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GERMAN

The German language in education in South Tyrol (Italy)
| 2nd Edition |

| Regional dossiers series |



This document was published by the Mercator European Research Centre on Multilingualism and Language Learning with financial support from the Fryske Akademy and the Province of Fryslân.

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ISSN: 1570 – 1239
2nd edition

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Foreword

background Regional and minority languages are languages that differ from the official state language. The Mercator Research Centre on Multilingualism and Language Learning uses the definition for these languages defined by the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (ECRML):

“Regional and minority languages are languages traditionally used within a given territory of a state by nationals of that state who form a group numerically smaller than the rest of the state’s population; they are different from the official language(s) of that state, and they include neither dialects of the official language(s) of the state nor the languages of migrants”. The Mercator Research Centre aims at the acquisition, application and circulation of knowledge about these regional and minority languages in education. An important means to achieve this goal is the Regional Dossiers series: documents that provide the most essential features of the education system of regions with a lesser used regional or minority language.

aim The aim of the Regional Dossiers Series is to provide a concise description of European minority languages in education. Aspects that are addressed include features of the education system, recent educational policies, main actors, legal arrangements and support structures, as well as quantitative aspects such as the number of schools, teachers, pupils, and financial investments. Because of this fixed structure the dossiers in the series are easy to compare.

target group The dossiers serve several purposes and are relevant for policymakers, researchers, teachers, students and journalists who wish to explore developments in minority language schooling in Europe. They can also serve as a first orientation towards further research, or function as a source of ideas for improving educational provisions in their own region.

link with Eurydice The format of the Regional Dossiers follows the format of Eurydice - the information network on education in Europe - in order

to link the regional descriptions with those of national education systems. Eurydice provides information on the administration and structure of national education systems in the member states of the European Union.

contents

Every Regional Dossier begins with an introduction about the region concerned, followed by six sections that each deals with a specific level of the education system (e.g. primary education). Sections eight and nine cover the main lines of research into education of the concerned minority language, the prospects for the minority language in general and for education in particular. The tenth section gives a summary of statistics. Lists of regulations, publications and useful addresses concerning the minority language, are given at the end of the dossier.

1 Introduction

language

The German language in South Tyrol originates from the settling of the area south of the Alps by Germanic tribes in the 6th century. After the eventful period of the Migration the German language stabilises under the rule of the bishops of Trento and Brixen and later under the counts of Tyrol. In 1363 the last Countess of Tyrol, Margarethe Maultasch, transfers the province to Rudolph IV of Habsburg, Duke of Austria. From that moment, German is the predominant language in the province until the end of World War I. With the Peace Treaty of Saint-Germain, the southern part of the Austrian crown land of Tyrol becomes part of Italy. German, though, remains widely used in everyday life. In 1922, shortly after the fascist Benito Mussolini takes power, South Tyrol sees the beginning of a phase of forced Italianisation. Tens of thousands of Italians are encouraged to immigrate to South Tyrol, the use of the German language is forbidden, everything German is banished from public life, German-speaking officials and teachers are dismissed or compulsorily transferred, German schools are closed. To the Italianisation of public schools, South Tyrolean Germans respond by calling for private schools and home education. This marks the birth of the 'catacomb schools', the illegal teaching in German. On 5 September 1946, the Italian Prime Minister Alcide De Gasperi and the Austrian Foreign Minister Karl Gruber sign the Paris Treaty, which secures special provisions for South Tyrol as regards the development of language, economy and culture. The German schools are re-established, the German speaking population is granted equal use of German and Italian in public offices and official documents as well as in place names. In 1961, as the Paris Treaty has yet to be implemented 15 years following its signing, Austria appeals to the UN. At the same time ethnic tensions in South Tyrol are escalating. After lengthy negotiations between Rome, South Tyrol and Vienna, the Second Autonomy Statute comes into force in 1972 and secures equal rights and protection for all language groups in the land. The legal prerequisites to safeguard the linguistic identity of the German speaking population in South Tyrol are established.



Figure 1: The location of the autonomous province South Tyrol (Source: Wikimedia Commons: The Free Media Repository. By TUBS – Own work, 2011)

population

Today, South Tyrol has a population of approximately 523,000. According to the last census in 2011, 69,4% of the population consider themselves German speakers, 26% Italian speakers and 4,5% Ladin [Rhaeto-Romanic] speakers.

The German-speaking population preponderates in all the cities and small towns of South Tyrol with the exception of the Ladin valleys where the majority is Ladin-speaking and the capital Bozen/Bolzano, as well as Leifers/Laives, Branzoll/Bronzolo, Salurn/Salorno and Pfatten/Vadena, where the majority is Italian speaking.

language status On 10 September 1919, the Tyrol south of the Brenner Pass is ceded to Italy in the Treaty of Saint-Germain. The Peace Treaty does not include any injunctions for the protection of the German minority. However, on 1 December 1919, King Victor Emanuel guarantees 'careful preservation of local institutions and self-governance' for the new provinces. Nonetheless, pre-fascist Italy grants no autonomous rights to the South Tyroleans. On 28 October 1922, Benito Mussolini's fascists begin their march on Rome. The fascists emblazon the annihilation of the German minority on their banners from the very start. From November 1922 onwards, the fascist prefects forbids the teaching of German in schools, making it punishable by law. Teachers who are caught teaching German are imprisoned and afterwards banished to convict islands or to remote areas of southern Italy. All German teachers are relieved of their duties or are moved to the Italian provinces; all German officials are fired, replaced by a policy of Italians only. In 1923, all place names are Italianised and the name Tyrol is forbidden. All German economic associations (workers' and farmers' unions) and all German clubs and societies (alpine, gymnastic, etc.) are dissolved and their property confiscated. All public announcements, signposts, signs and shop names have to be in Italian. In 1923, the Italian school system is reorganised according to the *Legge Gentile*. In 1925, Italian is decreed to be the only official language. Starting from 1925, teaching in German is provided in 'catacomb schools', illegal schools with a systematic and thorough organisation. According to Canon Michael Gamper, the leader of the South Tyrol catacomb schools, 'Every house, every cottage must become a school, every room must be a school room where children take instruction in their mother tongue'. The catacomb schools prepare the way for the reconstruction of South Tyrol schools after the Second World War and for a teaching staff with many assistants. After the Berlin Agreement of 23 June 1939 between Hitler and Mussolini concerning the resettlement of the South Tyrol Germans, German education undergoes an unintended revival. Official German language courses for children whose parents opted to immigrate to Germany are at the centre of this

revival. During the time of the German occupation, from 1943 to 1945, power relationships are reversed and German language courses develop into the *Deutsche Schule Südtirol* (South Tyrol German School).

