

Subject choices of students 2019

Subject choices of comprehensive school pupils

Share of pupils studying English is growing in the lower grades of comprehensive schools

According to Statistics Finland, studying English grew in grades 1 to 6 in 2019. Eighty-three per cent of students in grades 1 to 6 studied English. The share of pupils studying English increased by nine percentage points from the previous year in grades 1 to 6. Almost all students in grades 7 to 9 studied English.

Language choices of comprehensive school pupils in 2019

Grades	Studied language	Compulsory language A1	Optional language A2	Compulsory language B1	Elective language B2	Total	Share of pupils in grades 1-6 %	Share of pupils in grades 7-9 %
Grades 1-6	English	289 992	18 013	38	.	308 043	83.0	.
	Swedish	3 775	11 927	52 521	.	68 223	18.4	.
	Finnish	20 005	1 183	1	.	21 189	5.7	.
	French	3 965	3 894	20	.	7 879	2.1	.
	German	3 649	10 800	18	.	14 467	3.9	.
	Russian	1 100	1 016	.	.	2 116	0.6	.
	Spanish	1 031	6 762	.	.	7 793	2.1	.
	Italian	0	0	.	.	0	0.0	.
	Sami	4	220	.	.	224	0.1	.
	Other	382	132	0	.	514	0.1	.
Grades 7-9	English	168 922	13 158	85	69	182 234	.	99.5
	Swedish	2 023	10 879	156 379	3	169 284	.	92.5
	Finnish	9 266	1 341	213	2	10 822	.	5.9
	French	1 643	3 321	97	3 428	8 489	.	4.6
	German	1 774	7 608	301	7 346	17 029	.	9.3
	Russian	534	983	.	1 448	2 965	.	1.6
	Spanish	230	2 137	.	4 326	6 693	.	3.7
	Italian	0	0	.	75	75	.	0.0
	Sami	2	51	.	1	54	.	0.0
	Latin	0	7	.	373	380	.	0.2
	Other	178	47	6	63	294	.	0.2

According to the updated curriculum for basic education, starting from the beginning of 2020 all pupils start studying their first foreign language or a second national language at the latest in the spring of the first grade.

Eighteen per cent of pupils in grades 1 to 6 and 93 per cent of pupils in grades 7 to 9 studied Swedish as a foreign language.

Nearly all pupils attending grades 7 to 9 studied both English and Swedish or Finnish either as mother tongue, or as a compulsory, optional or elective foreign language. German was studied by nine per cent and French by five per cent of the pupils attending grades 7 to 9, mainly as an optional or elective foreign language.

A total of 371,102 pupils attended grades 1 to 6, of whom 189,974 were boys and 181,128 girls. Grades 7 to 9 had a total of 183,063 pupils, of whom 93,684 were boys and 89,379 girls.

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Appendix table 1. Language choices of comprehensive school pupils in 2019, boys

		Compulsory language A1	Optional language A2	Compulsory language B1	Elective language B2	Boys total	Share of boys in grades 1-6 %	Share of boys in grades 7-9 %
Grades	Studied language							
Grades 1-6	English	148 877	8 712	24	.	157 613	83.0	.
	Swedish	1 805	5 473	27 532	.	34 810	18.3	.
	Finnish	10 073	540	0	.	10 613	5.6	.
	French	1 694	1 519	8	.	3 221	1.7	.
	German	1 694	5 207	7	.	6 908	3.6	.
	Russian	486	455	.	.	941	0.5	.
	Spanish	440	3 005	.	.	3 445	1.8	.
	Italian	0	0	.	.	0	0.0	.
	Sami	1	101	.	.	102	0.1	.
	Other	173	80	0	.	253	0.1	.
Grades 7-9	English	86 631	6 430	49	37	93 147	.	99.4
	Swedish	946	4 725	80 725	2	86 398	.	92.2
	Finnish	4 759	634	111	1	5 505	.	5.9
	French	615	1 171	48	919	2 753	.	2.9
	German	855	3 430	119	2 932	7 336	.	7.8
	Russian	248	350	.	598	1 196	.	1.3
	Spanish	109	882	.	1 284	2 275	.	2.4
	Italian	0	0	.	32	32	.	0.0
	Sami	1	20	.	0	21	.	0.0
	Latin	0	0	.	126	126	.	0.1
	Other	83	24	5	24	136	.	0.1

Appendix table 2. Language choices of comprehensive school pupils in 2019, girls

		Compulsory language A1	Optional language A2	Compulsory language B1	Elective language B2	Girls total	Share of girls in grades 1-6 %	Share of girls in grades 7-9 %
Grades	Studied language							
Grades 1-6	English	141 115	9 301	14	.	150 430	83.1	.
	Swedish	1 970	6 454	24 989	.	33 413	18.4	.
	Finnish	9 932	643	1	.	10 576	5.8	.
	French	2 271	2 375	12	.	4 658	2.6	.
	German	1 955	5 593	11	.	7 559	4.2	.
	Russian	614	561	.	.	1 175	0.6	.
	Spanish	591	3 757	.	.	4 348	2.4	.
	Italian	0	0	.	.	0	0.0	.
	Sami	3	119	.	.	122	0.1	.
	Other	209	52	0	.	261	0.1	.

		Compulsory language A1	Optional language A2	Compulsory language B1	Elective language B2	Girls total	Share of girls in grades 1-6 %	Share of girls in grades 7-9 %
Grades 7-9	English	82 291	6 728	36	32	89 087	.	99.7
	Swedish	1 077	6 154	75 654	1	82 886	.	92.7
	Finnish	4 507	707	102	1	5 317	.	5.9
	French	1 028	2 150	49	2 509	5 736	.	6.4
	German	919	4 178	182	4 414	9 693	.	10.8
	Russian	286	633	.	850	1 769	.	2.0
	Spanish	121	1 255	.	3 042	4 418	.	4.9
	Italian	0	0	.	43	43	.	0.0
	Sami	1	31	.	1	33	.	0.0
	Latin	0	7	.	247	254	.	0.3
	Other	95	23	1	39	158	.	0.2

Inquiries

Vesa Hämäläinen 029 551 2594
Director in charge:
Jari Tarkoma

koulutustilastot@stat.fi
www.stat.fi
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