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Language Trends Survey

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British Council and Languages

We believe that speaking another language is crucial to understanding another culture and for long term growth and prosperity. So, no matter how many people around the world speak English, we still need to go to the effort of mastering foreign languages ourselves in the UK.

We believe that every young person should have international experience woven into the fabric of their formal and non-formal education to add value to their learning and boost their aspirations

International experience refers to intercultural *encounters* with people of other countries and cultures, at home and through periods of time spent overseas

Language Trends survey

Language Trends, which started in 2002, is an annual survey of primary and secondary schools in England, designed to gather information about the situation for language teaching and learning. Its aims are to assess the impact of policy measures in relation to languages and to analyse strengths and weaknesses based both on quantitative evidence and on views expressed by teachers.

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Language Trends England 2021 Interim Results

Ian Collen

Researcher and Survey Author

ALL Language World, 12 March 2021

Plan for this session

Overview of Primary

Overview of State
Secondary

Overview of Independent
Time for Q&A



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Primary School Responses

Region	Sample	Achieved	Response Rate
London	365	34	9.3%
South East	1082	181	16.7%
South West	995	116	11.6%
East Midlands	686	64	9.3%
West Midlands	494	48	9.7%
East of England	875	113	12.9%
Yorkshire and the Humber	480	43	9%
North East	161	19	11.8%
North West	862	127	14.7%
TOTAL	6000	756	12.6%

French remains the most popular language in primary schools

	EARLY YEARS	YEARS 1 AND/OR 2	YEARS 3 AND/OR 4	YEARS 5 AND/OR 6	TOTAL RESPONDENTS
Ancient Greek	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	50.00% 1	100.00% 2	2
Arabic	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	100.00% 1	100.00% 1	1
Chinese	17.39% 4	34.78% 8	78.26% 18	78.26% 18	23
French	18.10% 99	34.55% 189	95.80% 524	95.98% 525	547
German	20.00% 7	17.14% 6	48.57% 17	74.29% 26	35
Italian	28.57% 4	35.71% 5	57.14% 8	42.86% 6	14
Japanese	28.57% 2	28.57% 2	71.43% 5	57.14% 4	7
Latin	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	62.50% 10	81.25% 13	16
Spanish	22.73% 50	36.82% 81	81.36% 179	90.91% 200	220
Urdu	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0
Other	68.00% 17	52.00% 13	48.00% 12	56.00% 14	25



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Time for languages

	LESS THAN 30 MINUTES	30-45 MINUTES	MORE THAN 45 MINUTES BUT LESS THAN 1 HOUR	BETWEEN 1 AND 2 HOURS	MORE THAN TWO HOURS	NONE	WE DO NOT HAVE THIS YEAR GROUP IN OUR SCHOOL	TOTAL
Early Years	38.40% 278	2.90% 21	0.97% 7	0.69% 5	0.00% 0	54.83% 397	2.21% 16	724
Year 1	36.88% 267	11.19% 81	2.35% 17	0.97% 7	0.00% 0	46.69% 338	1.93% 14	724
Year 2	35.77% 259	14.36% 104	3.73% 27	0.97% 7	0.14% 1	42.96% 311	2.07% 15	724
Year 3	7.60% 55	52.35% 379	28.87% 209	10.36% 75	0.28% 2	0.41% 3	0.14% 1	724
Year 4	7.18% 52	50.97% 369	30.11% 218	10.91% 79	0.28% 2	0.28% 2	0.28% 2	724
Year 5	5.39% 39	45.86% 332	33.70% 244	13.95% 101	0.41% 3	0.41% 3	0.28% 2	724
Year 6	5.39% 39	44.34% 321	33.84% 245	14.23% 103	0.41% 3	0.69% 5	1.10% 8	724



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International Engagement

	2018	2019	2020	2021
The school has one or more partner schools abroad	35%	27%	19%	18%
Involvement in international projects	22%	16%	10%	7.5%
Host a language assistant	5%	5%	2.5%	1.5%
Pupil exchanges	5%	2%	1.5%	
School trips abroad	12%	8%	8%	
Teacher exchanges	6%	7%	4.5%	
Teacher CPD abroad	9%	7%	5%	
eTwinning	-	11%	6%	7%
None	46%	50.5%	61%	64%

Transition KS2/3

Q21: Do pupils in your school continue with the same language they learned at Key Stage 2?

