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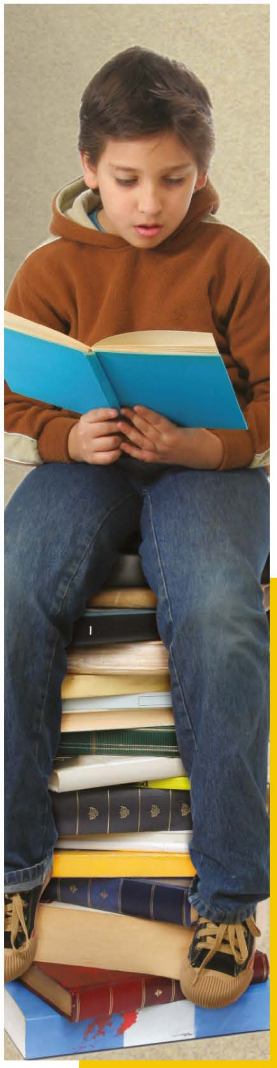

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Research for CULT Committee – Minority languages and education: best practices and pitfalls

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CULTURE AND EDUCATION

Research for CULT Committee – Minority languages and education: best practices and pitfalls

STUDY

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AUTHORS

Rixt VAN DONGERA, MA, Mercator European Research Centre
Drs. Cor VAN DER MEER, Mercator European Research Centre
Richt STERK, MA, Mercator European Research Centre

Research manager Michaela FRANKE
Project and publication assistance Virginija KELMELYTE
Policy Department for Structural and Cohesion Policies, European Parliament

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CULTURE AND EDUCATION

Research for CULT Committee – Minority languages and education: best practices and pitfalls

Abstract

This report delivers an in-depth comparative analysis of thirteen language case studies in order to gain insight into the situation of minority languages in education in Europe. Indications for best practices are described and challenges that minority languages face in education are highlighted. Specific attention is directed to vocational education and career perspectives. Lastly, this report gives recommendations how the EU can support minority languages in education.

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CONTENTS

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS **5**
LIST OF TABLES **6**
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY **7**
GLOSSARY **9**
INTRODUCTION **11**
1. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND BACKGROUND **15**
1.1. Minorities: what are they? What are they not? 15
1.2. Considerations on Language Vitality 15
1.3. Legal Framework for Minority Languages at the European level 17
1.4. (Quasi-) Legal Developments in the EU 18
1.5. EU Funded Projects 19
1.6. Academic Literature and Grey Literature on the Topic 20
2. Outcome case studies: Comparison and analysis **23**
2.1. Official language status 23
2.2. ECRML and FCNM 23
2.3. Demographics 24
2.4. Relation to and support by the kin-state 24
2.5. Degree of devolvement, level of commitment and support by the nation-state 25
2.6. Language planning 26
2.7. Choice of educational model 27
2.8. Information on language learning and awareness 29
2.9. Teaching material 29
2.12 Positive encouragement for minority language speakers 31
2.13 Career perspectives 31
3 Conclusions and Recommendations **33**
REFERENCES **39**
Annex 1 – List of Experts **47**
Annex 2 - Case studies **49**
Basque in France **49**
Basque in Spain **53**
Frisian in the Netherlands **57**
German in South Tyrol, Italy **62**
Hungarian in Romania **66**

Hungarian in Slovakia **70**
Hungarian in Slovenia **75**
Irish in Ireland **79**
Polish in Lithuania **83**
Romani and Beash in Hungary **87**
Sorbian in Germany **91**
Swedish in Finland **97**
Welsh in the United Kingdom **101**

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ABC	Department for Sorbian/Wendish Education Development Cottbus
BAC	Basque Autonomous Community
CEDIN	Centrum voor Educatieve Dienstverlening in Noord Nederland
CLIL	Content and Language Integrated Learning
COE	Council of Europe
ECMRL	European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages
ECTS	European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System
EHU/UPV	Euskal Herriko Unibertsitatea/Universidad del Pais Vasco
FCNM	Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities
FUEN	Federal Union of European Nationalities
GSCE	General Certificate of Secondary Education
IRALE	Irakasleen Alfabetatze Euskalduntzea
NPLD	Network to Promote Linguistic Diversity
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1:
Key statistical data of the case studies involved **13**

Table 2:
List of experts consulted for this report **47**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Main Findings

Based on a review of relevant legislation, projects and literature in combination with an in-depth comparative analysis of thirteen case studies, this report lists a variety of key findings that are essential for a thorough understanding of best practices and pitfalls concerning regional and minority languages in education. The most significant findings are listed below:

- There is no one-size-fits-all best practice suitable for all minorities.
- By recognising a language as a co-official or official state language, a state commits itself to taking concrete measures in order to protect and promote this language.
- It is the nation-state that needs to implement the necessary measures they have agreed to.
- Institutional support and language planning are of fundamental importance when it comes to minority education.
- A widely recognised problem regarding minority language education that needs to be addressed is the availability of high-quality teaching material and skilled minority language teachers.

The most widespread and commonly recognised challenge for minority language education is the availability of high-quality teaching material and the proficiency of minority language teachers. Although there is no one-size-fits-all solution for the challenges that minorities face, this report offers a number of general recommendations for the further development and promotion of minority languages.

It must be noted that the main responsibility for implementing essential measures to improve the quality of minority language education lies with the nation-state. A nation-state can commit itself to the further promotion and development of its minority languages by recognising the language(s) as a co-official or official state language or/and by ratifying the European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages (ECRML) for the respective language(s). Institutional support and language planning are namely the key components of support that a nation-state can provide.

Recommendations

The recommendations that can be deduced from the comparative analysis of the case studies (Annex 2) are focused on a diverse range of issues. On the basis of the review in chapter 1 of this report, as well as the analysis conducted in chapter 2, this report offers the following recommendations for the European Union and its Member States:

- To maintain and promote programmes focused on the exchange of experiences and best practices concerning regional and minority languages in Europe;
- To promote EU-wide research on education, language learning and instruction models in a multilingual context;
- To stimulate the development of qualitative teaching material in minority languages for all educational levels;
- To promote stable relationships between countries, especially in border regions where both languages are spoken;
- To develop an international reward system which stimulates teachers to become proficient in teaching in a multilingual classroom;
- To raise awareness for multilingualism throughout Europe;
- To stimulate Member States to ratify the legislative frameworks for proper legal language recognition;

- To implement language planning as a long-term key issue in state politics;
- To stimulate Member States to provide a continuous learning line for minority languages from pre-primary education to third-level education.

The basis for these proposals and a more detailed and explanatory description of the recommendations can be found in chapter 3.

Background

There are many minority languages in Europe, each of them coping with a different set of circumstances at nation-state level or regional level. There are no fixed definitions for the concepts 'minority' and 'minority' languages. For this report, the choice was to follow the definition used in the ECRML, and focus only on languages traditionally used within a given territory of a state by nationals of that state. In practice, this means that languages used by groups that have migrated to or within Europe in recent decades are not considered.

Under the subsidiarity principle, matters of minority languages in education must be dealt with on a national and sometimes even regional level. However, the international and more specifically European influence on these issues must not be overlooked. A multitude of countries on the European continent have signed and ratified the ECRML and the Framework Convention on the Protection of National Minorities (FCNM), which requires these countries to take relevant measures to protect and develop the situation of their national minorities and languages. Both are legally-binding instruments from the Council of Europe and especially the ECRML focuses very specifically on the rights that minority languages can claim under the Charter with regard to education. The influence of the ECRML and the FCNM, relevant EU charters such as the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, as well as the support the European Union can give by for example initiating research or projects that stimulate the cooperation between multiple minority language areas, is remarkably relevant when discussing minority languages in education.

The main aim of this research project is to give a clear overview of the situation of thirteen European minority languages, particularly with regard to the role that minority languages play in education. The report also contains a chapter on background issues, including the used definition of minority languages, a description of relevant international agreements and developments on the EU level. It is important to realize that an extensive framework for the protection and promotion of regional languages already exists.

The thirteen cases are compared on the basis of their 'best practices' and 'challenges'. Although each region has its own specific language situation, there is much to be gained from the exchange of best practices, and much is to be learned from each other's challenges. The role that the EU can play in this regard is also taken into consideration.

Methodology

The methodology used for this study comprised the writing of comprehensive case studies for all languages selected. The information was retrieved mostly from the Mercator Research Centre's *Regional Dossiers* series, complemented by interviews with experts from different European regions (Annex 1). These interviews completed the overview of this report's case studies and resulted in the acquirement of more detailed information on, for instance, specific language situations and career developments. In order to give a comprehensive framework in which this report and its outcomes can be placed, an extensive review of relevant legislation, literature and European projects has been conducted.

GLOSSARY

BAC region
The Basque autonomous community, the three areas in Spain (Bizkaia, Gipuzkoa, Araba) where the Basque language is the co-official language.

Basque country
An area that encompasses seven regions; four in Spain (Bizkaia, Gipuzkoa, Araba, Navarre) and three in France (Lapurdi, Behe Nafarroa, Zuberoa).

Border region
A border region is an area in a country that borders another country or multiple countries. Due to past border changes and due to migration, this region is often a culturally and linguistically mixed area where sometimes the languages of both countries are spoken.

European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages
The European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages (ECRML) is an international treaty designed to protect and promote regional and minority languages and to enable speakers to use these languages in private as well as public life. The Charter entered into force on 1 March 1998. By ratifying it, the Council of Europe's Member States confirm that they are committed to protecting and promoting the regional or minority language(s) in their state. Twenty-five states have actually ratified the Charter; eight states have merely signed it (Council of Europe, ETS 148, 1992).

Framework Convention on the Protection of National Minorities
The Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (FCNM) is a legally binding instrument used for the protection of national minorities in the Member States of the Council of Europe. It entered into force on 1 February 1998 and sets out principles and goals that the states have to achieve. It also provides guidelines for the linguistic freedom of national minorities and their rights regarding education (Council of Europe, ETS 157, 1994).

Kin-state
A kin-state is the nation-state of origin of a minority that now lives in another country. This national minority shares ethno-cultural bonds with the kin-state and often tries to maintain this bond.

Language planning
Language planning is the preparation or implementation of a policy or proposal on language use (Oxford Dictionary, 2017). It is an important aspect of the protection and promotion of minority languages.

Linguistic diversity
Linguistic diversity refers to the diversity of languages, both majority, minority and migrant languages, spoken by individuals in a specific geographical area.

Migrant languages
Migrant languages are the languages that migrants consider to be their mother tongue. Proficiency levels in these languages may differ as the frequency of use and the support of a language will vary.

Regional and minority languages

Regional and minority languages, as defined by the ECRML (Council of Europe, 1992), 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". In policy documents and scholarly publications, the type of languages covered under the ECRML is sometimes referred to with a number of more specific terms. Examples are: 'autochthonous', 'traditional', 'indigenous' or 'old' minority languages, contrasted to 'migrant' or 'new' minority languages. A minority language in one country sometimes has a majority position in another (often neighbouring) state. In such cases, we speak of 'minority languages with a kin-state'. Languages that do not have a majority status anywhere are considered to be 'unique minority languages'.

INTRODUCTION

Europe boasts a large variety of minority and regional languages, and a number of these are taught at schools. The definition of a minority language is relatively open (see Chapter 1), which is why this report recognises both minority languages with a kin-state (such as the Hungarian language, which is spoken in Slovakia, Romania and Slovenia, for instance) and unique minority languages: languages without a kin-state and traditionally spoken in a given territory (for example the Frisian language, which is mainly spoken in the Dutch province of Fryslân).

Education in a minority language is an important way to maintain the status and further the development of that minority language: many languages have become endangered simply because the language is not transferred to the next generation. Next to demographics and other influences, there are many factors to take into account when studying the position of minority languages in education. A minority language can be a unique minority language, but it can also be the main language of another country. This has implications for the amount of support a language can get from outside of the country where it is spoken as a minority language.

There is also a noted difference in the official recognition of a language as a minority language. Being officially recognised as a minority language mostly implies that a language can claim certain rights, which are laid down in the form of laws (also concerning education) and are supported by the nation-state's government. Other issues are the availability of minority language teachers and teaching material in the minority language. Overall, the way in which a language is kept 'alive' amongst its speakers (are they – and especially young people - proud of their language? Do they think it is necessary to keep the language alive?) is a very important factor to consider. An additional point of focus in this report concerns the practical use of minority language education after graduation. The report will present information on the possible benefits of minority language education concerning career perspectives later in life.

The current report presents a comparative analysis of thirteen case studies, with the issues mentioned above forming its key points of interest. It focuses intensively on 'best practices' and 'challenges' concerning its thirteen case studies as these can not only assist in providing the most relevant recommendations, but also serve as a learning tool for many of Europe's minority languages.

Aim

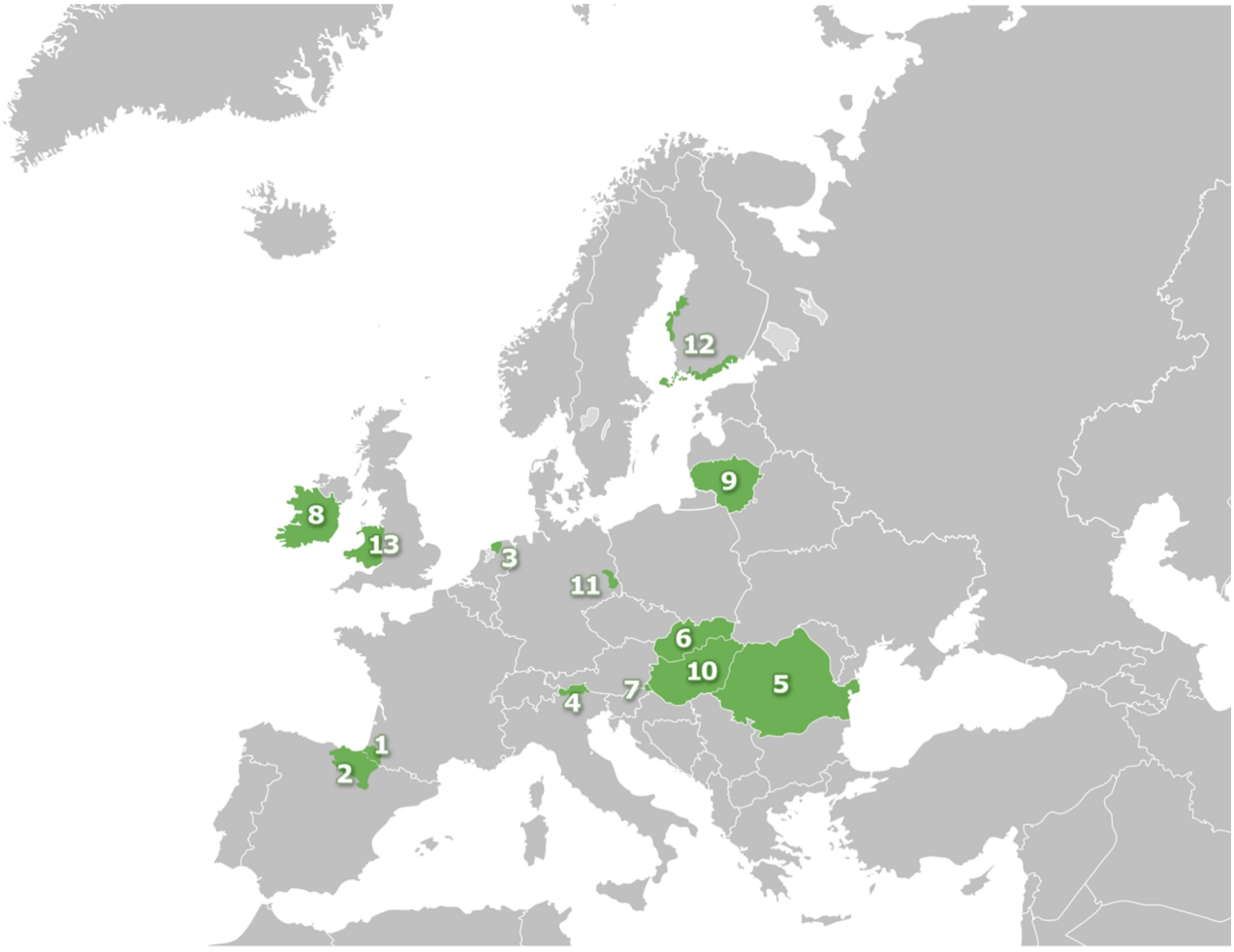
The aim of this study is to deliver a comparative analysis of thirteen selected European minority language case studies, to develop recommendations for best practices in minority language education, to highlight the challenges for making feasible education programmes and finally to identify potential areas in which the EU can offer support. The outcome will be a comparative overview of best practices and challenges, complemented by recommendations on this subject for the benefit of policy designers and decision makers.

This report contains an overview of the academic and professional frameworks in which this research will be placed. Additionally it delivers an analysis of thirteen case studies addressing the background of the language, demographics and language status, a description of each educational level (from pre-school to higher education), prospects, best practices, needs and

challenges).[1] The final chapter revolves around a number of conclusions formulated on the basis of the analyses and a variety of recommendations, all of which can assist in improving minority language education in the EU.

In order to formulate qualitative conclusions and relevant recommendations, a variety of experts were interviewed. In this manner, insights into the language situations of the thirteen case studies could become as complete as possible. A list of the interviewed experts can be found in Annex 1. The outcome of the interviews, the review of other studies and the comparative analysis served to answer the following questions: what does 'best practice' look like with regard to minority language education, what challenges are present for making feasible education programmes, what is the general added value for students of minority languages in terms of career development and how can the EU potentially offer support?

Map 1: Language areas represented by case studies in this report (numbers refer to table 1 on the next page).



Source: Fryske Akademy, 2016 (own work).

[1] The basis for this research project lies with the Mercator Regional Dossiers Series. Regional Dossiers are documents that provide concise descriptive information and basic educational statistics about minority language education in a specific region of the European Union. More than 40 language descriptions are available; the database is updated regularly (for a complete list of dossiers, visit www.mercator-research.eu).

Table 1: Key statistical data of the case studies involved

Languages	Demographics (most recent numbers)	Position under ECMRL	Language vitality[2]	Best practices	Challenges
1. Basque in France	21.4% of the French Basque region are Basque speakers	Signed (1999)	Vulnerable	- Ikastola schools - Stage Intensif	- Contribution for Ikastola schools is paid by parents - Teacher training
2. Basque in Spain	33.9% of the population of the Basque Country and about 10% of the population in Navarre are Basque speakers	Ratified (2001) Basque is covered under Part III.	Vulnerable	- Language models - Refresher course for teachers	- Non-native Basque speaking teachers - Teaching material for vocational education not commercially available
3. Frisian in the Netherlands	67% of the total population in the province of Fryslân are Frisian speakers	Ratified (1996) Frisian is covered under Part III.	Vulnerable	Trilingual education	- Quality of teachers - Continuity of Frisian in secondary education is needed
4. German in South Tyrol, Italy	69.4% of the population in South Tyrol speaks German	Signed (2000)	Not listed	- Full right to use German - Trilingual system - Teachers are mother tongue speakers	Monolingual system does not reflect plurilingual situation
5. Hungarian in Romania	6.7% of the total Romanian population are Hungarian mother tongue speakers	Ratified (2008) Hungarian is covered under Part III.	Not listed	- Full Hungarian programmes at two universities	- Number of teachers - Translation of textbooks
6. Hungarian in Slovakia	9.4% of the total Slovakian population are Hungarian mother tongue speakers	Ratified (2001) Hungarian is covered under Part II and Part III.	Not listed	- Hungarian as language of instruction in Kindergartens - Committed teachers	- Teaching material - Vocational schools lack expertise and reference books
7. Hungarian in Slovenia	0.4% of the total Slovenian population are Hungarian	Ratified (2000) Hungarian is covered	Not listed	- Obligatory use of both languages	- Number of bilingual schools

[2] Moseley, 2010. More information on what the levels signify can be found in Chapter 1.

	mother tongue speakers	under Part II and Part III.		- One person-one language strategy (Slovenian and Hungarian)	- Uneven balance of use of Hungarian and Slovene as language of instruction
8. Irish in Ireland	41.4% of the total Irish population are Irish speakers	Not signed	Definitely endangered	- Large amount of teaching material - Students results	Language skills of teachers
9. Polish in Lithuania	8.5% of the total Lithuanian population are (passive) Polish speakers	Not signed	Not listed	- Polish as language of instruction - Financial support	- No bilingual model - Teaching material
10. Romani and Beash in Hungary	0.5% of the total Hungarian population are Romani/Beash mother tongue speakers	Ratified (1995) Romani and Beash are covered under Part II and Part III	Definitely endangered	- Projects of the FUEN - Lovarí language certificate seen as equal to foreign languages certificate (in public sector)	- Romani Kindergartens only on parents' request - Lack of bilingual schools
11. Sorbian in Germany	No exact numbers are available due to the German ban of ethnic statistics	Ratified (1998) Sorbian is covered under Part III	Severely Endangered	- Native Sorbian speaking teachers in Kindergartens - Specific teaching material (native, L2 etc.)	- Not enough teachers - Lack of a language plan
12. Swedish in Finland	5.5% of the total Finnish population are Swedish mother tongue speakers	Ratified (1994) Swedish is covered under Part II.	Not listed	Total immersion programme	- Availability of textbooks - Students' results
13. Welsh in the United Kingdom	21.8% of the total Welsh population can speak, read and write Welsh	Ratified (2001) Welsh is covered under Part III.	Vulnerable	- Wide variety of educational material - FE colleges Welsh education strategy	- Matching the school needs and material provided - Teaching resources

Source: Based on the case studies in Annex 2 (2016)

1. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND BACKGROUND

1.1. Minorities: what are they? What are they not?

It is impossible to provide one generally accepted definition of the term 'minority'. This lack of definition has also been acknowledged in relation to various international conventions and treaties. A recent example can be found in the Council of Europe's *Thematic commentary no. 4: The scope of application of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities* which states that "there has never been a universally shared definition", and "as a result, the question of who is to be recognised as a right holder under the Framework Convention has, since its adoption, been the subject of extended debate at international and national, academic and political levels" (Council of Europe 2016a, p. 4).

Francesco Capotorti, in his role as Special Rapporteur to the United Nations, proposed a definition that is now commonly used:

> *"A group numerically inferior to the rest of the population of a State, in a non-dominant position, whose members - being nationals of the State - possess ethnic, religious or linguistic characteristics differing from those of the rest of the population and show, if only implicitly, a sense of solidarity, directed towards preserving their culture, traditions, religion or language."* (Capotorti, 1979, par. 586).

In the European context, all parties seem to agree on most elements of Capotorti's definition; the most important point of disagreement concerns the 'nationality clause'. In addition, and related to this matter, there is an ongoing debate on the question whether a group needs to have a certain 'historic link' to the territory of a specific state in order to be recognised as one of that state's minorities (Hoffman, 2007).

For the purposes of this report, we decided to follow the definition used in the European Charter on Regional and Minority Languages (ECRML). Languages can only be protected under this Charter when they are "traditionally used within a given territory of a State by nationals of that State" (Article 1). In this report, the term 'minority language' is used in the same sense. This does not mean that all the case study languages are protected under the ECRML, but that they are all languages that have been traditionally spoken in European regions by citizens of current EU Member States. In policy documents and scholarly publications, the type of languages covered under the ECRML is referred to with a number of terms. Examples are 'autochthonous', 'traditional', 'indigenous' or 'old' minority languages, contrasted to 'migrant' or 'new' minority languages. A minority language in one country may sometimes have a majority position in another (often neighbouring) state. In such cases, we speak of 'minority languages with a kin-state'. Languages that do not have a majority status anywhere are considered to be 'unique minority languages'. In sum, in this report we use the ECRML definition for regional and minority languages as a working definition, but in doing so we do not make any value judgement; we refrain from defining what would be a correct or incorrect definition of minority languages and which languages can or cannot be regarded as a minority language.

1.2. Considerations on Language Vitality

When it comes to maintaining languages, vitality is of key importance. Scholars usually distinguish nine criteria to measure whether a language is vital and not threatened with extinction. These nine indicators are part of a broader theoretical framework for language vitality and indicate what is necessary to maintain the language. These are the following: absolute numbers of speakers, intergenerational language transmission, community members'

attitudes towards their own language, shifts in domains of language use, governmental and institutional language attitudes and policies (including official status and use), type and quality of documentation, response to new domains and media, availability of materials for language education and literacy, and finally the proportion of speakers within the total population (UNESCO, 2003). The nine criteria are also listed in Figure 1 below.[3]

Figure 1: Language vitality

Source: UNESCO (2003)

It goes beyond the scope of this research report to discuss all the criteria separately, but this figure clearly shows that survival of a language is not only a responsibility of the speakers of a language, but that multiple factors play a role.

The *Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger* (Moseley, 2010) is one of UNESCO's initiatives and shows on a world map which languages are threatened with extinction. The five levels of threat are measured on the basis of the nine criteria illustrated in Figure 1. For the 'lightest' category of threat, the term 'vulnerable' is used. Vulnerability develops when most children still speak the language, but when the use of the language is "restricted to certain domains". The term 'definitely endangered' is used when "children no longer learn the language as mother tongue in the home". The term 'severely endangered' is used when the "language is spoken by grandparents and older generations; while the parent generation may understand it, they do not speak it to children or among themselves". Critically endangered are the languages where "the youngest speakers are grandparents and older, and they speak the language partially and infrequently" (p. 11-12). A language that has not been spoken since 1950 is labelled with the term 'extinct'. Table 1 (p. 13) shows in which category the minority languages discussed in this report are placed according to the *Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger*.

[3] Ethnolinguistic vitality research is currently ongoing, one can for example read articles written by M. Ehala and M.L. Landweer (see reference list).

1.3. Legal Framework for Minority Languages at the European level

Ever since the Second World War, international organisations have produced standards and mechanisms with the aim to protect minorities. Since the end of the Cold War, there has been a growing awareness of the importance not to oppress cultural differences, but to grant small communities more territorial, political and cultural freedom (Grenoble & Whaley, 2006).

One reason to protect and promote minority rights is that minority languages are part of the world's cultural and linguistic diversity. Another important reason is that protection of linguistic, ethnic and religious minorities leads to a more peaceful and stable Europe. The preamble of the Framework Convention on the Protection of National Minorities (FCNM), illustrates this as follows: "the upheavals of European history have shown that the protection of national minorities is essential to stability, democratic security and peace in this continent" (p. 2).

