



Retention Rates for Languages in Government Schools

Comparison of a Cohort: Entry at Year 7 2004 to Year 12 2009 (not including VSL)

Source: Victorian Government LOTE Reports and VCAA Website

German is relatively stable in both primary and secondary schools, although we know of schools who are in the process of reviewing their language programs. Languages are always up for negotiation. The retention rates for German from Years 10 to 12 is consistently strong. Numbers drop sharply between years 7 and 10 across languages, most likely due to languages becoming an elective.

It is unexplained why there is a sharp increase in numbers from Year 10 to Year 12 for Chinese.

Government Secondary NB: Some schools offer more than one language.	2004 Year 7	2007 Year 10	2009 Year 12 Gov't (Total VCE enrolments)	% retention Yr 7 to 10	% retention Year 10 to 12
Chinese enrolments	1288	261	*449 (871)	20.2%	172%
Number of schools	35	34	40		
French enrolments	7777	1525	505 (1725)	19.6%	33.1%
Number of schools	111	89	83		
German enrolments	5598	1028	405 (705)	18.3%	39.3%
Number of schools	72	61	64		
Indonesian enrolments	9823	1129	*282 (701)	11.5%	24.9%
Number of schools	124	110	98		
Italian enrolments	8185	1137	177 (830)	13.8%	15.5%
Number of schools	80	81	78		
Japanese enrolments	7705	1508	*509 (1198)	19.5%	33.7%
Number of schools	72	87	91		

*VCE enrolments for Chinese, Indonesian and Japanese as a 2nd Language.

Enrolments for German in Primary Schools in 2009

Prep: 2,046 Yr 1: 1,973 Yr 2: 2,100 Yr 3: 2,280 Yr 4: 2,159 Yr 5: 2,387 Yr 6: 2,610

Total Student Enrolment: 15,555 in 79 schools, being 7.5% of total enrolment for languages.

Source: Victorian Government LOTE Reports

Situation for German in Victoria

There are many fantastic programs for students learning German in Victoria.

The comprehensive support for German and the local and international opportunities, along with strong retention rates are powerful arguments to maintain German in schools where it is offered, and as a language to introduce.

Leadership teams in individual schools make decisions about what is and what is not offered on a year to year basis. Teachers are under constant pressure to maintain languages being offered in the curriculum, and more and more schools are making language an elective in Year 9, sometimes in Year 8. Language learning is often considered optional and not a core part of a general education in the compulsory years.

We must continue to advocate for a strong language policy in both state and federal levels to send clear messages that learning languages is a high priority for the education of young Australians.