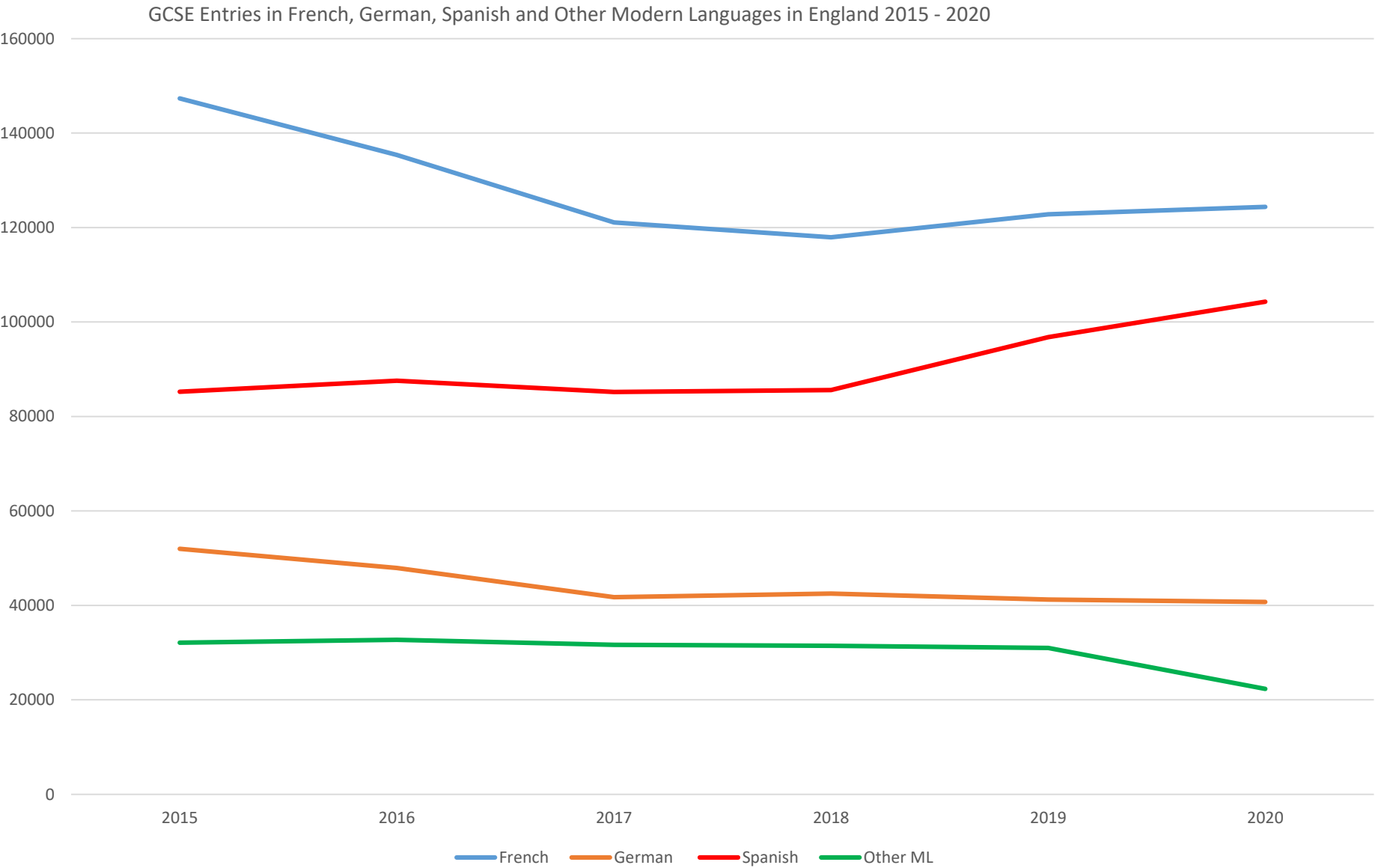
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
All pupils continue with the same language	2.95%	18
The majority of pupils continue with the same language	21.28%	130
Some pupils continue with the same language	65.96%	403
No, our pupils start a new language from scratch	9.82%	60
TOTAL		611

State Secondary School Responses

Region	Sample	Achieved	Response Rate
London	425	76	17.9%
South East	454	112	24.7%
South West	273	66	24.2%
East Midlands	254	47	18.5%
West Midlands	346	59	17.1%
East of England	326	90	27.6%
Yorkshire and the Humber	291	59	20.3%
North East	131	29	22.1%
North West	429	79	16.8%
TOTAL	2929	617*	21.2%

