



Det Nationale
Center for
Fremmedsprog

Languages in the Danish educational
system in numbers

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Agenda



- Languages in the Danish educational system in numbers
 - Elementary school
 - Secondary education
 - Higher education



Elementary school



Foreign language teaching in elementary school



- Elementary school (primary and lower secondary education) in Denmark is called “grundskole” - it is for 6/7-16/17-year-olds – compulsory education
- English as the first foreign language – from 1st grade
- German **or** French as the second foreign language – from the 5th grade
- Schools are obliged to offer German, and they can offer French

Language learning in primary and lower secondary education (grundskole)



- English is taught for a minimum of 630 hours through nine school years
- German and French are taught for a minimum of 390 hours through five school years
- Approximately 85% of the pupils in grundskolen have German as their second foreign language
- Approximately 10% of the pupils in grundskolen have French as their second foreign language

Geographical bias as to where French is taught in grundskolen



- The regional distribution of public primary and lower secondary schools (folkeskoler) where French is being taught

Region	Numbers	% schools
The Capital Region of Denmark	187 folkeskoler out of 254	74%
Region Zealand	26 folkeskoler out of 191	14%
Central Denmark Region	16 folkeskoler out of 307	5%
The Region of Southern Denmark	9 folkeskoler out of 296	3%
The North Denmark Region	2 folkeskoler out of 147	1%



Secondary education



Foreign language teaching in secondary education



- After elementary school, most young people in Denmark take either upper secondary education (high school) or vocational education.
- Approximately 72% of the pupils leaving elementary school apply for upper secondary school education, and approximately 20% apply for vocational education.
- Big political focus on getting more pupils to apply for vocational education – the political goal is 30%

Different types of secondary education



- There are four different major types of secondary education.
 - Stx – general
42% of the pupils leaving elementary school in 2022 applied for stx
 - Hhx – mercantile
15% of the pupils leaving elementary school in 2022 applied for hhx
 - Htx – technological
6% of the pupils leaving elementary school in 2022 applied for htx
 - Hf – vocationally and practically oriented
8% of the pupils leaving elementary school in 2022 applied for hf

Foreign language teaching in secondary education



- In stx (general) and hhx (commercial oriented) a second foreign language is compulsory for a minimum of 2 out of the 3 years.
- All beginner level languages (Chinese, Italian, Spanish, French) are taught all 3 years, and continued languages (German, French) are taught 2 years as a minimum – the possible third year is called A-niveau (advanced level – Leistungskurs)
- In other types of secondary education than stx and hhx, it is not compulsory to take a second foreign language, and only very few do so

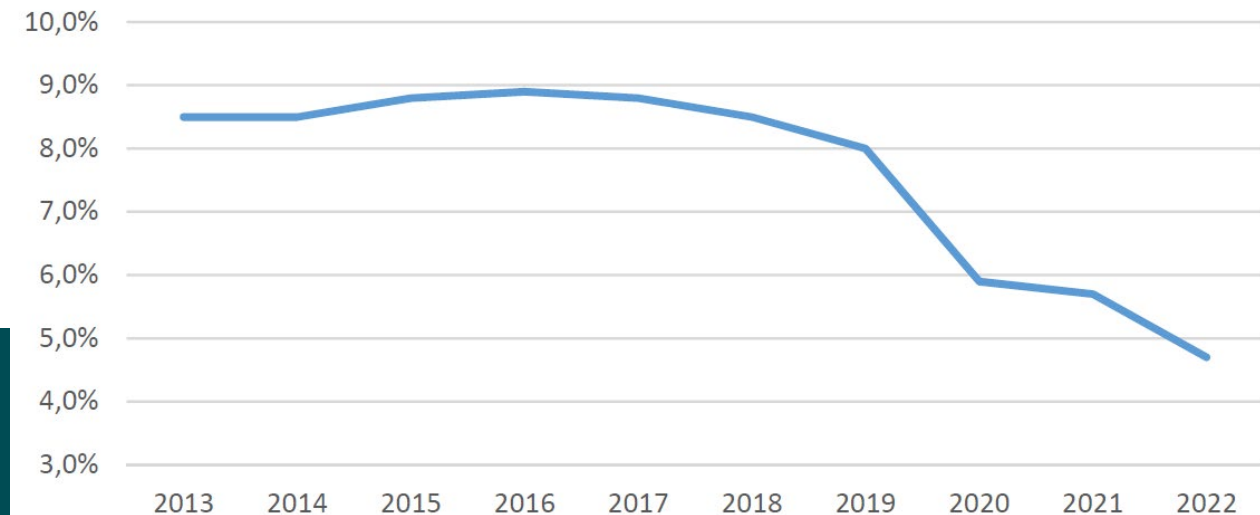
German in stx

- A small increase in the overall number of students graduating with German
- A significant dip in the number of students with German A-niveau
 - From 8,0% in 2019 to 4,7% in 2022
- The same development is seen in French continued level A-niveau