The idea that social diversity should be recognised and that the culture and language of minorities should be promoted and protected has led the Council of Europe to draw up two international treaties. These are the ECRML and the FCNM.

The ECRML is an international treaty designed to protect and promote regional and minority languages and to enable speakers to use these languages in private as well as public life. The Charter entered into force on 1 March 1998. By ratifying it, the Council of Europe's Member States confirm that they are committed to protecting and promoting the regional or minority language(s) in their state. As of 2017, 33 states have signed the ECMRL, 25 states have actually ratified the Charter; eight states have merely signed it (Council of Europe, ETS 148, 1992). The Charter is only binding for the states who ratified it.

The ECMRL consists of five numbered parts. Part I contains general provisions regarding the functioning and the scope of the ECMRL. The actual language protection measures are defined in Parts II and III. Part IV concerns the monitoring of the ECMRL and Part V treats the signing and the ratification.

Part II contains the following eight objectives and principles to which the states agree with regards to the minority languages in their territory:

- the recognition of the regional or minority languages as an expression of cultural wealth; the respect of the geographical area of each regional or minority language in order to ensure that existing or new administrative divisions do not constitute an obstacle to the promotion of the regional or minority language in question;
- the need for resolute action to promote regional or minority languages in order to safeguard them;
- the facilitation and/or encouragement of the use of regional or minority languages, in speech and writing, in public and private life;
- the maintenance and development of links, in the fields covered by this Charter, between groups using a regional or minority language and other groups in the State employing a language used in identical or similar form, as well as the establishment of cultural relations with other groups in the State using different languages;
- the provision of appropriate forms and means for the teaching and study of regional or minority languages at all appropriate stages;
- the provision of facilities enabling non-speakers of a regional or minority language living in the area where it is used to learn it if they so desire;
- the promotion of study and research on regional or minority languages at universities or equivalent institutions;
- the promotion of appropriate types of transnational exchanges, in the fields covered by this Charter, for regional or minority languages used in identical or similar form in two or more States.

These eight points should serve as a basis for "policies, legislation and practice" (p. 3).

Part III of the Charter contains the most concrete and far-reaching provisions. Each state explicitly designates the languages to be included under this part. For languages which are recognised under Part III, a minimum of 35 concrete steps in the following eight fields must be undertaken: education, judicial authorities, administrative authorities and public services, media, cultural activities and facilities, economic and social life and trans-frontier exchanges. The steps are chosen by the states themselves out of a list of 68 options (Council of Europe, 2014).

Part IV of the Charter determines issues of application and monitoring. Each state party – preferably with the help of minority organisations - periodically reports (once every three years) about the developments of the undertakings to the Committee of Ministers. Once the State Report has been submitted, a Committee of Experts visits the minorities ratified under Part III in the different countries. Minority organisations are invited to attend a hearing. Based on the state report, the hearing and the impression of the Committee of Experts, a recommendation report for the national state is compiled. This report lists which undertakings are fulfilled and which undertakings deserve attention.

The FCNM is a legally binding instrument used for the protection of national minorities, which entered into force on 1 February 1998 (Council of Europe, ETS 157, 1994). By ratifying the Convention, parties must promote "full and effective equality of persons belonging to minorities in all areas of economic, social, political, public and cultural life together with conditions that will allow them to express, preserve and develop their culture, religion, language and traditions (Council of Europe, 2016b)." The FCNM also "provides guidelines for their linguistic freedom and rights regarding education".

The difference between the FCNM and the ECRML is that the FCNM protects the persons belonging to a national minority rather than the regional or minority language. States who have signed the FCNM must also submit state reports (once every five years) and receive visits of an Advisory Committee; this Committee reports back to the Committee of Ministers. The states also receive a recommendation report from the Committee of Ministers. As indicated in Section 1.1 above, the FCNM does not contain a definition of what constitutes a 'national minority'.

1.4. (Quasi-) Legal Developments in the EU

Under the subsidiarity principle, Member States of the EU deal with matters regarding language rights and education on a national level. However, throughout the years, several initiatives regarding regional and minority languages started at EU level. From 2007 until 2010, the EU had a Commissioner who was exclusively responsible for multilingualism, but the portfolio has since then been merged (again) with that of the Commissioner responsible for education and culture. Other relevant developments are mentioned below, but it should be borne in mind that we did not intend to give an exhaustive overview of the developments of the European Union in its relation to regional and minority languages.

The EU's most important 'human rights document', the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, stipulates that "any discrimination based on any ground such as sex, race, colour, ethnic or social origin, genetic features, language, religion or belief, political or any other opinion, membership of a national minority, property, birth, disability, age or sexual orientation shall be prohibited" (art. 21), and that the "the Union shall respect cultural, religious and linguistic diversity" (art. 22). Discrimination on the basis of belonging to a national minority is hence prohibited by EU law.

In 2006, the European Commission decided to form a High Level Group on Multilingualism, in order to exchange ideas and best practices concerning multilingualism and to formulate recommendations for action. This decision was the result of a 2005 Communication titled "A New Framework Strategy for Multilingualism" (COM(2005)596). In its final report, the Group stated that "the learning of other languages, and multilingual and intercultural competence are no doubt of direct relevance to economic growth, competitiveness, employability and social cohesion" (High Level Group on Multilingualism, 2007, p. 21). The report emphasised the need for information campaigns targeting a wide range in the public and private sector, including parents, about the importance of multilingualism: "Multilingualism (…) has the greatest significance for the good of society and for the well-being of individuals" (p. 21). The Group additionally stated that minority languages, "a constituent element of Europe's linguistic and cultural diversity", should be both maintained and further developed (p. 22). The group recommended the dissemination of language education case studies and multilingualism management in the indigenous communities of Europe.

Since 1983, Members of European Parliament from various minority regions have formed the Parliamentary Intergroup for Traditional Minorities, National Communities and Languages, which has frequently discussed minority language issues. In its 2011 report, it was concluded that it "is necessary to teach and learn each other's history via intercultural education, to teach and to learn each other's languages in both directions – not only the minority learning the majority language, but also the majority learning the minority language, leading to a better understanding of each other" (p. 61). The authors recommend the European Commission, as "Guardian of the Treaties", "to live up to this statement and act to protect Europe's national and linguistic minorities" (Gál, Hicks & Eplényi, 2011, p. 62).

The European Parliament resolution of 11 September 2013 on endangered European languages and linguistic diversity in the European Union (2013/2007(INI)) states, amongst other things, that the European Parliament "whereas teaching in people's mother tongue is the most effective way of learning" (…) calls on the European Union and the Member States to be more attentive to the extreme threat that many European languages, classified as endangered languages, are experiencing (…) and supports the reinforcement of teaching endangered languages with appropriate methodologies for students of all ages, including distance learning for the development of true European citizenship based on multiculturalism and linguistic pluralism" (OJ C 93, 9.3.2016, pp. 52-58). The text of the resolution was supported by Meirion Prys Jones' analysis in "Endangered Languages and Linguistic Diversity in the European Union," which was published by the European Parliament's Policy Department B for Structural and Cohesion Policies earlier that year.

1.5. EU Funded Projects

Under the Lifelong Learning Programme of the European Union (2007-2013), a key activity was developed especially for multilateral projects promoting language awareness and access to language learning resources. The programme has funded several European projects and networks aiming at the promotion of minority languages. Below, a few of the relevant (research) projects and their outcomes are discussed. More information on concrete recommendations can be found in the individual reports themselves.

One *Mercator Network* project ran from 2009 until 2011. In its three annual reports, published in 2009, 2010 and 2011, policy recommendations were made for the benefit of minority languages. All of these reports illustrate the importance of available information on the role of the mother tongue as prerequisite for school success and the importance of including minority languages into multicultural education (Mercator, 2009).

In its 2013 closing report, the *Language Rich Europe* consortium (2010-2013) formulated a number of key issues concerning education. One of its recommendations was that "the offer of languages other than the national language(s) should be adapted so that all students, regardless of their background, have the opportunity to learn the languages of their community, from pre-primary to university education" (British Council, 2013, p. 5).

The *RML2Future* Network for Multilingualism and Linguistic Diversity in Europe (2009-2012) was initiated to promote and support multilingualism in Europe, and thus the objective of the European Union that every citizen should master two foreign languages in addition to his or her mother tongue. The network was aimed at integrating minority languages into this EU objective. Six partners from multilingual regions in Europe were involved: FUEN, EURAC, DG, Højskolen Østersøn, NSKS and YEN. The cooperation between the partners resulted in a large number of activities, such as organising conferences about education (pre-school as well as adult education) and language promotion, the creation of a questionnaire for all the regions in order to obtain an impression of language transfer, use and attitudes and other activities for the promotion of multilingualism.

In February 2016, the *LEARNMe* project ("providing policy guidelines and recommendations for policy stakeholders in the field as well as for practitioners") published a White Paper including considerations "for educational standards in order to improve Linguistic Diversity in societies and for individuals in education". The report's considerations include "equal access to education, teacher training in (the benefits of) plurilingualism, the promotion of individual plurilingualism in children, and the right of all children to develop and learn their first language/mother tongue" (Mercator, 2016, p. 22).

The *NPLD2020* Network to Promote Linguistic Diversity (2013-2015) has recently published a 'Toolkit to Preserve Mother tongue', which describes the advantages of bilingualism and multilingualism and how linguistic skills can be preserved. Examples of successful bilingual and multilingual education in Europe can be found in the Basque Country and Luxembourg. CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning), European schools and International schools are mentioned as good practices throughout Europe.

1.6. Academic Literature and Grey Literature on the Topic

Aside from the project reports mentioned above, much has been written on the various aspects of minority languages in education. This section presents a short overview of the types of academic and grey literature that have been used for the production of the report. The literature can be divided into two different categories: publications discussing the situation of a small number of specific languages and publications addressing general issues surrounding minority language education or language diversity.

For the purposes of the present report, the category of 'specific publications' first and foremost concerns the series of *Regional Dossiers* published by the Mercator Research Centre. These dossiers form the basis for the various case studies. Each dossier documents the position of a specific minority language in the education system of one country. So far, 49 different languages have been covered, and many dossiers have had multiple revised editions. As far as possible, the dossiers are written by local experts. This guarantees the inclusion of up-to-date information, which is sometimes only available in the minority language itself. Each dossier provides information on how the language is incorporated in various levels of education, from pre-school to higher and adult education, both legally and in practice. The dossiers also reflect on the research that is done on the language and on the language's future prospects. For the creation of the case studies, information gathered in the *Regional Dossiers* was supplemented

with findings from scholarly publications on specific languages as well as from interviews with local experts.

The following publications, all of which have a more general approach, were especially useful for the comparative analysis of the case studies:

- *Support for Minority Languages in Europe* (2002) is an "analysis of Regional and Minority Language (RML) protection and promotion in the EU context" (p. 9). It was published by the European Centre for Minority Issues (ECMI) and the European Bureau for Lesser Used Languages (EBLUL), and was commissioned by the EC's Directorate General for Education and Culture. The focus of this report is on policy issues regarding RMLs; it aims to provide tools for the "European Union support to linguistic diversity" (p. 2). According to the report, maintenance of RMLs is mostly the responsibility of the regions themselves, but more support from the EU is necessary because some problems can be solved better at EU level than at national level. The report advises the EU to come up with a cross-border action programme with a focus on "widely accepted principles and policies" (p. 3) and clear criteria for ways to implement this support for RMLs as well as instruments for checking if the criteria are being followed.

- *The Development of Minimum Standards on Language Education in Regional and Minority Languages* (2007) is a report prepared by the Mercator Research Centre at the request of the Dutch province of Fryslân. It focuses on the ECRML and its relation to the learning and teaching of minority languages (De Jager & Van Der Meer, 2007). The authors recommend describing different educational models for the ECRML ratification levels: "countries that ratified the Charter at Level I should guarantee that both primary and secondary schools use the minority language as language of instruction for more than 50% of teaching time. (…) At Level II, these countries should provide a substantial part of education in the minority language. (…) At Level III, countries should provide minority language education integrated with history, music, arts in primary schools" (p. 26). An important recommendation that this report makes is to look at the practical issues of these educational models in the different communities, since countries vary in terms of their circumstances and since every group of minority speakers has its own set of needs and wishes. Other relevant recommendations for the Council of Europe are stimulating countries to provide high-quality teaching material for teaching the minority language, creating a supervisory body with inspectors who monitor minority language education and explaining the legal right of parents to choose minority language education.

- Another publication issued by the Mercator Research Centre, *Study on the Devolvement of Legislative Power & Provisions* (2008), has also been important for the analysis of the present report. Like the present report, this study was based on various European case studies, and it concluded (amongst other things) that "policies are most efficient when created in respect to the special linguistic situation of the region. Therefore, a ranking according to regions having more or less power is not sensible. The provision of good services is not dependent on how much legislative power is devolved to the regions but how the legal measures are implemented" (Mercator, 2008, p. 41).

- The *NPLD European Roadmap to Linguistic Diversity* (2015) centres upon developing a new approach to languages in the EU 2020 agenda. The report recommends the EU to promote the use of minority and regional languages, as they are an added value in socio-economic activity as well product marketing. The report additionally wants the EU to:

  > *"encourage Member States to provide official status, support, promotion and use of Europe's Constitutional, Regional and Minority languages. Support the*

> *recognition of languages with official status in any territory of the European Union as official languages of the European Union, provided these languages wish to accept this status. Adopt measures of visibility and support for Europe's less widely-used languages and include them in the new narrative of European prosperity. Work in close contact with the Council of Europe to further develop the impact of the Charter for Regional or Minority Languages and ensure that all EU Member States ratify the Charter, as appropriate to their jurisdiction. Support the inclusion of language rights within the Charter for Fundamental Rights"* (p. 16).

Additionally, this report stresses that there is a rising EU-wide awareness that all languages are vital in the "social and economic development of Europe, in ensuring cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue" (p. 20).

- *Education Provision Through Minority Languages: Review Of International Research* (2015) is a review of literature, practices and national policies regarding minority languages in education, prepared on the initiative of the Chomairle um Oideachas Gaeltachta agus Gaelscolaïchta (Council of Gaeltacht Schooling and Education, COGG). The review is focused on the situation of minority languages in education in ten different regions worldwide: Welsh in Wales, Basque in Spain, Catalan in Spain, Diné or Navajo in the USA, French in the bilingual regions in Canada, Frisian in the Netherlands, Gàidhlig in Scotland, Hawaiian in Hawaii, Māori in New Zealand and Swedish in Finland (p. 4). Its overall conclusion is "that saving the minority language is not the concern of the school alone, and that a language planning process with appropriate funding from the State must be implemented" (Ó Duibhir, Ní Chuaig, Ní Thuairisg & Ó Brolcháin, 2015, p. 109). The BAC region and Wales are seen as good examples in Europe.

A number of the investigation lines followed in the above reports are pursued further in the analysis below. Of course, there is the question of which legal and practical approaches can be taken up as best practices for other languages. As educational practices change and new approaches are initiated constantly, this question always generates new answers. Another important factor to consider is the question at what level responsibility for minority language education should lie for this type of education to be as effective as possible. And what can the EU do to support supranational efforts?

2. OUTCOME CASE STUDIES: COMPARISON AND ANALYSIS

This chapter is an in-depth analysis, based on the findings of the case studies in Annex 2. During the research conducted for the writing of these case studies, as well as the comparative analysis carried out after the cases were finished, several findings could be noted. The paragraphs of this chapter have been shaped in accordance with these interrelations. All of this chapter's paragraphs list, when possible, the best practices and challenges of that specific interrelation.

2.1. Official language status

There is a large difference in how languages are looked upon and recognised. In some countries, the minority language is regarded as the official or co-official language of the nation-state. Examples are the Basque language in Spain, the co-official language in three of the four provinces where Basque is spoken (in the BAC region), the Frisian language in the Dutch province of Fryslân, where it is the second official language of the state, and Wales, where Welsh is the official language together with English. In the case of Ireland, Irish is the first official language of the state and English the second official language of the country. Sometimes the nation-state has recognised the minority language (under the ECRML) or the minority community itself as an official minority, for example the Sorbian population in Germany.

At the other end of the spectrum, there are the languages spoken by the Polish minority in Lithuania and the Basque minority in France. Both countries state in their Constitution that the official language of the countries shall be Lithuanian and French, respectively. However, it must be noted that although these two minorities are not explicitly recognised, the Constitution or other regional laws protect the respective rights of the minorities to some extent.

2.2. ECRML and FCNM

When discussing minority languages in Europe, one needs to consider the relevant treaties of the Council of Europe, in particular the ECRML and the FCNM. Some background information on these documents can be found in Chapter 1.

The majority of the nation-states involved in the case studies that this report analyses have signed the ECRML (see Table 1). Some languages are recognised under Part III of the ECRML. However, Ireland did not sign the Charter because the Irish language is the official (majority) language, and the ECRML is specifically aimed at regional and minority languages. France signed the ECMRL in 1999, but did not ratify it. One of the reasons for France not to ratify the ECMRL lies in the fact that this would be against the Constitution, which states that there is only one language in France. Lithuania did not sign the ECMRL, as their Constitution also calls for only one official language in the nation-state. This means that minority languages in France and Lithuania have very few rights to claim.

However, having signed the ECRML is not always a prerequisite for the development of best practices, because other elements such as historic, political, economic and legal aspects also play an important role in this respect. Although Italy did not ratify the Charter, the case of South Tyrol can in many ways be regarded as a best practice. In South Tyrol, all official documents are available in the region's two official languages (Italian and German). From pre-school until secondary school, education can be followed in either Italian or German. The region's public administration is also bilingual. This, however, is only possible because the region is economically strong and fairly wealthy. It therefore has the autonomy to distribute budgets in the way that the minority would like it to. The fact that Italy has not signed or

ratified the ECRML for the German language does not play a negative role in the case of South Tyrol, because the bilingual character of the region is preserved quite successfully.

Furthermore, the effectiveness of signing and ratifying the ECRML always depends on the national or regional implementation of the elements that have been signed. In Slovakia and Romania, for instance, the Hungarian language is listed under Part III of the Charter. However, in the case of Slovakia, the *State Language Act*, which gives priority to the Slovak language over the minority languages spoken in the territory, opposes the ECRML's goal of facilitating the use of minority languages.

In other case studies, such as the Frisian language in the Netherlands, the Welsh language in Wales or the Sorbian language in Germany, the ECRML serves as a useful framework for legal implementations. Countries that have signed the ECRML (and the FCNM) have regular monitoring rounds. These can serve as a reminder as well as a stimulation for the signatories of the ECRML to take care of their minorities and their regional and minority languages.

2.3. Demographics

In most cases, a minority language is used in a clearly defined area or territory. This is nearly always the case for languages that do not have a kin-state, such as the languages in Wales, the Basque country, Saxony and Brandenburg, and Fryslân. The Hungarian-speaking minority in Slovenia also lives in a clearly defined area, namely the Pomurje region near the Hungarian border. The Romani and Beash languages have a different position however, these languages are not (historically) bound to a certain region, but are spoken in a variety of countries. Of course, this does not mean that regions where a minority language is spoken cannot be highly ethnically and linguistically mixed. It should also be noted that people who belong to an ethnic or linguistic minority can live in other parts of the country or abroad. Still, in the above-mentioned cases it can be assumed that the traditionally recognised region where (often a majority of) the minority language-speaking population resides is clearly defined.

In general, it is easier to provide certain provisions specifically aimed at a minority when the minority community resides in a clearly identified territory. Most states apply this territorial principle, for instance Frisian, Basque and Welsh schools are only available in the area that is marked as the area where the minority traditionally resides. Furthermore, nation-states are increasingly likely to grant a minority more rights when this minority is the majority in a region.

A challenge in this respect is presented by the case of the Hungarian minority in Slovakia and Romania. Both countries apply a threshold of a 20% share of the population in a municipality, before any language can be incorporated into the municipal administration. With this threshold, Hungarian is excluded from administrative and public use in areas where Hungarian is spoken by less than 20%. This percentage is measured and established during each census. This means that the Hungarian minority could still be quite large, for example 19% of the region's population, and have no Hungarian provisions whatsoever in their region. Depending on each census, this provision can change every time a census is conducted. In practice, this could lead to schools needing to change their educational provisions in Hungarian every time a census is conducted, which is something that could heavily interrupt the continuity of Hungarian language education (Marácz, personal communication, November 30, 2016).

2.4. Relation to and support by the kin-state

For minority languages with a kin-state, as is the case for German (South Tyrol), Hungarian (Slovenia, Slovakia and Romania), Polish (Lithuania) and Swedish (Finland), the relation with the kin-state is an important factor on various levels. In the case of the Hungarian minority in Slovakia and Romania, the situation is politically sensitive. The tenuous relationship between

Slovakia and Hungary appears to be hindering the further development of Hungarian language education in Slovakia (Lük, 2012). In the case of Hungary and Slovenia, the situation is completely different. After the dismantling of the Iron Curtain, Hungary and Slovenia have made an agreement on recognising each other's minorities and languages, something which is mutually beneficial for both countries (Marácz, personal communication, November 30, 2016). The stability between the two countries can be judged as progressive and a contributing factor to the development and the current stable position of Hungarian language education (Marácz, personal communication, November 30, 2016). The difference between Slovenia on the one hand, and Slovakia and Romania on the other, is that in the border region Pomurje in Slovenia, the Hungarian population is relatively small and concentrated, whereas the Hungarian minority in Slovakia and Romania is more unevenly spread around the country. In the case of Slovenia and Hungary, bilinguals have more opportunities on the job market because there are many companies that conduct business in both countries.

Not only political support from the kin-state is important, but financial support can also play an important role for minorities. However, whether financial support from another country (the language's kin-state in this case) can actually play a role also depends on the political relationship between the two countries. In the case of Romania, for example, the Hungarian minority cannot be financially supported in a direct manner, because this is a politically sensitive matter. The Hungarian government therefore supports NGOs that will be able to advance the Hungarian minority in Romania.

Specific advantages can also be given by the kin-state in the form of indirect support. For example, the Polish Ministry of Education offers a programme exclusively for Lithuanians of Polish origin to enrol at a Polish university. These students receive grants offered by the ministry and do not have to pay study fees (Wicherkiewicz, personal communication, November 24, 2016).

2.5. Degree of devolvement, level of commitment and support by the nation-state

The case studies clearly indicate that merely recognising a language is not enough. It is more important to give languages certain rights, written down in national laws or autonomy statutes. This can be done in multiple ways. Although not all the case studies specifically describe the importance of a nation-state's commitment, a number of best practices and challenges can be identified.

The degree of devolvement of governmental powers plays an important role. The BAC region has a high degree of autonomy in Spain. The Basque language is supported by the public government of the BAC region, and the language enjoys political priority. This concretely means that parties are willing to (financially) invest in the language (Gardner, 2005). The German minority in South Tyrol also enjoys a considerable degree of autonomy in their region, as South Tyrol is an autonomous province. The level of self-government is quite high in the province, which means that the region can choose where and how to invest tax money. Public administration is bilingual and all public services are offered bilingually. According to Huber (personal communication, November 29, 2016), the level of autonomy and the ability to choose to invest in bilingual services is an important contributing factor for the bilingual organisation of the services. The Autonomy statute grants the population in South Tyrol the right to speak all recognised languages on every level.

Granting autonomy is not the sole way to ensure that minority rights are properly implemented. A focus on the minority language, instead of the minority as a population, can be beneficial as well. In this respect, the case of Hungarian in Slovenia can be regarded as a best practice. Pomurje is a Slovenian border region, which has Hungarian as one of its official languages.

Slovenia signed the *Act of Implementing Special Rights* in 2001, which regulates bilingual education in Pomurje and states that also outside of the bilingual region, Hungarian should be offered as an elective course (Lük, 2012). According to Hungarian language expert Marácz (November 30, 2016), the Hungarian minority in Pomurje has effectively made use of all the (realistic) possibilities available for the language in the region's education system. The status of Hungarian language education in the region can therefore be assessed as 'as good as possible'. In Wales the regional government is focused on the language as well. The Welsh government is highly committed to increasing the number of Welsh speakers from 300,000, to 1 million in 2050 (M. Jones, Personal communication, November 14, 2016), which can be seen as a promising basis for an increased effort by the Welsh government for Welsh language education. A responsibility that thus this government recognises as (partly) lying with the public authority.

With regard to the nation-state, the cases studied in this report also examined a few challenging situations that directly affect education in that specific minority language. This is specifically the case with the Hungarian minority in Romania and Slovakia. For example, the Slovakian *State Language Law* (1995) was amended in 2009 to actively protect the national language (Slovak) against minority languages such as the Hungarian language (Vančo, 2016).

Another element that this report indicates as being of major importance for the survival of minority languages is the extent of institutional support that a minority group can rely on. Institutional support is necessary, for example, for the production of teaching material, language planning, language courses, awareness raising, (in-service) teacher training, information on educational methods in all levels of education, to mention but a few areas. Wales, for instance, has a strong level of institutional support which can be considered a best practice. In the case of Fryslân, too, several supporting institutions are available.

2.6. Language planning

Another factor that plays a crucial role in the success of minority languages, in education as well as in other areas, is language planning. Language planning is closely related to institutional support and support from the nation- state. The nation-state (or in some cases the autonomous government) needs to provide stimulating conditions for language planning, such the availability of monetary means. The institutions (or in some cases the regional government) also need to put language planning into effect.

Some minority regions can serve as an example for other minority regions. Wales and the BAC region are often regarded as best practices. Despite the fact that Wales also faces challenges in its (educational) system, delegations from other minority regions often travel to Wales to study the region's language planning procedures and the way in which the bilingual system is functioning. For instance, the minorities in Germany have an identified need for a language plan. The Secretariat for Minorities in Berlin is therefore planning to travel to Wales to learn about the way in which the Welsh are putting language planning into practice (not only in education, but also in the health sector and the economy) (Walde, personal communication, November 29, 2016). This exchange shows a need for (international) cooperation and exchange of best practices. This also applies to teachers, who are able to benefit from witnessing and learning about the bilingual teaching methods used in Wales (Walde, personal communication, November 29, 2016).