In 1946 on the fringe of the Paris Peace Conference, the Gruber-Degasperi or Paris Agreement is signed. This Agreement forms an integral part of the peace treaty signed by the Allies with Italy and at the same time officially becomes an international matter. The agreement guarantees the German-speaking inhabitants of the new province of Bozen/Bolzano 'full equality of rights in relation to Italian-speaking inhabitants' within the framework of special measures to be taken for the protection of ethnic characteristics and the cultural and economic development of the German language group'. The 'citizens of German tongue' are granted not only elementary and intermediate school instruction in German but also 'equal use of German and Italian in public offices and official documents as well as in place names'. As the implementation of these rights proves to be rather problematical, in the late 1950s, and at the beginning of the 1960s, tensions arise and escalate. There are many bombing attacks on fascist monuments, police stations and the roads network. The most famous of these takes place on 11 June 1961 in what is dubbed 'the night of fire'. Over 40 transmission towers are blown up. These attacks are not attempts on people's lives but rather a means to acquire the undivided attention of Europe insofar as the attacks are given broad national and international coverage by the media. During those years, more than 100 people are arrested with many sentenced to long terms of imprisonment. Some are also tortured and die in prison. The first Autonomy Statute of 1948 held to the principle that Italian is the official language in the Trentino-South Tyrol region. The very opposite principle, namely that of equal rights as upheld by the Paris Treaty, is finally expressed in the new Autonomy Statute of 20 January 1972: 'In the region, the German language is given parity with the Italian language which is the official language of the State' (Art. 99). Thus, in South Tyrol, German is granted an official status equal to that of the official State language.

Since then the three language groups in South Tyrol, German speakers, Italian speakers and Ladin speakers, co-exist on the basis of a complex and special legal system that combines the rotation of offices, equal numbers as regards to committee membership and the proportional representation of all language groups.

**status of
language
education**

After the Second World War, German primary education in South Tyrol had to be rebuilt from the ground up. According to Decree No. 555 of 1947, the Italian State regulates the organisation of the elementary schools for the German speaking minority. However, it takes almost three decades before all teaching posts can be filled with trained teachers. The *Einheitsmittelschule* (comprehensive intermediate school) is introduced in 1962 and applied universally throughout Italy. With the new Autonomy Statute of 20 January 1972, the authorities in Rome place responsibility for the education of all three of the ethnic groups in South Tyrol in the hands of the Autonomous Province of Bozen/Bolzano. Each language group has its own educational system which provides instruction in the appropriate native language and the learning of the respective other language as a second language. Primary jurisdiction is granted for kindergartens, public assistance for schools, school construction and vocational education or training. South Tyrol obtains secondary jurisdiction for teaching in both primary and secondary schools. Matters such as employment rights and the payment of teachers remain in the hands of the State. By this means, South Tyrolean schools lose, at least partly, their dependence on Italian school legislation and regulation. Additionally, provincial school boards are established in 1975. Provincial law no. 48/1983 reforms and establishes intermediate-school curricula and the subjects and hours taught. Several subjects like geography or history are adapted to suit the situation in South Tyrol.

Provincial law no. 64/1988 introduces a South Tyrol primary school curriculum that results in new educational forms based on reform-minded educational principles. The new primary school regulations (Provincial law no. 25/1993) attempts to fulfil these educational principles by changing the way education is

organised. On 1 January 1996, the jurisdiction of State officials on the areas of employment rights and teacher salaries are transferred to the Autonomous Province. Agreement with the Ministry of Education is no longer necessary with respect to the development of schools and teaching positions. Provincial laws can now alter the subjects and hours taught, as well as the curricula and exams, in order to suit individual language groups and introduce additional subjects.

The autonomy for schools is introduced in 2000 (Provincial law no.12/2000), and the guidelines for pre-primary education (2008), primary education (2009) and secondary education (2010) are developed as accompanying measures in the following years. The new legal framework allows schools to respond to the sometimes quite heterogeneous linguistic situation more efficiently. Moreover, competence orientation has become the main focus in language teaching.

The schools system in Italy provides for compulsory education from the age of 6 to 16 and the right to education up to the age of 18. This means that between the age of 16 and 18, pupils have to attend either school or vocational training allowing everybody to obtain the upper secondary leaving certificate or a vocational qualification. Education is divided into five years of elementary school, three years of lower secondary school, and an upper secondary level. At upper secondary level, pupils are able to choose between upper secondary schools which provide general education (*Gymnasium/liceo*), upper secondary schools which provide technical education (*Fachoberschule/istituto tecnico*) and vocational schools. Vocational schools with the dual system have been common in South Tyrol for the last few decades, whereas they have not been implemented in the rest of Italy yet.

The most relevant education reform in Italy of the past years, has been the laws on school autonomy. With Provincial law No. 12 of 2000, school autonomy has been implemented in South Tyrol. 16 years later, the autonomous schools are increasingly using their leeway as far as the curriculum is concerned. There have been progressive educational approaches as well as a

variety of initiatives in language teaching (e.g. more hours for language teaching; CLIL – Content and Language Integrated Learning). In the same Provincial law of 2000 the main features of the evaluation system have been outlined. Since then external and internal evaluation have constantly been evolving.

**private and
public**

Private schools are in the minority in South Tyrol. They offer a very specific contribution to education. Legislative Decree no. 297 of 16 April 1994, Art.355, grants legal recognition to private schools which comply with state requirements for subjects and hours taught, teachers' and headmasters' qualifications and school structure. In this way, private schools are granted the same rights as public institutions with state-validated credentials and examinations. The Church and the religious orders have taken advantage of the opportunities open to them under constitutional law and have set up six schools with German as the language of instruction. These private schools include lower secondary and upper secondary schools. Since these private schools have taken on the curricula of public schools, language instruction and the teaching of other subjects in private schools do not differ from those in the State lower secondary and upper secondary schools.

