

FRANCE:

FOREIGN LANGUAGES IN THE EDUCATION SYSTEM

Correspondence to ISCED

Primary education (ISCED 1) is 5 years, from the age of 6 to 11.

Lower secondary education (ISCED level 2) is 4 years, from the age of 11 to the age of 15.

Upper secondary education (ISCED level 3) is 3 years, from the age of 15 to the age of 18.

General objectives

The aim of France is for each student to be able to speak and understand at least two languages by the end of upper secondary school.

The target CEFRL level for FL1 is B1 by the end of compulsory education.

Age of FLL

It will soon be compulsory to begin FL1 in the first year of primary education, and continue until the end of compulsory education (end of first year of upper secondary). It is compulsory to begin FL2 in the third year of lower secondary education, and continue until the end of compulsory education.

There is an option of beginning FL1 at a pre-primary level (ISCED 0).

FLs taught

Students can choose from 56 languages: Albanian, German, Amharic, English, Arabic, Armenian, Bambara, Basque, Berber, Breton, Bulgarian, Cambodian, Catalan, Chinese, Korean, Corsican, Creole, Croatian, Danish, Spanish, Estonian, Finnish, Gallo, Modern Greek, Hausa, Hebrew, Hindi, Hungarian, Indonesian-Malay, Italian, Japanese, Melanesian languages, regional languages of Alsace and Moselle, Laotian, Lithuanian, Macedonian, Malagasy, Dutch, Norwegian, Occitan-Langue d'Oc, Persian, Peul, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Russian, Serbian, Slovak, Slovenian, Swedish, Swahili, Tahitian, Tamil, Czech, Turkish, Vietnamese.

FL1 proficiency level targets

A1: end of primary

A2: end of lower secondary

B1: end of first year of upper secondary

B2: end of upper secondary

C1: end of upper secondary (international sections)

FOREIGN LANGUAGES IN PRIMARY EDUCATION:

Curriculum

There is a national curriculum.

<http://www.education.gouv.fr/bo/2007/hs8/default.htm>

Hours taught

There is 1.5 hours per week for FL1, totalling 216 hours by the end of primary education.

In border areas such as Alsace, there is 1.5 – 3 hours per week for regional languages.

Teacher profile

Primary school teachers require a minimum proficiency level of B2 in the target language.

Class size

FLs are either taught to the whole class, or the group is split.

Teaching methodology

In pre-primary education (ISCED 0), there is an emphasis on raising awareness of the FL, and typical activities are songs, rhymes, art and drama. In primary education, there is an equal weighting of both oracy and literacy skills.