A best practice specifically with regard to language planning and education is the 2010 Welsh education strategy, a five-year plan that sets targets for the language. This plan came to an end in 2015, but will be extended soon (M. Jones, personal communication, November 14, 2016). Other best practices regarding the Welsh language can be found in the case study of Wales in Annex 2. Language planning is also necessary for the promotion of the language,

transmission of the language within the family, the use of the language outside of school and for making companies and other public sectors aware of the advantages of multilingualism. Some minority languages are struggling with the low perceived prestige of their languages, which means that language planning could also be important in this respect.

2.7. Choice of educational model

Currently, several models are in place for teaching minority languages in Europe. Many of these were created on the basis of traditional forms of teaching the national language. The minority language was often simply added in the school curriculum, either as a subject or as a medium of instruction. Still, schools frequently incorporate a minority language in their educational model without sufficient knowledge about the applicability of other optional models. On the other hand, it should also be borne in mind that the selection of an educational model is not simply a question of 'one-size-fits-all'. The actual choice should depend on a variety of factors, such as national laws and regulations, available budgets, the number of languages, language conflicts, language distance between the minority language and the national language, awareness of schools for the need of multilingual models, and finally the number of students.

New insights and strategies for teaching multiple languages are continuously being developed and tested, (scientific) insights are expanded and improved, and new educational models are developed and reflected upon. This is one of the main reasons why it is so important to exchange best practices and to share knowledge and experiences between (bilingual) regions in Europe. The recent developments in the EU regarding migrants and refugees and the influx of many 'new' languages have created a strong need to re-evaluate traditional school models. Different research projects in this field are currently ongoing in Europe.

Minority language educational models can be monolingual, bilingual or trilingual. In case of the latter, the national language is used together with the regional or minority language in addition to a third foreign language (often English). Instruction methods also differ, but many experts refer to 'immersion education' as a best practice for their region. Immersion teaching is a method in which students are taught in the second language, so the second language is used as medium of instruction. Immersion education can take place in different formats, from complete immersion to partial immersion. Introduced in the 1990s, what is now known as CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning) offers a new approach of learning a language in a far broader scope than language teaching alone. With CLIL, proficiency can be developed in both the non-language subject and the language in which it is taught. It is a specific approach which revolves around teaching a non-language subject through a foreign language. In our case studies, CLIL is often not specifically mentioned as such, but a variety of languages are in fact taught with this method.

In most recent years, an increasing amount of experiments have taken place with so-called 'translanguaging' methods. Translanguaging is a dynamic process in which multilingual language students can fluidly use multiple languages in the classroom (Garcia & Wei, 2014). Some best practices are found in this report's case studies, but one needs to note that a model is never directly applicable to other regions. What is important is that the idea behind the applied educational model works well for a specific region or situation, a similar idea can work well in other regions as well, when applied to the specific situation of the minority or regional language in that region. A few best practices in the field of primary education are highlighted in the success story boxes.

A best practice in Frisian primary schools is an experiment with a trilingual educational model, which started as an experiment with seven schools in 1997. This is an on-going project, which currently involves 72 trilingual primary schools. A trilingual school has Dutch, English and Frisian as language of instruction. Since the experiment showed that greater time investments

in Frisian and English – as subjects as well as the medium of instruction – does not have any negative effects on students' Dutch language skills, roughly 50 schools have already initiated a process of becoming trilingual schools. This number increased to 72 in 2016 and is predicted to continue to increase (Staat der Nederlanden & Provinsje Fryslân, 2013).

In the majority of the regions examined in this report, pre-school and primary education in the minority language is possible to some extent. The educational model, the time that is dedicated to the subject and the teaching method all differ per region. For some regions, such as the province of Fryslân, introducing a multilingual educational model in secondary education is a relatively challenging task. In this province, there is a great need for continuity in secondary school. There is an obligation for schools to teach Frisian, but most secondary schools only do so in their first-year programmes. In other regions, immersion education, trilingual models or bilingual models are used as educational models. Again, this differs per region: it is impossible to develop tailor-made approaches that are applicable for all cases.

It is important to note that it works well to have a continuous learning line from primary school up to secondary school and even vocational education. This means that pupils start following a specific model as early as pre-school which is then continued in primary school and secondary school or even beyond.

Almost all regions encounter problems with the education programmes they offer in vocational or higher education. At the same time, there is an identified need for vocational educational students in specific sectors, such as health care, kindergarten and primary education and finally youth work.

Box: Success Story Fryslân

SUCCESS STORY

Primary School 'De Flambou' in Oosterbierum is a trilingual school (Dutch, Frisian, English) which incorporates migrant languages, mostly Polish and Arabic. In this school, parents are involved in a project where they read to their children in the home language. This is beneficial for the children as well as for the parents and the school, because in this way the parents are more involved in their children's learning process. Another project of the school is the so-called 'Vakantie-taalboek' (Holiday Language Book) in which the children are asked to fill a notebook with words and sentences they have learned in other languages during their holiday abroad.

Source: Duarte & Riemersma, 2016.

Box: Success Story Ireland

SUCCESS STORY

There is one specific primary school whose language policy appears to be a best practice on its own. This school is called Scoil Bhríde, is located in Dublin and has a relatively low amount of Irish speakers and a relatively high (80% of the 322 pupils in 2016) amount of students whose first language is not English. The school's open language policy (no restrictions on individual language use, based on the assumption that language is a tool for learning) and large focus on multilingual learning encourage all children to become active participants in matters regarding language. This also motivates Irish speakers heavily, as they do not want to be left behind in an environment where languages are treated as an advantage. The results in Irish language tests and exams at this school are unusually high in comparison to other schools in the area and country.

Source: Little, 2016

Box: Success Story BAC region

SUCCESS STORY

In the BAC region in Spain, students can choose between a Spanish-language (sometimes with Basque as a subject), a Basque-language and a bilingual education model. Some schools offer multiple models, so parents can choose the model their children follow at their schools. Currently (2016), about 85-90% of school-starting children are enrolled in the Basque language model in the BAC region (Gorter, personal communication, November 17, 2016). In Spanish-language models where Basque is offered as an elective subject (on a voluntary basis, as Basque is not a mandatory subject), Basque is taught for an average of three to four hours per week. Since parents can choose what language model their children follow at school, this system enables students to receive their education in Basque without having to go to another (specifically bilingual or Basque-language) school, which thus lowers the threshold for minority language education. The best practices above are specifically applicable to primary education.

Source: Case study Basque in Spain, 2016.

2.8. Information on language learning and awareness

Not only the choice for an educational model is important, but it is also important that schools are informed about the different models, so that they can make an informed decision about the way they will conduct language learning at their respective school. This can be done by the above-mentioned exchange of information, but also by ensuring that relevant scientific research on this subject reaches a wide variety of schools. Schools can then create a language plan on the basis of this information. The 'monolingual ideology' is quite prominent in some regions, and therefore a paradigm shift towards a multilingual approach (Duarte & Riemersma, 2016) is necessary. In that light, thoughts must be changed; multilingualism should not only be seen as an economic advantage, but it should be seen as a desirable goal, a cognitive advantage, a resource for learning and a normal condition instead (Meier, forthcoming).

2.9. Teaching material

In view of the different situations in multiple countries, it can be concluded that teaching material for teaching in the minority language forms a general challenge shared by all cases. Minorities that have a kin-state can often depend on teaching material from the kin-state, but it must also be noted that the development of a minority language's own teaching material (instead of importing it or translating it from the majority language) can be beneficial for a minority, because such material can convey or incorporate the region-specific cultural values and cultural embeddedness that are often present in teaching material (Ferreira, 2016).

The situation of the Hungarian language in Romania and the Polish language in Lithuania needs to be specifically mentioned here. Hungarian language education providers are not allowed to use Hungarian teaching material at their schools in Romania, as the Romanian government requires all books and materials that are used in education to be accredited by the state. Hungarian language schools therefore often translate Romanian material into Hungarian (Papp, forthcoming). Another challenge for the same minority is the cost-efficient translation and editing of specific textbooks for specific fields, as there is only a small demand for these books. In Lithuania, teaching material is also a challenge, despite the support that the Polish state offers the Polish minority in Lithuania with regard to teaching material and books (Wicherkiewicz, personal communication, November 24, 2016). Some teachers do in fact make an effort to gather teaching material from Poland, or they make their own Polish teaching material, but booklets that are used in pre-schools, for example, are only published in Lithuanian, so teachers in Polish pre-schools, even though they teach in Polish, use Lithuanian teaching material. In general, minorities face the issue that the market for teaching material is

relatively small. This means that not all the material can be commercially produced and that additional funding is necessary for producing teaching material. An example of a solution is the case of South Tyrol and the BAC region, where the autonomous governments are committed to cover the costs of teaching material.

Best practices are found in the BAC region, Ireland and Wales. Generally, these countries have a number of publishers who produce and publish teaching material for primary and secondary education. In the BAC region, teaching material for vocational education is often not commercially available, but the Department of Education of the BAC region has tried to resolve this issue by giving teachers the possibility to be relieved of their teaching responsibilities for three months. They can take a three to four-week Basque refresher course and then prepare teaching materials with guidance from the organisation IRALE, an institute for teacher literacy and second language learning (of Basque).

Furthermore, it is important that teaching material is available in the minority language for different subjects that use the minority language as the language of instruction and not only for teaching the language as a separate subject. In Fryslân, there is a lack of teaching material for subjects such as history or mathematics (Riemersma, personal communication, September 21, 2016). For the Sorbian languages, different textbooks are available for pupils who learn Sorbian as a mother tongue, as a second language and as a foreign language. Textbooks in Upper Sorbian are available for mathematics, general knowledge and religious instruction (Brězan & Nowak, 2016). This can be regarded as a best practice. Sometimes, German material is translated; at other times, own Sorbian material is used.

2.11. Quality and Qualification of Teachers

Another overall challenge that is identified in the case studies is the quality and qualification of teachers. In Fryslân, for example, the majority of teachers is not qualified to teach the Frisian language. Regions that demand that the teaching of the minority language should be done through mother tongue speakers especially suffer from a deficit of teachers. Basque education also relies on teachers who are non-native speakers, and these often have difficulties attaining the required level of competence in Basque.

The Irish Inspectorate has also observed weaknesses in the Irish language skills of teachers. In more than half of the classes observed by the inspectorate, the quality of teaching and the Irish language qualifications of teachers were mediocre to low. In Wales, there is a low demand (from students) in vocational training to learn or be taught in Welsh. This low demand is partly due to the lack of encouragement from colleges that offer vocational education.

The Sorbian system wants to include native and non-native Sorbian speakers, but it is difficult to teach on a level that is both good enough for mother tongue speakers as well as for non-native speakers. Furthermore, there are not enough teachers to successfully teach children under Konzept2plus. This is a teaching method where both Sorbian and German plus additional languages are used. In the Federal State of Brandenburg, not all teachers are native speakers of Sorbian.

In the BAC region and Wales, strategies are found to stimulate teachers to learn or be trained in the minority language. Of course, such training programmes cost more time and require sufficient monetary means. As was mentioned above, the Basque Department of Education enables teachers to lay down their teaching duties for a period of three months, when they can enrol in a three to four-week Basque refresher course. Assisted by IRALE, they may then continue to prepare new teaching materials.

In Wales, prospective secondary teachers can study for a Postgraduate Certificate of Education in the subject of Welsh, but there has been a shortage of students in the past decade. This is why the Welsh government has provided grants for potential students, in order to stimulate the studying of this subject. It is also possible to study Welsh as a subject via a Graduate Teacher Programme whilst already working as a teacher in a primary school or teaching another subject at a secondary school. Moreover, the Welsh government has founded a Sabbatical Scheme in Welsh-language training for teachers at primary and secondary schools and Further Education institutions.

In the Sorbian region, professional schools in both Saxony and Brandenburg have the possibility to allocate the training places under a so-called 'hardship provision', a provision similar to a scholarship, which is granted to Sorbian students because they are members of a minority. When students sign a document before beginning such studies, they are guaranteed a job upon successfully completing their programme (Walde, personal communication, November 29, 2016). Not only is it important to stimulate students to engage in teacher training in the minority language, but it is also significant to learn how teaching in a multilingual environment should be done.

2.12 Positive encouragement for minority language speakers

Besides positive encouragement for teacher training programmes in a minority language, this report also examines other encouraging measures, such as financial stimulation measures. Sorbian nursery groups, for example, receive financial support from the Foundation for Sorbian people. As another example, if a student in the BAC region chooses to pursue his or her PhD in Basque, that student can receive an extra scholarship.

2.13 Career perspectives

From the analysis of the case studies it becomes apparent that proficiency in the minority language of the region can be an advantage for job seekers. This is especially the case for teachers, candidates for public positions, small regional businesses, regional health care facilities and international companies that conduct business in areas where the minority language is spoken on both sides of the border.

Although a minority language is often deemed to be 'beneficial' in different fields in the public and private sector, the languages in the BAC region in Spain, Ireland, Wales in the United Kingdom and South Tyrol in Italy are sometimes even regarded as 'required' for positions in the public sector. In the BAC region in Spain, Basque language skills are considered an advantage to such a degree that it motivates Spanish-speaking parents to send their children to a school with a Basque language educational model, in order to strengthen their children's future position in the job market. An important shared characteristic of these regions is that they all have a certain extent of political autonomy. In these cases, the language is the first or second official language of the government in that region.

In the Netherlands (Fryslân) and Germany (Saxony and Brandenburg), the respective regions are less autonomous, but the minority languages in question are recognised as languages belonging to the nation, and they derive certain rights from this recognition. These languages play an important role in education in their respective regions, thereby creating a need for language teachers. Small regional businesses and organisations (such as health care organisations) in Fryslân, Saxony and Brandenburg have an expressed need for minority language speakers in their daily work, especially with regard to communication with customers or patients, for instance (Riemersma & De Jong, 2007; Brězan & Nowak, 2016). Being educated in the regional or minority language can therefore definitely be seen as a plus in these regions. Although there is a (researched) need, the awareness of the benefits that the use of a minority

language can bring for organisations and companies in the region still seems to be lacking. It appears that the promotion of a multilingual work environment continues to remain an area in which much progress can be made.

In relation to the career perspectives of people skilled in a minority language, one must pay specific attention to bilinguals, and more specifically to bilinguals who live in border regions where the minority language in question is the majority language on the other side of the border (in the kin-state). In this paper's case studies, this concerns the Hungarian language in Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia, the Swedish language in Finland, the German language in South Tyrol and the Polish language in Lithuania. However, the career perspectives for minority language learners differ significantly in each of these countries. On the basis of the established differences between the Hungarian language in Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia, one can say that a stable and positive relationship between two countries is a much more definite factor for increased career opportunities for bilinguals than would be possible in a more precarious relationship. For instance, in the border region of Pomurje in Slovenia, all people who have studied Hungarian but who are also fluent in the Slovene language can experience advantages from these multilingual capabilities, be it when they apply for a position with a public institution (in both countries in the border region), with a company that conducts business in both countries or with an exchange project between the two nation states. However, the situation is completely different in Slovakia and Romania, where the national governments are much less concerned with the status of their minority languages, partly due to the less positive relationship between Hungary on the one hand and Slovakia and Romania on the other hand. In the latter two countries, there is a lack of status and a less significant position on the job market for Hungarian speakers. In Romania, one may even go so far as to qualify mastery of the Hungarian language as a disadvantage. Children have been shown to become less well skilled in the majority language of the country (Romanian) when they exclusively follow Hungarian language education, a language which gives them little advantage in the Romanian job market.

A few of the case studies included in this report indicate that studying a minority language can have significant and quite tangible results. In Wales (Welsh) and Hungary (Romani and Beash), for instance, students can receive a specific certificate after having studied the language (in separate courses or a programme in Higher Education). In Wales, this is called the Welsh Language Skills certificate, and it aims to assist the recipients of the certificate in the job market. In Hungary, a certificate of proficiency in the Lóvári language (a dialect of the Romani language, mostly spoken by Romani people living in Hungary) has equal status to a certificate of proficiency in English or German; obtaining the certificate is accordingly reflected in the level of the holder's salary.

3 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

KEY FINDINGS

- There is no **one-size-fits-all** best practice suitable for all minorities.
- By recognising a language as a **co-official or official state language**, the state commits itself to taking concrete measures in order **to protect and promote** this language.
- It is the **nation-state** that needs to implement the necessary measures they have agreed to.
- **Institutional support** and **language planning** are of fundamental importance when it comes to minority education.
- A widely recognised problem regarding minority language education that needs to be addressed is the **availability** of high-quality **teaching material** and skilled minority language **teachers**.
- **Stable** relationships between nation-states need to be nurtured.
- The **exchange** of **scientific knowledge**, **practical models, best practices** and **challenges** needs to be stimulated among regions.
- **Teacher training** programmes need to pay attention to **multilingual** and **multicultural** teaching.

The thirteen case studies presented in this report are highly different, not only in terms of their history, political and economic situations, but also in terms of their geographic distribution and being a minority with a kin-state, to mention but a few aspects. This makes it quite a challenge to compare these case studies. One should note that a best practice for one country can be a challenge for another country. Additionally, a best practice can simultaneously be a challenge. For example, the education system in South Tyrol is highly monolingual for the two languages Italian and German, meaning that parents can send their children to either German or Italian schools. This is often regarded by other countries as a best practice. However, the other side of the coin is that this monolingual system does not reflect the multilingual society (Huber, personal communication, November 22, 2016).

In sum, best practices and challenges must always take into account the specific situation of each individual country, including that country's educational, administrative, political and legal characteristics. There is no 'one-size-fits-all' practice that will be suitable for all minorities. Still, some best practices and challenges can be highlighted in order to provide a construct which can be modified on the basis of a specific situation and which can lead to other best practices. This concluding section aims to present a value judgement on how best practices and challenges function and how they correlate with regard to our thirteen case studies. Based upon these conclusions, a range of recommendations are made, aimed at assisting both the EU and its Member States in further developing minority language education. These recommendations are listed below.

To maintain and promote programmes focused on the exchange of experiences and best practices concerning regional and minority languages in Europe

This reports recommends that the European Union stimulate the exchange of scientific knowledge, practical models and other best practices and challenges among regions with respect to regional and minority languages in Europe. The European Union should support this exchange by stimulating programmes which focus on the exchange of knowledge, not only between regional governments or institutions, but also between researchers, schools, teachers and students.

There is an identified need for EU-wide cooperation between providers of minority language education. Teachers and school principals will benefit from such cooperation by learning from each other's experiences and best practices and by witnessing how such a practice is put into practice in the classroom. Additionally, it would be beneficial for teachers to expand their knowledge in in-service training courses, for example (if applicable) in the kin-state of the respective language. Not only exchange on the level of teachers is necessary. Some regions and schools have implemented measures in order to counter the shortage of qualified teachers in minority regions. Therefore, delegates from (regional) governments could also profit from this exchange of knowledge and concrete examples. Following a summer school could be another example of an in-service exchange. It is important for teachers to be stimulated to undertake such activities; this could be done, for example, by rewarding teachers with credits for expanding their expertise. The EU has recognised this necessity and is already facilitating such exchanges, for example via the Erasmus+ programme. It appears that the exchange of knowledge between different European minorities is a practice of continued importance.

To promote EU-wide research on education, language learning and instruction models in a multilingual context

This report recommends to expand research not only on language planning in a European perspective and the development of concrete educational models, but also on what the European Union could do in order to support this. New insights and strategies are continuously developed and tested; the development of new educational models is an ongoing process. Further scientific research on this theme can lead to new and other insights into multilingual teaching. Such research can have a positive effect on the influx of migrant languages in classrooms as well.

More research needs to be done on the highest level of quality and effectiveness that can be achieved in international exchanges between minority languages. In addition, research as reported in the annual Mercator Network reports in 2009, 2010 and 2011 as well as research in the field of teacher training at bilingual or trilingual schools should be conducted, and best practices in this specific field should be distributed.

Little research is available on the career perspectives of minority language speakers. Although this report has touched upon this subject, there is still a wide range of potential research material that can be taken into account for much more extensive research on this topic.

To invest in the development of high-quality teaching material in minority languages for all educational levels

The European Union should encourage its Member States to facilitate the development of educational material for minority languages. The availability of high-quality and up-to-date teaching materials, especially in the field of vocational training and for more specific subjects, is a pitfall which has been identified in nearly all of the case studies. It is vital for providers of regional and minority language education to have access to up-to-date and high-quality

teaching material. Especially bilingual and immersion education providers have a need for teaching material on all, or many, subjects in the respective language. In many minority language regions, such material still needs to be developed, and providers need to have the monetary means and the knowledge to be able to do so. Additionally, the development of a minority language's own teaching material (instead of importing it or translating it from the majority language) can be beneficial for a minority because of the region-specific cultural values and cultural embeddedness this encompasses. In some regions, the regional or autonomous government is willing to cover the costs for teaching material. However, this is not the case for all minorities. In some regions, the demand for teaching material is low because of low numbers of language learners, and therefore it is difficult to produce the necessary material commercially.

This recommendation is in line with the objectives laid out in the ECRML, with one of the conclusions of the 2015 AThEME project, and also with Point 17 of the European Parliament resolution of 11 September 2013 on endangered European languages and linguistic diversity in the European Union (2013/2007(INI)).

To promote stable relationships between countries, especially in border regions where both languages are spoken

The European Union should invest in and nurture stable and good relationships between Member States, so that minorities do not become the victims of political tension between states. While it can be an advantage to be a minority with a kin-state, such a relation to the kin-state can also lead to particular challenges. The latter depends on the relation between the two states involved. The differences between the Hungarian language in Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia offer a good example of the importance of a positive relationship between two countries, not only concerning the educational programme for a minority language, but also with respect to career perspectives. When there is a stable relationship between two states that have minorities residing on both sides of the border (for example Slovenes in Hungary and Hungarians in Slovenia), there are mutual benefits in terms of recognition, concrete rights and legal measures that minorities can be given in this situation. In other cases, the kin-state has the ability to assist its minority on the other side of the border in terms of finances or education. An example of this is the opportunities that Poland offers for members of the Polish minority in Lithuania. All Lithuanians from the Polish speaking minority are allowed to apply and attend Polish universities free of charge. However, when the relationship between countries is tenser, the nation-state where a minority resides can block or actively work against such measures.

To develop an international reward system which stimulates teachers to become proficient in teaching in a multilingual classroom

The European Union should create a framework in which teachers are stimulated to undertake activities that expand their expertise in teaching (in) a regional or minority language. The availability of qualified teachers, and especially a lack of such teachers, is a challenge that is found multiple times in our case studies. It is seen as a best practice to have teachers who are mother tongue speakers of the minority languages, and in some minority regions this is even a requirement for potential teachers. However, it is often difficult to find enough mother tongue speakers who are willing and able to teach the language or use it as a medium of instruction.

Teaching students in a multilingual environment requires different skills from teachers than teaching in a monolingual environment. Therefore, it is important that teacher training programmes pay attention to multilingual (and often multicultural) teaching. This is beneficial not only for teachers in minority language regions, but also with respect to the influx of migrant languages in education.

To raise awareness for multilingualism throughout Europe

The European Union should provide an educational environment where multilingualism is viewed as an asset instead of a challenge. It appears that working on intergenerational language transmission, using the language outside of school, securing the status or prestige of the language, and finally people's awareness of the advantages of multilingualism in education and work environments are all elements that are important in furthering minority language education.

When it comes to career perspectives, it is apparent that in a variety of case studies being skilled in the (minority) language of that region is perceived as an advantage for job seekers. In Wales, South Tyrol, the Basque country and Ireland, speaking the minority language is even a requirement when pursuing a career in the public services. An important shared characteristic of these regions is that they all have a certain degree of political autonomy in which the language has a co-official or official status.

In other regions such as Fryslân and Saxony and Brandenburg, a passive or active knowledge of the language can be a merit for jobs in a variety of fields. However, although there is an identified need for minority language provision in these areas (on the part of organisations and businesses), the awareness of the benefits associated with using a minority language still seems to be low. In these two regions, especially with regard to positions in the health care sector, Kindergarten and primary school education or public functions, the language can be an advantage.

In view of the above, the active promotion of the advantages of multilingualism is a field in which the EU could and should (under the objectives of the *Lisbon treaty*) offer constructive support. In 2007, the High Level Group on Multilingualism noted this need in a similar manner and emphasised the necessity for information campaigns to target a wide audience in the public and private sector, including parents, particularly with respect to the importance of multilingualism.

To stimulate Member States to ratify the relevant treaties for proper legal language recognition

EU Member States should ratify legal instruments such as the FCNM and the ECRML, and they should implement the corresponding measures. The EU should stimulate Member States to do so. In order to receive education in a minority language, not only the educational model or specific conditions for education are important in this perspective, but also the legislative, political and administrative contexts are significant. Indeed, it appears that legal recognition and concrete legal measures to ensure rights for the specific minority are of utmost importance. When a (minority) language is treated as a co-official or official language of the state, this often leads to improved status and rights for this language. It also seems that by recognising a language as a co-official or official state language, the state commits itself to taking concrete measures in order to protect and promote this language.

The Framework Convention on the Protection of National Minorities and the European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages are two of the instruments that the Council of Europe has developed for states to stimulate them to implement concrete measures for the regional or minority languages or minorities. Regular monitoring rounds can serve as a reminder to the states to continue to implement measures for the benefit of their minorities. However, the analysis of this report's case studies makes clear that the ratification of the Charter or the Framework Convention is not necessarily a prerequisite for a best practice. It always comes down to the nation-state to implement the necessary measures they have agreed to. To illustrate the point: some states that have signed the Charter or the Framework Convention do

not always act in accordance with these treaties. On the other hand, some states who did not sign either of the treaties did in fact take concrete measures to promote and protect their minorities and their minority languages.

According to the principle of sovereignty, it is up to the Member States to take concrete legal and practical measures to promote and protect their (national) minorities. In some case studies, national laws contradict the agreed-upon provisions signed and ratified under the ECRML and the FCNM. However, other regions grant considerable autonomy to the minority region, so that the minority has control over its own public administration and educational system. However, the most important notion here is that a good provision of regulations, for example on language education, does not completely depend on how much legislative power a region actually has. In this respect, the way in which legal measures are implemented (regardless of who implements them) is much more important (Mercator's *Study on Devolvement of Legislative Power & Provisions,* 2008, p. 41).

