

# 10. The Middle East

## Status of Japanese-language education in the Middle East

The number of institutions in the Middle East decreased to 68 (a 17.1% decrease compared to the previous survey in 2021), and the number of teachers decreased to 193 (a 4.9% decrease). Meanwhile, the number of learners slightly increased to 6,199 (a 2.8% increase). Furthermore, this survey confirmed the resumption of Japanese-language education in Oman, where its provision could not be confirmed in the previous survey. On the other hand, this survey could not confirm the provision of Japanese-language education in Yemen.

In the previous survey, Turkey, Israel, and the United Arab Emirates were the only three countries with more than ten institutions. However, in this survey, only Turkey (26 institutions) remains. Turkey had the highest number of teachers at 80, followed by the United Arab Emirates and Israel, each with 21. Similarly, Turkey had the highest number of learners at 2,929, accounting for 47.2% of the regional total. This was followed by the United Arab Emirates with 929 learners and Iraq with 762.

Looking at the changes by country since the previous survey, the number of institutions increased in 4 countries, remained the same in 4 countries, and decreased in 6 countries. The number of teachers increased in 5 countries, remained the same in 2 countries, and decreased in 7 countries. The number of

learners increased in 6 countries, remained the same in 1 country, and decreased in 7 countries. In all cases, the number of countries showing a decrease exceeded the number showing an increase.

The proportion of learners by educational level is 7.9% for primary education, 18.0% for secondary education, 46.3% for higher education, and 27.8% for non-school education. As in the previous survey, this shows that Japanese-language education is primarily conducted at universities.

The online class implementation rate across the Middle East stands at 63.2%, significantly higher than the global rate of 30.9%. By educational level, non-school education showed a notably high rate of 88.9%.

Looking at the purposes for learning Japanese, interest in anime, manga, J-POP, fashion, etc. was the highest at 91.2%, followed by interest in history, literature, arts, etc. at 79.4% and interest in the Japanese language at 76.5%, showing a similar trend to the previous survey.

Table 2-10-1 Number of Institutions, number of Teachers, and number of Learners in the Middle East

(Listed in order of the number of Learners in 2024)

Country and Region	Number of Institutions in 2024 (institutions)	Number of Teachers in 2024 (people)	Number of Learners in 2024 (people)	Learners per 100,000 population (people)	Number of Learners in Primary education 2024 (people)	Number of Learners in Secondary education 2024 (people)	Number of Learners in Higher education 2024 (people)	Number of Learners in Non-school education 2024 (people)	Population* (people)	Number of Institutions in 2021 (institutions)	Number of Teachers in 2021 (people)	Number of Learners in 2021 (people)
Turkey	26	80	2,929	3.5	0	195	2,146	588	84,680,273	40	97	3,305
United Arab Emirates	9	21	929	22.6	0	516	82	331	4,106,427	10	28	598
Iraq	4	6	762	4.0	490	252	20	0	19,184,543	2	6	450
Israel	9	21	536	7.2	0	0	263	273	7,412,180	11	25	753
Iran	2	19	270	0.3	0	0	120	150	79,926,270	1	6	108
Qatar	6	8	217	7.6	0	150	40	27	2,846,118	4	9	71
Jordan	4	9	183	1.9	0	0	72	111	9,531,712	7	12	299
Syria	1	10	157	0.9	0	0	0	157	17,921,000	1	7	110
Oman	3	6	82	1.8	0	0	27	55	4,471,148	0	0	0
Saudi Arabia	1	6	80	0.2	0	0	80	0	32,175,224	1	4	80
Kuwait	1	2	24	0.8	0	0	0	24	3,065,850	1	2	121
Lebanon	1	1	20	0.5	0	0	20	0	3,779,859	2	2	25
Bahrain	1	4	10	0.7	0	0	0	10	1,501,635	1	3	96
Yemen	0	0	0	—	0	0	0	0	19,685,161	1	2	14
the Middle East overall	68	193	6,199	—	490	1,113	2,870	1,726	—	82	203	6,030

\*Source: *Population and Vital Statistics Report (as of 3 January 2025)*, by United Nations

