



REPUBLIC OF ESTONIA
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
AND RESEARCH

Creating space for additional foreign languages: opportunities and challenges

Marika Peekmann

Ministry of Education and Research

marika.peekmann@hm.ee

4.12.2024





Schools are autonomous in choosing foreign languages:

- Language A: English, German or French (B2-language in upper secondary);
- Language B chosen by schools (B1-language in upper secondary).

95% learn at least two foreign languages in basic education (Eurydice report).

Foreign languages in Estonian schools

Ca. 95% learn English as the first FL;

Ca. 75% learn Russian as the second foreign language (used to be 80% and above).





English being the overwhelming first foreign language means that the offer of second foreign language is the main means of creating diverse (foreign) language repertoires in schools.

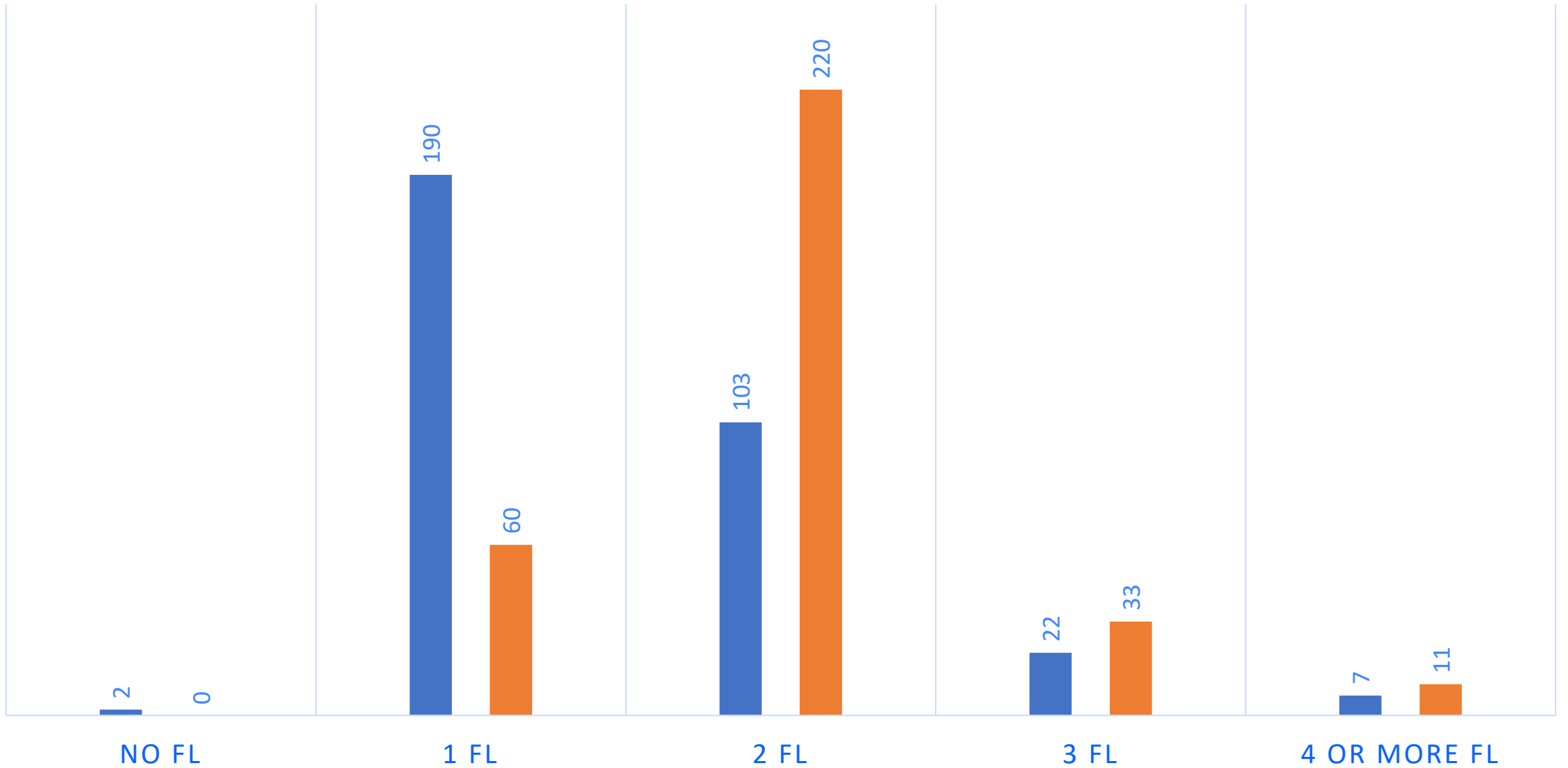




Since 2023/2024, schools are obliged to offer a choice between at least 2 foreign languages to students who start learning their second foreign language.