The EU should stimulate its Member States to provide status and support to their minority languages. All Member States should be encouraged to ratify the ECRML and to adopt the corresponding measures that come with it. This is in line with the recommendation made in NPLD's *Roadmap to Linguistic Diversity* (2015).

To implement language planning as a long-term key issue in state politics

Nation-states and the EU should take serious measures with respect to language planning. The comparative analysis and the reflection on other studies has shown that institutional support and language planning are of fundamental importance when it comes to minority education. This is in line with, amongst others, the report entitled *Education Provision Through Minority Languages: Review Of International Research* (Ó Duibhir, Ní Chuaig, Ní Thuairisg & Ó Brolcháin, 2015, p. 109), which concludes "that saving the minority language is not the concern of the school alone, and that a language planning process with appropriate funding from the State must be implemented".

Language planning is a long-term recommendation, and language learning is an item that should continuously be on the European agenda: the position of a minority language in education is never stable, so it must be seen as a development that needs regular monitoring and adjustment. The developmental process of minority languages in education does not stop by simply introducing the language in the school curriculum. It is a long-term process of evolution and progression that requires long-term political engagement. Education should therefore be one of the elements of a comprehensive strategic set of measures that helps minorities to safeguard their language, culture and identity. This recommendation is in line with Point 13 of the European Parliament resolution of 11 September 2013 on endangered European languages and linguistic diversity in the European Union (2013/2007(INI)).

To stimulate Member States to provide a continuous learning line for minority languages from pre-primary education to third-level education

The European Union should collaborate with its Member States to facilitate the continuation of minority language learning throughout all educational levels. Most case studies have shown that while there may be enough teaching material and teaching staff to teach a minority language at primary education level, this is not always the case at secondary level and beyond. The EU should also stimulate a continuous learning line in which the provision of minority language education programmes is interconnected with similar programmes offered at other and different educational levels. For example, the trilingual school model used for Frisian in primary education is currently also used at secondary schools. Furthermore, the educational programmes in minority and regional languages offered in higher education and vocational

education have been identified as a challenge for almost every region of the featured case studies. As there is an identified need for minority speakers, especially in vocational fields such as health care, primary education and Kindergartens as well as higher levels of education and in public administration, this is an important issue to address.

Many of the recommendations and conclusions in this research are in line with the recommendations and views that are stated in the European Parliament resolution of 11 September 2013 on endangered European languages and linguistic diversity in the European Union (2013/2007(INI)). This resolution was passed in the European Parliament with 92% of the votes in favour. However, concrete measures to implement the calls of this resolution have not yet been taken. The current study considers this resolution to be a key overview of the efforts that need to be undertaken to further develop minority language education. Hopefully, the stressed importance of this resolution could serve as a reminder to honour the commitments made by the Members of the European Parliament – commitments that they have already agreed upon.

Studying the different minority regions throughout Europe, we have found a number of best practices in minority language education from which other minorities could learn important lessons. This is why it remains extremely important to foster exchanges between the different minorities so that mutual learning is a continuous process. Although there is no single tailor-made approach to address all the challenges that minority and regional language education faces in Europe, this report listed a number of tools in the form of recommendations to assist the European Union, in not only addressing these challenges but also in being part of a solution.

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ANNEX 1 – LIST OF EXPERTS

Table 2: List of experts consulted for this report

Expert	Language(s)	Date interview
Iban Larrandaburu	Basque in France	19 December 2016
Durk Gorter	Basque in Spain	17 November 2016
Alex Riemersma	Frisian in the Netherlands	21 September 2016
Ulrike Huber	German in South Tyrol, Italy	22 November 2016
Attila Papp	Hungarian in Romania	16 November 2016
László Marácz	Hungarian in Slovakia and Hungarian in Slovenia	30 November 2016
Helen Ó Murchú	Irish in Ireland	2 December 2016
Thomasz Wicherkiewicz	Polish in Lithuania	24 November 2016
Kinga Mandel	Romani and Beash in Hungary	16 November 2016
Judith Walde	Sorbian in Germany	29 November 2016
Kjell Herberts	Swedish in Finland	28 November 2016
Meirion Prys Jones	Welsh in the United Kingdom	14 November 2016

Source: Case studies (2016)

ANNEX 2 - CASE STUDIES

BASQUE IN FRANCE

The information from this case study is, unless stated otherwise, based upon Mercator's Regional Dossier "The Basque language in education in France (2nd Edition)" compiled in 2007 by Daniel Sanchez. In order to complete Mercator's knowledge of the language Iban Larrandaburu, from the Office Public de la Langue Basque, was interviewed as an expert on 19 December 2016.

1. About the language

Basque (Euskara) is not an Indo-European language, although it is surrounded by languages that are of this ancestry and there is a little known about its actual ancestry. There is a variety of theories on this, but it goes beyond the scope of this research to discuss these. Basque is spoken in the Basque Country, which is an area that encompasses seven areas; four in Spain and three in France. The Basque language has been categorised as a vulnerable language by the UNESCO Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger. However, the UNESCO Atlas specifies that the language is 'severely endangered' in France as there are fewer than 80,000 Basque speakers in France.

2. Official language status

The only official language in France is French. France has not ratified the ECRML. Basque therefore has the status of a regional language, without many rights to claim.

3. Demographics

About 21.4% of the people living in the French Basque region speak Basque (Euskara, 2011).

4. Education in:

a. Pre-school

Pre-school education in France is aimed at children between the ages of 2-6. In France, the *Fillon Law* on education regulates pre-school education. Teachers at pre-school providers in France can choose to spend one to three hours per week on regional language and culture. However there are specific pre-school, primary school and secondary school providers called *Ikastola*, which use Basque as the language of instruction for some courses. The establishment of *Ikastola* schools is the result of a parent and teacher-driven initiative where children follow a bilingual educational programme. *Ikastola* schools are officially private, however they receive a lot of funding from regional and local authorities and slowly more of the schools become public. However, parents do need to contribute financially to these schools, in contrast to public school. Additionally, there are a few catholic schools that teach half of their curriculum in French and half of it in Basque.

b. Primary school

Primary school in France is for children between the ages of 6-11. Primary education is regulated by a framework law on education (2005) in France. In France only the aforementioned *Ikastola* schools, which also offer primary education, use Basque as well as French as the language of instruction. About 30% of all (15,170) primary school students in the French

Basque country receive some education in Basque. Especially the bilingual educational model bodes well, with an increase of 29 public schools that used a bilingual model in 1996, to 66 in 2008.

A best practice in primary education in France is the 'stage intensif'. This is a summer programme for children that follow the bilingual education model. These children visit a village in the Basque country where nearly all people speak Basque and they play games and do outdoor activities with their peers from different regions. Additionally, bilingual class groups follow a Basque language week (three to five days) once a year in which they are only allowed to communicate in Basque.

c. Secondary school

In France, secondary school is compulsory for students until the age of 16. Students can opt to finish secondary school at the age of 16 and then enter the labour market or continue with vocational education. Students can also choose to continue their secondary education until they are 18 and then apply to university. Secondary education is regulated by the new *Law of Orientation* (*Loi Fillon*, 2005). This law is somewhat vague about what the possibilities are for following Basque as a second modern language in secondary school, as the course does not have the same weight as other modern languages in establishing a student's final grade. Students still follow Basque (often as an optional subject) and do have the possibility to follow a bilingual programme or a fully-Basque taught programme at 17 of all secondary schools. It does appear that there are 10% less pupils studying Basque in comparison to the number of pupils studying Basque in primary schools. *L'Office Public de la Langue Basque* (Public Office for the Basque Language) argues that there are three reasons for this: "the effect of regular augmentation of the bilingual teaching, the continuity between primary school and secondary school is not guaranteed" (Sanchez, 2007, p.23), and some pupils choose to discontinue the model that included Basque that they were following before.

d. Vocational Education

Vocational education in France is aimed at students from the age of 16 and onwards, and educates them to enter the labour market. *Circular* 93-154 (1993) is the law on the development of vocational training in a regional context. The Basque language is hardly offered as a subject in vocational education, only a preparatory programme for prospective civil engineers, civil servant and technicians offers Basque as an optional subject.

e. Higher Education

In higher education only the inter-university department of Basque Studies in Bayonne offers a bachelor's degree that specialises in the Basque language and culture. The University of Pau and Pay de l'Adour and the Bordeaux Montaigne University co-organise this joint programme. Students can also obtain their PhD in Basque Studies at these universities.

With a bachelor in Basque studies students can continue their studies with a Master's programme in Basque Studies at a Research Centre called IKER_UMR 5478, the only academic centre that specialises in the Basque language. A bachelor's and master's degree is aimed at educating primary and secondary school teachers. However, Basque is also deemed beneficial for job seekers in the field of journalism, translating, arts and organisations that focus on interregional and cross border relations and cultural development.

5. Teacher training

Prospective primary and secondary school teachers study at university teacher training institutes. Prospective teachers need to pass several tests in order to become qualified as a

teacher. Basque is an optional test and there have been many complaints about the lack of facilities where one can train for the Basque test during teacher training. Often, Basque teachers are not initially trained as primary school teachers, but enter into teacher training (lasting two years) after getting their bachelor's degree in Basque. Students can get a Certificate of Aptitude for teaching at secondary level for Basque as a subject at University Teacher Training Institute Aquitaine, after they finish their bachelor's degree in Basque. In-service secondary school teachers can take summer school courses in Basque that last two weeks. An organisation called *Ikas* organises meetings between Basque teachers in order to share best practices, teaching methods and facilitate collaboration between the teachers.

6. Teaching material

The earlier mentioned organisation *Ikas* collects Basque-language resources so teachers can use them. *Ikas* is the main provider of teaching material for pre-, primary and secondary school. Additionally this organisations produces teaching material, but also translates French-language teaching resources into Basque. A commission, consisting of teachers and pedagogical experts, "[...] the director of the CRDP (regional centre of pedagogical documentation) of Aquitaine, and the inspection team of the National Education" makes the decisions in regard to the editing of teaching material. (Sanchez, 2007, p.13). Schools and teachers themselves also produce teaching material, as do several private organisations.

7. Career perspectives

Being proficient in the Basque language is beneficial when willing to become a journalist or a translator. For organisations that focus on interregional and cross border relations, or cultural development, it can be an advantage to hire employees with proficiency in Basque. For civil engineers, civil servants and technicians, for example, speaking the Basque language is beneficial because of the frequent contact with Basque speaking people.

8. Conclusions

Best practices:

- There is a strong affection for the Basque language by young adults.

- The *ikastola* schools, which offer bilingual educational programmes. *Ikastola* schools are the results of a parent and teacher-driven initiative.
- The bilingual educational model bodes well, with an increase of 29 public schools that used a bilingual model in 1996, to 66 in 2008.
- The *stage intensif*; a summer programme for children that follow the bilingual education model.
- Basque is deemed beneficial for job seekers in various field and organisations.
- The organisation*, Ikas,* which organises meetings between Basque teachers in order to share best practices, teaching methods as well as facilitate collaboration between teachers.

Challenges:

- Parents need to contribute financially to *Ikastola* schools, in contrast to public schools.
- Basque appears to not have the same weight as other modern languages in establishing a student's final grade.
- It appears to be less attractive to study Basque in secondary school, even for students that have studied Basque in primary school.

- Basque is an optional test for prospective primary school teachers. However, there appears to be a lack of facilities to train for such a test.

BASQUE IN SPAIN

The information from this case study is, unless stated otherwise, based upon Mercator's Regional Dossier "The Basque language in education in Spain (2nd edition)" compiled in 2005 by Dr Nick Gardner. In order to complete Mercator's knowledge of the language Durk Gorter, Ikerbasque research professor at the University of the Basque country, was interviewed as an expert on 17 November 2016.

1. About the language

Basque (Euskara) is not an Indo-European language, although it is surrounded by languages that are of this ancestry, there is a little known about its actual ancestry. There is a variety of theories on this, but it goes beyond the scope of this research to discuss them. Basque is spoken in the Basque Country, which is an area that encompasses seven areas, four in Spain and three in France. The Basque language in Spain has been categorised as a vulnerable language by UNESCO's Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger and the Endangered Languages project.

2. Official language status

Basque is covered under part III of the ECRML in Spain. In Spain, Basque is a co-official language in three of the four provinces where Basque is spoken (the BAC region) and in parts of Navarre, the fourth of these provinces. There therefore are some language laws in place that strengthen the position of Basque in education, both a subject and as the language of instruction. "The BAC region is Europe's biggest success story" (Gorter, personal communication, November 17, 2016). The Basque language was normalised (note that in this context, normalisation stands for the establishment of the equal position of the Basque language in regard to Spanish) by the *Law for the Normalisation for the Use of Basque* in 1982. This law establishes a bilingual society in the BAC region. Basque is a language that is supported by the public government and additionally enjoys political priority, which means that parties are willing to (financially) invest in the language. The latter became apparent when the number of students gradually declined in accordance with the birth rate and there was an abundance of Basque speaking teachers. Many of these teachers were not discharged but encouraged to take a Basque course (whilst still receiving their salaries), which in some cases is a three years course (Gorter, personal communication, November 17, 2016).

3. Demographics

A recently published survey by the Government of the Basque Country provides figures about the Basque speakers in Spain. It appears that 33.9% (631,000 people) of the people in the Spanish Basque country that are over the age of 16 are active Basque speakers. Additionally, 19.1% (355,519 people) of the population define themselves as passive Basque speakers. There is a significant increase in Basque speakers to be noted amongst young people in the Basque country; whereas 25% of the population between the ages of 16 and 24 identified themselves as Basque speakers in 1991, this number has increased to 71.4% in 2016 (NPLD, 2016, par.1).

4. Education in:

a. Pre-school:

Pre-school education in Spain is aimed at children between 2 and 6 years old. Education at this level is regulated by the *LOGSE* law (see "about the language"). There are Spanish-language (sometimes with Basque as a subject), Basque-language and bilingual pre-school education

models. Some schools offer multiple models, so parents can choose the model their children follow at their school. However, not all models are available in every region.

b. Primary school

Primary school in Spain is for children between 6 and 12 years old. Primary education falls under chapter two of the *LOGSE* law. There are Spanish-language (with sometimes Basque as a subject, but sometimes not), Basque-language and bilingual primary education models in Spain. Similar to pre-school, primary schools offer multiple models, so parents can choose the model their children follow at their school. Currently (2016), about 85-90% of school-starting children are enrolled in the Basque language model in the Basque Country (Gorter, personal communication, November 17, 2016). In Spanish-language models where Basque is offered as an elective, Basque is taught for three to four hours per week on average.

c. Secondary school

Secondary school is compulsory for students up to the age of 16. In the BAC region, about 60% of the students are currently following the Basque-language model. These numbers are expected to increase in accordance with the rise of school-starting children that are following this model (Gorter, personal communication, November 17, 2016). Students can opt to finish secondary school at the age of 16 and then enter the labour market or continue with vocational education. Students can also choose to continue their secondary education until they are 18 and then apply to university. Secondary education falls under part three of the *LOGSE* law in Spain. When Basque is taught as a subject in the Spanish-language model, it is for three and a half hours per week until students are 16 years old; after this, Basque is taught for three hours.

d. Vocational Education

Vocational education in Spain is aimed at students from the age of 16 and onwards and educates them to enter the labour market. Vocational education falls under chapter four of the *LOGSE* law. In the BAC region, all schools offer Basque as a subject. However, the subject is sometimes offered bi-annually instead of each year. Some schools also offer bilingual education models that students can follow. There are much less Basque courses in vocational education in comparison to primary, secondary and higher education.

e. Higher Education

It is a trend that the majority of secondary school students continue their education at university. When preferred, students can almost completely follow higher education in Basque, from a Bachelor's degree to a PhD. If a student chooses to pursue his or her PhD in Basque, that student can even receive an extra scholarship. At most universities in the BAC region, students can follow their program in either Basque or Spanish. However, as this is more expensive than teaching in one language, these universities sometimes deviate somewhat from this system and only offer a Basque course once every two years for example. This broad Basque language offer is in line with the market demand for employees with Basque language skills. Not only is Basque a requirement for nearly all public professions, the private sector also increasingly sees Basque language skills as a plus.

One can get a degree in Basque Philology at the University of the Basque Country (EHU/UPV) and the Jesuit University of Deusto. It is also possible to follow Basque Studies at the *Opus Dei* University of Navarre. At the Public University of Navarre students can study two (of the twenty-three) programs in Basque in addition to a number of courses (about 6% of all courses). Mondragón University also offers subjects in Basque in the Arts department. At the EHU/UPV almost all compulsory subjects can be studied in Spanish and Basque and students pressure

the administration to offer this possibility for even more Basque-taught courses. In the light of San Sebastian/Donostia being the European Capital of Culture in 2016, EHU/UPV organised an English and Basque language summer school program called 'Basque Yourself!' which combined learning and improving students' Basque language skills with fun activities.

5. Teacher training

In order to become a primary school teacher, students must finish a four-year university programme, including teaching internships. One can follow this program in Spanish and in Basque and the latter awards students with a *Euskararen Gaitasunagiria* certificate, which serves as proof of one's competency in Basque. Spanish-trained teachers can also get this certificate, but they need to pass an exam first. Prospective secondary school teachers need to get a degree in their subject, Basque in this case, and then follow a 350 hour postgraduate teaching program, provided by a variety of universities, or a more complete 500 hour program, which is provided by a few universities.

There is a considerate focus on in-service Basque language training. IRALE, (Irakasleen Alfabetatze Euskalduntzea), an institute for teacher literacy and second language learning (of Basque), provides teacher training for native Basque speakers and language training for non-Basque speakers in the BAC region. The Basque Department of Education pays for these trainings. Prospective teachers become fully qualified in Basque, and be relieved of their teaching duties in this period, in three years in this manner. The Department of Education in Navarre provides similar in-service training, but on a much smaller scale. One of the identified challenges of Basque education is that it relies on teachers who are non-native speakers, whom have difficulties attaining the required level of competence in Basque.

6. Teaching material

For primary and secondary education there are a number of publishers that produce and publish teaching material. Additional reference material is also widely available. When subjects become more specialised in the last two years of secondary school, high quality material is difficult or impossible to attain. Learning material for vocational education is often not commercially available. The Department of Education of the BAC region has tried to resolve this issue by giving teachers the possibility to be relieved of their teaching responsibilities for three months, taking a three to four week Basque refresher course and then prepare teaching material with guidance of the earlier mentioned organisation IRALE. This teaching material is not only aimed at vocational education, but also at secondary education. As regards higher education, EHU/UPV funds the publication of original Basque teaching material at university level in addition to translations of teaching material.

7. Career perspectives

The broad Basque language offer in education is in line with the market demand for employees with Basque language skills. Not only is Basque a demand for nearly all public professions, but also the private sector increasingly sees Basque language skills as a plus. This is why some Spanish-speaking parents also choose to let their children follow education in the Basque language, because being a skilled bilingual in the Basque Country can be seen as a strong advantage for job seekers.

8. Conclusions

Best practices:

- There is a strong affection for the Basque language by young adults. Not only has the number of young speakers increased considerably, but students are also pressuring their university (EHU/UPV) for more courses taught in the Basque language.
- Parents can choose what language model their children follow at school. This system enables students to receive their education in Basque without having to go to another (specifically bilingual or Basque-language) school and thereby lowers the threshold for minority language education.
- The initiative of the Department of Education of the Basque Country that gives teachers the possibility to be relieved of their teaching responsibilities for three months, and take a three to four week Basque refresher course and then prepare teaching material with guidance of IRALE.

Challenges:

- Basque education relies on teachers who are non-native speakers and may therefore have difficulties attaining the required level of competence in Basque.
- Learning material for vocational education is often not commercially available.

FRISIAN IN THE NETHERLANDS

The information from this case study is, unless stated otherwise, based upon Mercator's Regional Dossier "The Frisian language in education in the Netherlands (4th Edition)" compiled in 2007 by Dr Alex Riemersma and Dr Sikko de Jong. In order to complete Mercator's knowledge of the language Alex Riemersma, Vice-President of the NPLD and Professor of Applied Sciences, was interviewed as an expert on 21 September 2016.

1. About the language

Frisian is a West Germanic language closely related to Dutch and most often used in the Dutch province of Fryslân, one of the twelve provinces of the Netherlands. The Frisian language is covered under Part III of the ECRML. The Frisian language has been categorised as a vulnerable language by UNESCO's Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger and the Endangered Languages project. It appears that the main challenges that stand in the way of maintaining this vitality are the quality of teachers, the continuity of learning and teaching from primary school to secondary school, scaling up in rural areas, dealing with super-diversity (more languages in one class) and the monolingual ideologies as well as the one-sided stress on English as only important foreign language. There is a paradigm shift necessary towards a multilingual approach (Duarte & Riemersma, 2016).

2. Official language status

Frisian is the second official language of the province of Fryslân, next to Dutch (Rijksoverheid, n.d.).

3. Demographics

In 2015, around 67% of the 646.000 inhabitants of Frisia spoke Frisian (reasonably) well. Roughly 94% of the population understood Frisian and 15% wrote the language well. The general proficiency in writing in Frisian seem to have improved somewhat in the last few years (Provinsje Fryslân, 2015).

4. Education in:

a. Pre-school

In the Netherlands, playgroups are aimed at children who are between 2 and 4 years old. However they only offer placement for three mornings or afternoons per week. Day care is available for five days a week and is accessible for children from the age of 0-4. The Dutch government has signed article 8 of the ECRML, which states that pre-school group leaders are allowed to use Frisian in their daily work. In practice, however, this means that pre-school employees often use the Frisian language when conversing (on an individual level) with children or parents. When speaking to a group of children, or when reading or singing is involved, the general tendency is to use Dutch.

Roughly 60% of group leaders or pre-schools in the Province of Fryslân are mother tongue Frisian speakers. However, if no measures are being taken, this number is expected to decrease. Boneschansker and Le Rütte (2000) in *Pjuttepraat: Friestaligheid in Peuterspeelzalen en Kinderdagverblijven* (Toddler Language: The level of Frisian in Playgroups and Day Care Centres) state that there is a negative correlation between group leaders' age and the amount of Frisian they use in their teaching; it appears that the younger group leaders, the less Frisian they use at work. This is why the Sintrum Frysktalige Berne-opfang (Frisian Language Childcare Centre) has been founded, to assist and guide all pre-school group leaders in the province of

Fryslân in using Frisian in their daily teaching activities as well as in focusing on the language in their playgroup's or day care's policies.

b. Primary school

The target group for Dutch primary schools is children that are 4 to 12 years old and they follow primary education from grade 1 to grade 8. Frisian is a mandatory subject under the *Wet op Primair Onderwijs* (Primary Education Act) of 1998. Only a few schools in the province can apply for an exemption of this obligation. This will only be granted when a school can rightfully claim that the location where the school is situated is not an area where the Frisian language is traditionally spoken. This act also states that Frisian can be used as a medium of instruction at primary schools in the province of Fryslân; however, this usage is optional. Although teaching Frisian is obligatory under the *Primary Education Act*, 7% of the schools in the province do not teach it as a subject (Inspectie van het Onderwijs, 2009). The Committee of Experts of the Council of Europe visited the Netherlands in 2004 and concluded that the teaching of Frisian is not up to the standards.

The *Primary Education Act* prescribes a variety of subjects that are obligatory to be taught in primary school. However, it is not stated how many hours should be allocated to each subject. Frisian is one of these mandatory subjects and can also be used as the language of instruction. Still, 6% of all schools in the Province of Fryslân do not offer Frisian. The Committee of Experts of the Council of Europe has judged in 2004 that the legal provisions that the Dutch government offers in this respect are not in accordance with the obligations concerning Frisian education in primary schools that derive from the ratification of the ECRML.

The inspectorate (Inspectie van het Onderwijs, 2009) has researched and come to the conclusion that primary schools in Fryslân spend 40-65 minutes on average on Frisian as a subject every week (n=422 schools) and Frisian is used as the language of instruction for about 70-170 minutes a week (n=455 schools). It appears that schools spend less time on Frisian, as a subject and language of instruction, in the higher grades of primary school. The Committee of Experts evaluates the average of 40-65 as 'intolerable.'

A best practice to be observed in Frisian primary schools is that following an experiment on trilingual education, which ran from 1997-2006, 72 primary schools in province are currently so-called trilingual schools. A trilingual school has Dutch, English and Frisian as language of instruction. Because the aforementioned experiment showed that more time investment in Frisian and English as subject as well as medium of instruction does not have any negative effects on students' Dutch language skills, roughly 50 schools already initiated the process of becoming a trilingual school. That number reached 72 in 2016 and is predicted to continue to increase (Staat der Nederlanden & Provinsje Fryslân, 2013).

Another best practice is the primary School 'De Flambou' in Oosterbierum. This is a trilingual school (Dutch, Frisian, English) which incorporates migrant languages, mostly Polish and Arabic. In this school the parents are involved in a project in which they read to their children in the home language. This is beneficial for the children as well as for the parents and school, because parents are more involved in the learning process of their children. Another project of the school is the so-called 'Vakantie-taalboek' (Holiday-language book) in which the children are asked to fill a notebook with words and sentences they have learned in other languages during their holiday abroad (Duarte & Riemersma, 2016).

Commissioned by the province of Fryslân, the Afûk (the organisation that is responsible for promoting the knowledge and use of the Frisian language) has developed a wide range of high quality teaching material, including a new digital teaching method called 'Spoar 8,' which is a method that focuses on multiple subjects, with the use of innovative means, such as apps,

YouTube, educative games, but also texts and stories. The success of the 'Spoar 8' method lies in its ability to be easily integrated with existing primary school teaching methods, it is thus easy for teachers to use and does not require any extra training or different approach. A challenge that primary schools in Fryslân are facing however, is the 20% of unqualified Frisian teachers that were noted in the 2009 inspectorate report, in addition to the 28% of teachers of whom the director of the school did not know were qualified or not (Inspectie van Onderwijs, 2009).

c. Secondary school

Secondary education in the Netherlands caters to students aged 12 to 16 or 18. Vocational/intermediate secondary education lasts four years, higher secondary education lasts five years, and academic secondary education takes six years to complete. Obligatory school attendance ends at the age of 18. There are three levels of secondary education: pre-university education , higher general secondary education and pre-vocational education. Frisian became a mandatory subject in the lower (first or first and second) years of secondary school in 1993, when basic education was introduced (*Wet op het Voortgezet Onderwijs – VWO*, art. 11b). From 2006 onwards, schools can seek exemption of this obligation at the Province of Fryslân (art. 11e). When they obtain the exemption, this is only for one year, after which they can reapply each for the exemption of another year.

