



**HERITAGE LANGUAGE CLASSES
HERKUNFTSSPRACHENUNTERRICHT (HSU)**

ENGLISH/ENGLISCH

What are heritage language classes?

Heritage language classes are offered in Hamburg by the Behörde für Schule und Berufsbildung (Ministry of General and Vocational Education), generally speaking, for students who grow up speaking two or more languages. They are taught on the basis of framework curricula in many elementary and local comprehensive schools (Stadtteilschulen) schools, as well as grammar schools (Gymnasien).

Why is it important that children and young people learn their heritage languages at a German school?

Almost 40% of Hamburg's school population grow up in a bilingual or multi-lingual environment, rather than a monolingual German one. Heritage language classes promote, consolidate and expand the students' linguistic and cultural potential as well as their knowledge. Similar to how students learn German as an educational language at school, students in heritage language classes acquire educational language skills that go beyond the everyday language(s) spoken at home. Students also acquire strategies and knowledge that facilitate learning other languages, including German. Their self-confidence with regard to their bilingualism or multilingualism is strengthened.

What role do heritage language classes play in school?

Performance in heritage language classes is assessed on the basis of the framework curricula and the grade is included in the student's report card. This allows students to apply the knowledge and skills they have acquired in heritage language classes to their school career and, under certain conditions, even with the possibility of obtaining their university entrance qualification (in Germany: the "Abitur").

How are heritage language classes organised at school? In which languages are heritage language classes offered?



Under the direct responsibility of the Ministry of Education, the following types of classes are offered at Hamburg's primary and local comprehensive schools (Stadtteilschulen), as well as grammar schools (Gymnasien) (see overview on page 4):

Heritage language classes as an additional class (Type A)

Heritage language classes can be attended at primary schools, local comprehensive schools and grammar schools as an additional class, from pre-school class up to grades 12 or 13. Classes are often held in the afternoon and usually last three hours per week. Participation is voluntary for students, but mandatory for at least one school year after registration. The teacher responsible for the heritage language class evaluates each student's performance on the basis of the framework curricula. Grade is included in the student's report card.

Languages taught like this are: Albanian, Arabic, Bosnian, Chinese, Farsi, Italian, Polish, Portuguese, Russian and Turkish (as of school year 2020/21).



Heritage language classes as an additional foreign language (2nd or 3rd foreign language, Type B)

Heritage language classes can be chosen by the students as an elective subject at local comprehensive schools and grammar schools. The amount of weekly lessons taught corresponds to that of other foreign languages offered. Language classes are graded. Often, the lessons take place as joint classes for students from several schools and are usually compulsory until 10th grade. Heritage language classes are also taught at the upper secondary level (Studienstufe) and can be chosen as a subject for the "Abitur" exams.

Languages taught like this are: Arabic, Chinese, Farsi, Italian, Polish, Portuguese, Russian and Turkish (as of school year 2020/21).



Heritage language classes as a major subject (Kernfach) at the upper secondary level (Studienstufe; Type D) (Type D)

In addition to German and mathematics, one language must be taken as a major subject at the upper secondary level. The major subject may also be one of the heritage languages listed below. However, it is a prerequisite that the language is mastered at least at level B1, i.e. that it has been learned at school at the latest from year 8 or 9 onwards or has been demonstrably acquired outside of school. Classes are taught in the afternoon as joint classes for students of all schools in Hamburg in the afternoon.

Languages that can be taken as a major subject include Arabic, Chinese, Farsi, Italian, Polish, Portuguese, Russian and Turkish (as of school year 2020/21).

When and where do heritage language classes take place?

The school provides information on whether and what type of heritage language classes are available. If there are no native language classes taught in their own school, students can attend a centrally organised joint class, provided the chosen language is available. Information about internal and joint native language classes as well as the application forms, are available at the schools or on the website of the departmental unit *Steigerung der Bildungschancen (Increasing educational opportunities)*. There is also an up-to-date overview of all schools that offer heritage language classes at: <https://www.hamburg.de/steigerung-der-bildungschancen/14243862>

More information – including which schools offer heritage language classes – can be found here:



Who teaches heritage language classes?

Heritage language classes, under the responsibility of the Behörde für Schule und Berufsbildung (Ministry of General and Vocational Education), are taught by school-based teachers. In general, these teachers are native speakers. In addition to their teaching activities, heritage language teachers are in charge of language and cultural mediation. Among other things, they advise parents or guardians on how they can support their children in learning at home and answer questions about school careers and career orientation.

Can additional heritage language classes be set up?

A new heritage language class can be set up via the school's principal at the request of parents if there is a need and at least 15 students register for a school year on a binding basis. In addition, a qualified teacher and appropriate resources must be available.

How can you enroll in heritage language classes?

Registration is required for participation, which then necessitates regular attendance. The heritage language classes will start after the summer holidays. Registration for the following school year is required before the summer holidays. Information about internal and joint classes, as well as the application forms, are available at the schools or on the website *Steigerung der Bildungschancen (Increasing educational opportunities)* (<https://www.hamburg.de/steigerung-der-bildungschancen/14243862>).

Are there any other heritage language classes at Hamburg schools?