*unable to ascertain the regions of four schools

GCSE Entries – JCQ Data



State Secondary – Most frequently taught languages

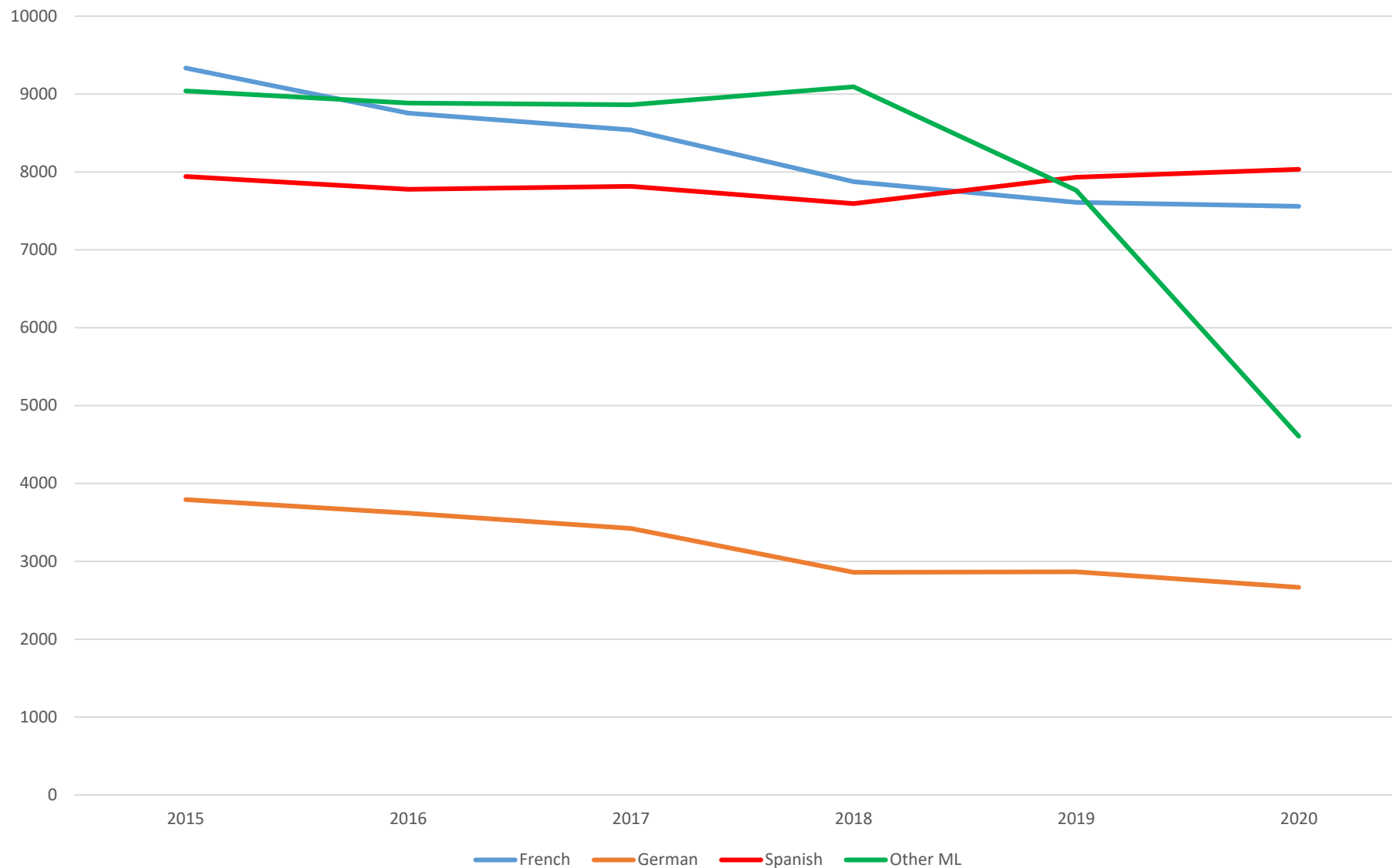
Language GCSE	% of responding schools
French	95.2
German	65
Spanish	87.5

State Secondary – GCSE exam options in lesser taught languages

Language GCSE	% of responding schools
Arabic	5.1
Chinese (Mandarin)	8.9
Italian	10.3
Japanese	3.5
Polish	8.9
Russian	6.1
Urdu	6.1

Post-16 – JCQ Data

A level Entries in French, German, Spanish and Other Modern Languages in England 2015 - 2020