Graph 2-10-1 Number of Institutions in the Middle East



Graph 2-10-2 Number of Teachers in the Middle East



Graph 2-10-3 Number of Learners in the Middle East



Graph 2-10-4 Percentages of Learners by educational stage in the Middle East

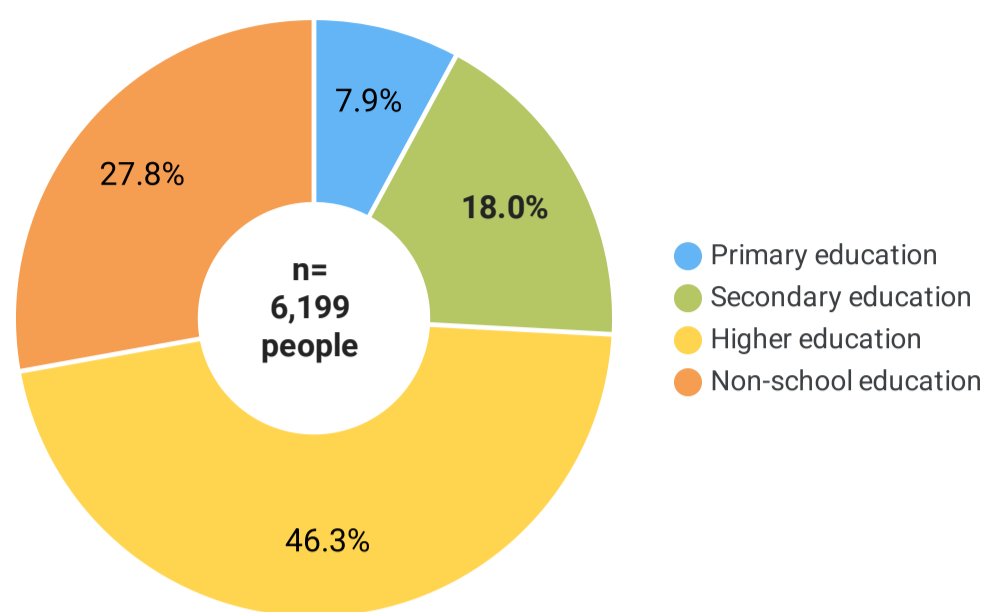
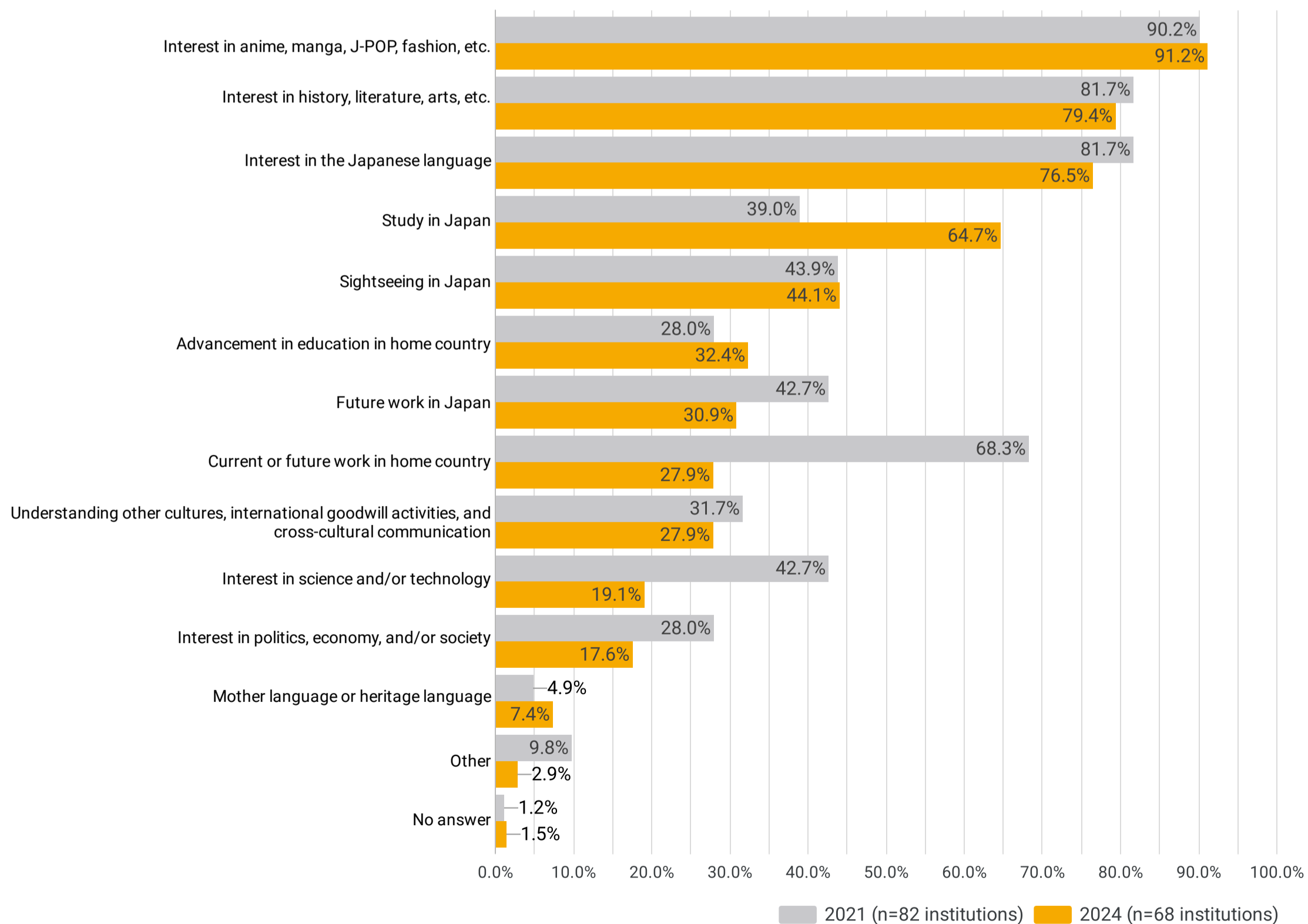


