

# Explore ELT 6, Step 6.1: (Europe) What it's like to teach where you are

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## Portugal

I am Portuguese but also an English native speaker so I teach English in a private school and that's all you need. To teach in a public school it's a bit more complicated... You need a degree in English teaching and the ministry of education decides where you teach and what levels depending on your classifications. I love teaching English in Portugal and I recommend it! Portuguese people are very nice and easy going, in general, and they have a good ability to learn languages, especially English because in Portugal they have a lot of contact with the language through TV, Internet, tourism, etc. Also Portugal is not very expensive, we've got nice weather and wonderful food, beaches, monuments, wine, ... (I could go on!)

## Teaching in England

I teach in a FE college in the South East. I mainly work with 16-18 year old learners although I manage a department that has mostly adults who are ESOL learners. I enjoy working with the young learners and seeing them achieve and progress onto mainstream courses in a variety of vocational areas once their English has developed sufficiently for them to be able to cope in the classroom. There are a lot of quality processes in FE that you have to comply with which can be time consuming and limiting in what you can do with the groups but overall the learners are enthusiastic and enjoy learning English which makes it easy to teach. I actually teach the ESOL learners maths which involves teaching them the language of maths in order to pass exams in the UK. Some of my learners have not had schooling in the past which means we have to start from the beginning but most of them have had some schooling so it is more about language for those learners. I like to deliver my sessions in a practical way using realia wherever possible and then use some worksheets or a Kahoot quiz to check for learning. I have taught for 18 years but have only worked with ESOL learners for the last two years. I love it.

## Teaching in Italy

I've been teaching English to Italians for quite some time, since I moved back from London after studying and working there for around 15 years. Before going back to my native town I decided to get my Cambridge Proficiency Certificate, so when I was looking for a job, it came handy and started working for a large private language institute, where I had a training on teaching with the communicative method. I also followed a course on teaching stories by a no-profit language organization. I wasn't asked for any teaching diplomas or similar, but I have always worked in private schools. Teaching in Italy is fun but also hard work, as Italian kids - and most adults alike - aren't used to listening to English much and teachers in state schools in the region haven't got the skills to teach English pronunciation. The government has started to ask for a B2 certificate now, so hopefully things will improve in the long run.

### Teaching in Italy

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## Italy

So, I've been teaching English to Italians for quite some time now. I think I started 10 years ago with private individual lessons, one-on-one. I've always been good at English (I'm Danish) and thought I would give it a go. Then I found work in a private language centre, tutoring students and adults for various exams and also teaching the Sandwich Method (not recommendable). At that time, no one really cared about my teaching qualifications. It was enough that I was semi-mother tongue, although I do have a minor in English language and literature, but no teaching qualifications as such. So, it was rather easy to find work as an English teacher here in Italy. But now, things have changed and schools are starting to expect some certificate, preferably from Cambridge. The school I work for now have interviewed me and found I qualify as an English teacher but

they are pushing for me to get a proper certificate, as are required by most state schools now.

Italy is a wonderful country to teach and live in and opportunities (especially for mother tongues) are plenty.

## Teaching ESOL in England

My teaching experience so far has been in the voluntary sector. I was trained and vetted by my local college here in North London under a scheme called Talk English, and they send me to local community centres, colleges and schools to teach men and women pre-entry and entry-level English. The voluntary sector is an excellent way to find out if you would like to do more and if you are suited to the profession of teaching. The initial teacher training is based on the teaching practices of the CELTA, and so if we then want to go on and take the CELTA, it gives us the confidence to do so.

The classes I have taught are made up of many different nationalities. Some learners have been in the UK for many years and some maybe a few months. Whatever the dynamics of the learners the experience is always rewarding.

From what I have seen from searching the job market there is a requirement for ESOL teachers to have one of the following CELTA, TEFL, TESL, TESOL and in some cases a degree but not always.

## England

This must be the easiest place to teach English as a foreign language. There are so many opportunities for learners to hear English spoken in all its varieties. There are places to visit, magazines and other publications in the language. The experience of living as a native, etc. Easier for teachers and more dynamic and exciting for learners.

**What qualifications do you need?** The best possible of course, but during the summer, when students visit from abroad there is a range of possibilities for teaching at various levels with private companies.. When I was studying to become a teacher, I taught in the holiday breaks on a course offering theory in the mornings and visits to London and other places in the afternoons. Getting them all back home was sometimes a difficulty.

**Local Authorities** would be the first place I would look now. It may be possible to assist in an ongoing class. Offer to work voluntarily until you have been able to prove your ability. PB

## step 6.1 Ella Coman What i like about teaching and living there

Ireland. I live and work in Ireland. I teach adults who are returning to education to upskill to find work. I love my work and enjoy living here as firstly it is home to me and my family. Secondly we are now a multicultural country and in my job and get to meet and work with so many different people from all over the world. Also if you like sport we have a great culture of hurling and Gaelic Football and Camogie which is a wonderful pasttime for both players and spectators

What qualifications you need to teach there?

To work with adults you need a diploma in Adult teaching Education Like JEB, also you can do basic training with NALA to work with Literacy and of course TEFL course to teach English to foreign Students

Top Tips for working here

Get registered with your local ETB or Adult training centres. Work Voluntary in such organisations to get you started.

## Teaching and living in The Netherlands

The Netherlands is a small but rich country in Europe. Being a river delta the land is rather fertile and green. It has a climate that is softened by the sea's influence, so no real hot summers or cold winters here. English is taught at various levels starting from the upper three levels of primary school. I like teaching at a university of applied science. There is a lot opportunity for experimental teachings. Also the students are more prone to be intrinsically motivated than when you were teaching French or German (however English will be an instrumental class in the course in most cases).