Additionally, there are two legally recognised Waldorf Schools, based on the educational philosophy of Rudolf Steiner. Its pedagogy emphasizes the role of imagination in learning, striving to integrate holistically the intellectual, practical, and artistic development of pupils. One of these schools provides instruction for years one to eight, the second one also for year nine and ten. Moreover, there is one legally recognised Montessori primary school. The Montessori Method of education, developed by Dr. Maria Montessori, is a child-centred educational approach based on scientific observations of children

**bilingual
education forms**

For the German-speaking population of South Tyrol, education at kindergarten, primary, secondary and vocational schools is given in German. Italian, the second language taught from the first year of primary school, and one foreign language from the 4th year onwards at primary level, are both taught in all schools.

Only higher vocational training and the university offer bi- and trilingual educational curricula. The School of Higher Education for Health Professions Claudiana is bilingual. Some of the courses are taught in German, others in Italian. At the Free University of Bozen-Bolzano courses are offered in German, Italian, English and some also in Ladin.

The new millennium brings new developments into language education in South Tyrol. The *Sprachenkonzept* (language concept) of the year 2003 includes the new approach of integrated language teaching and the concept of functional multilingualism. The curricula for all school levels, which are revised in 2009-2010, contain intercultural learning, new and innovative forms of language learning, bi- and multilingualism as important aims of teaching. Measures are implemented that secure and improve the quality of language teaching with the help of new teaching materials, in-service courses and the development of a plurilingual curriculum. Additionally, CLIL methodology is undergoing a trial phase in upper secondary education, and the project *Zweitsprachjahr/Un anno in L2* (a year in the second language) where upper secondary pupils can spend a school year in a school of the other language group is launched.

administration

The Autonomy Statute for South Tyrol of 1972 gives the province various options for influencing the development of its school. The Province of Bozen/Bolzano possesses primary legislative powers in the areas of school welfare and construction, all matters relating to kindergarten, as well as vocational training and education. South Tyrol regulates these areas on its own, independent of State laws. The province has secondary legislative powers in the area of education at primary and secondary school levels. The province can regulate these areas with its own laws but they must comply with the principles laid down by the State. This means that it is possible to adapt State norms to local needs (e.g. curricula, subjects and hours taught and school calendars). South Tyrolean groups of experts plan curricula and develop them for each level of education.

The Autonomy Statute of 1972 turns all South Tyrol schools into public provincial schools that remain within the State school

system because they comply with State guidelines. This guarantees that education is uniform and that all diplomas are valid within Italian national territory. Each ethnic group in South Tyrol has a political representative in the provincial government for matters relating to schools and since 1975 each group has had its own administrative office led by a *Schulamtsleiter* (head of the school board/local education authority). The provincial government appoints them in collaboration with the Ministry of Education. The appointments are for five years and can be extended. The German School Board is responsible for the administration of kindergartens and primary and secondary schools. With Provincial law No.15/2010 (art. 14) the School Board is renamed Department of Education and is also responsible for vocational schools and musical schools where the language of instruction is German.

Several different authorities hire school staff because of the special legal situation of the schools in South Tyrol. Teachers, administrators and inspectors of public primary and secondary schools are State officials but the province is in charge of personnel administration. Consequently, the provincial administration can use its own laws and its own collective wage agreement to adapt employment rights and teacher salaries to its particular requirements. The provincial administration allocates school administration personnel, technical personnel, temporary staff and assistants for students with disabilities to individual schools. Teaching and administrative personnel and the inspector of the kindergartens and vocational schools are appointed by the province which has primary jurisdiction in this area.

inspection

The inspectors of primary and secondary schools are State officials but are supervised by the province and, according to Provincial law no. 10, Art. 8, of 23 April 1992, they belong to the staff of the head of the School board (now called Department of Education). The German Department of Education is assigned two inspectors for primary schools, three for secondary schools, one second-language instruction and one for Catholic religious education. There is also one inspector for kindergartens. Due to the province's primary jurisdiction in the area of kindergartens,

kindergarten inspectors have administrative and directive tasks alongside those that are educational and didactic.

The professional role of inspectors has undergone a substantial change with the introduction of school autonomy. The traditional task of inspecting performed as a supervisory duty has become the exception. It is carried out if there are reasonable grounds to believe that the quality of a teacher's didactic performance does not comply with elementary requirements. It is the school head who requests the inspection. This procedure, however, has become quite rare. Over the past years the main focus of the inspectors' work has shifted to dealing with general issues regarding education and quality management. Nowadays inspectors mainly co-ordinate, guide and deal with school development. One of the main tasks for example is adapting national education laws to the local requirements of the Autonomous Province of Bozen/Bolzano, another example is setting the targets with school heads and assessing their performance.

The inspectors work closely with the evaluation office which was introduced in 2000 with Provincial law No. 12. The evaluation office deals with external evaluation, performs school visits and draws up relevant reports. Moreover, it is responsible for carrying out standardised student assessments.

**support
structures**

The main support organisation for the German language group is the Innovation and Consultancy Service. It is one of the sub-departments of the Department of Education and is responsible for educational material, for support and advice as well as the professional development of teachers. It collects, develops, elaborates and distributes pedagogical materials, stimulates educational innovation, carries out educational research and supports and advises schools and individual teachers. Additionally, the Department of Education handles the integration of disabled students and school improvement activities. The teachers in the German schools are organised into two occupational associations through which they participate actively in the development of South Tyrolean schools. The *Katholische Südtiroler Lehrerbund* (Catholic South Tyrolean Teachers' Association) is

the professional organisation for the primary school teachers of the German and Ladin schools. Among its primary tasks are the development and representation of the political interests of the profession. The *Arbeitskreis Südtiroler Mittelschullehrer* (Working Group of South Tyrolean Intermediate school Teachers) sees itself as a grassroots, democratic professional association that pools the concerns and opinions of the teaching staff so that these can become an impetus for change in school politics and development. Within the context of an ever-changing school and social situation, it attempts to represent the professional interests of the teachers across party and union lines.

In addition there is the South Tyrol Cultural Institute which organises cultural events for students, teachers and other interested adults, particularly on linguistic and literary matters.

