THE EDUCATION STATE

VICTORIA State Government | Department of Education

English as an Additional Language in Victorian government schools

Statistics Summary 2024

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Introduction

This report provides information about English as an Additional Language (EAL) students and programs in Victorian government schools in 2024.

This report is based on:

- the 2024 August School Census

  The Department of Education conducts a schools' census in August each year. This census provides detailed information about students from Language Backgrounds Other Than English (LBOTE) who are enrolled in government schools in Victoria. The allocation of EAL index funding for the following year is based on this census.

- the EAL section of the Principal Survey, conducted in Term 3 2024

  The Department of Education collects data by surveying principals each year. The EAL section of the survey sought information from schools in receipt of EAL index funding, including a profile of EAL learners and the types of EAL programs in government schools. The EAL section of the survey is not mandatory. The response rate was 53% which represents an improvement over 2023 (46%).

- CASES21

  CASES21 is the software component of CASES (Computerised Administrative System Environment in Schools) which is the package provided to Victorian government schools to support school administration, finance and central reporting.

Students who are newly arrived in Victoria are eligible for support through an intensive English language program (also known as a new arrivals program) in the first 12 to 18 months in Australia. Students transition from a new arrivals program to a mainstream school where they are supported by programs funded by EAL index funding.

Part 1 provides information about EAL provision and programs for newly arrived EAL students.

Part 2 provides information about EAL provision and programs for students in mainstream schools.

This report was published in November 2025.

Part 1: Provision for newly arrived EAL students

Newly arrived students from language backgrounds other than English who meet eligibility criteria may access EAL support through a new arrivals program within the Victorian government education system.

New arrivals programs aim to improve the educational opportunities and outcomes of newly arrived students from language backgrounds other than English by developing their English language competence and facilitating their transition to participation in mainstream education.

New arrivals programs provide intensive English language instruction to both non-fee-paying and fee-paying (international) students. This report provides information about provision for newly arrived EAL learners eligible to enrol in government schools as non-fee-paying students.

Models of provision

In 2024, new arrivals programs were provided through 4 English Language Schools (ELS), one in each region in a metropolitan location, 2 secondary English Language Centres (ELC) in metropolitan locations, and 3 regional centres, in Geelong, Mildura and Shepparton (Geelong English Language Program, Mildura English Language Centre, Shepparton English Language Centre).

In rural and regional areas, schools with small numbers of EAL students formed clusters to employ an EAL specialist to support teachers across the cluster to provide more effectively for their EAL students.

The Virtual New Arrivals Program (VNAP) delivered EAL instruction to newly arrived students in non-metropolitan areas, using video-conferencing to connect them with a specialist EAL teacher in Melbourne.

Summary data

In the period from 1 January to 31 December 2024, Victorian government schools enrolled 8,678 newly arrived EAL learners. This is an 8% increase over the number of newly arrived students who enrolled in 2023 (8,020). The number of new arrivals in 2024 continued the trend of significant growth over the COVID-19 affected years of 2020 (3,608) and 2021 (2,695). **Figure 1** and **Table 1** below show enrolments by region – North Eastern Victoria Region (NEVR), North Western Victoria Region (NWVR), South Eastern Victoria Region (SEVR) and South Western Victoria Region (SWVR).

Enrolments increased in every region from 2023 to 2024, except in NEVR.

The total number of unique students across the state is less than the sum of the students in each region, because students moved from one region to another during 2024 and may have been counted in both regions.