At 65 of the 103 secondary schools in Fryslân, Frisian is offered as a subject. At 44 schools, this is only possible in the first year. 15 schools offer the subject in the second year as well and 6 secondary schools are multilingual, in which English, Dutch and Frisian are the mediums of instruction (Provinsje Fryslân, 2015). Most schools (73%) offer Frisian as a compulsory subject in the first year, for one hour per week. Other schools offer Frisian in a different manner, for example only for a specific period or as a sub-part of their Dutch subject (Inspectie van het Onderwijs, 2009). Attainment targets are set for all school subjects in the lower grades of secondary education. Frisian is an optional exam subject in the higher grades of all three types of secondary education. The exams are prepared by the National Institute for Educational Assessment. A report from 2009 by the national education inspection states that not all schools are achieving all the objectives that they are legally required to do under Article 8 of the ECRML. However, it does appear that, in comparison to 2005, more schools (18 out of 55) have constructed language policies on the use of Frisian. (Inspectie van Onderwijs, 2009). Afûk and CEDIN recently developed a new digital teaching method called 'Searje 36' together. Like the 'Spoar 8' method for primary school, this method can also be easily integrated with other teaching methods. This method is a continuation of the primary school method and a precedent of the method for vocational education (Afûk, 2016). About 40% of the secondary school teachers that teach Frisian on a daily basis are not qualified to do so (Inspectie van Onderwijs, 2009).

d. Vocational Education

Vocational education in Fryslân is targeted at students between the ages of 16 and 19. The *Wet Educatie en Beroepsonderwijs* (Education and Vocational Training Act, 1996) is aimed at better integration of the needs of society and the labour market with the education that vocational educational institutes provide. In coherence with the objectives set out in this act, there have been many developments regarding Frisian as a subject in vocational education.

In the last few years, Frisian has gained an increasingly important role in the curricula of the vocational education providers in the province of Fryslân (Provinsje Fryslân, 2009).

A best practice in regard to vocational education is that the provincial government has done research on the needs in the field of language of employers of vocational education students.

This research proves that such a need is present in society and therewith provides legitimacy for the focus that vocational educational institutes in Fryslân have on Frisian. Three major vocational education providers in the Province of Fryslân have signed a covenant, in which they have agreed upon the added value of Frisian in their educational offer and commit themselves to expanding and further their current offer .

e. Higher Education

The University of Groningen used to have a special Bachelor's and Master's programme on Frisian. However, this programme has been cancelled in 2012. Frisian still is an optional part of the Bachelors programme 'Minorities and Multilingualism' and an optional minor programme for all students that study at the University of Groningen's Faculty of Arts (Rijksuniversiteit Groningen, 2016). Students can also take a postgraduate Master of Education programme at the University of Groningen. The University of Amsterdam also offers two courses on Frisian. One is called 'Language Acquisition Frisian for non-Frisian speakers' and the other 'Language Acquisition Frisian for Frisian speakers' (Universiteit van Amsterdam, 2016).

5. Teacher training

Regional universities Noordelijke Hogeschool Nederland and Stenden University provide teacher training. Frisian is a subject in primary school teacher training at both universities; you can get your qualifications in Frisian, which is a qualification that prospective teachers can put on their CVs. Additionally, students can study to become a secondary school Frisian teacher at the Noordelijke Hogeschool Nederland.

6. Teaching material

There is a digital teaching platform called 'EduFrysk,' which is aimed at Frisian teachers on all levels. The earlier mentioned primary school method 'Spoar 8', the secondary school method 'Searje 36' and the method that is currently developed for vocational education, can all be accessed via this platform (Afûk, 2016). Additionally, teachers often develop their own teaching material or design their own exams (Inspectie van het Onderwijs, 2009).

7. Career perspectives

The employee needs of regional companies and organisations play quite an important role in vocational education in the province of Fryslân, especially in the field of health care, regional governmental organisation and small business. It appears that over 80% of the 5599 organisations that took part in this research project think that understanding Frisian is a plus when selecting future employees and over 50% feel the same for speaking Frisian (Provinsje Fryslân, 2009). Under the *Wet Gebruik van de Friese Taal* (*Law on the Use of the Frisian Language*, 2013) people in Fryslân have the right to use their mother tongue in their daily public affairs. Therefore, the training for public careers (such as within the fields of the police, fire department, security, administration) could and should play an important role in Frisian language education on the vocational and higher educational level. Their communication in their work outside of the office for a big part has an informal character, in which the use of Frisian, or of other minority languages such as migrant languages as well, could turn out to be beneficial. Additionally, this is a profession in which one largely relies on teamwork: informal use of (a minority) language therefore plays a major part within their contact with colleagues. Being able to understand as well as communicate in Frisian could therefore be beneficial on this level as well (Riemersma, personal communication, September 21, 2016).

8. Conclusions

Best practices:

- The existence of a continuous learning line from primary school to vocational education and is easily integrated with existing teaching methods on the respective educational levels. This concept greatly assists Frisian teachers in specifically catering to their students' needs.
- The need for teaching Frisian at vocational educational institutions is proven by a research report conducted by the Province of Fryslân. This report greatly legitimises and motivates vocational education providers to offer Frisian as a subject or even a minor programme.
- Primary school in Oosterbierum with trilingual education and incorporation of migrant languages. The involvement of parents reading to their children in the home language and the 'Holiday-language book' project are best practices of the school.
- The Afûk has developed a wide range of high quality teaching material, including a digital teaching method called 'Spoar 8,' which can be easily integrated with existing primary school teaching methods.
- Afûk and CEDIN recently developed a new digital teaching method called 'Searje 36' together. Like the 'Spoar 8' method for primary school, this method can also be easily integrated with other teaching methods. This method is a continuation of the primary school method and a precedent of the method for vocational education.

Challenges:

- The main challenges are the quality of teachers, scaling up in rural areas, dealing with super-diversity (more languages in class) and the monolingual ideologies as well as the one-sided emphasis on English as only important language. It appears to be necessary to have a paradigm shift towards a multilingual approach.
- There is a big need for continuity in secondary school. There is an obligation for schools to teach Frisian, but most secondary schools only do so in the first year. It would be best to teach Frisian until the pre-examination year and then offer students the possibility to earn a certificate (when passing the subject), which enables them to take Frisian as an optional exam subject in their final year.
- Frisian in vocational education is currently only aimed at prospective health care workers and teaching assistants.
- The training for uniform careers (police, fire department, security) should be a focus for Frisian language education as well.
- A large percentage of the teachers in primary and secondary schools in Frisia are not qualified to teach in Frisian.

GERMAN IN SOUTH-TYROL, ITALY

The information from this case study is, unless stated otherwise, based upon Mercator's Regional Dossier "German language in education in South Tyrol (Italy)" compiled in 2002 by Katrin Pircher, Ulrike Huber and Herbert Taschler. In order to complete Mercator's knowledge of the language, Ulrike Huber was consulted as an expert on 22 November 2016.

1. About the language

German belongs to the West-Germanic language family of which English, Dutch and Frisian are members as well (Paul, Simons & Fenning, 2016). German is spoken in many other countries and regions besides Germany, for example in Switzerland, Austria and South Tyrol (Italy) (this case study focuses on the Italian region South Tyrol, where the German language is offered in education). The German language in South Tyrol is a language with a kin-state (Germany), which means that the language cannot be defined as threatened. German as language in South Tyrol is thus not listed in the Atlas of World's Languages in Danger.

2. Official language status

Together with Italian and Ladin, German is an official language in South Tyrol since the Autonomy Statute of 20 January 1972 (Art.99). This Autonomy statute plays an important role in the status of the language (Law 482, Article 2, 1999). Italy has signed the ECRML in 2000, but this has not been ratified or come into force. German in Italy is not covered under the ECRML. Italy has signed the FCNM in 1995, which the country ratified in 1997 and came into force in 1998.

3. Demographics

Based on the 2011 population Census, 69.4% (314,604 people) of the population of South Tyrol is German language speaker (Istituto Provinciale di Statistica, 2011). Compared to the 1991 Census a growth is showing: in 1991 this was 67.9%. The German-speaking population is the largest language group of the three groups living in South Tyrol. Ladin speakers form 4.5% and Italian speakers 26.1% of the population (Autonomous Province of South Tyrol, 2012). From the age of 14 people have to indicate to which language group they belong, e.g. Italian, German or Ladin. This is used for the Census that takes place every 5 years.

4. Education in:

Almost the entire school system in South Tyrol is monolingual. Parents thus have to choose between an Italian or German means of education from pre-school to secondary school.

a. Pre-school

Children in South Tyrol between the ages of 2.5 and 6 have the opportunity to go to kindergarten. This level of education is not compulsory. The Province of Bolzano is responsible for kindergartens. The language of instruction in pre-schools must be the native language of the attending children (Italian and German) as is stated in the Autonomy Statute of 1972, and kindergarten teachers need to be speakers of these languages. There are both public and private German-language kindergartens in South Tyrol. In the school year 2014/2015 there were 342 pre-schools, of which 268 were ones with German as the language of instruction, 11,949 children attended these kindergartens (Astat, 2015).

b. Primary school

In South Tyrol, primary education is compulsory, free of charge, and begins at the age of 6. Children attend primary schools until they are 11 years old. The Italian State is responsible for the laws regarding education and the province can adapt these laws to the specific situation in South Tyrol. The schools themselves have autonomy and each schools constructs their own three-year education plan. German is the language of instruction of all subjects. Due to this regulation, in earlier days it was not possible to offer CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning) teaching because it was not allowed to teach a subject in a different language than German. However, this is now possible (Huber, personal communication, November 22, 2016). School teachers need to be mother tongue speakers of the German language. From the second year of primary school on, several hours (four to five) of instruction in Italian (as second language) is compulsory. In the school year 2014/2015 there were 20,287 children attending primary schools with German as language of instruction, while 6425 students attend Italian primary schools (Astat, 2015).

c. Secondary school

In South Tyrol, students attend the compulsory intermediate school, the so-called 'scuola secondaria di primo grado' (lower secondary education) from the ages of 11 to 16 and the 'scuola secondaria di secondo grado' (upper secondary school) from 14 to 19. It is a comprehensive school in which all children of the same age group get general education that is free of charge. This type of school was introduced in Italy in 1962 and the curriculum is adapted to the situation in South Tyrol. Next to German as language of instruction, English and Italian are used as well. In the second year, English is used as the language of instruction for three hours a week and Italian between five and six hours a week. A leaving certificate is necessary to get access to upper secondary school, which takes 5 years and ends with a state final exam. For the German-speaking population there are several secondary schools. In the schoolyear 2014/2015 12,299 students attended German secondary schools (Astat, 2015), and 4,017 students in this region went to Italian secondary schools.

d. Vocational Education

Students between the age of 14 and 29 can attend vocational training in Italy. At German vocational schools, the language of instruction is German. After an orientation year the students have the possibility to choose for three or four years of professional training in a dual or full-time system, which concludes respectively with a certificate or a technical diploma. Students can choose to take an admission test to attend a fifth year of education, This year concludes with a secondary State diploma which grants access to all universities.

e. Higher Education

For higher education there is the Free University of Bozen-Bolzano and the School for Higher Education for Health Professions, known as "Claudiana". The languages used for instruction are German, Italian and English. In some courses, Ladin is also used as the language of instruction, especially in courses for prospective teachers (kindergarten and primary school). Both German and Ladin can be studied as a subject as well. In the School for Higher Education for Health Professions, German and Italian are used as the language of instruction.

5. Teacher training

Students who want to become a kindergarten or primary school teacher have the opportunity to follow five-year courses, offered by the University of Bolzano. To attend these courses, a secondary school diploma is necessary. Students can choose between three divisions. Either German as the main language of instruction with Italian or English aside. Or Italian as main

language and German or English aside (Free University of Bozen-Bolzano, 2016). For becoming a secondary school teacher, one must go abroad for their education. There is an agreement that German speaking people from South Tyrol have the same rights to become a teacher in Austria. This is not the case for the Italian speaking population in South Tyrol. Teachers in South Tyrol are expected to follow an in-service training for several hours per year. The language of instruction for these courses is German and the classes are free of charge. Teachers also have the possibility to follow an in-service training abroad via Erasmus+ Mobility Projects.

6. Teaching material

Educational material is partially provided by the German school board in cooperation with the Pedagogical Institute and teacher's associations, and partially bought from other countries and adapted to the needs of the students of South Tyrol. Teachers also produce their own teaching material (Huber, personal communication, 22 November, 2016).

Teaching materials that are used in intermediate schools are developed locally by experts or purchased in German-speaking countries, such as Austria. The teaching material at vocational technical schools, like in other schools, is bought from German-speaking countries or developed by the schools themselves.

7. Career perspectives

As already indicated in the section 'demographics', every citizen from the age of 14 and up has to fill out a so called *'Sprachgruppenzugehörigkeitserklärung'* to indicate to which language group they belong. One can only choose one language. On the basis of this statement, the region estimates the percentage of German and Italian speakers, on the basis of which the public jobs in the region are divided, the so-called "ethnic proportion". Currently, 70% of the population of South Tyrol identifies as a German language speaker. According to these numbers, 70% of the public jobs need to be allocated to German speaking citizens (Huber, personal communication, 22 November, 2016). Public jobs constitute professions at schools, in the health sector, and administration.

Immigrants also need to fill in the 'Sprachgruppenzugehörigkeitserklärung'. They usually choose the German language, as that is the language which gives them the best job perspectives in the region. To be able to pursue a public profession, one must pass a test (Zweisprachigkeitsprüfung) in order to prove that one has sufficient language skills in both German and Italian (and Ladin for Ladin communities). When someone aspires a job at university level, one needs to be at C1 level for both languages.

Italian is offered as a subject in German schools and vice versa. This is why both the German and Italian speaking population speaks both languages quite well. However, as German is predominantly used in South Tyrol and 70% of the public professions are allocated to German speakers, the career perspectives in the region are relatively better for fluent German speakers. Therefore, it appears that the number of German schools in the region are slightly increasing and immigrants have the general tendency to let their children follow their education at German language schools. (Huber, personal communication, November 22, 2016).

8. Conclusions

Best practices:

- The full right to use the German language as language of instruction in all school types and the opportunity to learn the official national language and foreign languages.
- The accessibility of textbooks from other German-speaking countries
- All teachers are mother tongue speakers of the language they teach.

- Each ethnic group is being represented in the provincial government and the German school board is responsible for kindergartens, primary and secondary schools where German is the language of instruction.
- The trilingual system

Challenges:

- Future secondary school teachers need to go abroad for training, as there is no training available in South Tyrol.
- Not many bilingual people because you have to choose one mother tongue.

HUNGARIAN IN ROMANIA

The information from this case study is, unless stated otherwise, based upon Mercator's Regional Dossier "The Hungarian language in education in Romania" (soon to be published) compiled by Attila Papp Z., director of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences and Centre for Social Sciences. In order to complete Mercator's knowledge of the language, Attila Papp Z. was interviewed as an expert on 16 November, 2016.

1. About the language

Hungarian belongs to the Uralic language family and is a Finno-Ugric language, the largest Finno-Ugric language there is. Hungarian is the official first language of Hungary, and is besides Romania also spoken in many other countries like Slovakia and Serbia, Croatia and Slovenia. The language is therefore far from endangered or vulnerable.

2. Official language status

Hungarian is officially one of the minority languages in Romania and is covered under Part III of the ECRML. The *Law on Local Public Administration* (2001) declares that in territorial-administrative units where there is a population of 20% Hungarian speakers and over, people have the right to use the Hungarian language in relations with local public administration authorities. This requirement creates tension in areas where the Hungarian population falls just beneath this threshold, because this means this (still significant) part of the regional population is exempted from this. Additionally, pre-university education in Hungarian is provided in the eighteen counties where a significant proportion of the population speaks Hungarian (Alba, Arad, Bacau, Bistrița-Năsăud, Bihor, Brașov, Cluj, Caraș-Severin, Covasna, Harghita, Hunedoara, Maramureș, Mureș, Satu Mare, Salaj, Sibiu, Timiș and Bucharest). In all these counties, there is an integral curriculum for Hungarian language education from pre-school to pre-university education. The information on education below is on the educational regulations in the eighteen counties where Hungarian is taught.

3. Demographics

Based upon the national census of 2011, there were 1.2 million people in Romania of Hungarian ethnicity that year. A total of 6.7% stated Hungarian to be their mother tongue (National Institute of Statistics, 2013). The majority of these speakers are from Hungarian origin, speak Hungarian fluently and they generally live in the centre and north-western parts of Romania.

4. Education

There are Hungarian language schools, bilingual schools and Romanian language schools. There are also additional classes students can take, which are not included in the formal education system but are organised by NGOs. Most of these NGOs receive funding from the Hungarian government: as the Hungarian government does not want to directly invest public money in education in another country, it wants to stimulate Hungarian language education in this manner (Papp, personal communication, November 16, 2016).

a. Pre-school

Pre-school education in Romania is aimed at children from the age of 0-6, nursery schools (0-3) and kindergartens (3-6). The curriculum is set up on the basis of articles 23, 27 and 28 of the *National Education Law* (Ministry of Education, Research, Youth and Sports, 2011). There is no data to be found on the focus on Hungarian in Romanian nursery schools, but there is some information to be found on kindergartens. It appears that out of the 24-28 classes, 2-4

classes are devoted to language learning; 1-2 on Romanian and 1-2 on Hungarian. The number of children attending Hungarian pre-school education was 35,375 in the school year 2013/2014 (ECRML, 2016b). There is little additional information to be found on the position of Hungarian in pre-school education.

b. Primary school

Primary school in Romania is targeted at children between the ages of 6-14. In the school year 2013/2014, there were 53,346 children that were studying Hungarian in primary school (ECRML, 2016b). The curriculum on Hungarian education must be approved by the Ministry of Education. However, the National Committee of Hungarian Language assists in producing the goals and the methods of Hungarian language education. The government of Hungary, the kin-state of the Hungarian language, also organises projects for the advancement of the Hungarian language through civil society organisations that are situated in Romania. For primary school education the project is called *Year of the Elementary School Students* and this project is aimed at innovating the means of the teaching of Hungarian.

c. Secondary school

Secondary school, called lyceum, is for children from 14-17/18, depending on what area of specialisation the students choose. Students can follow a theoretical (human and natural sciences), a technological (mechanics, services) or a vocational specialisation (military sciences, theology, sports, arts, pedagogy). There were 75,474 children studying Hungarian in secondary schools in Romania in the school year 2013/2014 (ECRML, 2016b). At the end of their program, students have to take a final oral and a final written exam. Students who studied in Hungarian are allowed to take their exams in digital competency, Hungarian language, and sometimes other specialised subjects in Hungarian. When successfully finishing their exams, students receive a certificate with which they can enter into higher education, however it is also possible to continue studying for 1-3 years in order to receive a higher level of vocational training. The Hungarian government also conducts a project for the advancement of the Hungarian language for secondary schools. This project is called *Year of the Secondary School Students* and has the same aims as the one for primary schools; innovation.

d. Vocational Education

Vocational education in Romania is aimed at students from the age of 17 and up. For students up to the age of 18, vocational training is free. The Ministry of Education approves the content of the curriculum for each training programme, but consults other organisations before producing them. In 2012/2013, 16,120 students were studying in Hungarian at vocational and technical schools in Romania (ECRML, 2016b). However, there is a problem finding enough teachers who are qualified in teaching about specialised technical fields. Most of the Hungarian-speaking experts in these fields want to work in the private sector. An additional problem is the translation and editing of specific textbooks for specific fields with little cost-efficient means, as there is only a small demand for these books.

e. Higher Education

Hungarian can be studied as a degree at a range of universities, among them the University of Bucharest that offers a complete Hungarian degree in that language. Additionally, there are three private universities that offer their programmes exclusively in Hungarian: these are "the Sapientia Hungarian University of Transylvania, the Partium Christian University and the Protestant Theological Institute of Cluj" (as cited in Papp, forthcoming, p.13). The first two of these (Sapientia and Partium) are funded by the Hungarian government. In addition, "[t]here are three state funded institutions that are classified as multicultural [according to the Law on national education 1/2011]: the Universitatea Babeş-Bolyai in Kolozsvár/Cluj, the University of

Medicine and Pharmacy of Târgu Mureş and the University of Arts in Marosvásárhely/ Târgu Mureş offer programs in Romanian and Hungarian" (Papp, forthcoming).[4]

5. Teacher training

Kindergarten and primary school teacher training is carried out in higher educational institutes. Prospective secondary school teachers can study to become a teacher in the Hungarian language at seven pedagogical institutes. Teachers of Hungarian also have the right, according to article 45 of the *Law of National Education* (2011) to follow trainings abroad, for example in Hungary. Universities also offer extra Hungarian courses. Another example of an in-service teacher training course is a summer programme organised by the Hungarian Teacher Association in Romania (funded by the Hungarian government). The problem with this summer school programme is that the Romanian government does not accredit it. Teachers therefore do not receive any credits for following the programme (Papp, personal communication, November 16, 2016).

6. Teaching material

Hungarian language education providers are not allowed to use Hungarian teaching material at their schools in Romania. The Romanian government requires all books and material that are used in education to be accredited by the state. Hungarian language schools therefore often translate Romanian material into Hungarian (A. Papp, personal communication, November 16, 2016). In the school year 2011/2012, the nationally-used book for geography and history in Romania for all secondary school grades was translated into Hungarian, so Hungarian-speakers could learn these subjects in their own language.

7. Career perspectives

A problem is that many ethnic Hungarians, who have solely been going to Hungarian language schools, have a relatively low level of proficiency in Romanian. As there are a few Hungarian enclaves in for example the east of Transylvania, they can make use of their Hungarian language skills in that area. However, if they lack knowledge of Romanian, this limits their chances of finding a job in the majority of the country, often leading people to emigrate to Hungary in order to look for a job there (Papp, personal communication, November 16, 2016).

8. Conclusions

Best practices:

- Pre-university education in Hungarian is provided in the eighteen counties where a significant proportion of the population speaks Hungarian.
- The government of Hungary, the kin-state of the Hungarian language, supports Hungarian minority education in Romania (and in other countries of the Carpathian Basin) with different projects. For primary school education the project is called *Year of the Elementary School Students,* for secondary school it is called *Year of the Secondary School Students.* Both projects are aimed at innovating the means of teaching in Hungarian.
- Students who studied in Hungarian are allowed to take their exams on Hungarian, digital competency and several other specialised subjects in Hungarian.
- Hungarian language is offered as a course at several institutions, but there are also universities offering full academic programs in Hungarian and universities at which every program is offered in Hungarian.

[4] In the scope of the present study, it was not possible to further research how the provisions of this law pertaining to multicultural institutions are implemented by the universities concerned.

Challenges:

- There is a problem that concerns the finding of enough Hungarian language teachers who are qualified in teaching about specialised technical fields. Most of the Hungarian-speaking experts in these fields want to work in the private sector.
- A second challenge is the translation and editing of specific textbooks for specific fields – especially in vocational education - with little cost-efficient means, as there is only a small demand for these books.

HUNGARIAN IN SLOVAKIA

The information from this case study is, unless stated otherwise, based upon Mercator's Regional Dossier "The Hungarian Language in Education in Slovakia" compiled in 2005 by Dr Ildikó Vančo of the Univerzita Konštantína Filozófa, Nitra. In order to complete Mercator's knowledge of the language László Marácz, Assistant Professor European Studies at the University of Amsterdam, was interviewed as an expert on 30 November 2016.

1. About the language

Hungarian is part of the Finno-Ugric language family. Hungarian spoken by Hungarians in Slovakia differs a bit from Hungarian spoken in Hungary due to loanwords, borrowings or interference from the Slovak language. The majority of the language elements and registers employed by Slovak Hungarians are identical to the language varieties used in Hungary, and easily understood by Hungarian speakers. Many of the Slovak Hungarian parents raise their children in the Hungarian language. Since the Hungarian language is a language that is spoken in a kin-state, facilities to support the language are sufficient. Hungary and Slovakia have a complicated relationship and the linguistic rights for the Hungarian minority in Slovakia appear to reflect this. The Slovakian State Language Law of 1995 was amended in 2009 to actively protect the national (Slovak) language against minority languages such as Hungarian (Lempp & Marácz, 2015).

2. Official language status

National minorities and ethnic groups in Slovakia officially have the right to spread and receive information in their first language in official relations. Language use in Slovakia is regulated by the *State Language Law* of 1995. Paragraph 1.1. states that "the State language on the territory of the Slovak Republic is the Slovak language" and in paragraph 1.2. "that the Slovak language is the official state language and that it has priority over other languages." Furthermore it is written in paragraph 1.4 that "The usage of minority languages or language of ethnic groups are not regulated in this law". Other regulations such as the *Law on Minority Language Use* of September 1999 describe the use of minority languages. The Education Act "guarantees to the members of the nationality different from Slovak one the right to education in their native language within the scope adequate to their national development, at all levels and types of schools and school facilities" (Institute of Information and Prognose of Education, 2005*).* The ECRML was signed by Slovakia in 2001, protecting Hungarian as minority language under Part III of the Charter. However, the implementation of various types of legislation in Slovakia, especially the *State Language Law*, opposes the ECRML's goal of facilitating the use of minority languages. In regard to the public use of Hungarian, as well as other minority languages, in a municipality, Slovakia applies a threshold of 20% of the population. This means that 20% of the population of a municipality needs to be Hungarian, before the language can be treated as an official language. This requirement creates tension in areas where the amount of Hungarian citizens falls just beneath this threshold, because this entails that this (still significant) part of the regional population is exempted from all language rights. In the ECMRL monitoring report of April 2016, the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe recommends to alter this 20 % threshold.