At Hamburg schools, the following classes are offered in addition to the heritage language classes that fall under the direct responsibility of the Hamburg's Ministry of Education:

Heritage language classes by verikom

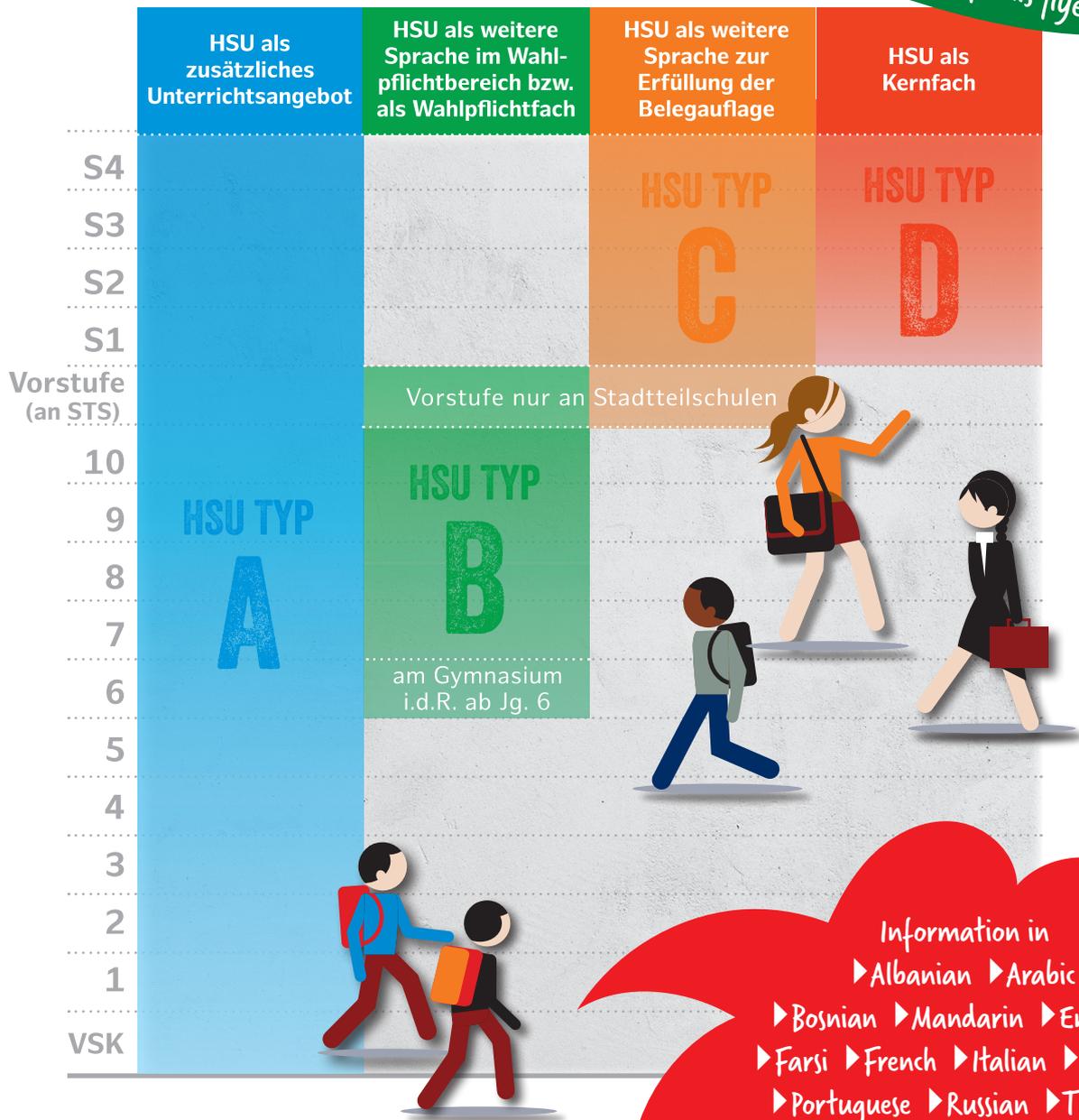
Consular classes!

The association verikom - Verbund für interkulturelle Kommunikation und Bildung e.V. (Association for Intercultural Communication and Education) offers joint classes for some of the less common heritage languages. These lessons are based on framework curricula but do not appear as a grade in the student's report card. Therefore, contrary to the heritage language classes, under the responsibility of the Ministry of Education, good performance in a heritage language programme cannot compensate for another (bad) grade in the report card. *Languages currently offered include Albanian, Aramaic, Dari, Farsi, Pashto, Vietnamese, and Twi (as of the 2020/21 school year). The establishment of additional classes is possible on request.*

Some consulates organise additional language complementary classes (so-called "Konsulatsunterricht"). They take place outside of regular class time. The teachers are hired from the respective country and work according to the curricula from the country of origin. The class will not be graded in a way that is relevant to the report card, but will be included as a remark. *Languages currently offered include Greek, Croatian, Portuguese, Serbian, Spanish, and Turkish (as of the 2020/21 school year).*



Types of heritage language classes in Hamburg schools
(see also page 2 of this flyer)



Information in

- ▶ Albanian ▶ Arabic
- ▶ Bosnian ▶ Mandarin ▶ English
- ▶ Farsi ▶ French ▶ Italian ▶ Polish
- ▶ Portuguese ▶ Russian ▶ Turkish

can be found online at:

<https://www.hamburg.de/steigerung-der-bildungschancen/>



Further information

Freie und Hansestadt Hamburg
Behörde für Schule und Berufsbildung
Amt für Bildung – Abteilung B3:
Referat: Steigerung der Bildungschancen

Winterhuder Weg 29, 22085 Hamburg
E-Mail: steigerung-der-bildungschancen@bsb.hamburg.de
Web: <https://www.hamburg.de/steigerung-der-bildungschancen/>