Figure 1: EAL new arrivals by region, government schools, Victoria 2024

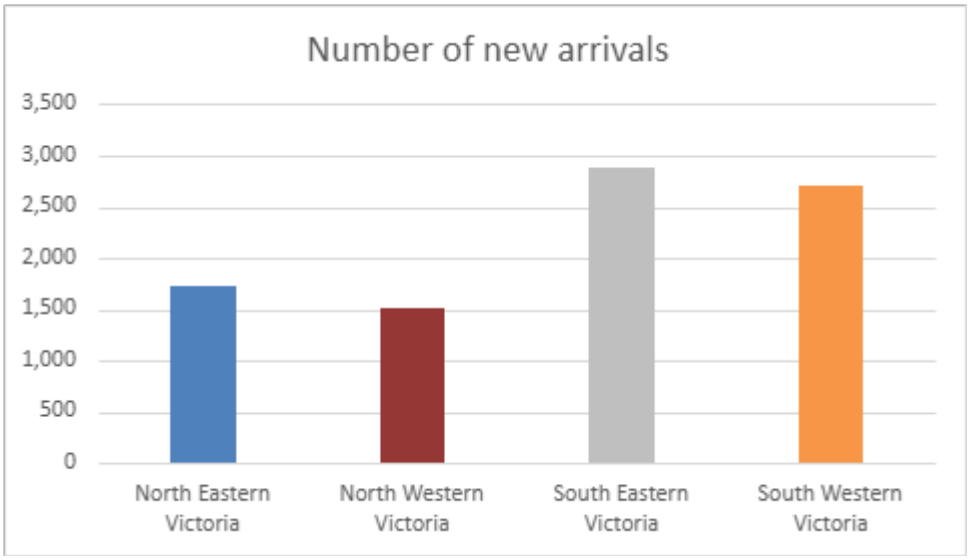


Table 1: EAL new arrivals by region, government schools, Victoria 2024

Region	Number of new arrivals
NEVR	1,732
NWVR	1,511
SEVR	2,874
SWVR	2,712
Statewide total	**8,678**