2 Pre-school education

target group South Tyrol's kindergartens are educational institutions for children from the age of 2½ to 6. Attendance is voluntary. Parents pay a monthly fee for running costs.

structure There are eight German language kindergarten headships which administer 266 kindergartens. The local communities are in charge of maintaining the buildings and structures, while the provincial administration is responsible for personnel. The kindergartens are under the supervision of the Department of Education, one inspector is appointed. The curriculum is provided by the Department of Education and cares for emotional, cognitive and social competences.

legislation The Autonomy Statute grants the Province of Bozen/Bolzano primary legislative jurisdiction over the kindergartens. Provincial law No. 5/2008 contains the general educational objectives and the organisation of the kindergartens. The provincial guidelines for pre-primary education are approved by Decision of the Provincial Government No. 3990 in 2008 and regard child development and education for the relevant age group.

language use The Autonomy Statute states that instruction in kindergartens for the German language group must take place in German and that teachers must be native speakers of German.

statistics

	kindergarten headships	kindergarten	groups	children	kindergarten teachers and assistants
public	8	266	567	12,350	1,330
private (legally recognised)		3		53	9

Table 1: Number of kindergartens, children and kindergarten teachers and assistants involved in pre-primary education in the kindergarten year 2016/17 (Source: Department of Education for the German language group, 2016).

3 Primary Education

- target group** As is the case throughout Italy, compulsory education in South Tyrol begins at the age of six. Primary education lasts five years and is free of charge. Parents pay a fee if the children make use of the refectory.
- structure** The five classes of primary education are structured depending on age classes. They are attended by pupils from 6 to 11 years. Most of the primary schools are part of a *Schulsprengel* (combined headship of primary and lower secondary schools). Curricula provide the basic competencies, mathematics and science. Italian is taught as second language, in class 4 pupils start with English as their first foreign language. In the area of compulsory education the State provides the framework laws. However, the curriculum is adapted to the special situation in South Tyrol and, consequently, the Department of Education provides its own curriculum for German-speaking primary schools.
- legislation** The general framework laws are provided by the State (Law no. 53, dated 28 March 2003 and Legislative decree no. 59, dated 19 February 2004). The Province has secondary legislative powers and can therefore adapt laws to the special situation in South Tyrol. As the schools themselves have autonomy, each school works out a three-year education plan. They are binding for the school community and are the basis for the target agreement between school heads and the Department of Education.
- language use** In primary schools for the German language group all subjects are taught in German by German native speakers. German as a subject is generally studied for five hours per week. Italian as second language starts in class 1 with one hour per week. The teaching hours increase to four hours in class 2 and 3 and five hours in class 4 and 5. English is taught as the first foreign language in class 4 and 5 for two hours per week.

**teaching
materials**

The right to be taught by native speakers of their own language, guaranteed to students by the Autonomy Statute, implies that schools have an obligation to provide German textbooks as well as German instruction. Textbooks from Austria, Germany and Switzerland offer teachers a broad selection, but because of the differences in the curriculum, these texts do not correspond entirely to the needs of South Tyrol's students in many subject areas. For some subjects it is impossible to make use of textbooks from other countries. This is for example true for Italian as a second language. Historical, geographic, social and economic aspects of South Tyrol have to be given adequate coverage, too. Some educational material is generated by the Department of Education in its Innovation and Consultancy Service and in collaboration with the teachers' associations. Some materials are bought from other German-speaking countries and adapted to South Tyrolean conditions. The choice of textbooks is up to the teaching staff of the individual schools.

18

statistics

As most primary school headships are combined with lower secondary schools (intermediate schools), in what is known as *Schulsprengel* you find the statistics in the chapter about secondary education.

4 Secondary education

target group In Italy, secondary education is compulsory and split into two levels. The *scuola secondaria di primo grado* (lower secondary education) also called *scuola media* (intermediate school) comprises three classes for pupils from age 11 to 14. The *scuola secondaria di secondo grado* (upper secondary school) is for pupils from 14 to 19 and consists of five classes.

structure Lower secondary school comprises three years (age group 11 to 14) and is a comprehensive school that gives all children in the same age group a general education, free of charge. Intermediate school has the task of educating young people according to the principles of the constitution, to prepare them for life and to offer assistance in orientation towards a choice of profession or further study. A leaving certificate is obtained after passing the State examination. This provides access to upper secondary school and vocational education.

The upper secondary level consists of five-year courses leading to the *Esame di Stato* (State examination). This leaving certificate grants access to university. Upper secondary schools are subdivided into general secondary schools with a specific focus (e.g. languages) and technical schools. This school level prepares students for university studies and/or a profession as well as a responsible and successful life in society. It conveys sound general knowledge and, according to the school type chosen, linguistic, artistic, technical and pedagogical skills.

legislation Comprehensive intermediate schools are introduced throughout Italy in 1962. The curricula prescribed by the State contain very few adaptations to the specific situation in South Tyrol. The State curricula are translated into German in 1983 in the course of the intermediate school curriculum reform. Moreover, for the first time the ethnic minorities in Italy, and therefore also the German community in South Tyrol, are able to make their own input in specific areas, particularly in the subjects of history

and geography (Provincial law 48/1983). With Decision of the Provincial Government No. 81/2009 the provincial guidelines for the curricula for the intermediate schools are passed.

Essentially, the original structure of the upper secondary schools goes back to the *Gentile* reform law of 1923. Over the course of the 1980s and 1990s, upper secondary school is transformed in terms of content and structure in its orientation and focus through a series of *Schulversuche* (experiments or trial activities). In the new millennium the wide range of different study courses at individual schools are reduced. For South Tyrol the most important recent provisions are the Decision of the Provincial Government No. 2040/2010 *Rahmenrichtlinien des Landes für die Festlegung der Curricula in den deutschsprachigen Gymnasien und Fachoberschulen* (Provincial guidelines for the curricula in upper secondary schools and technical schools with German as teaching language) and Provincial law No. 11/2010 *Die Oberstufe des Bildungssystems des Landes Südtirol* (Upper secondary education in South Tyrol). National provisions about secondary education are adapted to the local situation.

language use

As on all other education levels also in secondary education the teaching language at schools for the German language group is German. The teachers have to be native German speakers. At lower intermediate level, German as a subject is taught four hours per week, Italian as a second language four hours and English as a foreign language two to three hours per week. At upper intermediate level the teaching hours of German, Italian and the foreign languages (English, French, Spanish, Russian, Latin and Greek) depend on the focus of the school. German and Italian are usually taught for four hours per week, the foreign languages between two to four hours per week. In some schools the CLIL-methodology is used.