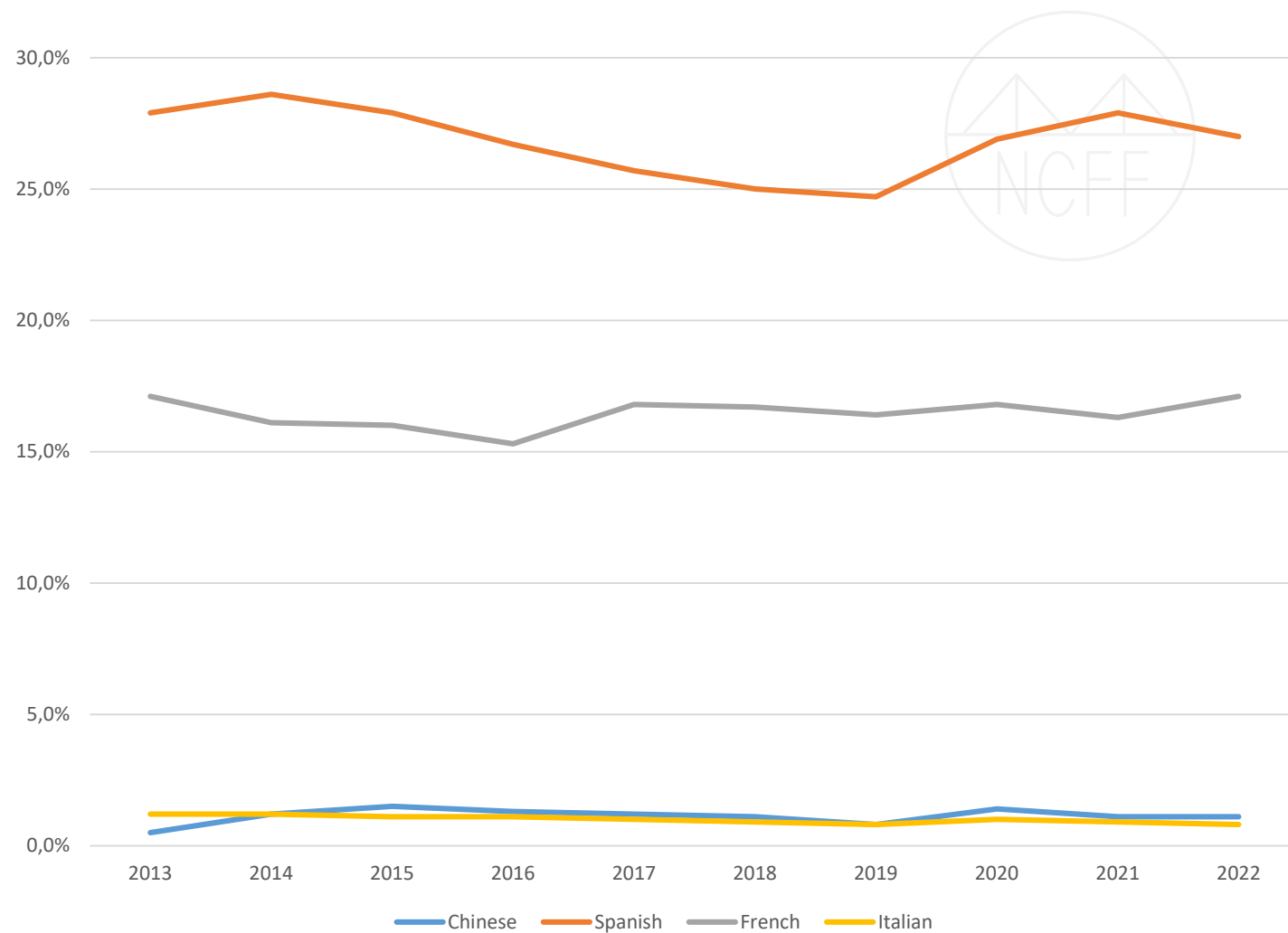
Number of stx graduates with German



Number of stx graduates with German A-niveau



Other second foreign languages in stx.