Source: CASES21

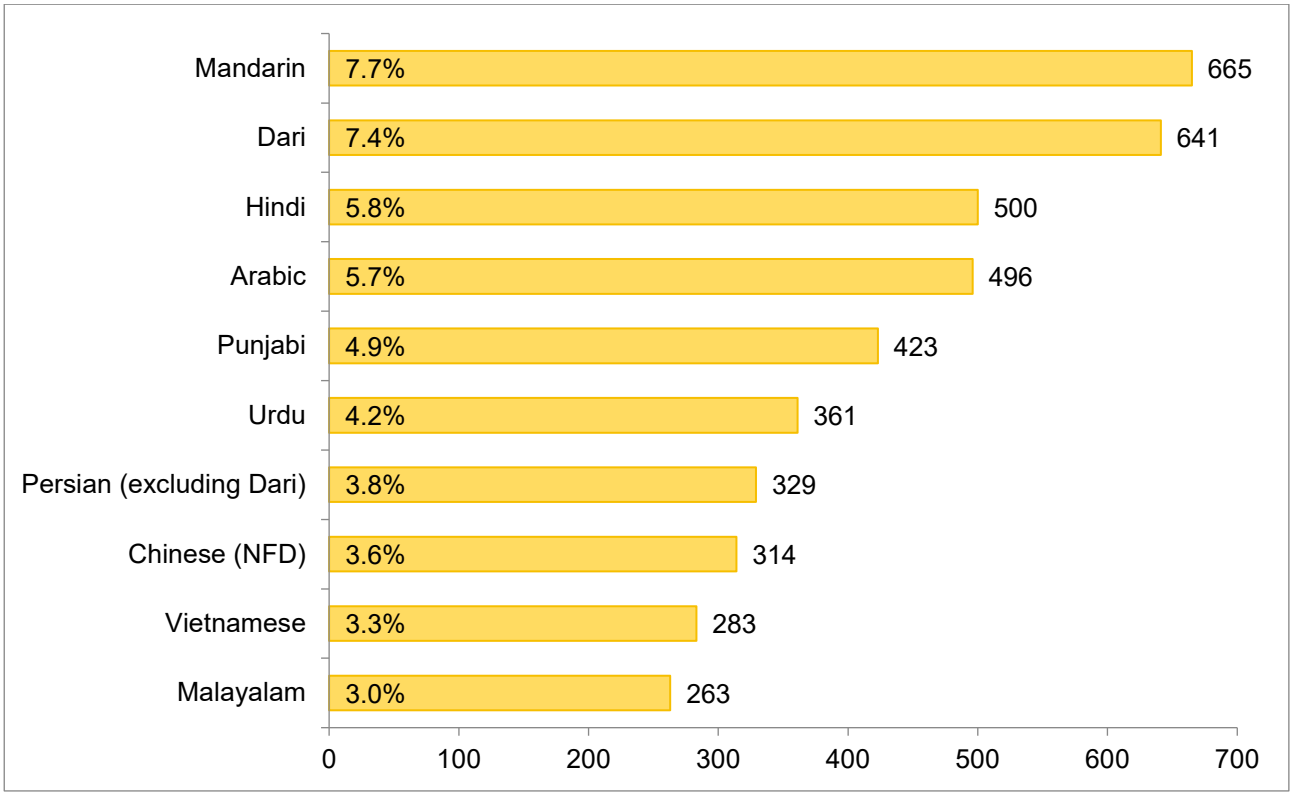
Language backgrounds

The 8,678 newly arrived EAL students who enrolled in Victorian government schools in 2024 came from 135 language backgrounds. Mandarin was the most common language background of these students, reflecting China as one of the largest contributors to net migration to Victoria[1]. This was closely followed by Dari (which had the largest number of speakers in newly arrived students in 2022), likely due to the improving but still unstable geo-political environment in Afghanistan.

Figure 2 below shows the top 10 languages and includes the number of speakers of the language, and the percentage of all newly arrived students who speak the language.

The top 10 languages account for 49.4% of newly arrived students, mainly originating from South Asia, China, Vietnam and the Middle East.

Figure 2: Top 10 language backgrounds of newly arrived EAL students, government schools, Victoria 2024



Source: CASES21

[1] Australian Bureau of Statistics (2023-24-financial-year), Overseas Migration, ABS Website, accessed 11 September 2025.

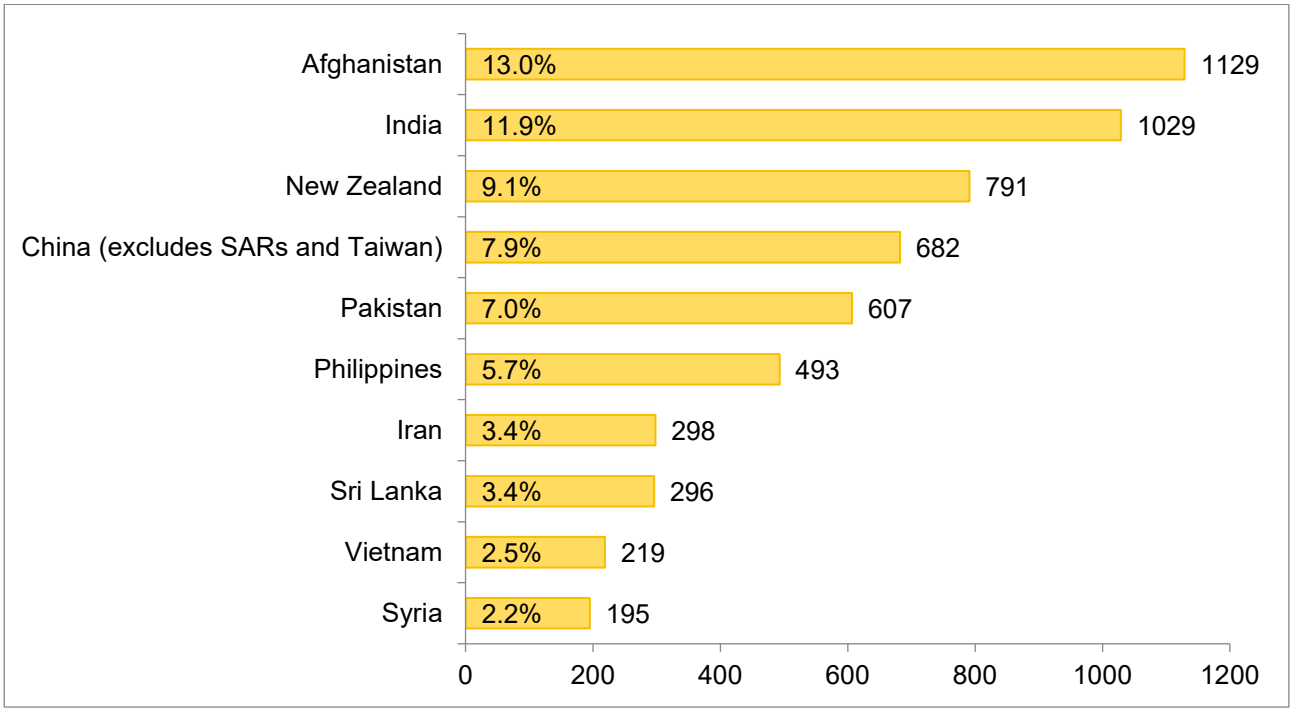
Countries of birth

The countries of birth of newly arrived EAL students vary from year to year and reflect world events and Commonwealth immigration policy. Following significant disruptions and border closures due to the pandemic in 2020 and 2021, traditional (pre-COVID) migration policies were restored in 2022 and continued in 2024, contributing to strong growth.