Post-16 – compared to previous years (our survey)

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
More pupils taking a language post 16	24.04%	81
Fewer pupils taking a language post 16	31.45%	106
Similar numbers	44.51%	150
TOTAL		337

Independent School Responses

Region	Sample	Achieved	Response Rate
London	138	26	18.8%
South East	150	34	22.7%
South West	77	21	27%
East Midlands	35	1	2.9%
West Midlands	61	9	14.8%
East of England	65	22	33.8%
Yorkshire and the Humber	42	11	26%
North East	14	7	50%
North West	55	7	12.7%
TOTAL	637	138	21.7%

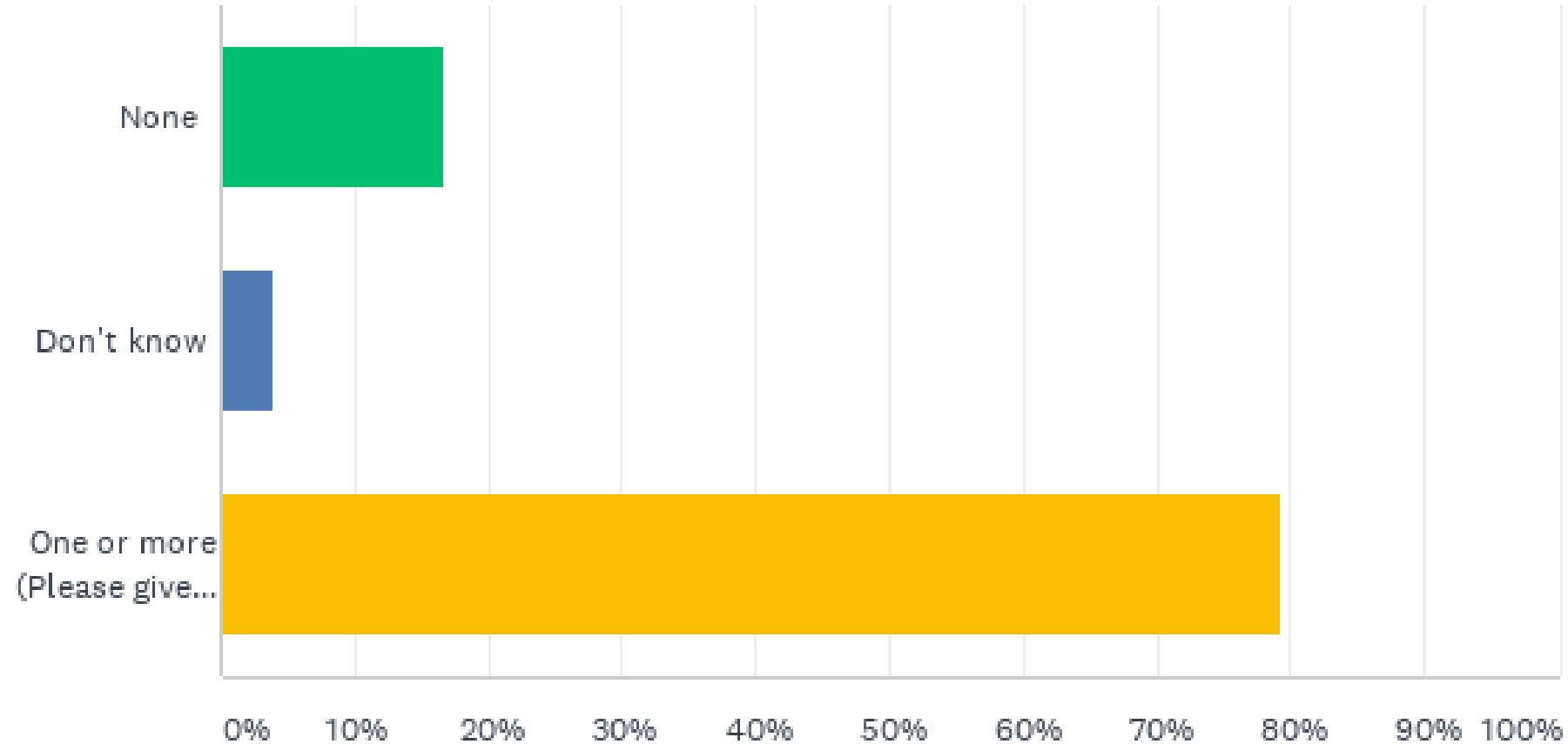
Independent – GCSE uptake over the past five years

