** Baroness Williams of Trafford | **Department:** Home Office

Home Office policy is not to provide asylum seekers with publicly funded English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) courses. They may access courses on a fee-paying basis. Asylum claimants awaiting a decision for over six months are eligible for a 50% contribution to the cost of ESOL courses through the Adult Education Budget. We also know that many ESOL providers use their discretion to set lower fees.

Those granted refugee status by the Home Office and in receipt of certain work-related benefits are eligible for fully funded ESOL courses.

We encourage asylum claimants (adults and dependants of an adult asylum seeker) to contact the Asylum Help helpline for free and independent advice (telephone: 0808 8000 630, <https://www.gov.uk/asylum-helplines>).

[Basic Skills](#), HC deb 14 May 2018, 246 c9

**Asked by:** Kate Green

Government funding for ESOL—English for speakers of other languages—has fallen by 53% in real terms since 2010, and participation rates have fallen by 36%. Home Office-funded regional ESOL co-ordinators say that there is severe pressure on provision at pre-entry level. What additional funding are the Government going to put into ESOL?

**Answered by:** Anne Milton | **Department:** Education

Funding matters, absolutely—I am not disputing that; but this is also about the innovative ways in which people—

**Answered by:** Anne Milton | **Department:** Education

The hon. Lady raises her eyes to the heavens, but this does make a difference. I have seen some extraordinary examples of adult education providers working with local primary schools to make sure that people who need English language skills get the support they need.



[Refugees: English Language](#), PQ 136267, 23 Apr 2018**Asked by:** Godsiff, Mr Roger

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Answer of 16 March to Question 134845 on English Language: Refugees, how much funding the Government has allocated to accredited English language teaching for refugees in each of the last 10 years.

**Answering member:** Mr Sam Gyimah | **Department:** Department for Education

The Department for Education funds English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) courses through the adult education budget. We do not collect data on learners that would allow us to identify them as refugees. We have previously published providers' overall spending on ESOL, which includes funding for refugee learners. I refer the hon. Member for Birmingham, Hall Green to the answer my right hon. Friend, the Minister for Apprentices and Skills gave on 12 March 2018 to [131906](#).

In addition, as part of the Home Office's Vulnerable Person Resettlement Scheme (VPRS) and Vulnerable Children Resettlement Programme (VCRP), local authorities receive £8520 per person for the first year of resettlement (with the exception of Northern Ireland, where the tariff is £8000 per person) from which they are required to provide a range of support services, including access to English language support. Local authorities are able to determine for themselves how this tariff funding is used, based on local need and service provision.

The government has also made an additional £10 million available over five years for English language support for those resettled on the VPRS and VCRP programmes. This funding is for the provision of ESOL classes, and equates to £850 per adult resettled. The Home Office has also allocated funding (£600,000 in each of the financial years 2016/17, 2017/18 and 2018/19, and £500,000 in 2019/20) to enable local authorities to provide additional childcare to those on the VPRS and VCRS so that they can attend ESOL classes.

PQ 134845 can be found here: [Refugees: English Language](#) (answered 16 April 2018)

[English Language: Education](#), PQ 134917, 16 Apr 2018**Asked by:** Marsden, Gordon

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how much and what proportion of the adult education budget was spent on ESOL in (a) 2016-17 and (b) 2017-18.

**Answering member:** Anne Milton | **Department:** Department for Education

I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 20 March 2018 to Question 131906 which includes spend in 2016-17 on English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) -

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-questions-answers/?page=1&max=20&questiontype=AllQuestions&house=commons%2clouds&uin=131906>.

ESOL funding represented £99 million of the £1.5 billion Adult Education Budget in 2016-17. This is not a ring-fenced amount as education providers have the freedom and flexibility to use their Adult Education Budget allocation to meet the needs of their local communities. Spend for 2017-18 is not yet available.

[Community Relations](#), PQ 132698, 21 Mar 2018

**Asked by:** Lucas, Caroline

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, with reference to his Department's press release of 14 March 2017, how much of the £50 million of funding allocated to support the new Integrated Communities Strategy will be used to expand English for Speakers of Other Languages teaching.

**Answering member:** Mrs Heather Wheeler | **Department:** Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government

The £50 million funding over the next two years supports the priorities set out in the strategy, including investment to support a new wave of the Community-based English language, the Integration Areas programme and establishing a new Integration Innovation Fund to stimulate and test innovative approaches to promoting integration. We will announce more details of how the funding is allocated following the consultation which closes on 6 June 2018.