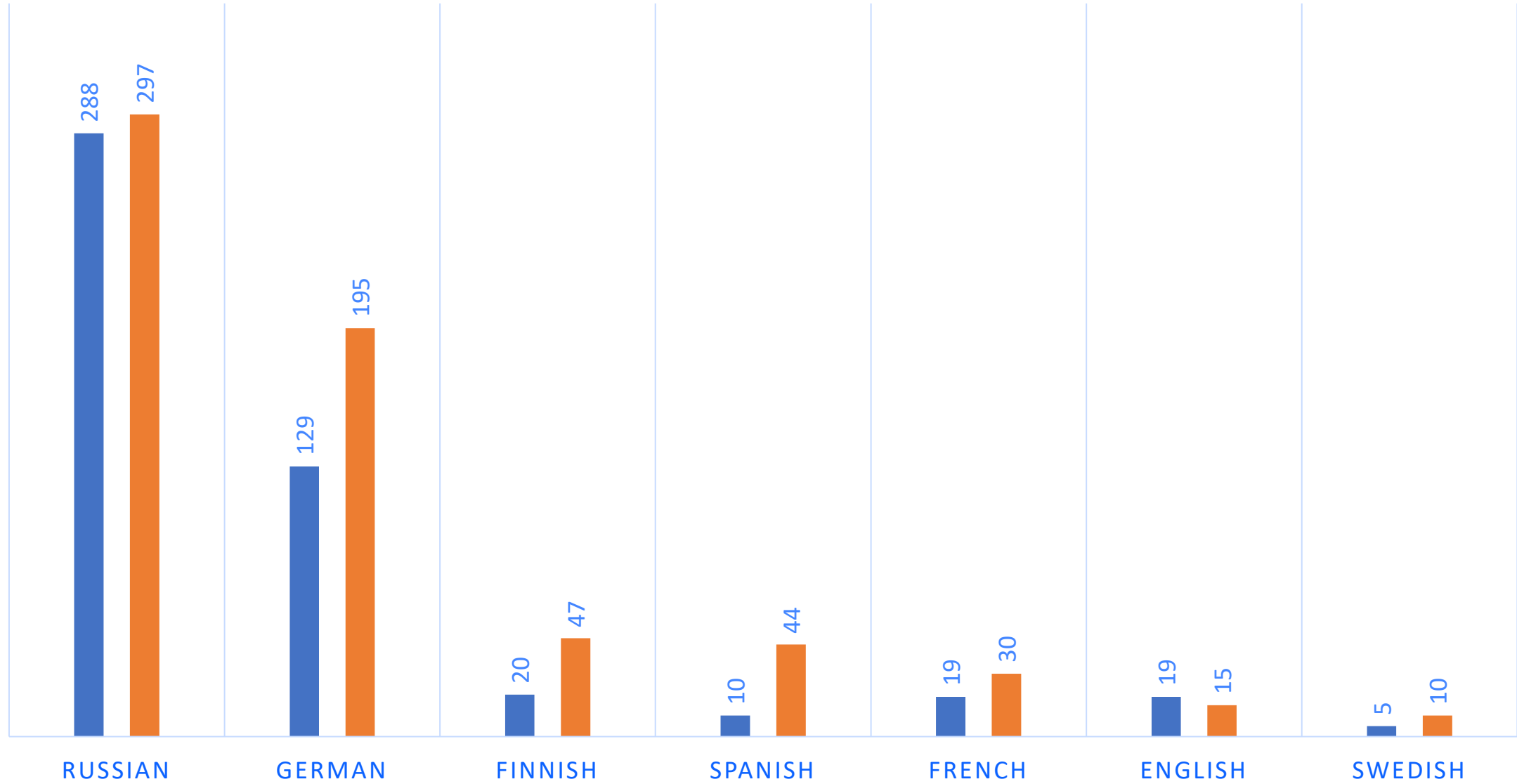
SECOND FOREIGN LANGUAGES 2022/23 AND 2023/24

■ 2022/23 ■ 2023/24



SECOND FOREIGN LANGUAGES

■ 2022/23 ■ 2023/24



Meaningful partnerships

- Teacher Associations;
- Institutes (Goethe, French, Finnish);
- International foreign language certificates, including Goethe, DSD, DELF, YKI (recognized as school-leaving exams).

Giving students an outlet: CertiLingua Label of Excellence

Network: Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Italy, Sweden

Students receive certificates for:

- European and international competence;
- participation in (and documentation of) an international face-to-face project;
- B2 level (or higher) in at least two FLs learned in school.

Certificate given on completing upper secondary education

www.certilingua.net





Challenges

Teacher shortage;

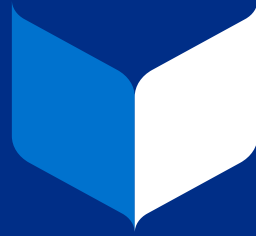
Teacher qualification;

Consistency of second foreign language learning.

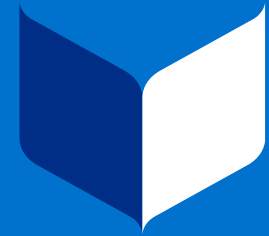


Motivation through
increasing student
autonomy

Opportunities



Plurilingualism and
variation in foreign
language repertoire
in Estonian society



More personalized
language learning
pathways,
including language
learning in non-
formal education



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Thank you!
Aitäh!