

Which languages should I learn?

Learning a language will improve your literacy and interpersonal skills, which will inevitably enhance your career prospects.

The top 4 most valued **Languages for International Business** (after English) are Chinese, Spanish, Arabic and French. Speakers of these languages will always be lucrative for local, national and multinational companies, allowing them to maintain links with existing clients and expand into new markets.

Business in Northern Ireland - Languages are important for Business and tourism in NI. In 2019, NI welcomed 5.3 million tourists who brought a billion pounds into the economy. Employers actively seek graduates with language skills. According to Invest NI, German speakers are highly sought-after, and graduates of German will have 100% employability success rate. Graduates of other Modern Languages such as French and Spanish have gone on to work for various firms based in N.I including PwC, Barclays, Ernst and Young, Baker McKenzie and many others.

Tourism/Hospitality - A flourishing tourism industry is vital for our economy here on the island of Ireland. In 2014, Fáilte Ireland invested over €10m in the 'Wild Atlantic Way' project, which incorporates many Gaeltacht areas along the Northwest coast of Ireland. This has generated many jobs for Irish-speakers across the hospitality, retail and business sectors in N.I.

Community Languages - In recent years, there has been increased demand for interpreters in N.I. to address the needs of people coming from other countries. In N. Ireland, the main newcomer languages include: **Polish, Lithuanian, Portuguese and Chinese.**

Languages for Employability



NICILT | Moving forward with Languages

What skills can I acquire from language learning?

Proficiency in another languages equips us with linguistic skills and a wide range of transferable skills including:

- Communication skills
- Intercultural awareness
- Adaptability
- Leadership
- Self Awareness
- Tolerance
- Teamwork

Thanks to their strong transferable skillset, linguists can work in a variety of fields including Journalism, Media, Hospitality, Education, Law and Politics.

Find out more about our services



Established in 1995 at Queen's University, NICILT is funded by the Department of Education to support the teaching and learning of Modern Languages in Northern Ireland's Schools.

✉ nicilt@qub.ac.uk ☎ 02890975954

🌐 www.qub.ac.uk/schools/nicilt

School of Social Sciences, Education & Social Work

Queen's University Belfast
8 College Green, Belfast, BT7 1LN



NORTHERN IRELAND
CENTRE FOR INFORMATION
ON LANGUAGE TEACHING
AND RESEARCH



French

French is truly a global language. La Francophonie (the French-speaking world) stretches across 5 continents including Europe, Africa, Asia and North & South America. Today, there are approximately 80 million native speakers of French, as well as 190 million secondary speakers.

French is the sixth most widely spoken language in the world. As well as being a procedural language for the European Union, French is the only language used for deliberations at the Court of Justice for the EU, and one of the recognized working languages of the United Nations and NATO.

Spanish

The British Council's "Languages for the Future" report (2017), identified Spanish as the most important language to learn in the UK for business, diplomacy, tourism, and international research.

With almost half a billion speakers worldwide, Spanish the 3rd most widely spoken language in the world and is spoken in 21 countries, 18 of which are in Central and South America. In the U.S, there are around 53 million people speak Spanish, and many more learn it as a second language.



Jobs for Linguists

Studying a language allows young people to develop a strong set of transferable skills that will make them attractive to employers across a wide range of fields including:

- Business & Marketing
- Education
- Translation & Interpretation
- Media & Journalism
- Tourism
- Education
- Culture & the Arts

Knowledge of a second language is highly valued in today's global workplace. According to the QS Global Employer Survey Report (December 2016) 6 out of 10 employers give extra credit for an international student experience and more than 80% said that they actively sought graduates who had studied or worked abroad. As such, those with a language qualification stand out on the job market and have access to a wider range of professional opportunities.

German

Over 100 million people speak German on a daily basis. There are 95 million native speakers of German across the world. German is spoken in Germany, Austria, Liechtenstein, Switzerland, Luxembourg, Italy, Belgium, Russia, and even in the U.S.A.

German is an important language for UK businesses and is one of the most sought after languages by UK employers. Boasting the largest economy in the EU, Germany is a key trading partner for the UK. Germany is also the 2nd most important market for inward tourism to the UK, and the 3rd most important to Ireland.

Irish

Irish is one of the oldest recorded written languages in the world, dating back to the 5th century and is an important part of Ireland's cultural heritage. According to the latest census figures, around 179,000 people in N.I. claim some knowledge of Irish. In the Republic of Ireland, approximately 1.77 million people speak Irish.

The Irish language is also becoming increasingly popular further afield. Irish is an official language of the European Union, and 2.3 million people are currently learning Irish on Duolingo placing it among the 10 most popular languages on the app.

