



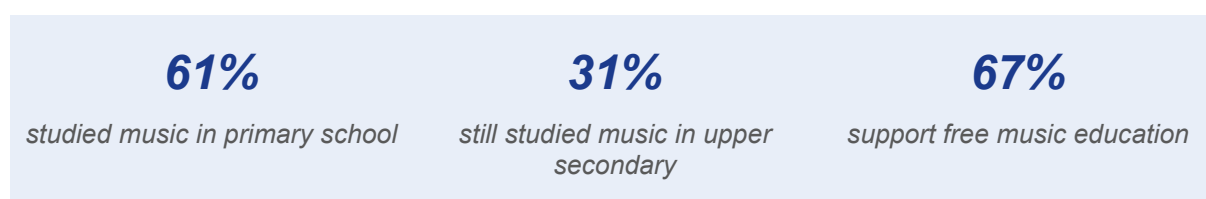
OPEN MUSIC EUROPE FACTSHEET

Music Education and Information

Key findings from D3.2 — Report on Music, Society and Citizenship in Europe

For more music data, see <https://www.openmuse.eu/cultural-access-and-participation/>

What's the state of music education in Europe, and how do Europeans discover new music? These were some of the questions explored by the European Commission-funded project OpenMusE (Open Music Europe), which brought together music researchers and sector stakeholders from 11 EU countries and Ukraine. This factsheet is based on our population-representative survey of 4,985 respondents in France, Germany, Italy, Poland, and Spain.



Music education tapers off after primary school

Most Europeans surveyed encounter music at school, but **formal music education falls away sharply** as students get older. The chart below shows the share of respondents who studied music at each stage of school, pooled across all five countries.



Share of respondents who studied music at each school stage (M50), pooled across DE, ES, FR, IT, PL. Source: OpenMusE survey, weighted, n≈2,500.

Provision varies widely by country: in primary school, participation ranges from 48% in France to 79% in Poland. By upper secondary, it falls everywhere — to as low as 19% in Poland and 38% in Germany at the top. Once school ends, fewer than three in ten respondents ever study music again: 11% as a main subject and 17% as a minor subject in tertiary or vocational education.

What gets taught: among those who received music education at any school stage, the most common subjects are basic music theory (68%) and Western classical music (41%). However, a sizable minority are also exposed to traditional folk music from their own country and/or pop, rock, etc. (37% each). Classwork on jazz or folk music from other countries is significantly less common (22% each). However, **curricula are diversifying:** 57% of 16–29-year-olds who studied music in school report having studied pop, rock, or other non-classical styles — compared with just 11% of those aged 70 and over.

Strong, stable support for free music education

The public mandate for music education is **overwhelming stable** across countries, age ranges, genders, and education levels. Support for free, publicly guaranteed music education in all schools ranges from 64% (Poland) to 69% (Italy), with opposition nowhere above 6%.



Share of respondents supporting free, publicly guaranteed music education, by country (M63_16). Source: OpenMusE survey, weighted.

Indeed, support for universal music education is one of the rare policy points on which Europeans of all political stripes can agree: support is strongest among those who identify with the political left (72%), but reaches a clear majority on the right as well (63%).

Discovering new music: a generational divide

Discovering new music is important or very important to 48% of respondents overall, rising to 58% in Spain and falling to 41% in Germany. **Age is a stronger predictor than nationality:** more than half of those under 40 value music discovery, versus just 16% of those 70 and older.

Radio is the most important discovery channel overall (73%), just ahead of streaming (64%) — but the two swap places by generation. **Streaming dominates among the young:** it is important to 81% of 16–29-year-olds, easing to 73–74% through the thirties and forties before dropping to 46% at 60–69. **Radio climbs with age,** peaking at 83% among 50–59-year-olds and 79% among 40–49-year-olds.

Social media follows the same generational gradient — important to 81% of 16–29-year-olds but 36% of those 70+ — as do AI-assisted recommendation tools, used by 39% of 16–29-year-olds for discovery, compared with just 8% of those 70 and above.

Another music discovery trend that is partly age-dependent is **cross-national listening:** around 70% of those below 60 years old sometimes listen to music with lyrics in a European language other than their own, but this drops to 65% among 60–69-year-olds and 52% among those 70 and up. This could connect to the fact that 47% of streaming users agree that their platforms make it **easier to discover music from other European countries** (compared to only 11% who disagree). Such isolated data points hardly refute well-founded warnings against streaming platforms' concentration of market power and the attendant risks — but they do somewhat mitigate the fear that streaming will singlehandedly homogenise Europeans' musical tastes.

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Data and documentation: <https://github.com/openmusiceurope/>

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