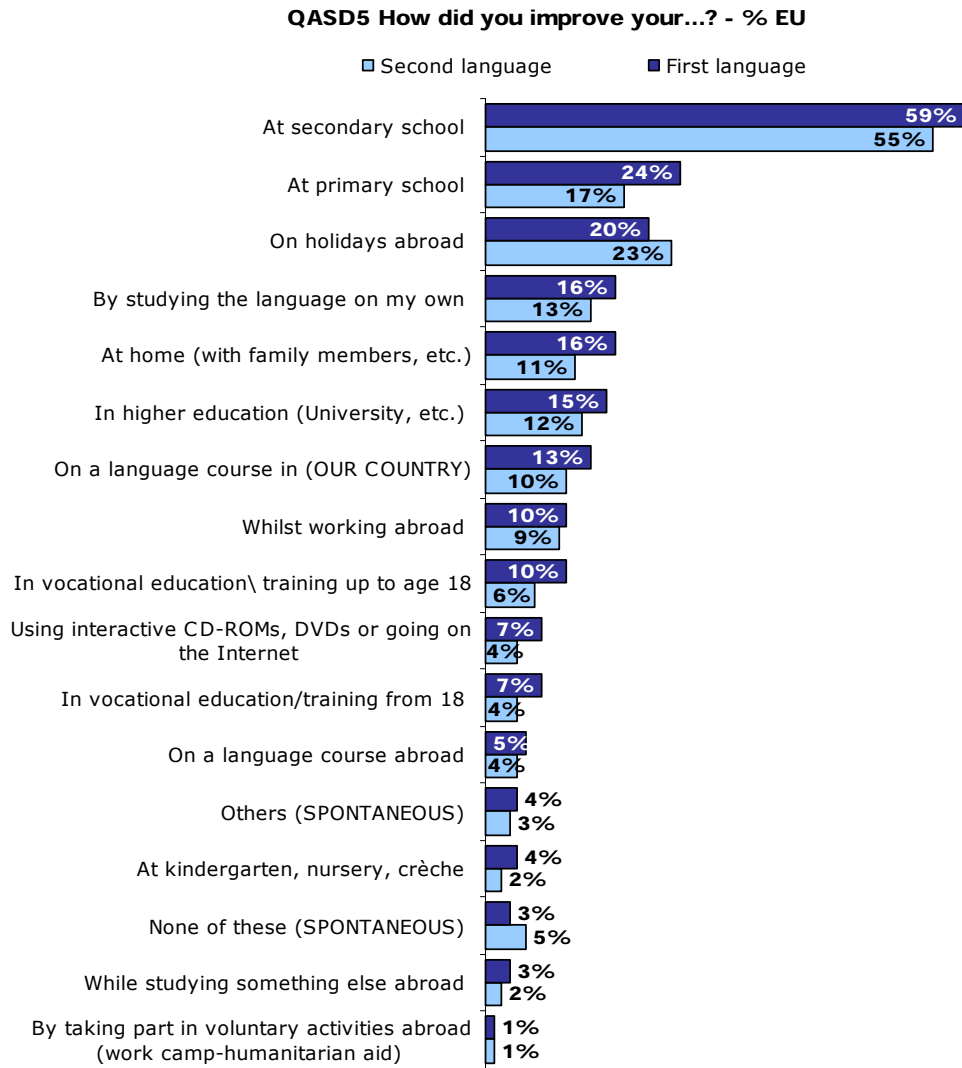


1.6 Ways of Learning

- *The majority of Europeans learn languages in secondary school –*

