



REPUBLIC OF ESTONIA  
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION  
AND RESEARCH

# Towards plurilingualism

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# Key competences for lifelong learning

2006:

Communication in the mother tongue

Communication in foreign languages

2018:

Literacy competence

Multilingual competence



# Multilingual competence

Use **different languages** appropriately and effectively for communication.

Integrates a historical dimension and **intercultural competences**.

**Mediate** between different languages and media, as outlined in the CEFR.

Knowledge of **vocabulary and functional grammar of different languages** and an awareness of the main types of verbal interaction and registers of languages.



# CEFR Companion Volume

„Common European Framework of Reference  
For Languages: Learning, Teaching,  
Assessment: Companion Volume with New  
Descriptors“

Reaffirm existing principles

Elaborate on existing scales

Add new scales (mediation, online  
communication, literary texts, plurilingualism)



# CEFR Companion Volume

## Plurilingual and pluricultural competence

Building on pluricultural repertoire

Plurilingual comprehension

Building on plurilingual repertoire

## Mediation

In addition to mediating a text, also mediating concepts and communication. Sometimes within the same language, sometimes from one language to another.



# European Education Area 2025

Setting a new benchmark for all young Europeans finishing upper secondary education to have a good knowledge of two languages in addition to their mother tongue(s) by 2025



## KEY ACHIEVEMENTS SO FAR



One in two EU citizens can speak and understand **only their mother tongue**.



Only **one in four** EU citizens can hold a conversation in two other languages.



The number of lower secondary students learning two foreign languages is up compared with ten years ago (in 2014, **60%** of all students enrolled in lower secondary education were learning **two foreign languages or more**; in 2004: **47%**).



# **Proposal: EU Council recommendation (22.5.2018)**

**Aim:** language of schooling + 2 foreign languages before the end of upper secondary education

## Comprehensive language approaches in schools

Language awareness: language friendly environment, transversally in the curricula, subject classes

Range of languages (global communication, neighbours)

Valuing learners' linguistic repertoires and prior/informal learning, involving parents

Student and teacher mobility, teachers' CPD

Use of digital tools, CLIL, virtual cooperation

Assessment to support language acquisition

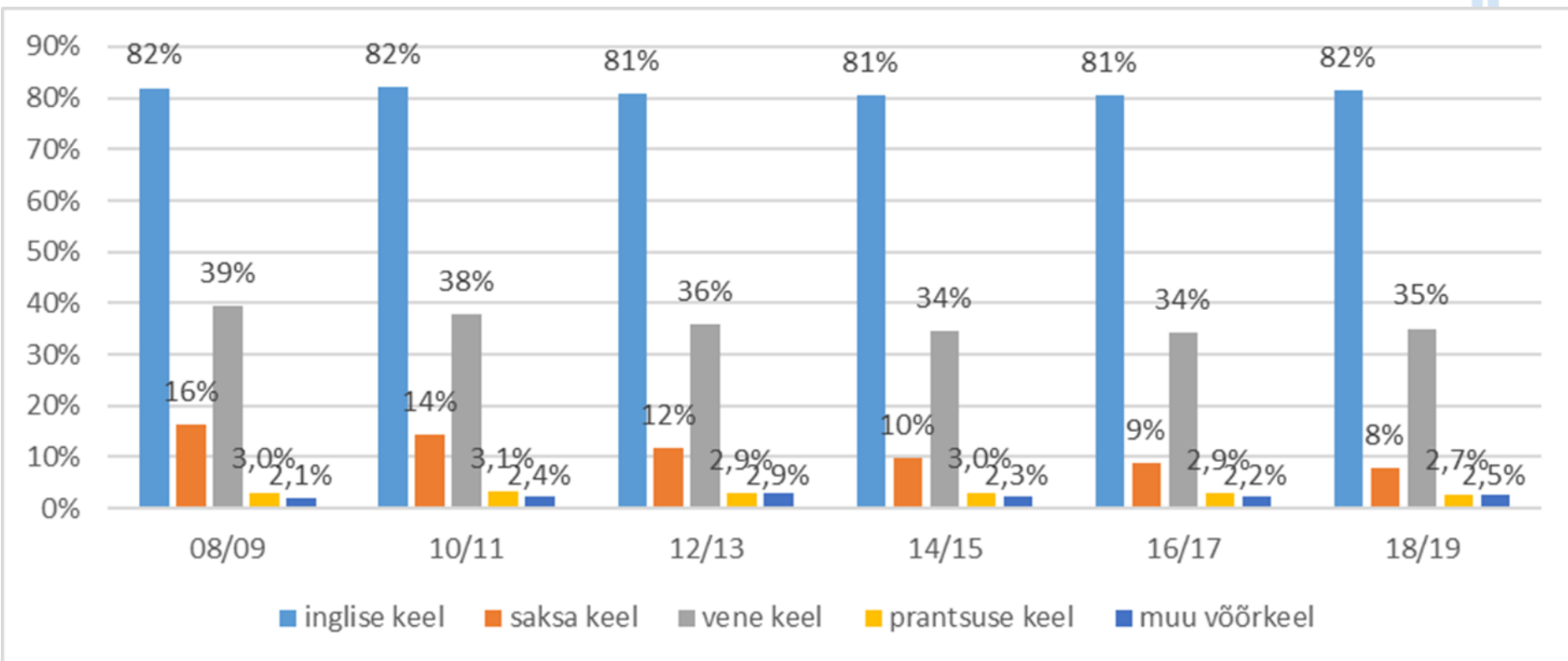


# Foreign languages in Estonia

## Dominance of English

95% of students study 2+ FL (EU:59%) (2016)

Start by Year 3 (25% by Year 2)





# Assessment

Study goal for upper secondary education:  
2 foreign languages to level B (B2 and B1)

Data available on one foreign language  
(state exam at Year 12)

2017/2018

B2 level+ 71.7%

(full-time studies, across languages)



# International tests

Since 2014, state exam replaced in French (DELF), German (Goethe Zertifikat) and Russian (ТРКИ)

English exam prepared by Foundation Innove

Other international test results recognised

Certificates submitted:

2014: 272

2017: 881

2015: 457

2018: 1195

2016: 671



# Teachers

Almost 50% are over 50; 11% are 30 or below

Not enough new teachers trained



2008/09-2017/18	Graduates	Working in 2018/2019	% working in 2018/2019
English teachers	103	60	55,3%
German teachers	41	15	34,1%
French teachers	16	8	43,8%
Russian teachers (incl. Russian language and literature)	80	42	44%



First language + English = enough for students? enough for us?

Becoming plurilingual, not just proficient in English

Teaching plurilingually, are we ready for it?

Learning neighbours' languages

Achieving better results in second foreign language





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