The 8,678 newly arrived EAL students who enrolled in Victorian government schools in 2024 were born in 128 countries (127 in 2023). Almost 33% of these students were born in Afghanistan, India or China.

Figure 3 below shows the top 10 countries of birth of newly arrived students in Victoria in 2024, including the number and the percentage of all newly arrived students.

Figure 3: Countries of birth of newly arrived EAL students, government schools, Victoria 2024



Source: CASES21

Student residency status

Students eligible for EAL services in Victorian government schools include both permanent and temporary residents of Australia. Students may have arrived under the Australian government's migration program or humanitarian program, been born in Australia, or be seeking Australia's protection.

In Victorian government schools, approximately 61% of newly arrived students in 2024 were permanent residents. As residential status changes from temporary to permanent for some students, the distribution between statuses fluctuates within a year.

Table 2 below shows the number of students by residency status across the 4 regions and includes a statewide total.

The number of permanent residents among newly arrived students increased 21% compared to 2023, increasing in all regions. Permanent residents among newly arrived students increased by 12% in NEVR, 8% in NWVR, 39% in SEVR and 14% in the SWVR . In contrast, temporary residents among newly arrived students grew by only 4% compared to 2023. This reflects continuation of pre-COVID migration policy settings at the Commonwealth level, with increased numbers of permanent visas issued through the skilled and family migration streams in 2024[2] and phasing out of temporary visas and transitional arrangements for COVID-19 affected periods.

The total number of unique students is less than the sum of permanent and temporary figures because some students transitioned from temporary to permanent visa types during 2024.

Table 2: Residency status of EAL new arrivals, government schools, Victoria 2024

Region	Permanent	Temporary	Total
NEVR	1,085	725	1,732
NWVR	978	670	1,511
SEVR	2,053	931	2,874
SWVR	1,688	1,286	2,712
Statewide	**5,717**	**3,553**	**8,678**

Source: CASES21

[2] Department of Home Affairs (2023-24 financial year), 2023-2024 Migration Program Report, DHA website, accessed 11 September 2025

Provision across program type

Students usually spend between 6 and 12 months in a new arrivals program.

Table 3 below shows the number and distribution of newly arrived students enrolled in English language schools and centres, by region, in 2023 and 2024.

The total number of newly arrived students enrolled in English language schools and centres is 4,325 compared with 3,881 in 2023. Not all new arrival students require intensive English language support outside a mainstream school setting and some newly arrived students are provided EAL support programs at mainstream schools or may already have English language proficiency. Enrolment in English language programs is also optional.

Table 3 - Newly arrived students enrolled in English language schools and centres by region, 2023 and 2024

		Primary			Secondary		
Region	**Language School/ Centre**	**2023**	**2024**	**Year on year change**	**2023**	**2024**	**Year on year change**
NEVR	Blackburn English Language School	431	473	9.7%	242	245	1.2%
	Shepparton English Language Centre	84	129	53.6%	72	118	63.9%
NWVR	Collingwood English Language School	293	352	20.1%	318	341	7.2%
	Hume Central Secondary College	-	-	-	72	83	15.3%
	Mildura Senior College	37	43	16.2%	20	37	85%
SEVR	Noble Park English Language School	714	710	-0.6%	661	759	14.8%
	Westall English Language Centre	5	5	0%	87	76	-12.6%
SWVR	Western English Language School	479	536	11.9%	389	442	13.6%

Source: CASES21 (international student enrolments not included)

*Excludes the Geelong English Language Program (GELP) and Virtual New Arrivals Program (VNAP), which are not recorded in CASES21

Part 2: Provision for EAL students in mainstream government schools

Program types

Mainstream schools provide support to EAL students through several different types of programs, including:

- timetabled EAL classes taught by specialist EAL teachers
- in-class support (provided by a specialist EAL teacher to a small group of students or single student in a mainstream class)
- withdrawal from a class, in a small group (support provided for either English language learning or curriculum-related content by a specialist EAL teacher)
- withdrawal from class, one-on-one support from a teacher
- team teaching (the joint instruction of a lesson or unit of work by a classroom or subject specialist teacher and an EAL specialist teacher).