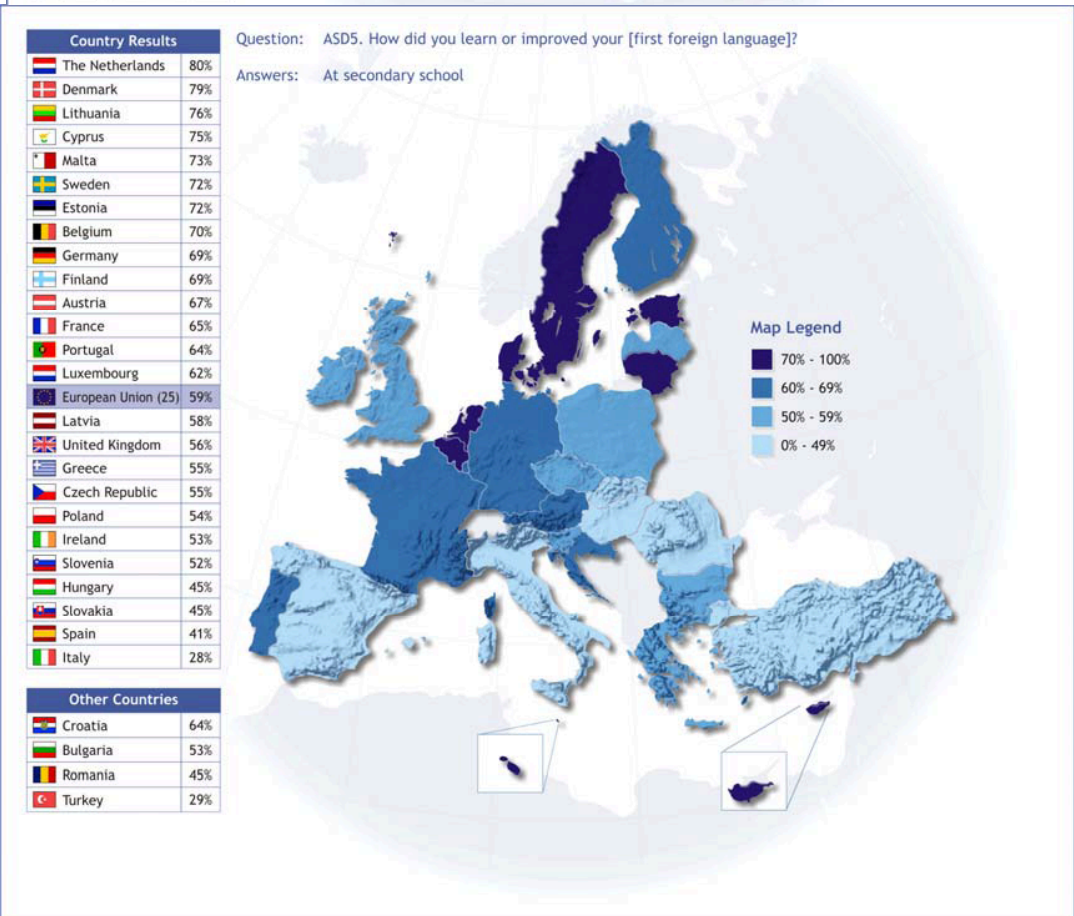
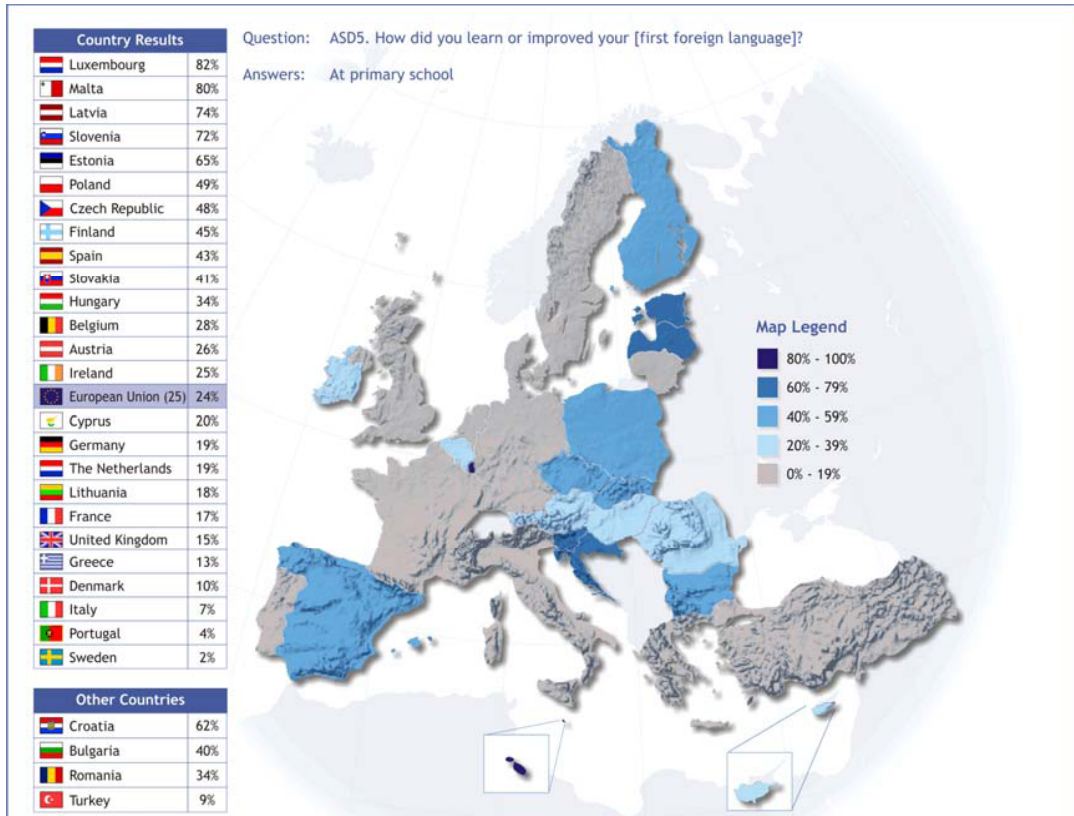
Source Questionnaire: QASD5a-b