teaching material

In intermediate schools, as in primary schools, teaching materials are in part developed locally and in part bought from German-speaking countries. At upper secondary level the schools adopt most of the teaching materials from German-speaking

countries. In the case of specific subjects, for example law or tax law, it is South Tyrolean experts who develop the materials relevant to South Tyrol.

statistics

	Grundschulen (primary schools)	Schulsprengel (primary and intermediate schools)	Mittelschulen (intermediate schools)	total
headships	10	45	3	58
pupils	19,905		11,560	31,465
teachers	2,812		1,244	4,056

Table 2: Number of headships, pupils and teachers involved in German education in primary and lower secondary schools in the school year 2016/17 (Source: Department of Education for the German language group, 2016).

private, legally recognised intermediate schools	
headships	6
pupils	790
teachers	71

Table 3: Number of headships, pupils and teachers involved in German education in private and legally recognised lower secondary schools in the school year 2016/17 (Source: Department of Education for the German language group, 2016).

upper secondary school	
headships	20
pupils	12,989
teachers	1,492

Table 4: Number of headships, pupils and teachers involved in German education in upper secondary schools in the school year 2016/17 (Source: Department of Education for the German language group, 2016).

private, legally recognised upper secondary schools	
headships	3
pupils	319
teachers	38

Table 5: Number of headships, pupils and teachers involved in German education in private and legally recognised upper secondary schools in the school year 2016/17 (Source: Department of Education for the German language group, 2016).

5 Vocational Education

target group

Vocational training in South Tyrol is intended for students from the age of 14 to 29. In the vocational training system students can also complete their compulsory education and schooling until the age of 18.

Since 2003, students choosing vocational training are given the opportunity to get a taste of various different professions in a one-year orientation period. Afterwards, students can decide to opt for either a dual educational system (minimal entrance age 15) with apprentice training or choose a full-time vocational school. Training lasts three to four years and is received as units of instruction or in the form of weekly visits to the vocational school plus apprentice work. Vocational school ends after three years with a certificate of proficiency or after four years with a vocational diploma. The fourth year offers the opportunity for specialisation. Moreover, students can choose to take the entry examination to attend a fifth year, enabling them to obtain the secondary State diploma which grants access to all universities.

Those who wish to study hotel administration and gastronomy can attend the relevant four-year school which ends with a vocational diploma. After one more year they can also obtain the secondary State diploma which grants access to all universities.

After intermediate school, at the age of 14, students can choose to attend a provincial three-year technical school for forestry, agriculture or home economics. All of these schools conclude with a final exam and a certification, enabling such graduates to engage in their chosen profession after obtaining the relevant experience. There is also the opportunity to attend a fourth year of specialisation which concludes with a vocational technical diploma. Those who wish to attend the fifth year have to pass an entry examination and can obtain the secondary State diploma which grants access to all universities.

structure Vocational education in South Tyrol differs from the Italian system. Pupils can either attend full-time vocational courses or learn in the dual system spending time at school and working as an apprentice. The curricula are skill-oriented and contain a part on general and one on technical/professional education. The Department of Education with its sub-department for vocational training is responsible for elaborating the curricula.

Vocational training for the German language group is structured as follows:

3 years professional training in dual system or full-time system, which concludes with a certificate (generally age 14 to 17 – including the first orientation year). In most professional areas there is the opportunity to attend a fourth specialisation year.

4 years professional training in dual system or full-time system, which concludes with a technical diploma (generally age 14 to 18 – including the first orientation year).

A fifth year of education after an admission test which concludes with a secondary school diploma qualifying university admission.

Areas of full-time vocational education include many different professional fields such as metal – mechanics, electrical installations, informatics, hotel administration and gastronomy, administration and trade, construction, social professions, wood technologies, automation and mechatronics, fashion, print and multimedia, beauty care sector, forestry, agriculture or home economics.

The dual system prepares for over 80 professions.

legislation In the field of vocational education the Autonomous Province of Bozen/Bolzano is not bound to the Italian vocational system as it has primary legislative powers. The dual system found in the Province is unique in Italy but common in other German speaking countries. The teachers working at vocational schools are not state but provincial employees.

language use As in primary, intermediate and upper secondary schools, all vocational schools subjects are also taught in German

(except for Italian as second language and English as a foreign language) and German as a subject is part of the curriculum.

teaching material

As in state schools, the Department of Education and the schools develop some of the teaching materials for vocational schools while some others are bought from German-speaking countries.

statistics

	vocational schools	schools of forestry, agriculture and home economics
headships	10	8
pupils	8,244	1,008
teachers	870	225

Table 6: Number of headships, pupils and teachers involved in German vocational education in in the school year 2016/17 (Source: Department of Education for the German language group, 2016).

6 Higher education

- structure** In 1997, the Free University of Bozen-Bolzano was founded. Currently it offers the following courses: education (kindergarten and primary school teachers and educators), economics and management, computer sciences, design and arts, science and technology. At the moment there are 10 bachelor degree courses, 10 master degree courses and five PhD courses as well as one Studium Generale course.
- In addition, there is the School of Higher Education for Health Professions Claudiana with a three-year-course.
- legislation** Universities follow national laws such as Law No. 240/2010 *Norme in materia di organizzazione delle università, di personale accademico e reclutamento, nonché delega al Governo per incentivare la qualità e l'efficienza del sistema universitario* (Rules on the organisation of universities, academic staff and recruitment, as well as the delegation to the government to enhance the quality and efficiency of the university system).
- The Free University of Bozen-Bolzano is autonomous and is mostly financed by the Province. The above mentioned law does, however, also apply to this university.
- The School of Higher Education for Health Professions Claudiana is established in 1993 with Provincial law No. 18 and is financed by the Province.
- language use** The languages of instruction at the Free University of Bozen-Bolzano are German, Italian, English and Ladin (at the faculty of education only).
- The use of the languages is laid down in the Statute of the Free University of Bozen/Bolzano. In view of the international structure of the university and the didactic requirements resulting from multilingualism, room has been made for foreign languages, particularly English, alongside the use of locally spoken languages. The use of languages is laid down in internal rules which can also provide for the separate use of the above languages if this is of service to working and studying.

At the School of Higher Education for Health Professions Claudiana the teaching languages are German and Italian, an equal balance between both teaching languages is guaranteed.