- What qualifications do you need?

If you only want to teach in English you should study for four years at the university to become a teacher English.

Still, I found out, some teaching activities don't require that length of study in English, provided you possess adequate skill. First, the teachers at primary school have had a university course themselves, but mainly on didactics. Besides that, some teachers at high schools or universities may be asked to fill in some lectures in English. I guess that would apply for native speakers especially. Perhaps only an indication of didactic skill would suffice in their case.

- What are your top tips for people who want to work in the Netherlands?

1. Native speakers: come across the sea before the Brexit! The working conditions for inhabitants of other EU-countries are pleasant and the living expenses slightly less than in the UK.
2. The most of the industry is located in the west: "Randstad" which is composed of smaller cities and the four big cities of Amsterdam, The Hague, Rotterdam and Utrecht. A lot of schools are located there. But as I was stating earlier, most educational programs have English to some extent and even the smaller cities have

### Teaching and living in the Netherlands

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## Germany

I have developed my communications skills and become more aware of the culture. My learners like to have a clear structure, a coursebook, would like to know why they need to learn one particular topic; whereas people on the Balkans do not question the lesson plan (or teacher's knowledge). Giving feedback is really challenging, especially, if everything is ok(I remember wondering 'Are they really enjoying the lesson? HBR has a great article on Feedback in Germany;) Overall, I love the process of self-development because it is never boring.

## The Czech Republic

The most opportunities for teaching English are probably in the capital city. The capital city of Prague is famous as one of the most popular TEFL destinations in the world. This is good and bad. Good because there are lots of opportunities and plenty of other teachers to socialise with. Bad because the competition keeps starting salaries rather low, especially in view of accommodation costs. It remains an excellent choice for first-timers, and those with considerable experience can earn a good salary. As expected, it is much easier for EU nationals to find jobs because language centres are hardly likely to offer jobs to those living in New Zealand, Australia, Canada and the USA when there are teachers knocking on the door, CV in hand, on a regular basis. For those willing to live outside Prague, although the salaries are lower the living costs are usually remarkably less.



## Romania

You can work as a teacher of English in both public and private systems and you need a Bachelor's degree for that. Private schools may require other certificates as well, but they sometimes also offer the training. As a foreigner, you may need an acknowledged certificate for teaching English as a foreign language. The requirements vary from school to school, so it is a good idea to check in advance. There is freedom in terms of resources and everything, although teachers may need to prepare those on their own (depending on the school). Teachers should follow syllabuses as well.

Apart from that, Romania is a beautiful country, with wonderful landscapes and unique places in the mountains or by the sea, some of them protected by Unesco. You can taste great food and wine, remote places offer unique organic products as well. It could be a nice place to visit and spend some time learning about its culture and history. People are friendly and they like it when foreign visitors do speak a few words in Romanian.

## France

In France, you can find two worlds in the school system : the state organisation, and the private area. The second one is open , more or less, to some freedom.

You could teach although a different graduation, a non usual graduation.

I think there is such a need that if you are motivated and talented, you can find your place and have a great job !

In France , there is a will to boost the digital approach, the schools are supplied with computers and tablets ...

## Ukraine

### ◦ What do you like about teaching and living there?

You will definitely enjoy living and teaching in Ukraine. Its rich history and culture, extraordinary customs and traditions, the most delicious cuisine in the world, amazing landscapes and scenery will astonish you. People are very friendly and hospitable. You will easily make friends with local people and be a welcome guest in their houses. Teaching English in Ukraine is very interesting but it can be challenging. On the one hand, there is a lot of paperwork, the classes are often overcrowded and sometimes there are not enough course-books and other materials and resources. But at the same time children are very enthusiastic, they are interested in studying foreign languages.

### ◦ What qualifications do you need?

You need to have a bachelor's degree in order to teach in Ukraine.

Most schools are state schools. You can also teach in private schools, in higher education or on various courses. Tuition is also booming.

### ◦ What are your top tips for people who want to work there?

You should study a little Ukrainian or Russian because older people do not usually speak a foreign language, so it will help you in your daily life.

## Greece

Living and teaching in Greece is quite interesting for me. Greek culture is so rich that you can use it in many different ways during the learning process.

In order to teach English in state schools, you have to study English Language and a Bachelor degree. But you can also take Proficiency exam, attend some seminars and apply to the Minister of Education so as to give you the right to teach English mainly in private schools.

My top tips for people who would like to work in Greece as English Language Teachers are:

- learn some Greek words in order to help you communicate with the learners easier
- be ready to share with them your experiences and make memories with them (e.g. going for trips or organising meetings in cafeterias, etc) and
- don't be "frightened" by their enthusiasm and their spontaneity.



**France**

To teach in France is very difficult, you need to take a public exam (Minister of Education) and then you cannot decide where you want to teach. And you are being transferred every 3-5 years in general. Moreover, you cannot decide

what you want to teach, it depends on the Minister of Education lesson plan (you have a book to follow all year). But I bet, you still can show them some videos or play some games...I am very enthusiastic to be an English teacher, it is going to be my first year in a Secondary School, I can't wait!

**Russia (Moscow region)**

It's hard. As they say, your husband/wife has to earn enough money to let you be a teacher. This is the great disadvantage of being a teacher in Russia. The advantages are satisfaction when you see the results of your work and opportunities to know different people and learn something from them (I'm working with teenagers, young adults and adults that's why I've written those pros).

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