When asked how they have learned or improved their language skills, the majority of Europeans refer to school. 59% indicate that they have learned languages at secondary school, whereas about a quarter (24%), started language learning at primary school when it comes to the first foreign language.

Other learning environments receive a moderate share of mentions, learning on holidays abroad reaching a 20% score and studying a language by oneself or improving language skills at home having a 16% share each when the first foreign language is considered.

These results imply that **a significant share of Europeans learn languages only at school.** This highlights the role of the education systems, and language teaching in particular, in promoting multilingualism.



When looking at the results at the country level, **considerable variations occur between the Member States**. The proportion of those who have learned their first foreign language at primary school ranges from 82% in Luxembourg to 2% in Sweden. When it comes to secondary school, 80% of the Dutch indicate that they have improved their language skills there, while this is the case for only 28% of Italians.

In every country polled, secondary school receives the highest number of mentions. This is particularly the case in the Netherlands (80%), Denmark (79%) and Lithuania (76%). On the contrary, 28% of Italians, 29% of citizens of the candidate country Turkey and 41% of Spanish mention secondary school as their language learning environment.

With respect to the goal set by the Barcelona Council of starting language learning as early as possible, the primary school offer is of particular interest.

Again, differences between countries are significant. Luxembourg (82%) and Malta (80%) have the largest share of respondents stating that they have improved their language skills at primary school. This is no doubt a consequence of the specific linguistic conditions in these countries. In Luxembourg the majority speak Luxembourgish as their mother tongue, although French is the administrative language of the country, whereas Malta is a bilingual country where both Maltese and English are state languages.

By contrast, less than 1 in 10 Italians (7%), Portuguese (4%) and Swedes (2%) mention primary school as their language learning environment.

It is worth mentioning that **4% of Europeans indicate that they have improved their language skills at a very early age, in kindergarten.** This is especially the case in Luxembourg, Malta and Spain, although the respective shares remain modest, 10% in both Luxembourg and Malta and 9% in Spain.

Once more, **differences between the old and the new Member States** are visible. While 46% of the citizens of the EU10 group state that they have learned languages or improved their language competence at primary school, only 19% of the respondents in the EU15 group indicate the same.

VOLUME A Pondère Weighted

EUROBAROMETER 64.3

Terrain/Fieldwor

QASD5a Comment avez-vous appris ou amélioré votre (LANGUE CITEE EN D48b) ? (PLUSIEURS REPONSES POSSIBLES)

QASD5a How did you learn or improved your (LANGUAGE MENTIONED IN D48b)? (MULTIPLE ANSWERS POSSIBLE)