[English Language: Education](#), PQ 131907, 20 Mar 2018

**Asked by:** O'Mara, Jared

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how much funding has been allocated from the public purse to English for Speakers of Other Languages classes in each of the next five years.

**Answering member:** Anne Milton | **Department:** Department for Education

Funding for adult education, including English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), is not allocated by subject at the national level. Instead, education providers have the freedom and flexibility to use their Adult Education Budget (AEB) allocation to meet the needs of their local communities, including through the provision of ESOL classes. Unemployed adults who are looking for work are eligible for full funding; all other learners are co-funded with the government contributing 50% of the course fee.

The table attached sets out the funding spent on ESOL from the AEB over the past five years based on what providers delivered. The table also shows the funding for English language projects by the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government. The department cannot show future subject-specific allocations, as this is for each provider to determine based on local demand and need on an annual basis. In addition, from 2019/20, the government is devolving approximately 50% of the AEB to eight Combined Authorities and London (subject to meeting readiness conditions). These areas will have responsibility for determining adult English language and other adult further education provision in their local areas.

There are a number of other funding sources for ESOL and English language provision, including through Home Office funding for English language as part of its commitment to help vulnerable people integrate into their local communities.

**Attachment:** [ESOL from AED Funding Table](#)

## 3.2 Debates

[Integrated Communities](#), HL deb 15 March 2018, cc1768-80

## 4. Further reading

### Library publications

[Devolution of the Adult Education Budget](#), House of Commons Library, June 2019

[Adult further education funding in England since 2010](#), House of Commons Library, March 2019

[Adult ESOL in England](#), House of Commons Library, April 2018

### Policy research

[Refugee Action – response to Integrated Communities Strategy Green Paper](#), Refugee Action, June 2018

[Languages and literacy programmes for migrants and refugees: challenges and ways forward](#), UNESCO, April 2018

[Safe but Alone: The role of English language in allowing refugees to overcome loneliness](#), Refugee Action, October 2017

[Towards an ESOL strategy for England: how far have we got one year on?](#) NATECLA, October 2017

- NATECLA (National Association for Teaching English and Community Languages to Adults) has been campaigning for a ESOL strategy in England.
- In 2016, NATECLA set out its ideas in [Towards an ESOL strategy for England](#).

[Locked out of learning: a snapshot of ESOL learning in England](#), Refugee Action, March 2017

[Let refugees learn: challenges and opportunities to improve language provisions to refugees in England](#), Refugee Action, May 2016

[Empowerment through education: women breaking the English barrier: women's consultation report](#), Wonder Foundation, 2016

[English for speakers of other languages ESOL: UCU briefing](#), University and College Union, October 2015

[On Speaking Terms](#), DEMOS, 2014

- This report looked at ESOL provision in the UK and made a series of recommendations.

[The ESOL Manifesto](#), Action for ESOL, 2012

### Government publications

[Integrated Communities Action Plan](#), MHCLG, February 2019

[Integrated Communities Strategy Green Paper: Summary of consultation responses and Government response](#), MHCLG, February 2019

[Integrated Communities English Language Programme](#), MHCLG, September 2018

MHCLG explains this funding in its press release, [Building stronger communities through English language learning](#), 5 September 2018

[Community-based English language programme: a randomised controlled trial](#), MHCLG, 14 March 2018

## Local projects

[The ESOL for integration, employability and social cohesion project](#), Action West London, 2018

[Information Pack: ESOL Plus – Childcare Programme](#), Greater London Authority (GLA), March 2018

[Information Pack: ESOL Plus: employer strategic partnership](#), GLA, March 2018

[Brexit: A risk assessment for language provision in Manchester](#), University of Manchester September 2017

[Fuller lives, stronger communities: English My Way Phase 3 Evaluation Report](#), Good Things Foundation, May 2017

[Mapping ESOL provision in Greater London](#), Learning and Work Institute, May 2017

[English: the key to integration in London](#)

- Various documents, including case studies, explain this project financed by the London Schools Excellence Fund and the European Integration Fund.

## Guides

[Supporting people with English language needs to access apprenticeships: a guide for employers and providers of ESOL and apprenticeships](#), Learning and Work Institute, July 2018

[How to guide: Commissioning ESOL for refugees in the South East of England](#), Learning and Work Institute, September 2017

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