Table 2-10-2 Online class implementation ratio in the Middle East

Country and Region	Number of Institutions in each Country and Region	Online class implementation (institutions)	Online class implementation (%)
United Arab Emirates	9	5	55.6
Israel	9	8	88.9
Iraq	4	1	25.0
Iran	2	1	50.0
Oman	3	2	66.7
Qatar	6	5	83.3
Kuwait	1	1	100.0
Saudi Arabia	1	1	100.0
Syria	1	0	0.0
Turkey	26	14	53.8
Bahrain	1	1	100.0
Jordan	4	3	75.0
Lebanon	1	1	100.0
the Middle East overall	68	43	63.2

Graph 2-10-5 Objectives of Japanese-language learning in the Middle East



## Trends in each country and region

### [Turkey]

Turkey is the country with the most active Japanese-language education in the Middle East, but the numbers of institutions, teachers, and learners are all on a downward trend. It should be noted that the provision of Japanese-language education in primary education has not been confirmed in Turkey, and many learners study Japanese at the higher education level.

Factors contributing to the decline include the temporary suspension of Japanese-language classes due to teacher shortages, as well as a decrease in learners choosing foreign language departments in higher education, which is not limited to Japanese and is due to reasons such as limited job opportunities and economic uncertainty. Furthermore, as educational policies concerning foreign language learning have become centered on English, Japanese-language education and other foreign languages tend to be given lower priority regardless of educational level. However, local Japanese-language educators report that the number of individual learners continues to increase year by year, regardless of age.

### [Other Countries and Regions]

In the United Arab Emirates, while the number of institutions and teachers is decreasing, the number of learners is increasing at all educational levels, continuing the trend observed in the previous survey (2021). China and Korea are expanding language education through government-led initiatives such as establishing Confucius Institutes and King Sejong Institutes in Abu Dhabi.

In the previous survey, Japanese-language education was being conducted in Yemen in non-school education. However, this survey revealed that operations are suspended at the relevant institution, confirming that there are no institutions providing Japanese-language education.

In Iran, due to economic sanctions, it is difficult to obtain textbooks and materials for Japanese-language learning, and opportunities to study are limited, with only one university offering Japanese as a major. However, the popularity of manga and anime has led to an increase in learners interested in Japanese, suggesting high potential demand for Japanese-language learning.

In Oman, the resumption of Japanese-language education was confirmed in this survey. Universities that newly launched Japanese-language courses starting in September 2024 have also been confirmed, and the number of institutions has increased compared to the 2018 survey. With the end of the pandemic, recruitment of Japanese-language teachers became possible, and some institutions resumed their courses. This suggests that Japanese-language education is generally popular.

In Qatar, the number of learners in secondary education is increasing, driven by the Ministry of Education and Higher Education's introduction of Japanese as an elective subject at two public boys' high schools. The Ministry of Education is seeking to expand the Japanese-language elective program to more public schools, but progress has been slow due to issues such as securing Japanese-language teachers.