	TOTAL	At home (with family members, etc.)	At kindergarten, nursery, crèche	At primary school	At secondary school	In vocational education\ training up to age 18	In vocational education\ training from 18	In higher education (University, etc.)	On a language course in (OUR COUNTRY)	On a language course abroad	While studying something else abroad
UE25 EU25	13707	16%	4%	24%	59%	10%	7%	15%	13%	5%	3%
BE	737	22%	7%	28%	70%	5%	7%	17%	13%	4%	2%
CZ	623	13%	3%	48%	55%	4%	8%	9%	15%	4%	1%
DK	912	18%	1%	10%	79%	28%	25%	24%	13%	7%	7%
D-W	709	18%	4%	17%	69%	10%	6%	12%	17%	6%	3%
DE	1039	17%	4%	19%	69%	11%	6%	13%	16%	6%	3%
D-E	287	11%	2%	32%	67%	15%	6%	21%	13%	6%	2%
EE	890	9%	4%	65%	72%	16%	7%	18%	9%	1%	3%
EL	574	10%	2%	13%	55%	7%	2%	4%	65%	3%	2%
ES	452	21%	9%	43%	41%	12%	7%	9%	12%	3%	2%
FR	521	22%	5%	17%	65%	3%	8%	21%	8%	6%	3%
IE	342	11%	2%	25%	53%	5%	2%	5%	11%	5%	4%
IT	415	13%	2%	7%	28%	26%	7%	16%	10%	6%	3%
CY	389	8%	0%	20%	75%	8%	19%	18%	25%	4%	6%
LV	948	15%	6%	74%	58%	12%	4%	11%	7%	1%	1%
LT	932	12%	3%	18%	78%	5%	3%	13%	5%	1%	1%
LU	496	17%	10%	82%	62%	7%	7%	9%	5%	4%	5%
HU	421	17%	3%	34%	45%	6%	2%	12%	10%	1%	4%
MT	458	19%	10%	80%	73%	12%	7%	13%	5%	1%	4%
NL	936	14%	1%	19%	80%	13%	9%	18%	8%	1%	4%
AT	617	8%	3%	26%	67%	21%	11%	8%	13%	6%	2%
PL	574	13%	1%	49%	54%	7%	2%	20%	12%	3%	1%
PT	417	5%	1%	4%	64%	1%	4%	9%	3%	2%	1%
SI	939	13%	3%	72%	52%	8%	5%	17%	11%	3%	2%
SK	1018	12%	3%	41%	45%	4%	4%	8%	5%	2%	2%
FI	702	15%	3%	45%	69%	20%	25%	24%	14%	8%	9%
SE	953	16%	1%	2%	72%	8%	8%	20%	14%	11%	7%
UK	498	19%	4%	15%	56%	4%	5%	8%	11%	4%	2%
BG	595	9%	4%	40%	53%	15%	4%	15%	14%	1%	1%
HR	706	9%	1%	62%	64%	7%	3%	18%	9%	2%	1%
RO	471	10%	4%	34%	45%	34%	15%	18%	4%	1%	0%
TR	329	20%	2%	9%	29%	7%	3%	8%	8%	1%	1%

VOLUME A Pondéré Weighted

k : 11/2005

QASD5a Comment avez-vous appris ou amélioré votre (LANGUE CITEE EN D48b) ?
(PLUSIEURS REPONSES POSSIBLES)

	TOTAL	Whilst working abroad	On holidays abroad	By studying the language on my own	By taking part in voluntary activities abroad (work camp-humanitarian aid)	Using interactive CD-ROMs, DVDs or going on the Internet	None of these (SPONTANEOUS)	Others (SPONTANEOUS)	DK
UE25 EU25	13707	10%	20%	16%	1%	7%	3%	4%	1%
BE	737	9%	29%	24%	2%	10%	1%	8%	0%
CZ	623	8%	24%	24%	1%	9%	4%	4%	1%
DK	912	20%	51%	24%	4%	16%	1%	3%	0%
D-W	709	9%	18%	13%	1%	6%	2%	2%	0%
DE	1039	8%	18%	14%	1%	6%	2%	2%	0%
D-E	287	6%	19%	17%	0%	9%	2%	5%	-
EE	890	7%	11%	31%	1%	7%	2%	10%	1%
EL	574	9%	7%	10%	-	6%	-	2%	0%
ES	452	7%	6%	7%	0%	3%	4%	6%	1%
FR	521	11%	28%	17%	1%	10%	2%	4%	0%
IE	342	10%	20%	10%	1%	3%	2%	1%	3%
IT	415	8%	22%	13%	1%	4%	7%	4%	1%
CY	389	7%	5%	16%	2%	8%	1%	3%	0%
LV	948	2%	2%	17%	0%	3%	1%	11%	0%
LT	932	5%	5%	18%	2%	2%	1%	4%	0%
LU	496	8%	15%	10%	3%	4%	2%	3%	0%
HU	421	7%	5%	13%	1%	4%	6%	3%	2%
MT	458	5%	17%	12%	2%	6%	1%	14%	-
NL	936	15%	36%	18%	2%	7%	1%	6%	0%
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PT	417	16%	5%	6%	1%	3%	2%	4%	5%
SI	939	8%	25%	17%	1%	9%	1%	5%	-
SK	1018	9%	10%	12%	1%	5%	5%	2%	20%
FI	702	14%	36%	28%	1%	14%	3%	0%	0%
SE	953	15%	44%	27%	2%	23%	3%	5%	0%
UK	498	16%	23%	13%	2%	7%	1%	2%	1%
BG	595	7%	2%	11%	0%	4%	2%	1%	3%
HR	706	10%	8%	19%	1%	8%	2%	2%	1%
RO	471	5%	4%	15%	0%	13%	2%	2%	4%
TR	329	3%	0%	5%	1%	2%	5%	5%	4%