3. Demographics

Based on the 2011 National Census (Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic, 2015), the Hungarian minority consists of 8.5% of the total Slovakian population and is the biggest minority in Slovakia. However, this percentage is slowly decreasing (for example this number was 10.8% in 1991 and 9.7% in 2001). It appears that people who claim to speak Hungarian as a first language outnumber those that identify themselves as being of the Hungarian

nationality; 9.4% of the total Slovakian population stated Hungarian to be their native language in 2011.

4. Education in:

a. Pre-school

Pre-school in Slovakia is aimed at children between the ages of 3-6. Attendance however is not compulsory until the age of 6. In their curriculums, pre-school programmes in Slovakia do not specifically include the Hungarian language or culture. Although Slovak is the language of instruction at most schools, schools that use minority languages as language of instruction are funded as well. There are, according to the data of the Ministry of Education in 2004, 271 Hungarian and 92 Slovak-Hungarian state pre-schools and 4 Hungarian-church pre-schools in Slovakia. In Hungarian pre-schools, Hungarian is language of instruction. The Slovak language in these schools is being taught in a playful way for a compulsory 30 minutes per day. While 1,959 children attended these Hungarian pre-schools in 2004, 17% of all Hungarian children attended Slovak pre-schools with the state language as language of instruction.

b. Primary school

In Slovakia, primary school is aimed at children between the ages of 6 and 10. In 2013/2014 there were 237 primary schools teaching in Hungarian 26 primary schools teaching in both Slovak and Hungarian. During the previous report cycle, those numbers were 242 and 29 respectively (ECRML, 2016). In 2004, Hungarian primary school classes tended to be smaller than those in Slovakian schools, with an average of 18 children in each class. It appears that these smaller groups are a result of an unfavourable demographic situation of the Hungarians in Slovakia. According to the ECRML Committee of Experts, small schools will have to close due to 'school rationalisation', meant to decrease the cost of education in Slovakia. This measure particularly affects minority schools, which are as aforementioned often small. The 'school rationalisation' results in students having to choose between travelling further to another Hungarian primary school, or just attend a Slovak language school. The Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe recommends in their resolution on the implementation of the FCNM of April 2016 that Slovakia should "increase efforts to maintain high quality minority language education and to pursue a close dialogue with national minority representatives, parents and school administrations to ensure that the eventual closure of small schools does not hinder effective opportunities for persons belonging to national minorities to learn in their minority languages" (Council of Europe, 2016c).

c. Secondary school

In Slovakia, secondary education is divided over two stages: lower secondary school and higher secondary school. Lower secondary education is aimed at children between the ages of 11 and 15, whilst higher secondary education is for students between the ages of 15 to 18. Attending school is mandatory for all children up to the age of 16. Lower secondary school education is often offered in the same building where students receive their primary school education. Higher secondary education is then offered at a different building. Secondary education can be attended at academic grammar schools (general secondary education with school-leaving certificate) and vocational secondary schools (specializing in technical, economic, medical, and agricultural knowledge and skills).

There is no recent information on the number of Hungarian academic grammar schools in Slovakia, however this number was 19 in 2004. As the number of Hungarian schools have been reported to have slightly increased over the last few years, one could expect the current number of schools to lie between 15 and 19. During the school year 2014/2015, there were 9 secondary

vocational schools with Hungarian as language of instruction, and 31 with both Slovak and Hungarian as language of instruction (ECRML, 2016).

d. Vocational Education

Students can start their vocational education in Slovakia at the age of 15 and often continue their programmes until the age of 17, 18 or 19 (depending on the type of school). There were five state vocational schools in 2004 and one of them had Hungarian as language of instruction. There also was one private vocational school with Hungarian as language of instruction. There are 17 state and 5 private apprentice schools (schools where to get a certificate of apprenticeship that prepares students for trades after completing the compulsory school period without finishing secondary education) with Hungarian as language of instruction.

e. Higher Education

There are 4 higher education institutes where students can study the Hungarian language or pursue their studies in Hungarian. The universities where one can study Hungarian are the Comenius University in Bratislava, the Konstantin the Philosopher University in Nitra, and the Bél Mátyás University in Banska Bystrica. The Selye János University in Komárno was the first Hungarian University in Slovakia, established in 2004 with the aim to "increase the qualification level of the Hungarian minority in Slovakia"[5]. This university provides programmes in Hungarian. It offers Bachelor, Master and PhD programmes, for example Hungarian Language and Literature[6]. The Konstantin the Philospher University in Nitra offers a bachelor programme for students who want to become Hungarian-Slovak bilingual mediators and offers teacher training in Hungarian[7].

5. Teacher training

The Konstantin the Philosopher University was the institute responsible for teacher training, at least until 2005. Students were able to study Hungarian as part of the teacher-training programme at the department of Hungarian language and literature, part of the Philological Faculty. The faculties Philology, Science and Pedagogy allowed students to study in their first language, if these faculties were able to provide it (in practice, this was 60% of the subjects). The university opened the faculty of Central-European Studies in the academic year of 2004/2005, with a total of 609 students. This department became the host for students that wanted to study in Hungarian and for all Hungarian teachers of other departments. Teacher training for Hungarian primary schools (the junior section) also takes place at this faculty. Even though examination is in Hungarian, all of the documentation (books, examination sheets and protocols for example) are in Slovak.

The Selye János University in Komárno started teacher training in 2004/2005. In that year, there were three faculties where students could study for different kinds of teacher training. At the Pedagogical Faculty, one can study to become a kindergarten or junior section of primary school teacher. Hungarian is used as the language of instruction at the Economics faculty, where three majors that can be studied in Hungarian, and at the Faculty of Presbyterian Theology one can follow pastor training. 386 students attended programmes at this university in 2004/2005.

[5] http://www.ujs.sk/en/
[6] http://ujs.sk/en/study-at-jsu/study-programmes/faculty-of-education.html#bachelor-study-full-time?jjj=1493728268450.
[7] https://www.ukf.sk/en/ects-and-accredited-study-programmes/programmes-in-foreign-languages

A centrally managed organisation of the Slovak Ministry of Education, is set up to sponsor continuing teacher education, including teaching in a minority language. A branch office of the Methodology and Pedagogy Centre has opened in 2011 in Komárno, and is among other things responsible for tasks related to instruction in Hungarian at educational institutions (e.g. the assessment of textbooks translated to Hungarian, providing assistance to teachers teaching in a minority language, and guiding teachers in teaching Slovak at minority schools). More than 1,600 teachers were trained there between April 2011 and August 2013. In 2013, the Methodology and Pedagogy Centre organised a summer school and several seminars for schools that use Hungarian as instruction (ECRML, 2016).

6. Teaching material

There is no Hungarian teaching material for the pre-school level in Slovakia. Many teachers use teaching material they acquire from Hungary or develop their own material. For the primary school level however, course books for Hungarian primary schools are translated from the Slovak language, with the exception of books for the subject Hungarian grammar and literature. Course books published in Hungary are sometimes used as supplementary material. Similar to primary education, secondary school teaching material are Hungarian translations of Slovak books. Books used at vocational schools are either in the Slovak language or are translated from Slovak.

Vocational education course books used at Hungarian vocational schools are either written in Hungarian or Slovak. The Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe recommends in the evaluation report of April 2016 that Slovakia should "ensure that teachers of minority language schools have adequate access to relevant training programmes for teaching in all subjects and ensure that textbooks contain adequate portrayals of all national minority communities and their history in Slovakia" (ECRML, 2016).

7. Career perspectives

Hungarian teachers have career opportunities in the Hungarian language education described in this case study. Based upon the establishment of Hungarian secondary vocational schools, and a Hungarian vocational school, it can be assumed that there is need for proficiency in the Hungarian language in various vocational sectors as well. Additionally, people that are skilled in the Hungarian language have career opportunities in the Hungarian job market.

8. Conclusions

Best practices:

- Many Slovakian Hungarians raise their children in Hungarian, so there is transmission of the language within the family.
- In Hungarian kindergartens, Hungarian is the language of instruction.
- Teachers at pre-school level make the effort to create their own teaching material in Hungarian or receive material from Hungary.
- The percentage children belonging to the Hungarian nationality that attend primary schools with Slovak as language of instruction went down from more than a quarter in 1980 to 17.8% in 2004.
- Hungarian primary schools use Hungarian as language of instruction, except for the subject Slovak language.

Challenges:

- The tenuous relationship between Slovakia and Hungary appears to be hindering the further development of Hungarian language education in Slovakia.
- 17% of all Hungarian children in Slovakia attend Slovak kindergartens with the state language as language of instruction.
- There is no pre-school material in the Hungarian language for Hungarian children in Slovakia.
- Due to the unfavourable demographic position of the Hungarian minority in Slovakia (they mostly live in smaller settlements), classes in Hungarian primary schools are small.
- In order to reduce costs in the educational sector, small schools in Slovakia probably need to close. This will mostly affect minority language schools.
- Slovak-Hungarian and Hungarian state vocational schools appear to have a lack of expertise and teaching material.
- The *State Language Act* appears to be actively protecting the Slovak language against minority languages. This Act therefore opposes the ECRML's goal of facilitating the use of minority languages. [8]

[8] The question of legal recognition given to minority languages in education did not emerge in the original research nor in the update when the interview with the expert was conducted. It has, however, been raised as an issue, but it is outside the scope of the present study to investigate further.

HUNGARIAN IN SLOVENIA

The information from this case study is, unless stated otherwise, based upon Mercator's Regional Dossier "The Hungarian language in education in Slovenia" compiled in 2012, by Prof. Emeritus Dr Albina Nećak Lük of the Faculty of Arts at the University of Ljubljana. In order to complete Mercator's knowledge of the language László Marácz, Assistant Professor European Studies at the University of Amsterdam, was interviewed as an expert on 30 November 2016.

1. About the language

Hungarian (Magyar) belongs to the Uralic language family. Other languages belonging to this family are Finnish and Estonian. Hungarian is the official language of Hungary and is spoken as a minority language in other countries, for example in Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Romania and Slovenia. Hungarian in Slovenia is a language with a kin-state, in this case Hungary, which means that there will always be enough facilities in the kin-state to support the general development of the language. The Slovenian variation of Hungarian is a local and quite archaic variant of the language. Slovenia has signed the ECRML as well as the FCNM with a declaration which specifically states that Hungarian is to be protected as a minority language. Early after the end of the Soviet Union (in 1992), Hungary and Slovenia agreed on recognising each other's minorities and languages, which is mutually beneficial for both countries (Marácz & Lempp, 2016). Both countries have joined the EU, opening the borders between the two and creating a border region in which nationals from both countries live in the other country. The stability between the two countries is seen as a progressive and contributing factor to the development and the current stable position of Hungarian language education.

2. Official language status

Hungarian is mostly spoken in Slovenia in the Pomurje region (the area along the Slovenian-Hungarian border). This region is ethnically mixed and has Slovenian and Hungarian as the official languages. Hungarian in Slovenia is covered under Part II and Part III of the ECRML.

3. Demographics

Based on Slovenia's 2002 population[9] Census, 6,243 people defined themselves to be of Hungarian nationality (out of a total population of 1,964,036) and 7,713 people declared to have Hungarian as their first language. These numbers do not completely correspond. This appears to be due to a significant and increasing number of linguistically mixed (Slovenian and Hungarian) families. In this regard, there must be many bilinguals in the region that define both languages to be their first language.

4. Education in:

a. Pre-school

In Slovenia, pre-school education is not compulsory and is available for children between the ages of 1 and 6. It contains two cycles: the first cycle is aimed at children in the age group 1-3 and the second at children in the age group 3-6. Both the Slovenian and Hungarian languages are used as the language of instruction. As stated in the *Pre-school Institutions Act* (1996, 2005) and the *Act Implementing Special Rights* (2001), both languages (Slovenian and Hungarian) need to be used in the pre-schools that are situated in regions where ethnicities are mixed. Therefore pre-school staff is often required to be proficient in both languages. For example, at a bilingual school in Pomurje, both languages are used in all school activities. The school has implemented a "one person - one language" strategy. In accordance with this

[9] Unfortunately this is the most recent census that Slovenia has.

strategy, bilingual teachers must use one language, preferably their first language, when communicating with the children. Two bilingual teachers then supplement each other. In the school year 2011/2012 most students from the Hungarian minority went to the Lendava Pre-school Institution (Government of Slovenia, 2013).

b. Primary school

In Slovenia, school is compulsory for children from the age of 6 to 16. Children go to primary education in the age group 6-12. In the Pomurje region, children have the opportunity to go to a bilingual primary school, which has linguistically mixed classes. These schools have different language policies in comparison to other regions in Slovenia. Both Slovenian and Hungarian are taught as subjects at all levels and both are used as the language of instruction. This is regulated by the *Elementary School Act* (1996, 2005). In the first three years of primary school the focus lies on the first language of the children. Similar to pre-school, two bilingual teachers use the one person – one language strategy in a class. After these three years, literacy in the second language of the children is gradually developed. Between the fourth and the ninth year, both languages are represented equally as a subject in the curriculum. Generally, Slovenian is used more as the language of instruction in comparison to Hungarian because of the ratio of native speakers in the department. Nevertheless, the linguistic goal is for children to become fully competent in both languages. Such a proficiency is needed for students to be able to go to secondary school or college in either Slovenia or in Hungary. In the school year 2011/2012, 781 pupils in total from the Hungarian national minority attended primary school, of which the majority went to the bilingual primary school Lendava (Government of Slovenia, 2013).

c. Secondary school

Secondary schools in Slovenia are aimed at children from the age of 12 to 15/16. Children that choose to go to a bilingual secondary school, have often attended a bilingual primary school and have either Hungarian or Slovenian as their first language. In the Pomurje region, there is one secondary school that uses both Slovenian and Hungarian as the language of instruction and that teaches both languages as a subject. This is the Lendava Bilingual Secondary School which roughly 300 students attend each year. The *Act Implementing Special Rights* of 2001 regulates bilingual education in Pomurje and states that Hungarian should be offered as a free-of-charge facultative course outside of the bilingual region as well. At all levels, Hungarian and Slovenian as second language is taught as a subject. The predominant language of instruction is Slovenian, but when Hungarian history and culture is taught, the Hungarian language is used as the medium of instruction. It is obligatory to use both languages in presentations or written assignments.

d. Vocational Education

Students can receive vocational education in Slovenia between the ages of 15 and 19. The Lendava Bilingual Vocational School offers three vocational programmes: an economic-commercial technical programme which lasts four years, a commercial programme that takes three years and a mechanic engineering programme which is another four-year programme. The Hungarian and Slovenian language are both used as medium of instruction in these programmes, as well as taught as a subject (both as first and second language).

e. Higher Education

When one has graduated from bilingual secondary school, one can opt for a university in Slovenia or Hungary. In Slovenia, universities are obliged to offer education in the Hungarian language as well as teacher training for Hungarian as a subject. There are different universities where one can study the Hungarian language as a programme, for example at the faculty of

Arts of the University of Maribor and the University of Ljubljana. At both of these universities, Hungarian is the medium of instruction for all the lectures and publications.

5. Teacher training

Prospective teachers can follow a pedagogically oriented programme and then take Hungarian language courses at a variety of universities. One needs to pass the state exam in the Slovenian and Hungarian language in order to become a teacher at a bilingual school.

Pedagogical consultants of the Education Institute, in cooperation with experts of the Slovenian and Hungarian universities, provide in-service training for bilingual school teachers. For the training of teachers and other professionals, a yearly catalogue of programmes is published, from which the teachers can choose a programme that matches their preferences. The Institute for Culture of the Hungarian National Community has developed the E-competences of Teachers in Bilingual Schools project, which aims at modernising the methods of bilingual education and e-competences in Hungarian programmes (Government of Slovenia, 2013).

6. Teaching material

The Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports funds textbooks for Hungarian national communities. The Task Force for the Education of Ethnicities selects textbooks for each school year programme (Government of Slovenia, 2013). The responsibility for pre-school teaching material lies with the National Education Institute. Pre-school material is created by authors in Slovenia or is imported from Hungary. In primary education, bilingual textbooks as well as Slovenian textbooks and Hungarian textbooks from Hungary are used. In secondary and vocational schools, Slovenian textbooks are used for the non-linguistic subjects. For other subjects, Hungarian textbooks are used. For Hungarian language learning (both as first and second language) textbooks are imported from Hungary. The National Education Institute is responsible for the textbooks and the Expert Council of Education of the Republic of Slovenia makes sure that the textbooks correspond with the curriculum. Unfortunately, there is a shortage of textbooks in Hungarian for a few subjects.

7. Career perspectives

Although cultural identity appears to play a big part in the decision of parents to let their children follow education in the Hungarian language, a strengthened sense of identity of the students is not the only important matter in this regard. As Pomurje is a border region with Hungarian as one of the official languages, Hungarian speaking and bilingual (Slovenian and Hungarian) individuals benefit from their skills in the Hungarian language for all public professions in this region. Not only public organisations, but companies working in the two countries and for example exchange projects in the region also have a need for bilingual employees. Additionally, bilinguals have the opportunity to study or work abroad in Hungary and are not being limited by the physical (thanks to the Schengen agreement) and linguistic (with Hungarian as Hungary's main language) border (Marácz, personal communication, November 30, 2016).

8. Conclusions

Best practices:

- The Hungarian population in Slovenia is relatively small and concentrated in Pomurje. This assists the Slovenian government in recognising and supporting this minority and their language, whilst limiting this to a specific area. The official position of Hungarian in Pomurje is therefore very strong.

- The Hungarian minority in Pomurje has made use of all the (realistic) possibilities there are for the language in education the region.
- Both languages are mandatory in pre-school curricula.
- The one person-one language strategy that is used by pre- and primary school teachers.
- Bilingual primary schools aim for their students to be fully proficient in Hungarian, which allows the students to go to high school in both Slovenia and Hungary.
- The *Act Implementing Special Rights* of 2001, which regulates bilingual education in Pomurje and states that Hungarian should be offered as a facultative course in all of Slovenia.

Challenges:

- The ratio of speakers of Hungarian in the department of bilingual primary schools. This is the reason why in primary schools the Slovenian language is used more than the Hungarian language.
- There is only one bilingual secondary and vocational school in the Pomurje region.
- There is a shortage of Hungarian textbooks for a few subjects.

IRISH IN IRELAND

The information from this case study is, unless stated otherwise, based upon Mercator's Regional Dossier "The Irish language in education in the Republic of Ireland (2nd Edition)" compiled in 2016 by Helen Ó Murchú, an Irish language expert. In order to complete Mercator's knowledge of the language Helen Ó Murchú was consulted as an expert on 2 December 2016.

1. About the language

Irish (Gaeilge) belongs to the Celtic language family, which Scottish Gaelic and Manx Gaelic also belong to. The Irish language has been categorised as "Definitely Endangered" by UNESCO's Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger.

2. Official language status

Irish is the national language of Ireland, with English being the second official language of the country. Because Irish is the first official language of Ireland (and thus not a minority language), the country has not been able to sign the ECRML for the Irish language.

3. Demographics

The 2011 Census shows that 1,774,437 persons, 41.4% of the total population, define themselves as Irish speakers.

4. Education in:

a. Pre-school:

Pre-primary education in Ireland is aimed at children between the ages of 3-6. Pre-primary education is mostly funded privately. It is therefore the educational provider which decides to teach Irish or not. Irish is listed in the curriculum of Montessori (a teaching model focused on a pupils' ability for self-development) pre-schools, which means that all of the Montessori pre-schools focus on Irish in their teaching. Next to English-medium pre-school providers there also are Irish-medium playgroups for children under the age of 6. In 2009, the latest Early Childhood Curriculum was developed and it was called AISTEAR, which means Journey. The curriculum is aimed at children from 0-6 and teaching material can be downloaded in Irish as well as in English.

b. Primary school

Primary school in Ireland is aimed at children aged between 4 and 12, although education only becomes mandatory from the age of 6. In a judgment delivered in the High Court on 16 April 1999, Ms Justice Laffoy claimed that the state has

> "an obligation to provide for the education of the children of the State at their first stage of formal teaching and instruction must involve an obligation to provide for education in the constitutionally recognised first official language of the State. It follows that the requirement of the rules that teachers teaching in recognised primary schools should have proficiency in Irish is a valid provision under the constitution […] also a valid requirement under European Community law […] it is neither disproportionate nor discriminatory." (Ó Murchú, 2016, p.27-28).

This judgement recognises and enforces a child's right to be taught in the country's official first language, Irish, as well as requires teachers to be proficient in the language. The government

is also responsible for the curriculum in primary education. All schools follow the national curriculum, in which Irish language is a requirement, unless people are specifically exempted from this on individual grounds. There are 2,014 English-medium schools with 347,602 pupils, 876 schools with 143,480 students that teach a minimum of two courses in Irish, and 247 Irish-medium schools with 41,961 pupils. It appears that the Inspectorate (Inspectorate Survey 2005) was satisfied with the way Irish was taught, but this is not the case for the quality of the teachers' Irish skills. An Inspectorate study in 2007 defines weaknesses in 25% of *de facto* qualified Irish teachers and severe weaknesses in the qualifications of 9% of Irish teachers. 50% of all classes that were observed by the Inspectorate showed a high-quality level of teaching and 9% was categorised as excellent. In one third of all classes, Irish was taught with English as the language of instruction. Although it appears that in 50% of all classes the quality was mediocre to low, the majority of students did state that they enjoy studying Irish.

No significant differences are found between the exam results of students in English and Irish-medium education. It appears that results on the English exam were even significantly better at Irish-medium schools than English-medium schools.

There is one specific primary school whose language policy appears to be a best practice on its own. This school, called Scoil Bhríde, has a relatively low amount of Irish speakers and a relatively high (80% of the 322 pupils in 2016) amount of students whose first language is not English. The school's open language policy (no restrictions on individual language use, based on the assumption that language is a tool for learning) and large focus on multilingual learning encourage all children to become active participants in matters regarding language. This also motivates Irish speakers heavily, as they do not want to be left behind in an environment where languages are treated as an advantage. The results in Irish language tests and exams at this school are unusually high in comparison to other schools in the area and country (Little, 2016).

c. Secondary school

Students at Irish secondary schools are 12-18 years old. There are 664 English-language schools, 15 Irish-language schools and 3 schools that offer multiple subjects in Irish. From the 2014/2015 cohort, 5917 students received their education partially or fully in the Irish language at 18 different schools. Under the 1988 Education Act Irish is a mandatory core subject in secondary schools.

A similar trend in comparison to primary education, in regard to the quality of teaching can be observed in secondary education (DES Inspectorate, "Irish in Junior Cycle," 2007). Other problems that English- and Irish-language schools encounter are the small amount of Irish teachers and the little availability of examinations done through Irish. It also appears that an increasing amount of students try to seek exemptions for the Irish language requirement. Helen Ó Murchú, an Irish language expert, argues that students try to get their Irish requirement lifted because they do not have any opportunity to use Irish in a different context than school. In order to provide students with a social context in which they can use Irish, the organisation Gael Linn Gael organises summer colleges and debates between schools.

d. Vocational Education

Vocational education in Ireland is aimed at (young) adults from the age of 18. There are almost no vocational education providers that teach all their subjects through Irish. There are two Irish-language programmes for aspiring Irish-language pre-school teachers. Students can get their Level 5 and Level 6 certificate in Childcare by following these programmes. The governmental organisation Údarás na Gaeltachta also offers a variety of practical trainings and courses, taught through Irish, to companies. Údarás na Gaeltachta also provides the relevant

material for all courses in Irish they are involved in and Combhar na Naíonraí Gaeltachta (a partnership of Gaeltacht Irish Medium playgroups) develops Irish-language material for the programmes aimed at childcare.

e. Higher Education

Higher education is aimed at adults from 18 years and up. Irish is taught at all of the seven universities in Ireland and is studied as a subject by 331 students. 30 students solely study Irish and 298 students study a subject with Irish as the language of instruction. Additionally, there is a variety of courses taught via the medium of Irish at undergraduate, graduate and postgraduate levels. The *Higher Education Authority Act* of 1971, requires the Higher Education Authority in Ireland to always aim at the development of Irish in all of its activities. The Higher Education Authority provides funding, research and advice in regard to recruiting (qualified) Irish teachers and does so in order to maintain the official status that the Irish Language enjoys in the EU and in order to uphold the demands under the *Official Languages Act* of 2003.

5. Teacher training

There are twenty two higher education institutes that offer teacher training courses. There are no statistics available on the extent to which Irish is offered as a subject at these institutes. Irish is taught at all schools that offer primary school teacher training and is a compulsory subject. Several of the institutions that offer secondary school teacher education teach Irish as a subject in conjunction with disciplines such as religious studies, economics and business and physical education.

6. Teaching material

Teaching material for the pre-school curriculum can be downloaded in Irish as well as in English. Additionally, Combhar na Naíonraí Gaeltachta has published a variety of CDs with Irish-language songs and books, with traditional rhymes. A best practice in Irish-language education is that there is a relatively large amount of teaching material available for teaching Irish as a subject. For Irish language-schools (primary and secondary) there do appear to be some difficulties in acquiring Irish-language material for all subjects. However, there are several (commercial) organisations that try to tackle this problem. One of these organisations, COGG, is also working on developing and maintaining online information and their online database also has material from Northern Ireland.

7. Career perspectives

Generally it would be most useful to possess all linguistic skills (writing, speaking, understanding, reading). However, understanding/speaking Irish might be more relevant for receptionists/first points of contact with public personnel (whether on the phone or personally). In job advertisements, Irish may be cited as 'required/essential' or merely 'desirable'. It can be regarded as a 'plus' in regard to certain types of posts in the Civil Service or in education, in the Gaeltacht or in companies with a market segment among Irish speakers. Posts requiring Irish include some in education/research, in Irish-language media (across the spectrum), in advertising/public relations/publishing/lexicography (market niches), and posts with Irish-language bodies/organisations whether statutory or voluntary. Posts for which Irish essential are translation and interpretation, including specific training for translating/interpretation and certification. Such posts are needed both in Ireland and in the EU institutions, as Irish/Gaelic is one of the official languages of the EU (Ó Murchú, personal communication, December 2, 2016).

8. Conclusions

Best practices:

- The language policy in Scoil Bhríde's educational programme.
- A best practice in Irish-language education is that there is a relatively large amount of teaching material available for teaching Irish as a subject.
- The results on the English exams are significantly better at Irish-medium schools in comparison English-medium schools.
- In order to provide students with a social context to use Irish in (one of the challenges of Irish language education), the organisation Gael Linn Gael organises summer colleges and debates between schools.