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
The trend in our schools has been an increase	4.76%	6
No change, fairly consistent	50.79%	64
The trend in our school has been a decrease	44.44%	56
TOTAL		126

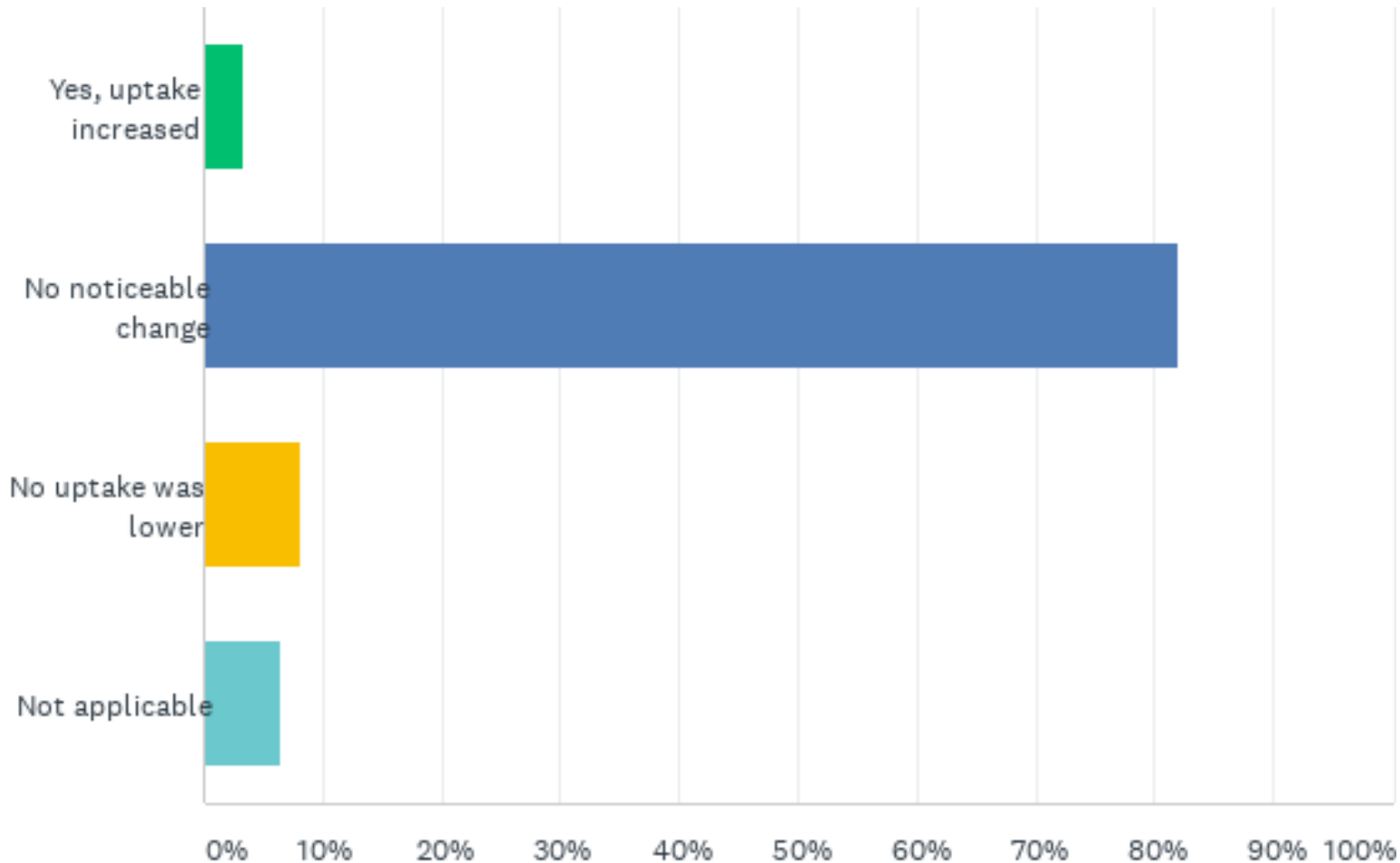
Independent – post-16 uptake

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
More pupils taking a language post 16	8.94%	11
Fewer pupils taking a language post 16	47.97%	59
Similar numbers	43.09%	53
TOTAL		123

Independent – almost 4/5 schools have one teacher of languages from the EU



Independent – post-16 uptake following summer 2020 GCSE results of centre assessment grades



Questions & Answers