The EAL section of the principal survey in term 3 2024 was not mandatory with 313 of 582 (53%) funded schools reporting on the provision of programs to cater for the needs of primary and secondary EAL students.

Figure 4 and **Table 4** below show the types of programs provided in mainstream schools in 2024.

The most common form of provision for primary students was withdrawal from class, small group support.

The most common form of provision for secondary students was through timetabled EAL classes taught by specialist EAL teachers. Many schools provided more than one type of program, tailored to meet the needs of students according to year level or English language learning need.

Figure 4: EAL program types, mainstream government schools, Victoria 2024

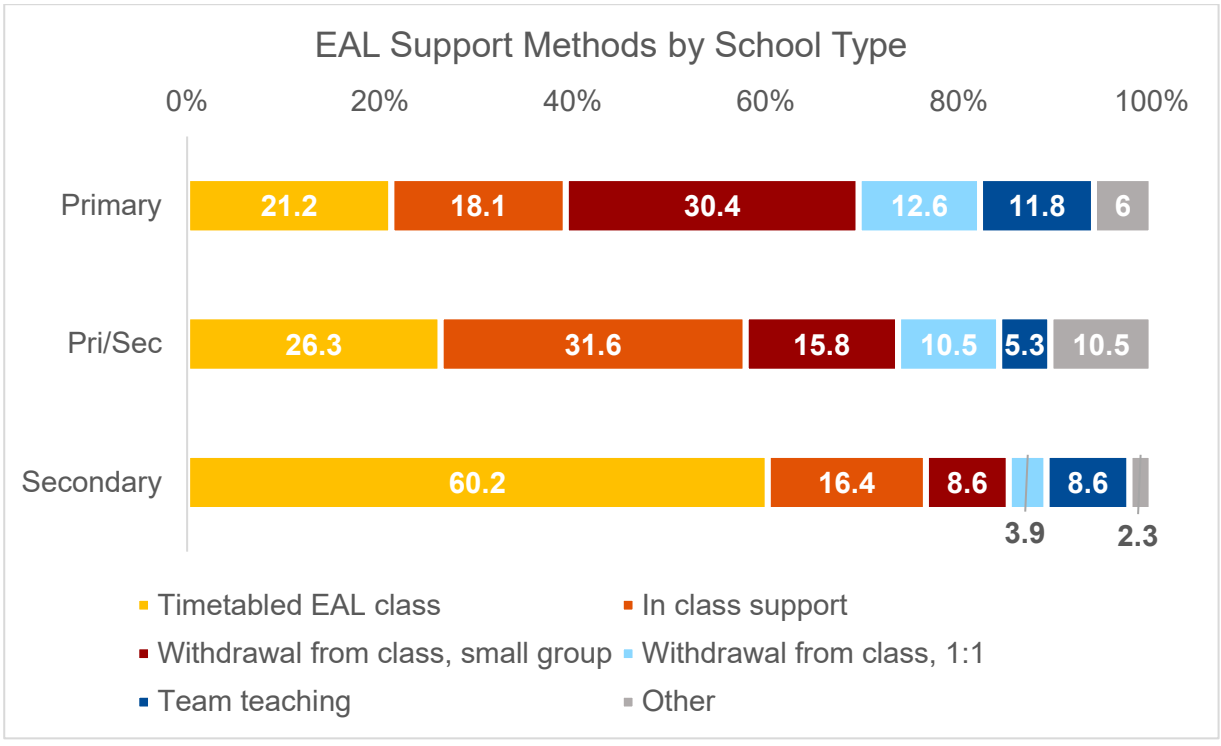


Table 4: EAL program types, mainstream government schools, Victoria 2024

Year levels	Timetabled EAL class	In class support	Withdrawal from class, small group	Withdrawal from class, 1:1	Team teaching	Other	Total
Primary	81	69	116	48	45	23	382
Primary/ secondary combined	5	6	3	2	1	2	19
Secondary	77	21	11	5	11	3	128
Total	**163**	**96**	**130**	**55**	**57**	**28**	**529**

Source: Term 3 principal survey 2024

EAL student assessment

The English language learning progress of EAL students should be assessed against the Victorian Curriculum F-10 EAL. The EAL curriculum provides a set of standards and a framework for assessing student achievement and developing effective learning programs for students in Victorian schools who are learning English as an additional language. Student progress is assessed in each of the 3 modes: Speaking and Listening, Reading and Viewing, and Writing.