**teacher
training**

The Free University of Bozen-Bolzano provides teacher training at kindergarten and primary school level at its faculty of Education. There are bachelor, master and Phd-programmes. Lectures are given in German, Italian and Ladin according to the language group the student belongs to.

**pre-school
training**

In order to become a pre-school teacher in Italy you have to attend a 5-year master degree course. The first course in South Tyrol started in September 2000 at the Faculty of Education of the Free University of Bozen-Bolzano. For the German language group the language of instruction is German.

26

**primary
training**

The Faculty of Education of the Free University of Bozen-Bolzano offers primary training in the three main languages: German, Italian and Ladin. The main contents of the courses regard pedagogy, didactics, languages, science, art and music. For German-speaking primary teacher candidates, German is not only the language of instruction but is also studied as a subject. The German-speaking students only receive instruction in German (except for the English lessons) as they will not be teaching Italian or Ladin as a language.

**secondary
training**

In order to become a secondary school teacher, students mainly study in Austria or at an Italian university. After graduation, teachers must attend one more training course in order to get access to public exams and jobs. These training courses are also offered at the Faculty of Education of the Free University of Bozen-Bolzano.

**in-service
training**

In South Tyrol every teacher is expected to follow a certain number of hours of in-service training every year. The training courses are mainly organised and provided by the Department

of Education, especially by the Innovation and Consultancy Service, or by the schools themselves. The courses are held in German (except for in-service courses for Italian and foreign language teachers) and are free of charge. The Department of Education also supports in-service training abroad by providing the teachers the possibility to take part in Erasmus+ Mobility Projects (e.g. PluriPro-Project).

statistics

University of Bozen/Bolzano	
total enrolled	3,450
faculty of education	1,355
German as a subject	513

Table 7: Number of enrolled students at the Faculty of Education and number of students studying German as a subject in the academic year 2016/17 (Source: Free University of Bozen/Bolzano, 2016).

School of Higher Education for Health 'Claudiana'	
total number of students	629

Table 8: Number of students at the School of Higher Education for Health 'Claudiana' in the academic year 2016/17 (Source: School of Higher Education for Health 'Claudiana', 2016).



7 Adult education

structure and language courses

The cultural and educational sectors as well as further education and vocational training are separated by language group. This separation is also to be found at the political level and in the public administration. Most further education institutions target one language group. The legal framework is the same for all language groups: Provincial law No. 41/1983, which regulates further education and the public library system, enshrines, amongst other things, the “right to further education”. Courses are run by public and (primarily) by private institutions. The latter are financed by the local government provided they fulfil certain requirements such as being not for profit. Teaching materials are mainly imported from other German-speaking countries, some material is developed by the institutions themselves.

language use

There are a few bilingual courses. The language of instruction is generally either German or Italian.

statistics

adult education	
courses and activities	10,411
hours of further education (45 min/lesson)	217,316
attendances	162,731

Table 9: Number of courses, hours and attendances provided by the office for further education of the Culture Department for the German language group in 2015 (Source: Culture Department of the German language group, 2016).

8 Educational research

The main object of research concerns native speaker abilities in standard German. A German dialect is spoken outside school and the switch to standard German is experienced as being difficult for children, especially speaking. Therefore, it is felt that native-speaker abilities in standard German need to be enhanced. Schools are the only environments where students can practice standard German. The Department of Education with its Consultancy and Advisory Service assembles the curricula for native speaker instruction and generates the teaching materials for the German-language schools.

As far as German as a mother-tongue is concerned, large scale assessments on German for native speakers are carried out in grade 3 (primary level), grade 6 (lower secondary level) and grade 8 (end of lower secondary level, being part of final examination). Furthermore upper secondary students participate at the Programme for International student assessment (PISA), where reading is one of the three areas tested every three years. In addition to large scale assessment, which provides important data for educational policy in the area of language teaching, there have been numerous other research projects that analyse mother tongue and foreign language acquisition as well as other areas of education. One of the most important ones certainly is the study *Bildungssprache im Vergleich* (Analysis of the language competence German L1) of the Europäische Akademie Bozen (European Academy Bozen) in collaboration with the Department of Education of the German language group. The study shows that 18-year-old German speaking South Tyroleans easily reach the same language proficiency in German as peers in the Austrian North Tyrol and the German Thuringia.

Moreover, the language proficiency in the Second Language Italian is assessed on a regular basis. Research activities in the field of language training for children and youngsters with migration background are also carried out. Based on these results, recommendations for schools, in-service training offers, the *Sprachenkonzept* (language concept) and a plurilingual

curriculum have been worked out. Other current fields of research are early school leaving, history teaching, pupils' learning, media use in kindergarten, school architecture and learning in general.

9 Prospects

At the end of WWI, the borders between Austria and Italy were redrawn and South Tyrol became part of Italy. During the fascist regime there are no official German schools anymore, they are gradually re-established after the end of World War II.

The educational system has flourished in South Tyrol over the past 70 years and the establishment of schools in the mother tongue has proved to work very well. The German schools in South Tyrol also teach the second official language (Italian), performed by teachers whose native tongue is Italian from primary level on, as well as one or more foreign languages (English from grade 4, other foreign languages from grade 9 on). Schools in the mother tongue are seen as essential for the linguistic and cultural survival of the German community and are regarded as the cornerstone of the autonomy of South Tyrol. The principle of teaching in the mother tongue also applies to the Italian community. Students learn German as a second language, taught by teachers whose native tongue is German, as well as one or more foreign languages. Both communities therefore share the same opportunities and options. The pupils can attend the school of their choice. Experience shows that children from bilingual families mostly attend German schools. The language situation is still quite heterogeneous, there is no widespread bilingualism. It can be observed that German speaking South Tyroleans living in rural areas have difficulties with Italian and on the other hand Italian speaking South Tyroleans living in the cities have insufficient proficiency in German.

Recently new developments have emerged whereby, above all, the Italian community is demanding more bilingual tuition. According to these concepts, part of the school subjects should be taught in the mother tongue while other subjects should be given in the second language of the province. As the German community speaks with a dialect, introducing bilingual tuition would mean taking away their only possibility to learn the standard language. Many examples in Europe show what missing or failing tuition in the mother tongue can lead to.

The South Tyrol school system is considered the best solution for the German minority because it assures the minority the full right to use its own language. It is a school system which includes every opportunity for students to be taught in their mother tongue, in which the official national language can be learnt and in which foreign languages are part of the curriculum to keep abreast with the rest of Europe. The major challenges are the language abilities of the schoolchildren and the quality of tuition, to ensure that the German language and culture can develop to satisfaction.