Challenges:

- Helen Ó Murchú, an Irish language expert, argues that students try to get their Irish requirement lifted because they do not have any opportunity to use Irish in a context other than school.
- It is difficult for Irish-medium schools to acquire Irish language teaching material for all subjects.
- The Irish Inspectorate has observed weaknesses in the Irish language skills of teachers. In more than half of the classes observed, the quality of teaching and the Irish language qualifications of teachers were mediocre to low.

POLISH IN LITHUANIA

The information from this case study is, unless stated otherwise, based upon Mercator's Regional Dossier "The Polish Language in education in Lithuania" compiled in 2006 by Markus Roduner. In order to complete Mercator's knowledge of the language, Tomasz Wicherkiewicz from the Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznan was interviewed as an expert on 24 November 2016.

1. About the language

The Western Slavic Language Polish is the official language of the Republic of Poland. According to the 2011 census, the Polish minority in Lithuania, which also is the largest minority in the country, comprises 6.6% of the total Lithuanian population. The language is mostly spoken in the Vilnius county (Statistics Lithuania, 2013). Although Lithuania does not officially recognise its minority languages, being proficient in Polish has a great practical function (and many Lithuanians speak Polish), because Poland is one of the biggest trading partners of Lithuania. The prestige of the Polish language also is relatively good for a language that is not recognised as minority language (Wicherkiewicz, personal communication, November 24, 2016). Polish as minority language in Lithuania has not been enlisted in UNESCO's Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger (Moseley, 2010).

2. Official language status

Article 14 of the Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania states that "the official language shall be Lithuanian". According to article 37, "citizens belonging to ethnic communities shall have the right to foster their language, culture, and customs". Although there are many provisions that allow the public use of minority languages, Lithuanian is granted a privileged status. Lithuanian authorities also insist that publicly everything is written in Lithuanian, even Polish names (Wicherkiewicz, 2016). Lithuania has not signed the ECRML. Polish, therefore, has the status of a regional language, without many rights to claim.

3. Demographics

Based on the 2011 National Census (Statistics Lithuania, 2013), 8.5% of the total population of Lithuania had a certain command of the Polish language. 77.1% of the Polish population in Lithuania considers Polish to be their first language. These numbers are somewhat lower in comparison to the last census in 2001, when 80% of the Polish population in Lithuania defined Polish as their first language. Middle-aged Polish people in Lithuania do not know the Lithuanian language very well. Young Poles usually know how to speak Lithuanian, Polish, Russian and English (Wicherkiewicz, personal communication, November 24, 2016).

4. Education in:

a. Pre-school:

Pre-school education is not compulsory and can be attended by children aged 0-6. Pre-primary education is compulsory and intended for children aged 6-7. A total of four hours of pre-school education is funded by the State. Parents are only asked to financially contribute for food and supplies, but these fees can be lowered depending on the parents' financial situation (Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania, 2013). Concerning education in general, the *Lithuanian Law on Education* of 1991 (last amended in 2015) states in article 30 that "at a general education and a non-formal education school (…) the teaching process may be conducted or certain subjects may be taught in the national minority language". The hours allocated to the minority language, however, can never be less than the time allocated to the

Lithuanian language. According to the Lithuanian Ministry of Education, both pre-school and pre-primary education in other languages can be acquired at institutions providing pre-primary education programmes for ethnic minorities. At these schools, at least 4 hours of education should be done in Lithuanian according to the Law on Education. In 2004/2005 there were 38 Polish kindergartens, or kindergartens with Polish groups, attended by 1,907 children. However, this number of children is fairly low considering the total Polish-speaking population. Quite many parents send their children to Lithuanian kindergartens or kindergarten groups.

b. Primary school

Primary education in Lithuania is compulsory and aimed at children between the ages of 7-11. In general, there are no balanced bilingual schools in Lithuania (like the trilingual school model in Friesland), which can be seen as a shortcoming (Wicherkiewicz, personal communication, November 24, 2016). According to the Ministry of Education, children who attend schools for national minorities start learning Lithuanian (as official language) from the second year of primary education onwards. Article 30 of the Law on Education mainly highlights the importance of teaching the state language. In 2005/2006 there were 103 primary schools with Polish as the language of instruction (in one group or the entire school), all located in the Vilnius county. Outside of the areas where Polish is mostly spoken, the subject Polish language and culture is taught as non-compulsory subject on Saturday or Sunday school. The Ministry of Education works out academic plans for two years, which regulate the minimum number of lessons for each subject in non-Lithuanian schools. As is the case with pre-primary education, the percentage of ethnic Poles attending Lithuanian schools is fairly high.

c. Secondary school

Secondary education in Lithuania is provided for students between the ages of 11 and 18, and is divided into lower (compulsory) and upper (non-compulsory) secondary education. Lower secondary education lasts six years and upper secondary education lasts two years. After completing upper secondary education, students take the basic education achievement test in Lithuanian language, mathematics and an elective basic education achievement test in their first language (for example, Polish). Students of non-Polish secondary schools can choose to take a Polish as a second language course. 142 students, from five secondary schools, made use of this possibility in 2004/2005. Similar to primary education, Polish secondary schools use Polish as language of instruction for every subject except for Lithuanian language. Only when there is no Polish speaking teacher available for a subject, the subject is taught in Lithuanian. However, this is rarely the case. Polish schools receive substantial financial support from the Polish state in order to renovate old school buildings or to build new ones.

d. Vocational Education

There are several vocational education programmes in Lithuania which last two or three years. Completing vocational education results in vocational qualification. Overall, there is one vocational school with Polish as most used language of instruction, two schools that partly use Polish as language of instruction, and one vocational school that only teaches Polish language with Polish as the medium of instruction. The only basic vocational training schools in the Vilnius county that offer programmes taught in Polish are Vilnius Advanced School of Agriculture in Baltoji, where classes are mainly taught in Polish, and the third polytechnic school of Vilnius in the suburb of Naujoji Vilnia, where about 50% of the classes is taught in Polish. Another school, Dzieweniski School of Agriculture uses Polish as the language of instruction for subjects related to secondary education to students with Polish as their native language. At Bukiškės School of Agriculture, Polish language is the only subject taught with Polish as medium of instruction. There are no legislative provisions regarding the language of instruction at vocational schools in Lithuania.

e. Higher Education

Higher education in Lithuania has three levels: a three- or four-year bachelor programme, a two-year master programme and a 4-year doctoral programme. The two universities in Lithuania where Polish is used are Vilnius University and Vilnius Pedagogical University. Polish Philology can be studied as subject at the Vilnius University. The Polish Ministry of Education offers a programme, exclusively for Lithuanians of Polish origin, to enrol at a Polish university. These students receive grants offered by the ministry and do not have to pay study fees (Wicherkiewicz, personal communication, November 24, 2016). Compared to the 150 candidates earlier, the recent number of candidates for this programme has dropped down to fewer than 50.

Article 49 of the *Law on Higher Education* (Republic of Lithuania, 2009) states that "A medium of instruction on state higher education institutes shall be the Lithuanian language. Other languages may be used in teaching if; 1) the content of a study programme is linked to another language; 2) lectures are delivered or other academic events are headed by teaching staff members from foreign states; 3) studies are carried out pursuant to joint study programmes or study programmes on completion of which a double qualification degree is awarded and a part of these is carried out in other countries (…); 4) studies are carried out in pursuance of study programmes intended for studies of foreign nationals or in the case of study exchange."

5. Teacher training

Polish language and literature teachers are often trained at the Polish Philology department of the Faculty of Slavic Studies of Vilnius Pedagogical University. In the academic year of 2005/2006, there were 267 Polish Philology students in total (216 studying Polish Philology, 39 studying Polish Philology and Primary Education Teaching, and 12 studying Polish Philology and Social Pedagogy). In order to maintain a high level of competence in Polish language teaching, training courses for Polish teachers are organised on a regular basis by the Association of Polish Teachers in Lithuania.

6. Teaching material

Due to the fact that teaching material used in the majority of kindergartens are only published in Lithuanian, teachers in Polish kindergartens, even though teaching in Polish, use Lithuanian material. Some teachers collect their own material from Poland. Polish primary schools in Lithuania use Lithuanian material that is translated to Polish. The material for the subject Polish language and literature is created by Polish teachers in Lithuania. Teaching material for secondary schools that use Polish as language of instruction are published in Polish by various publishers in Lithuania. Lithuanian textbooks are used in the last two years of upper secondary education, but nevertheless the subjects are still being taught in Polish. Additionally, some schools also use teaching material from Poland.

Teaching material for the subject Polish language at vocational education is the same as is the case with secondary education, produced by Lithuanian Polish authors and published in Lithuania. Lithuanian material is used for subjects concerning vocational specialisation, since publication of this material in Polish would be rather expensive. Some teachers use their own material or use material from Poland. Only at Vilnius Advanced School of Agriculture, Polish material is used for both Polish language as well as subjects on vocational specialisation. The Polish state supports the Polish minority in Lithuania quite well with teaching material and books (Wicherkiewicz, personal communication, November 24, 2016).

7. Career perspectives

It is neither an advantage nor an obstacle to be proficient in the Polish language in Lithuania with regard to one's career perspective.

8. Conclusions

Best practices:

- Education in a language other than Lithuanian can be received at institutions providing pre-primary and primary education programmes for minorities.
- At both Polish primary and secondary schools, Polish is used as the language of instruction for every subject except for Lithuanian language.
- Polish schools receive substantial financial support from the Polish state in order to renovate old school buildings or build new ones.
- Some teachers make efforts to gather teaching material from Poland, or make their own Polish teaching material.

Challenges:

- There is no bilingual educational model for schools to follow if they want to use multiple languages as the languages of instruction.
- Quite many Polish parents send their children to Lithuanian kindergartens or kindergarten groups.
- Similar to pre-primary education, the percentage of ethnic Poles attending Lithuanian schools is fairly high.
- Due to the fact that teaching material used in the majority of kindergartens only are published in Lithuanian, teachers in Polish kindergartens, even though teaching in Polish, use Lithuanian material.
- Lithuanian authorities insist that everything is written in Lithuanian spelling, even Polish names.

ROMANI AND BEASH IN HUNGARY

The information from this case study is, unless stated otherwise, based upon Mercator's Regional Dossier "The Romani and Beash languages in education in Hungary" compiled in 2005 by Dr Kinga M. Mandel, senior lecturer at the ELTE PPK Adult Education and Knowledge Management Institute. In order to complete Mercator's knowledge of the languages, Dr Kinga M. Mandel was consulted as an expert on 16 November 2016 and 7 December 2016.

1. About the language

The Romani language belongs to the Indo-Aryan branch of the Indo-European language family. It has seven varieties and is spoken throughout Europe and the USA by Roma (or Cigány) people. The language can thus be defined as a diaspora language. The Beash-speaking population prefers to be called Cigány because they do not consider themselves to belong to the Roma population (the Beash community considers the Roma population to be from Romania/Wallahia, whilst the Beash-speaking community is from Transdanubia –the part of Hungary that is West of the Danube river). The Romani language in Hungary is called the Lóvári language. The Romani language has been categorised as definitely endangered by UNESCO's Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger (Moseley, 2010).

2. Official language status

Both the Romani and Beash language are officially registered and protected by the FCNM (1995) and the ECRML (1995 -ratification-).

3. Demographics

According to the 2011 Census, 3.1% of the Hungarian population defines themselves to be of Romani nationality (308,957 people). A much smaller percentage – namely 0.5% - of the total Hungarian population (and 17.6% of the Romani people in Hungary) stated Romani to be their first language (54,339 people, Hungarian Central Statistical Office, 2011). The Roma/Cigány population is the "largest linguistic community in Hungary" (Government of Hungary, 2014, p.15).

4. Education in:

a. Pre-school

Pre-school education is for children in the age category 3-7. Pre-school is compulsory from the age of 3 instead of 5 since 2014. Pre-school is divided into 3 phases: a youngest, middle and an advanced group. Children conclude pre-school with an obligatory year in which they learn the basics they need for school. Regarding education in the minority languages Romani/Beash, the creation of a kindergarten specifically offering education to a minority depends on parents' requests. If a minimum of eight parents requests to have such a kindergarten, the government is obligated to specifically establish a pre-school for, for example, Romani speakers. Parents can then decide if their children will be educated in Romani/Beash, bilingually (Hungarian and Romani/Beash) (Government of Hungary, 2014). According to the statistics provided by the Hungarian Government in their sixth periodical report (2014), there are 451 pre-schools that provide Roma/Cigány education, these kindergartens are attended by 18,042 children.

b. Primary school

In Hungary, primary school is divided into two levels: one for children between 6 and 10 and a second level for children between 10 and 14. There are four types of education the Roma/Cigány pupils can participate in. Those types are: integrated education, with or without remedial minority programmes, special segregated classes for Roma/Cigány children or special education for children with learning difficulties.

It is specified by the National Base Curriculum that the language of instruction in primary schools should be Hungarian and that minority languages should be taught from the first year onwards. There are no primary bilingual primary schools in Hungary or schools where Romani/Beash are used as language of instruction. Over 37,000 Roma pupils attend primary school. (Government of Hungary, 2014).

c. Secondary school

Children in Hungary start secondary education at the ages of 10, 12 or 14. The number of Roma/Cigány students attending secondary school is limited due to the fact that most Roma students do not complete primary school or do not have the required results.

Secondary schools in Hungary can be either a general secondary school (comprising four grades), a secondary school with six or eight grades, a vocational secondary school or a vocational training school. There is one bilingual secondary school for Roma/Cigány children. This is the Gandhi High School (a grammar school) in Pécs, where the Lóvári and the Beash languages are taught.

The Federal Union of European Nationalities (hereafter: FUEN) has developed a project called "Solidarity with the Roma – Minorities helping Minorities" in 2013, and in one of the projects they aim to expand "secondary school partnerships between minority schools in Hungary, Denmark and Germany" and intensify the school exchanges of Roma-students (FUEN, 2013a, p. 12). A community school will be established as well, in which different cultures come together and the students will have day-long classes with the focus on the development of professional skills.

d. Vocational Education

Students can start their vocational education after completing secondary school, when one turns 16 or has completed ten years of education, or when one attains the secondary school-leaving certificate. and includes the previously mentioned vocational training school and the vocational secondary school. The language of instruction at vocational schools is Hungarian, however in some institutions it is possible to learn Romani or Beash. Parents can request for their children to receive education in the Romani or Beash language.

Another FUEN project focuses on the expansion of the amount of general and vocational schools for Roma children in Hungary. The motivation for this is to increase awareness of other cultures (and vice versa) amongst Roma/Cigány children as well as assist the Roma/Cigány population to successfully integrate in society. The FUEN additionally wants to establish a vocational training programme for students who are not able to go to a technical school (e.g. do not have the relevant qualifications). Although the initial focus and goal of this programme is to assist the Roma/Cigány minority in Hungary to transition to a job more easily, this programme is also open for the Hungarian population. After training for a year students receive a certificate (not an official diploma). Sectors in which they could find a job after this programme are for example hotel and catering, design, cooking, hair dressing and beauty treatment. The programme will include native language classes (FUEN, 2013a).

e. Higher Education

There are no higher education institutions for minorities in Hungary. Institutions do, however, provide "teacher training for ethnic minority languages and literature" (Government of Hungary, 2014, p. 64). In healthcare studies, Romology education is a part of the curriculum of many universities. An example of a course in Romology is "Communication with Gypsy (Roma) patients". The Romology Department of Pécs University is the most famous institute involved in research and teaching in Roma/Cigány communities in Hungary.

5. Teacher training

In Hungary, the Faculty of Humanities of the University of Pécs offers the possibility to become a primary or secondary school teacher in Romani or Beash language and culture.

Since 2013 one can participate in double major teacher training. This means that in five years students can become primary school teachers, and in six years they can become secondary school teachers, absolving between 300-360 credits during 10-12 semesters. They will acquire a Master of Education's degree in both majors. In order to be eligible to this training, students need to have successfully finished secondary school and a teacher aptitude test. The aptitude test is verbal and is based on the motivational letter that the applicant has sent in advance in addition to a discussion of a pedagogical theme based on the interpretation of a text concerning a specific educational situation, or a pedagogical movie that highlights the educational aspects.

In the first three years students are educated in the fields of pedagogy, psychology, methodology and specialty subjects. In the fourth year the group is split into primary (two more years to study) and secondary (three more years to study) teacher training groups. In both cases, students take a few more classes, do a teaching internship, defend their thesis and take a final exam in the last year. In order to attain the diploma, students need to successfully pass a B2 level foreign language (or Romani or Beash) exam. (Mandel, personal communication, November 7, 2016)

6. Teaching material

Teaching material (e.g. poems, CD's, tales) for pre-school education is available in both languages. For the other levels of education there is a lack of suitable teaching material. However, with the help of the "Social Renewal Operative Programme Project", a project conducted by the Hungarian government, largely funded by the European Social Fund, which focuses on "Competence-based teaching material development II, and the care of the Roma culture and language," new digital training programmes and teaching material, which are published in the Romani and Beash languages, have been developed (Government of Hungary, 2014, p. 104).

7. Career perspectives

Proficiency in Romani or Beash is neither a big advantage, nor a disadvtantage with regard to one's career perspective. As in the case of public employees (for example police officers, educators or social workers) the Lóvári language certificate is considered to be equal to a modern foreign language (English or German) certificate and is included in the salary accordingly. In the private sector, however, one rarely has cases in which proficiency in Romani/Beash languages is an asset. A medium level foreign language exam is required to get the BA university degree, therefore many students opt to learn Romani (Lóvári in the Hungarian case), considering that it is easier to successfully pass a medium level Lóvári exam, than any other foreign language exam. (Mandel, personal communication, November 7, 2016). There is little information to be found on the Beash language in this respect.

8. Conclusions

Best practices:

- For public employees a certificate in the Lóvári language is equal to a modern foreign language (English or German) certificate and is included in the salary accordingly.
- The "Social Renewal Operative Programme Project", conducted by the Hungarian government and focused on producing teaching material for Roma culture and language.
- The "Solidarity with the Roma – Minorities helping Minorities" FUEN initiative. The most remarkable best practice in this regard is the project in this initiative that is focused on the a minority schools network in Hungary, Denmark and Germany and the international exchange of Roma students.
- Another FUEN project, which revolves around the expansion of the amount of general and vocational schools for Roma children in Hungary.

Challenges:

- Kindergartens specifically for Roma/Cigány are only established when at least eight parents have put in a request for such a school.
- The lack of bilingual schools, there is only one bilingual secondary school.
- There appears to be little need for employees with Romani/Beash language skills in the Hungarian private sector.

(LOWER AND UPPER) SORBIAN IN GERMANY

The information from this case study is, unless stated otherwise, based upon Mercator's Regional Dossier "The Sorbian language in education in Germany" compiled in 2016 by Dr. Beate Brězan, head of the WITAJ-Sprachzentrum, and Měto Nowak, personal assistant at the Brandenburg Ministry of Sciences, Research and Cultural Affairs. In order to complete Mercator's knowledge of the languages, Judith Walde from the Minderheitensekretariat der Vier Autochthonen Nationalen Minderheiten und Volksgruppen Deutschlands in Berlin was interviewed as an expert on 28 November, 2016.

Because Upper Sorbian and Lower Sorbian are spoken in two different Bundesländer (federal states) of Germany (Saxony and Brandenburg) with separate regulations in each state, in some headings they are treated separately.

1. About the language

Lower Sorbian and Upper Sorbian are western Slavic languages. The languages are closely related to other West Slavonic languages such as Polish, Czech, Slovak and Kashubian. Lower and Upper Sorbian are listed as 'severely endangered' by UNESCO's Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger.

2. Official language status

Lower Sorbian and Upper Sorbian are two of the seven recognised minority languages in Germany. The Sorbs have been legally recognised as a national minority in the *German Grundgesetz* (Basic Law) and in the German Unification Treaty (FUEN, 2013b). Upper Sorbian (in the Free state of Saxony) and Lower Sorbian (in Brandenburg) are recognised as territorial languages under Part III of the ECRML (Bundesministerum des Innern, 2013). The FCNM was signed in 1997 by the Federal Republic of Germany, also for the Sorbian language.

3. Demographics

Ethnic statistics are prohibited in Germany. There are no exact data on the number of Sorbs or Sorbian speakers. According to estimated numbers, there are 60.000 Sorbs in general of which 20,000 live in Lower Lusatia and 40,000 in Upper Lusatia.
It is estimated that Lower Sorbian is spoken by 7,000 people and Upper Sorbian by 18,000 people. The number of speakers is declining. Especially the transmission of the language within the family and the image of the language is a challenge (FUEN, 2013b).

4. Education in:

a. Pre-school

In Germany, children can go to non-compulsory kindergarten from the age of 1. 38 nursery schools and day care centres in Brandenburg and Saxony educate children in the Sorbian language more or less intensively. When children do not go to kindergarten, they will therefore not come into contact with the Sorbian language as their peers do and when they start studying Sorbian in primary school, they have a different level of Sorbian than children who did follow pre-school. For both federal states an immersive education programme called the WITAJ-model was developed. Using this model, children hear and see the Sorbian language at nursery school based on the idea of "One person – one language". In this model pre-school teachers are native speakers of the Sorbian language. An alternative to the immersion method is bilingual language teaching where the teachers talk to all children in two languages (Sorbian and German). The teachers decide in which situation and how much the two languages are

used. Another method is the supply model. With this method the children learn the Sorbian language for one hour a week. The children get to know Sorbian habits, songs and dances and they learn some Sorbian words and phrases.

In Saxony (Upper Sorbian), nursery groups receive funding from the federal state for hiring staff and educational material. As cited in the Regional Dossier (Brězan & Nowak, 2016, p.20), "Sorbian education in day-care centres and its special promotion is established by law in paragraphs 2 and 20 of the *Day Care Act* and in the Regulation about day-care facilities in the Sorbian settlement area. In Brandenburg (Lower Sorbian) Sorbian education is established in the Constitution of Brandenburg, in *the Day Care Act* and in the *Sorbian Wendish Law*. It is arranged by law that nursery schools in the Sorbian area, have to teach Sorbian culture and history. Sorbian nursery groups receive financial support from the Foundation for Sorbian People".

b. Primary school

Compulsory education starts from the age of 6 in both Brandenburg and Saxony. In Saxony primary education takes four years. The *Saxon Education Act* (as cited in Brězan & Nowak, 2016, p.26) prescribes that "the Sorbian language is taught as a language of instruction in the status of mother tongue, second language and foreign language". The most successful way of teaching the Sorbian language takes place in schools that use the Konzept2plus. This is a teaching method where both Sorbian and German plus additional languages are used. Both languages are the medium of instruction in three additional subjects such as mathematics, general knowledge, music and sport. The teachers decide which language they use more intensively. At schools where Sorbian is taught as a foreign language, pupils learn Sorbian one hour a week in the first grade and three hours per week in grades two to four.

In Brandenburg, primary education takes six years. There are almost no Lower Sorbian native speaking children and, therefore, the WITAJ programme was started. The immersion education model is used by 6 primary schools. 18 primary schools offer Sorbian as a foreign language. One school offers Sorbian as an extracurricular subject. The number of bilingual lessons differs between the schools. The subjects taught bilingually depend on the qualifications of the teachers.

Lesson organisation is a challenge because it is possible that in one class pupils learn Sorbian through immersion, some students learn it as a foreign language and some others do not learn Sorbian at all. The pupils who follow immersive education have to learn the same subject in both German and Sorbian, while the other students can learn the same topic only in German. Another challenge is that Lower Sorbian lessons have to deal with a lack of attraction and they have to compete with other afternoon activities.

c. Secondary school

General education prepares students at secondary schools for the vocational education at different schools. Grammar school prepares students for higher and university education. A best practice is that in both federal states Sorbs have consultation rights concerning all school affairs. When the contents of minority-related instruction or the examination requirements get changed, the minority representatives have a right to take part in the discussion.

Secondary education in Brandenburg starts in the seventh grade and takes four years. Pupils who had immersive education at primary school according to the WITAJ method can continue this intensive method in secondary education. There are two secondary schools where pupils can learn Sorbian voluntarily as a foreign language. There is only one grammar school. In this school Lower Sorbian is a compulsory subject. Pupils can choose Lower Sorbian as an additional examination in foreign languages. The certificates are only issued in Lower Sorbian and in

German for pupils who do their A-level at the grammar school. A challenge is that not all of the teachers are Sorbian native speakers.

Secondary education in Saxony begins in the fifth grade and usually takes six years. There are six secondary schools where Sorbian is taught by the Konzept2plus method. In addition to those six schools there is a grammar school where Sorbian is taught by the Konzept2plus method. In schools where this method is used, Sorbian lessons are compulsory for all pupils up to the tenth grade. Because many students at the grammar school are Sorbian native speakers, it is possible to form mother tongue classes. The teachers speak Upper Sorbian as much as possible in all subjects. Examination, however, is not compulsory. At some secondary schools it is possible to learn Sorbian as a voluntary subject. Normally, secondary schools in Saxony must have two classes with no less than twenty pupils in every grade, but schools can differ from this directive in order to uphold the rights of Sorbian people. This can be regarded as a best practice.

d. Vocational Education

In both Saxony and Brandenburg vocational training is aimed at school-leavers who have already completed nine or ten years of secondary education. Students from grammar schools who do not want to go to university can follow vocational training too.
It is in both Brandenburg as Saxony only possible for kindergarten teachers to learn Sorbian during vocational training. All future kindergarten teachers who attend the Sorbian professional school for social education must learn Upper Sorbian. In Brandenburg, where Lower Sorbian is spoken, it is very hard to find native speakers among the kindergarten teachers and the youth care workers. A challenge is that they have to learn the language during their vocational training while they are already working. Not many are willing to take this extra effort.

From a legislative perspective the following best practice can be mentioned: if the situation arises that there are more applicants for professional school than places, schools in Saxony and Brandenburg handle a selection procedure. This selection procedure means that the training places are allocated under 'hardship provision'. This is similar to granting a scholarship to Sorbian students for their minority membership.