Higher education



Students in higher education studying foreign languages



- In Denmark we have around 50 programmes in higher education that have at least one foreign language as a core element – distributed on 4 universities and 6 teacher training colleges
 - Programmes at universities in English, German, French, Italian, Spanish, Russian, Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Portuguese, Arabic, Polish, Balkan languages, Hebrew, Turkish, Persian, Latin, classical Greek, Hindi with more
- Approximately 3-4% of the students in higher education are admitted to study a programme that has a foreign language as a core element

Students in higher education studying foreign languages



- In 2022 60,034 students were admitted to a higher education programme
- Approximately 1,500 of these were admitted to a university programme that has at least one foreign language as a core element
- 2,277 students were admitted to teacher training college, and approximately 35-40% of them will study at least one foreign language (English, German, French) as one of their main subjects

Students in higher education studying foreign languages

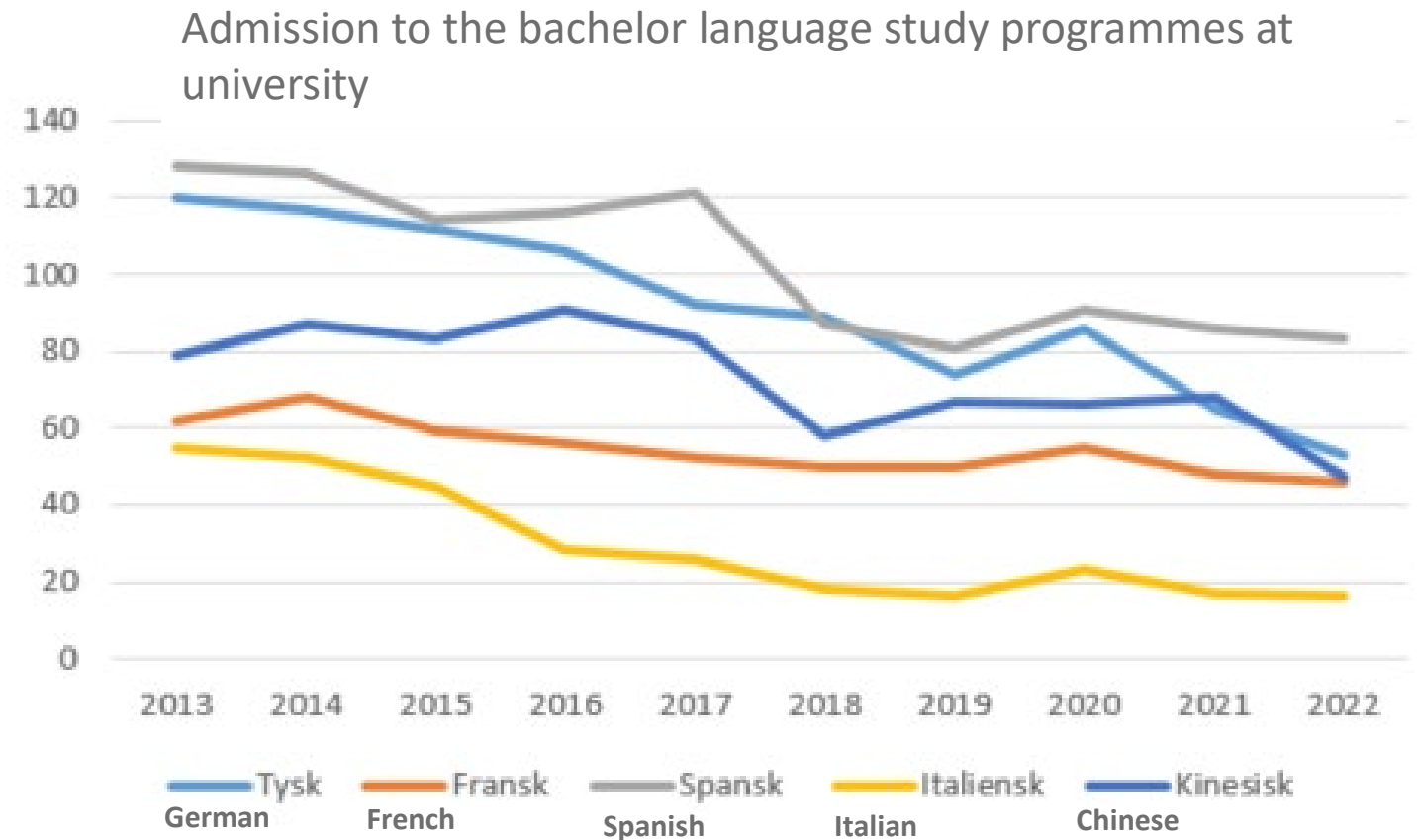


- There has been a significant decrease in the number of programmes within the last 10-15 years
- Number of students who study a programme at university level has also been decreasing for the last 10-15 years.
- We risk a lack of qualified teachers in Denmark, especially in German and French in secondary education, if the current trend continues.

