

**Figure B8: Mandatory foreign languages specified by the central education authorities (full-time compulsory education), 1982/83, 1992/93 and 2002/03**

	BE fr	BE de	BE nl	CZ	DK	DE	EE	EL	ES	FR	IE	IT	CY	LV	LT	LU	HU
1982/83		▲	●▲	○	●	●					⊗		●			■▲●	○
1992/93		▲	●▲		●	●		●			⊗		●			■▲●	
2002/03		▲	●▲		●	●		●			⊗		●▲	●		■▲●	
	UK																
	MT	NL	AT	PL	PT	SI	SK	FI	SE	ENG/WLS/NIR	SCT	IS	LI	NO	BG	RO	
1982/83	●	●		○			○	fi/sv	●	⊗		da ●		●	○		
1992/93	●	●						fi/sv	●			da ●		●			
2002/03	●	●						fi/sv	●		⊗	● da	●▲	●			

● English   ▲ French   ■ German   ○ Russian   □ No specific mandatory language  
 ⊗ No foreign language as a compulsory subject

Source: Eurydice.

Additional notes  
 For notes on the situation in 2002/03, see under Figure B7.

**Belgium (BE fr):** In 1982/83, 1992/93 and 2002/03, Dutch was a mandatory language in Brussels.

**Belgium (BE de):** In 1982/83, 1992/93 and 2002/03, German was a mandatory language in schools in which French was the language of instruction for the French-speaking minority resident in the German-speaking region.

**Estonia and Latvia:** The Figure indicates the situation in schools in which Estonian (in Estonia) and Latvian (in Latvia) were the languages of instruction.

**Finland:** The second state language (Swedish or Finnish depending on the pupil's mother tongue) has to be taken as a compulsory subject.

Explanatory note  
 Only situations affecting all pupils irrespective of their branch or field of study are indicated.

**Specific mandatory foreign language:** See definitions.

## English has long been a mandatory language

Most countries in which the learning of English was mandatory at a particular stage of compulsory education in 2002/03 had already adopted this policy in 1982/83. However, Greece, Latvia and Liechtenstein are exceptions. Furthermore, pupils in Italy have been obliged to learn English from the first year of primary education since 2003/04. Policies in these countries under which it is mandatory to learn specific languages thus indicate a growing tendency in Europe to insist on pupils learning English.

All countries in central and eastern Europe in which Russian was a mandatory language in 1982/83 abandoned this policy from the beginning of the 1990s. In the three Baltic countries, Russian was a mandatory language in 1982/83 but not regarded as a foreign language.

In several countries, the central education authorities insist that two or even three specific languages have to be learnt at different stages of compulsory education. Generally the first language, in most cases English, begins in primary education while the second is introduced in secondary education.