10 Summary statistics

	kindergarten headships	kindergarten	groups	children	kindergarten teachers and assistants
public	8	266	567	12,350	1,330
private (legally recognised)		3		53	9

Table 1: Number of kindergartens, children and kindergarten teachers and assistants involved in pre-primary education in the kindergarten year 2016/17 (Source: Department of Education for the German language group, 2016).

	Grundschulen (primary schools)	Schulsprengel (primary and intermediate schools)	Mittelschulen (intermediate schools)	total
headships	10	45	3	58
pupils	19,905		11,560	31,465
teachers	2,812		1,244	4,056

Table 2: Number of headships, pupils and teachers involved in German education in primary and lower secondary schools in the school year 2016/17 (Source: Department of Education for the German language group, 2016).

private, legally recognised intermediate schools	
headships	6
pupils	790
teachers	71

Table 3: Number of headships, pupils and teachers involved in German education in private and legally recognised lower secondary schools in the school year 2016/17 (Source: Department of Education for the German language group, 2016).

upper secondary school	
headships	20
pupils	12,989
teachers	1,492

Table 4: Number of headships, pupils and teachers involved in German education in upper secondary schools in the school year 2016/17 (Source: Department of Education for the German language group, 2016).

private, legally recognised upper secondary schools	
headships	3
pupils	319
teachers	38

Table 5: Number of headships, pupils and teachers involved in German education in private and legally recognised upper secondary schools in the school year 2016/17 (Source: Department of Education for the German language group, 2016).

	vocational schools	schools of forestry, agriculture and home economics
headships	10	8
pupils	8,244	1,008
teachers	870	225

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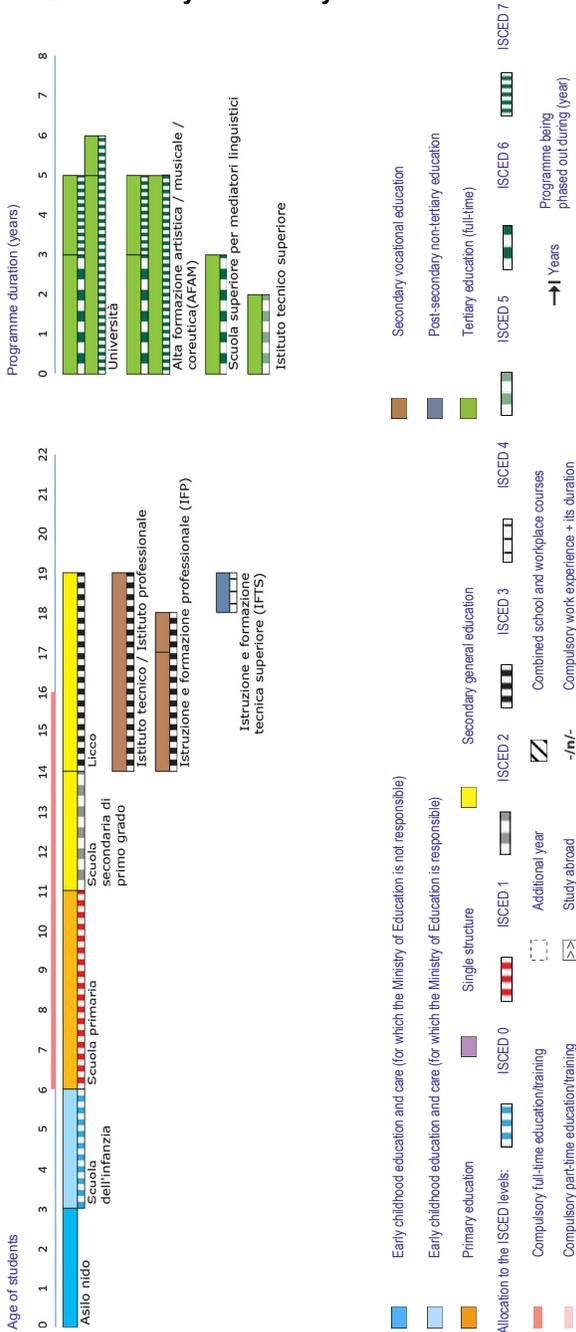
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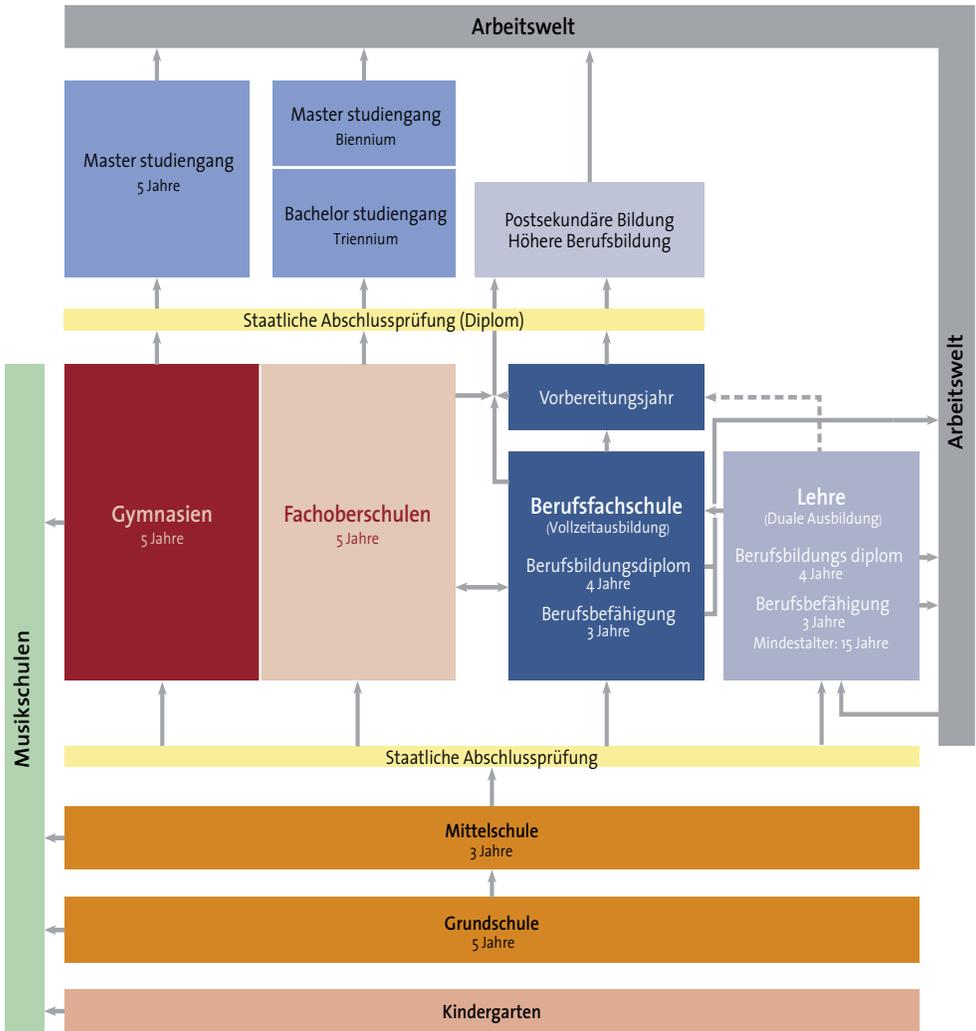
Table 9: Number of courses, hours and attendances provided by the office for further education of the Culture Department for the German language group in 2015 (Source: Culture Department of the German language group, 2016).