Admission to the bachelor language study programmes at university 2013-22



- German: decrease of 56%
- French: decrease of 26%
- Spanish: decrease of 35%
- Italian: decrease of 71%
- Chinese: decrease of 41%

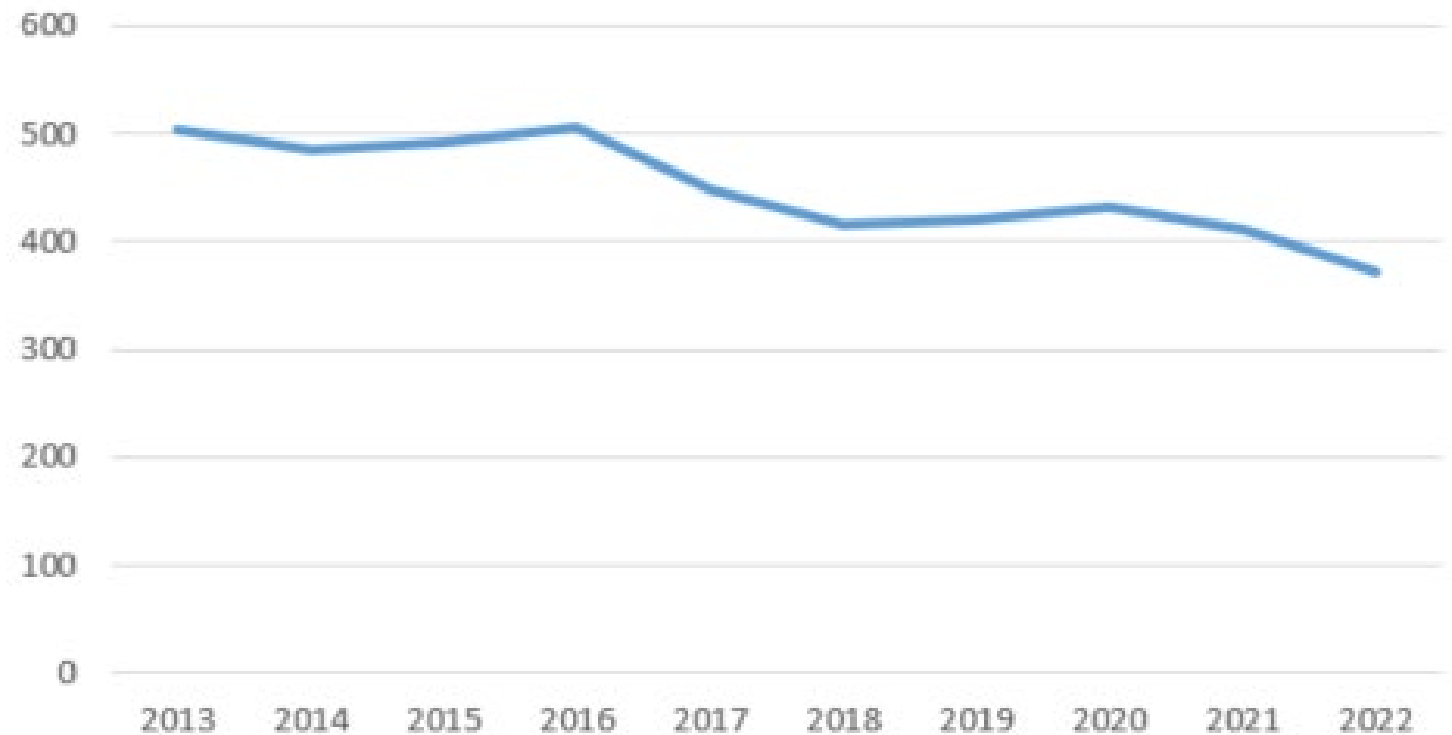


Admission to the bachelor programme in English



- English: decrease of 26%

Admission to the bachelor language study programmes in English at university



FL in Denmark in decline - why?