Schools are required to report student progress against the Victorian curriculum twice a year. The number of students assessed against the EAL curriculum in previous annual reports[3] was reported on the basis of responses to a mid-year survey of schools. In 2024, data was collected in a new method; using teacher judgement data uploaded to CASES 21 by schools.

Table 5 below shows the number of students assessed against the Victorian Curriculum F-10 EAL across each of the 3 modes, in semester 1 2024.

Table 6 shows the number of schools that assessed students against the Victorian Curriculum F-10 EAL in semester 1 2024.

Table 7 below shows the number of students assessed against the Victorian Curriculum F-10 EAL across each of the 3 modes, in semester 2 2024.

Table 8 shows the number of schools that assessed students against the Victorian Curriculum EAL in semester 2 2024.

[3] EAL Annual Reports (education.vic.gov.au)

Table 5: Students assessed against the Victorian Curriculum F-10 English as an Additional Language, government schools, Victoria, Semester 1 2024

School type	NEVR			NWVR			SEVR			SWVR			Total		
	S/L	**R/V**	**W**	**S/L**	**R/V**	**W**	**S/L**	**R/V**	**W**	**S/L**	**R/V**	**W**	**S/L**	**R/V**	**W**
Primary	7,287	7,293	8,116	7,902	7,912	8,531	12,627	12,646	14,171	7,957	7,960	8,775	35,771	35,809	35,788
Primary / secondary combined	48	48	65	868	867	1,007	670	671	770	2,562	2,564	2,876	4,148	4,150	4,158
Secondary	1,337	1,334	1,681	730	742	881	1,671	1,718	2,299	1,244	1,251	1,591	4,982	5,045	5,012
Total	**8,672**	**8,675**	**9,862**	**9,500**	**9,521**	**10,417**	**14,968**	**15,035**	**17,224**	**11,762**	**11,774**	**13,212**	**44,898**	**45,001**	**44,955**

Source: CASES21

S/L – Speaking and Listening, R/V – Reading and Viewing, W – Writing

Table 6: Government schools that assessed EAL students against the Victorian Curriculum F-10 English as an Additional Language, Victoria, Semester 1 2024

School type	NEVR	NWVR	SEVR	SWVR	Total
Primary	126	130	164	147	567
Primary/secondary combined	4	12	4	23	43
Secondary	28	30	34	31	123
Total	158	172	202	201	**733**

Source: CASES21

Table 7: Students assessed against the Victorian Curriculum F-10 English as an Additional Language, government schools, Victoria, Semester 2 2024

School type	NEVR			NWVR			SEVR			SWVR			Total		
	S/L	**R/V**	**W**	**S/L**	**R/V**	**W**	**S/L**	**R/V**	**W**	**S/L**	**R/V**	**W**	**S/L**	**R/V**	**W**
Primary	6,926	6,944	6,940	7,755	7,771	7,766	13,038	13,046	13,043	7,693	7,702	7,704	35,411	35,462	35,452
Primary / secondary combined	58	58	58	897	890	897	705	705	704	2,480	2,486	2,489	4,140	4,139	4,148
Secondary	1,563	1,563	1,561	794	793	795	2,168	2,178	2,182	1,460	1,452	1,459	5,985	5,986	5,997
Total	**8,547**	**8,565**	**8,559**	**9,446**	**9,454**	**9,458**	**15,910**	**15,928**	**15,928**	**11,633**	**11,640**	**11,652**	**45,534**	**45,585**	**45,595**

Source: CASES21

S/L – Speaking and Listening, R/V – Reading and Viewing, W - Writing

Table 8: Government schools that assessed EAL students against the Victorian Curriculum F-10 English as an Additional Language, Victoria, Semester 2 2024

School type	NEVR	NWVR	SEVR	SWVR	Total
Primary	125	130	167	152	574
Primary/secondary combined	4	12	4	24	44
Secondary	32	26	37	36	131
Total	**161**	**168**	**208**	**212**	**749**

Source: CASES21