The structure of the education system in Italy 2016/2017



Source: Eurydice (2016 / 2017)

Education system in South Tyrol



Deutsches Bildungsressort und land-, forst- und hauswirtschaftliche Berufsbildung

Source: Deutsches Bildungsressort der Autonomen Provinz Bozen/ Department of Education for the German language group of the Autonomous Province of Bozen.

References and further reading

regulations

All Italian laws can be found at: www.normattiva.it

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(Office for school and university welfare)

Amt für Ausbildungs- und Berufsberatung (Office for educational counselling and career guidance)

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T +39 0471 412950

W www.provinz.bz.it/bildungsfoerderung

Freie Universität Bozen

(Free University of Bozen)

39100 Bozen, Universitätsplatz 1

T +39 0471 011000

W www.unibz.it

cultural institute **Südtiroler Kulturinstitut Bozen**

(South Tyrolean cultural institute Bozen)

Schlernstraße 1

T +39 0471 313800

W www.kulturinstitut.org

**teachers'
associations**

Katholischer Südtiroler Lehrerbund (KSL)

(Catholic South Tyrolean Teachers' Association)

39100 Bozen, Schlernstraße 1

T +39 0471 978293

W www.ksl.bz.it

**Arbeitskreis Südtiroler Mittel-, Ober- und Berufsschullehrer/innen
(ASM)**

(Working Group of South Tyrolean Intermediate school Teachers)

39100 Bozen, Schlernstraße 1

T +39 0471 976370

W www.lehrerasm.it

Other websites on minority languages

Mercator www.mercator-research.eu

Research Centre Homepage of the Mercator European Research Centre on Multilingualism and Language Learning. The website contains the series of Regional dossiers, a database with organisations, a bibliography, information on current activities, and many links to relevant websites.

Mercator www.mercator-network.eu

Network General site of the Mercator European Network of Language Diversity Centres. It gives information about the network and leads you to the homepages of the network partners.

European <http://ec.europa.eu/languages>

Commission The website of the European Commission gives information about the EU's support for language diversity.

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Council of <http://conventions.coe.int>

Europe European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (1992) and Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (1995). European Treaty Series 148 and 157, Strasbourg.

Eurydice <http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurydice>

Eurydice is the information network on education in Europe. The site provides information on all European education systems and education policies.

European Parliament Committee – supporting analyses database

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/committees/en/supporting-analyses-search.html>.

In this database you will find research papers produced by the European Parliament's research service. A study for the CULT Committee, conducted by Mercator, is published in 2017: *Minority Languages and Education: Best Practices and Pitfalls*.

NPLD

<http://www.npld.eu>

The Network to Promote Linguistic Diversity (NPLD) is a European wide network working in the field of language policy & planning for Constitutional, Regional and Small-State Languages (CRSS) across Europe

FUEN

<https://www.fuen.org>

The Federal Union of European Nationalities is the umbrella organisation of the autochthonous, national minorities/ethnic groups in Europe and represents the interests of European minorities on regional, national and European level.

What can the Mercator Research Centre offer you?

mission & goals The Mercator European Research Centre on Multilingualism and Language Learning addresses the growing interest in multilingualism and endeavours to promote linguistic diversity within Europe. The centre focuses on research, policy, and practice in the field of multilingualism and language learning. Through the creation, circulation and application of knowledge in the field of language learning at school, at home and through cultural participation, the Mercator Research Centre aims to provide for the increasing need of language communities to exchange experiences and to cooperate in an European context. Though the main focus lies in the field of regional and minority languages, immigrant languages are topic of study as well.

partners

Since 1987 the Mercator Research Centre forms a network structure with two partners: Mercator Media, hosted at the University of Wales in Aberystwyth, and Mercator Legislation, hosted at the Ciemen Foundation in Barcelona. Together with the Stockholm University in Sweden and the Research Institute for Linguistics of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences in Hungary, these partners formed the Mercator European Network of Language Diversity Centres. Mercator also works closely with a number of other partner organisations researching in the same field. This cooperation includes partners in the province Fryslân and other parts of the Netherlands, as well as partners across Europe. The main funding body of the Mercator Research Centre is the provincial government of Fryslân. The EU and regional authorities in Europe fund projects and activities as well.

research

The research activities of the Mercator Research Centre focus on various aspects of bilingual and trilingual education such as language proficiency in different languages, interaction in the multilingual classroom, and teachers' qualifications for working in a multilingual classroom. Latest developments look at how educational models for minority languages can also cater for immigrant pupils. Whenever possible, research is carried out in a comparative European perspective. Results are disseminated through publications, conferences and publications in collaboration with European partners.

conferences

The Mercator Research Centre organises conferences and seminars on a regular basis. The main target groups are professionals, researchers and policymakers from all member states of the Council of Europe and beyond. Themes for the conferences are: assessment & best practice, educational models, development of minimum standards, teacher training and the application of the Common European Framework of Reference.

q&a

If you have any questions, please contact us at mercator@fryske-akademy.nl.



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