In Saxony, more specific in the city of Bautzen, it is compulsory for all students at the professional school to learn Upper Sorbian. Students who qualify as a kindergarten teacher or youth care worker have 160 hours of Upper Sorbian lessons during their apprenticeship. This is however not enough to acquire a sufficient level of the language.

At the professional school for kindergarten teachers in Cottbus, students have two Lower Sorbian lessons a week and some subjects are bilingual.

e. Higher Education

Leipzig is the only university in Germany where Sorbian studies can be followed. Students who want to become a teacher for Upper or Lower Sorbian, have to take part in some courses at the institute of Sorbian studies in Leipzig. A challenge is that there are not enough lecturers who can teach their subject in both Lower and Upper Sorbian. Hence, some subjects are only taught in Upper Sorbian.

5. Teacher training

For becoming a primary and secondary education teacher, university training must be followed. The Institute of Sorbian Studies at the University of Leipzig educates teachers who want to teach the Sorbian language at primary, secondary or grammar schools. This task is supported by the Sorbian Institute in Bautzen in the field of Sorbian history and folklore.

As already mentioned above, students who want to become a kindergarten teacher or youth worker and follow their education at the professional school in Bautzen have lessons in Upper Sorbian. Additionally, the WITAJ Language Centre offers special courses for kindergarten teachers.

In Lower Lusatia the same programme is offered by the School for Lower Sorbian Language and Culture and in Upper Lusatia by the Sorbian Family and Education Centre LIPA. The Supervisory School Authorities of Brandenburg and Saxony offers further training for the Sorbian language. Especially for Lower Sorbian the Department for Sorbian/Wendish Education Development Cottbus (Arbeitsstelle für sorbische/wendische Bildungsentwicklung Cottbus; hereafter ABC) offers further training. Both institutes also offer bilingual teachers training.

In-service secondary education teachers can follow a master in Lower Sorbian beside their job. Additionally, teachers from Brandenburg can follow an educational programme if they also wish to be qualified as Lower Sorbian teacher. In service training for Lower Sorbian language courses are organised by the ABC and for Upper Sorbian by the Saxon Educational Institute. The WITAJ Language Centre offers some special language courses.

6. Teaching material

The WITAJ Language Centre develops pedagogical material for pre-school education such as books, plays and games. The nursery schools get most of them for free.
For primary education in Brandenburg the ABC and the WITAJ language Centre edit learning material like textbooks, working books and audio-visual material. There are different textbooks available for pupils who learn education through immersion and for pupils who learn Lower Sorbian as a foreign language. There is specific teaching material for mathematics and general knowledge, music and sports. In Saxony, the WITAJ language Centre is the only responsible institution for teaching material. There is material available for Upper Sorbian lessons as a mother tongue, as a second language and as a foreign language. Textbooks in Upper Sorbian are available for mathematics, general knowledge, music and religious instruction.

For secondary education the institutes that publish and develop teaching material are the same as for primary education. For Upper Sorbian teaching material is available for the subjects history, geography, biology, music, religious education and informatics. Most textbooks are translated from German into Sorbian except for Sorbian history and religious instruction. Some material is developed together with teachers for classes based on the Konzept2plus method. For the subjects history, ethics and music, Lower Sorbian textbooks are available. Regarding teaching material for vocational training, teachers use textbooks and dictionaries for adults published by the Domowina Publishing House. No other textbooks are available for vocational training.

7. Career perspectives

Although having learnt Sorbian can be cautiously regarded as a positive factor for job seekers, it is not a hard requirement for any job except for jobs at Sorbian institutes or research centres. However, if students want to become a Sorbian teacher by studying at the University of Leipzig, they have the opportunity to sign an agreement ensuring them of a job when they have finished their teacher training programme (Walde, personal communication, November 28, 2016). When it comes to communication with other Sorbian-speaking people, Sorbian is the language employed. This applies to many professions: salesmen, doctors, and religious professions. Most of them are willing to improve their language abilities. When it comes to working in other professions, there are many people in other professions who speak Sorbian on a daily basis.

In the Regional Dossier on the Sorbian language (Brězan & Nowak, 2016, p.38) the following is stated: "Staff in Sorbian and municipal institutions, politicians, priests and artists primarily speak Lower Sorbian in their daily work. The fact that Lower and Upper Sorbian language is alive in daily work and continues to develop is primarily the result of newspapers, the radio and the TV programmes which are broadcasted in both Sorbian languages every month for half an hour. Journalists who work there are faced with the challenge to report daily on a variety of topics in both Sorbian languages and to define terms in Sorbian or to describe the topics with other Sorbian words. In this way, they actively contribute to the vitality of both Sorbian languages."

8. Conclusions

Best practices:

- The system tries to include not only mother tongue Sorbian speakers, but speakers with a different first language as well.
- In "after school clubs" children can receive help with their Sorbian homework
- Additional financial support from the State for staff and educational material (pre-school education).
- In Upper Lusatia the children in Sorbian groups are almost exclusively taken care of by kindergarten teachers who are native Sorbian teachers.
- The use of immersion methods in pre-school.
- The Konzept2plus method, which is a continuous model, so it enables students to study Sorbian from kindergarten to higher education.
- Specific teaching material for different type of learners of the Sorbian language: e.g. As a mother tongue, as a second language or as a foreign language.
- Sorbian learning material for subjects mathematics, general knowledge, music.
- Schools can differ from the rule that in every class there must be a minimum of 20 students in order to uphold the rights of the Sorbian people, according to the Saxon Education Act.
- Mother tongue classes for pupils at the grammar School in Bautzen (Upper Sorbian)
- Professional schools in both Saxony and Brandenburg have the possibility to allocate the training places under a so-called 'hardship provision', a provision similar to a scholarship which is granted to Sorbian students because they are members of a minority.

Challenges:

- Given that the system wants to include native and non-native Sorbian speakers, it is difficult to teach on a level that is both good enough for mother tongue speakers as well as non-native speakers.
- There are not enough teachers to successfully teach children with the Konzept2plus method.
- There is an identified need for a language plan. The secretariat for minorities in Berlin is therefore planning to travel to Wales, to learn about the way they are language planning (not only in education, but also the health sector, the economy, etc.).
- This exchange also shows a need for (international) cooperation and exchange of best practices. This also accounts for teachers, who Walde claims to be able to benefit from the bilingual teachings methods they use in Wales.
- The aging structure is a big problem for transmission of the language, especially for Lower Sorbian. Most speakers are older than 60 years. Hence, transmission within the family is a challenge.
- Especially Lower Sorbian dialects are vanishing due to the major role of formal learning of the standard language in school.
- Image of the language is low; there is a need for more promotion for the language.

- In Brandenburg different educational methods can be used in class. This makes it difficult to organise the lessons.
- In Brandenburg the teaching of Lower Sorbian must compete with other afternoon activities.
- In Brandenburg not all the teachers are native speakers of Sorbian.
- Lack of specific textbooks for vocational training in the Sorbian language.
- There are not enough students for all subjects to teach in both Upper as Lower Sorbian.

SWEDISH IN FINLAND

The information from this case study is, unless stated otherwise, based upon Mercator's Regional Dossier "The Swedish language in education in Finland (2nd Edition)" compiled in 2012 by Anna-Lena Østern of the Faculty of Education, Åbo Akademi University and Heidi Harju-Luukkainen of the Department of Teacher Education, University of Helsinki. In order to complete Mercator's knowledge of the language(s) Kjell Herberts, researcher at Åbo Akademi, was consulted as an expert on 28 November 2016.

1. About the language

Swedish (Svenska) is from the Germanic language family and can be defined as a Nordic language. The variety of Swedish that is a minority language in Finland is the Högsvenska (standard Swedish) variety and its speakers live along the southern and western coasts of Finland and on the Åland Islands (Østern & Harju-Luukkainen, 2013). As Swedish is a language with a kin-state, there will always be enough facilities supporting the language, inside and outside of Finland.

2. Official language status

Swedish is the second official language of Finland. The language can be used in communication with authorities and is supported by the Finnish government in an equal manner to Finnish. Swedish is covered under Part III of the ECRML.

3. Demographics

5.5% (291,193) of the total of 5.4 million people living in Finland are mother tongue Swedish speakers.

4. Education in:

a. Pre-school

Children that are 6 years old can attend pre-school in Finland for one year. This year, which is meant to be a preparation for primary school, is free of charge and not obligatory, although 90% of all 6-year olds in Finland attend pre-school. Additionally, parents with children between the age of 6 months and 6 years can enrol their children in a day care facility.

There are both Swedish and Finnish pre-schools and day care institutions; these organisations are divided on the basis of their language of instruction. About 3,200 children went to a Swedish-speaking pre-school in 2009, out of a total of 57,000 students that year.

In some areas in Finland, most notably in the Helsinki area, children can be enrolled into a total immersion programme for both languages. This means that children between the age of 3 and 6 that are monolingual in either Swedish or Finnish follow a total immersion programme in the other language, thanks to which they become fully and functionally bilingual. Again this can be observed as a best practice, as this programme enables children to enjoy the advantages that full proficiency in both of these languages offers.

b. Primary school

Primary school is obligatory for children between the ages of 7 and 12, who attend grade 1 to 9, with an optional extra year 10 (this grade focuses on extra basic education). The primary school period is divided into two stages: the lower stage (grade 1-6) and the upper stage (grade 7-9). There are Swedish- and Finnish-language schools and the curriculum is the same for

either variety, except concerning subjects that are focused on the mother tongue or literature. 21,405 students went to a Swedish-language primary school in 2010 (Westerholm, 2011) and there were 274 Swedish-language schools in Finland in 2009, however, this amount was a lower number of schools than in previous years. This could turn out to be a problematic trend if this decrease would continue.

In most conventional Finnish-language primary schools, Swedish is the second foreign language students follow from the 7th grade onwards and the same counts for Swedish-language schools with Finnish as the second foreign language. English is often pupils' first foreign language, which they study from grade 3 onwards. There is a second variety of primary schools, which have an immersion programme similar to the one described in the pre-school section and students are educated in a bilingual manner. Yet again this is a best practice to be observed, as it gives students the opportunity to become fluent in both languages.

c. Secondary school

Secondary school students are usually between the ages of 16-18/19. After their basic education in primary school, students can opt to go to either the gymnasium/lukio (general upper secondary education) or yrkesskola/ammattikoulu (upper secondary vocational education and training). Both systems give students entry into higher education. This section focuses on upper secondary education.

In 2010 there were 37 Swedish-language upper secondary schools in Finland, with 7,041 students enrolled. Swedish is a mandatory subject in both Finnish-language and Swedish-language schools. In upper secondary education there are nine courses on Swedish, six of these are mandatory, the others are optional. Like in pre- and primary school, students can go to Swedish-language schools or Finnish-language schools. There is a course called 'Strengthened Mother Tongue Swedish for Bilingual Pupils', which aims to educate students to such an extent that they are equally proficient in both Finnish and Swedish. All schools, Swedish- and Finnish-language, aim to not only teach pupils Swedish so they can communicate in the language, they also want to enrich students' cultural identities, as according to the Finnish government, bilingualism is inherent in the country's identity.

d. Vocational Education

14 vocational education and training institutions had Swedish-language programmes in 2011 (Westerholm, 2011). Similar to the other types of education discussed, there are Finnish-language and Swedish-language vocational schools. Finnish is a mandatory subject at Swedish-language schools and vice versa.

e. Higher Education

Finland has one big Swedish-language university, called Åbo Akademi, which has about 7,000 enrolled students. The University of Helsinki is a bilingual university and has approximately 2,600 Swedish-speaking students of the university's total of 35,000 students. At both universities, Swedish-speaking students have the opportunity to follow all courses, in every field that the universities offer, in their native tongue. Additionally, the University of Helsinki has 41 professors that have Swedish as their mother tongue. Other Swedish-language higher education institutes are often institutes of technology, specializing in engineering, technology, applied sciences and natural sciences.

5. Teacher training

Pre-school teachers need to have a Bachelor's degree, which takes a minimum of three years (180 ECTS) to attain. Teachers at primary and secondary schools, as well as at vocational and

higher educational institutions need to have a Master's degree in order to be able to teach. Students can study to become a primary and secondary school teacher at the Vasa Teacher Training School (VTTS) and the University of Helsinki. Fully fledged teacher training is only available in Vasa. There is no bilingual teacher education programme available, an immersion teacher training programme is running in Vasa.

In-service training for teachers is in practice only offered by the Centre for Lifelong Learning (CLL) at Åbo Akademi in Vasa.

6. Teaching material

Teaching material is often produced by Swedish producers in either Finland or Sweden, but sometimes Finnish-language material is also used in both Finnish- and Swedish-language schools.

There is a Swedish publisher in Finland (Schildts & Söderströms), which produces teaching material for pre-schools and day care institutions. However, most of the teaching material is imported from Sweden. This can be regarded as a best practice, because it offers pre-schools a large variety of teaching material of good quality. Teaching material for all Swedish-language primary school subjects are produced in Swedish by either Swedish publishers in Finland or in Sweden. Swedish-language publishers in Finland receive grants from foundations in Finland, most remarkably by the Swedish cultural foundation. This same foundation has been quite critical of the quality of the textbooks they are partially supporting, they apparently are old-fashioned and the Finnish texts that were adapted for the teaching material have been badly adapted. Concerns voiced by other foundations were about the low availability of textbooks. This is one of the challenges that Swedish language education in Finland faces.

7. Career perspectives

It appears that in Finland, proficiency in the English language is more in demand than proficiency in Swedish. However, in practice, Swedish can be useful when one aspires to a career in state administration, for which Swedish is often regarded as a merit. In Finland's bilingual (Finnish and Swedish) municipalities (where 25-95% of the population is Swedish), Swedish is one of the languages that is used on a daily basis. Proficiency in the language is therefore seen as a merit or sometimes even a requirement for job seekers for the education field to the healthcare sector. This is less the case in regions and municipalities of which a smaller part of the population speaks Swedish, especially large cities such as Helsinki, Espoo and Turku), however competences in the Swedish language can still be regarded as a merit, even in these areas. In the private sector it varies: in small local companies and shops the local languages are used, but the language legislation does not affect the policy of companies and there is freedom of choice. It appears that Finnish and English are the languages one mostly needs in order to develop one's career. Then there may be an advantage to speaking Swedish if one has contact with Sweden. Often Swedish speakers are asked to manage the Swedish contacts. It therefore appears that there is a hidden need for Swedish speakers, but not an outspoken policy that answers to this need. (Kjell Herberts, personal communication, November 28, 2016).

8. Conclusions

Best practices:

- Thanks to Swedish being a language with a kin-state, teaching material is both produced in Finland itself and imported from Sweden, which is a cost-efficient way of acquiring high-quality teaching material. Production companies that produce this teaching

material in Finland, however, can receive a grant from the Swedish cultural foundation, an organisation that is very concerned with upholding the quality of the teaching material.
- Children that are monolingual in either Swedish or Finnish have the possibility to follow a total immersion programme in the other language in pre-, primary and secondary school, thanks to which they can become fully and functionally bilingual. Additionally, it is possible for aspiring teachers to enter into a bilingual teacher programme.
- The emphasis put on intercultural communication in Finland is a reason that is offered to explain why bilingualism functions so well in Finnish society.

Challenges:

- Although one would say that there is a great variety of textbooks to be imported from Sweden, some foundations have voiced their concerns about the low availability/variety of textbooks on Swedish in Finland.
- Finnish-speaking schools have much better student results in comparison to Swedish language schools.
- Demography professor Fjalar Finnäs states in 2007 that the aging of the general Finnish population, as well as the increasing immigration numbers can be seen as a challenge, but also an opportunity, for the position of Swedish in Finland. Finnäs claims that it is important for bilingual families to plan the upbringing of their children in the terms of languages.

WELSH IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

The information from this case study is, unless stated otherwise, based upon Mercator's Regional dossier "The Welsh language in education in the UK (2nd Edition)", originally compiled by Meirion Prys Jones and updated in 2014 by Ceinwen Jones. In order to complete Mercator's knowledge of the language, Meirion Prys Jones was interviewed as an expert on 14 November, 2016.

1. About the language

Welsh (Cymraeg) belongs to the Celtic language family, of which Irish, Manx and Gaelic are also a member. The language is mainly spoken in Wales. The Welsh language has been categorised as a vulnerable language by UNESCO's Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger.

2. Official language status

Together with English, Welsh is the official language of Wales. Welsh also is the official language of Wales ever since the Mesur y Gymreag (Cymru) (Welsh Language (Wales) Measure) was put into working in 2011. Welsh is covered under Part III of the ECRML.

3. Demographics

Based on the 2011 National Census, 21% of the population of Wales was able to speak Welsh and this constitutes 562,000 people. 77% (432,740) of the people stating to speak Welsh were also able to read and write Welsh. These numbers are somewhat lower than during the last census in 2001, when 21.8% of the population in Wales stated to speak Welsh.

4. Education in:

a. Pre-school

Children between the ages of 0-5 have the possibility to follow pre-school education in Wales. The Welsh government ensures that all children from the age of 3 to 5 have access to free pre-school care, after the age of 5 it is compulsory for children to go to school (which is also freely accessible). Children can attend English-medium, Welsh-medium and bilingual pre-schools. The government has a Foundation Phase educational programme, aimed at children between 3-7 years, of which Welsh Language Development is one of the compulsory programmes. Mudiad Meithrin ('Nursery Movement') is the main pre-school provider of Welsh and also works with nursing staff in order to train them in this field. There are roughly 1,000 Mudiad Meithrin nurseries/toddler groups and more than 21,000 children that follow their early childhood education at such an organisation. The Mudiad Meithrin training is government-funded and the same accounts for other types of training that childcare practitioners receive. This training's aim is to ensure that practitioners have basic skills in Welsh, so that children receive a high-quality introduction to the Welsh language in the early childhood education.

b. Primary school

Children in Wales follow primary education between the ages of 5 and 11. Pupils can attend English-medium, Welsh-medium and bilingual primary schools. In 2016, there were 428 Welsh-medium schools in Wales, this is 32.7% of all primary schools in Wales. All primary school pupils follow the National Curriculum and one of the seven (compulsory) areas of learning in this curriculum is Welsh. The *Education Reform Act* of 1988 regulates education in primary schools, but the Education (National Curriculum) (Attainment Targets and Programmes of Study in Welsh) Order of 1990 made Welsh a mandatory subject for all students up to the age of 16.

The content of the subject, however, differs depending on whether the school is English-medium, Welsh-medium or bilingual. In Wales there is often one teacher responsible for the teaching of the entire curriculum. However, some schools make use of specialist Welsh teachers in order to adhere to the curriculum. The availability of such teachers can be viewed as a best practice as it ensures that the students receive high-quality teaching of the subject. Over the last thirty years, much Welsh teaching material has been developed. However, it is a continually difficult process to match the schools' needs with the correct material because the curriculum keeps changing for individual subjects. There currently is a wide variety of educational material available: about 160 titles are published in print, digitally, but also in formats that are accessible for blind or partially sighted students. In 2012, a digital learning platform known as 'Hwb' was set up and this platform is available in all of Wales. Additionally, the Welsh government initiated the development of a digital application in 2014, which has been downloaded for over 20,000 devices.

c. Secondary school

Students between the ages of 11 to 16 follow secondary education, which until this age is compulsory. After qualifying for the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GSCE), students can opt to follow an additional two years of secondary education, in order to get their A- or AS-levels and qualifying for university. Secondary schools can be English-medium, Welsh-medium or bilingual. In 2016, there were 54 Welsh-medium secondary schools, this is 25.5% of all secondary schools in Wales. A challenging phenomenon is that more and more students opt for English-medium education, although they did go to a Welsh-medium primary school. A second challenge that Welsh language education has to deal with is how little the language is used outside of the classroom, even at Welsh-medium and bilingual schools. Most secondary schools offer the option of studying for an extra two years. Welsh is a compulsory core subject that students need to follow until their examinations. Students may then choose to take the course as a full GSCE qualification, as a short course qualification or not qualify in the language at all. In 2012 roughly a third of the students opted for the latter.

d. Vocational Education

If students choose not to continue to study at secondary school until they are 18, they can also opt to continue their education in vocational training, at vocational education colleges or work-based education. In 2013, 20.1% of all secondary schools were Welsh-medium or bilingual, 8.4% of all vocational education colleges and 3.6% of all work-based learning institutions were Welsh-medium or bilingual. Sometimes pupils also have the opportunity to follow vocational education at the institution where they followed their secondary education. There are English-medium, Welsh-medium and bilingual secondary schools that offer vocational education, but there are no specific vocational education colleges where students can receive their complete vocational training in Welsh. There is, however, an increase in vocational courses that are taught through Welsh, although the number of courses is still quite low. There appears to be a definite need for Welsh language vocational education.

Since 2012, the Welsh government requires all vocational education colleges to have a strategy to develop and support bilingualism in their institutions. Before 2012, this requirement was specifically aimed at Welsh. All colleges therefore receive a grant, which they can use to further develop their Welsh and bilingual means of instruction. Like the Welsh-specialist teachers at primary schools in Wales, there also is a similar service for vocational education. Since 2001, an organisation called Sgiliath has provided vocational education colleges all throughout Wales with support to set up Welsh and bilingual means of instruction. The organisation also developed a module with which teachers are instructed how to use bilingual teaching skills in their specific subject area. It appears that there is a low demand (from students) to learn or get taught in Welsh in their vocational training and it is claimed that this lack of enthusiasm is shared and

perhaps also increased by the little encouragement students receive on this matter from the colleges. In 2013, a new Apprenticeship Programme started in Wales, which again focused on Welsh and bilingual teaching. Work-based teachers will get contract funding via this programme. However, this does mean that each training body needs to set specific targets for a Welsh-language action strategy.

e. Higher Education

There are eight universities that offer Higher Education in Wales. Students can follow Welsh as a course at the majority of these. In 2011, the Welsh government founded the National Welsh Language College, which aims to improve the Welsh courses that are already available and develop new Welsh-medium programmes in a variety of fields. The Academic Strategy that this organisation developed provides universities with funding for hiring Welsh teachers. Roughly a hundred teachers have been appointed via this strategy. Lastly, the National Welsh Language College has introduced a Welsh Language Skills Certificate, which functions as proof of the students' Welsh language skills when they successfully finish their Welsh language courses.

5. Teacher training

At some vocational education colleges it is possible to receive some training in the Welsh language and methodology whilst studying to become an early education caregiver. Students can follow initial teacher training in order to become a teacher at a primary schools. There is one (out of three) centre which provides this programme through the Welsh language. Prospective secondary teachers can study for a Postgraduate Certificate of Education in the subject of Welsh, but there has been a shortage of students in the past decade. This is why the Welsh government has provided grants for potential students, in order to stimulate studying this subject. It is also possible to study Welsh as a subject via a Graduate Teacher Programme, whilst already being a teacher in a primary school or in another subject at a secondary school. Additionally, the Welsh government has founded a Sabbatical Scheme for teachers at primary and secondary schools and vocational education institutions in Welsh-language training. In 2014, 238 people made use of this scheme in order to use their Welsh language skills in their teaching profession.

6. Teaching material

There are many varieties of teaching material for pre-school teaching of Welsh, from books, to toys, DVDs and television and computer programmes. With regard to teaching material for primary schools, the situation is similar to the one in primary school. Providing high-quality teaching resources for Welsh is characterised as on-going challenge. However, there is an aspect to be taken into account: in the past three decades the teaching material has developed in line with the development of the digital age. Additionally, it appears that many teachers also take it upon themselves to produce their own material in innovative and varying ways. However, teaching material in and for Welsh still is of lesser quality than English-language resources, so there is still a lot of progress that needs to be made. The teaching material for vocational education comes from the same provider as the one producing material for primary and secondary schools. Additionally, there are some individual institutions that produce their own Welsh-language teaching material. The National Language College set up an e-learning platform for universities called Y-Porth. More than 2,000 people use this platform and it is the basis of hundreds of university modules.

7. Career perspectives

There is a big demand for Welsh speaking employees in the education and health care system and in the administration because, according to the law, organisations have to provide their

information in Welsh, so administrators who are competent in Welsh are needed. In the private sector this is a need as well. For example, providers of electricity and water are reaching out to the increasing requests for information and offers in Welsh.

8. Conclusions

Best practices:

- The wide variety of educational material available for primary school education, also in formats that are accessible for blind or partially sighted students.
- The Welsh government's requirement of vocational education colleges to have a strategy to develop and support bilingualism in their institutions. It is claimed that the increase of the percentage of young people and children that speak Welsh can be attributed to Welsh-medium and bilingual education.
- The funding work-based teachers receive via the Apprenticeship programme, which requires each training body needs to set specific targets for a Welsh-language action strategy.
- The founding of the National Welsh Language College, which aims to improve the Welsh courses that are already available and develop new Welsh-medium programmes in a variety of fields.
- The Welsh Language Skills Certificate. This certificate can be an asset when for example applying for jobs; it additionally serves the purpose of motivating employers to make use of the language skills of their employees.
- The Sabbatical Scheme for teachers at primary and secondary schools and vocational education institutions in Welsh-language training.
- Individual institutions that produce their own Welsh-language teaching material.
- Y-porth, the e-learning platform for universities.
- The 2010 Welsh education strategy, which is a five-year plan that sets targets. This plan has come to an end in 2015, but will be extended.
- The Welsh pre-school provision is excellent, providing Welsh language education for children from the age of 6 months and up. Every parent who wants their child to go to a Welsh language pre-school has the possibility to do so (although sometimes they need to travel somewhat more than if they would send their child to the nearest pre-school facility).
- Innovation: Centres for late comers. Children who come from outside of Wales who move into the country between the age of 7-11, have the possibility to follow a fulltime intensive Welsh immersion course of four months, after which children can pick up the language easily at a Welsh or English medium primary school.
- The commitment of the Welsh government to increase the amount of Welsh speakers with 300.000, to 1 million, in 2050.

Challenges:

- It is a continually difficult process to match the schools' needs with the correct material because the curriculum keeps changing for individual subjects.
- Students increasingly opt for English-medium education, although they did go to a Welsh-medium primary school.
- Welsh language education has to deal with how little the language is used outside of the classroom, even at Welsh-medium and bilingual schools.
- The low demand (from students) to learn or get taught in Welsh in their vocational training and the lack of encouragement from vocational education colleges.
- Providing high-quality teaching resources for Welsh.

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