



European Research Centre on
Multilingualism and Language Learning

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SORBIAN

The Sorbian language in education in Germany

| 2nd Edition |

| Regional dossiers series |

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Glossary

ABC	Department for Sorbian/Wendish Education Development Cottbus (Arbeitsstelle für sorbische/wendische Bildungsentwicklung Cottbus)
BRD	Federal Republic of Germany (Bundesrepublik Deutschland)
DDR	German Democratic Republic (Deutsche Demokratische Republik)
SBA	Saxon Education Agency (Sächsische Bildungsagentur)
SMK	Saxon State Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs (Sächsisches Staatsministerium für Kultus)
SWG	Sorbian/Wendish Law (Sorben/Wenden-Gesetz)

Foreword

background The Mercator European Research Centre on Multilingualism and Language Learning aims at the acquisition, circulation and application of knowledge in the field of regional and minority language education. Regional or minority languages are languages that differ from the official language of the state where they are spoken and that are traditionally used within a given territory by nationals of that state forming a group numerically smaller than the rest of the state's population. For several years an important means for the Mercator Research Centre to achieve the goal of knowledge acquisition and circulation has been the Regional dossiers series. The success of this series illustrates a need for documents stating briefly the most essential features of the education system of regions with an autochthonous lesser used language.

aim Regional dossiers aim at providing a concise description of and basic statistics on minority language education in a specific region of Europe. Aspects that are addressed include features of the education system, recent educational policies, main actors, legal arrangements and support structures, as well as quantitative aspects, such as the number of schools, teachers, pupils and financial investments. This kind of information can serve several purposes and can be relevant for different target groups.

target group Policymakers, researchers, teachers, students and journalists may use the information provided to assess developments in European minority language schooling. They can also use a Regional dossier as a first orientation towards further research or as a source of ideas for improving educational provisions in their own region.

link with Eurydice In order to link these regional descriptions with those of national education systems, the format of the Regional dossiers follows the format used by Eurydice, the information network on education in Europe. Eurydice provides information on the

administration and structure of national education systems in the member states of the European Union.

contents

The remainder of this dossier consists of an introduction to the region concerned, followed by six sections each dealing with a specific level of the education system. These brief descriptions contain factual information presented in a readily accessible way. Sections eight to ten cover research, prospects and summary statistics. For detailed information and political discussions about language use at the various levels of education, the reader is referred to other sources with a list of publications.

1 Introduction

language

Lower Sorbian (dolnosěrbska rěc, also called Wendish) and Upper Sorbian (hornjoserbska rěč) are western Slavonic languages spoken in the region of Lower and Upper Lusatia in the southeast of Germany (cf figure 1). Lower Lusatia is part of the Land Brandenburg (Land of Brandenburg) and Upper Lusatia is part of the Freistaat Sachsen (Free State of Saxony). The languages are closely related to other West Slavonic languages, such as Polish, Czech, Slovak and Kashubian. The Sorbian languages, next to Danish, Saterfrisian, North Frisian, Romanes and Lower German, are two of seven recognised autochthonous minority and regional languages in Germany.

Both Sorbian languages are standardised. Within the language areas both languages are characterised by their dialectal differentiation. In the region of Schleife/Slepo, between Lower and Upper Lusatia, a transitional dialect is spoken. Especially Lower Sorbian dialects are vanishing due to the major role of formal learning of the standard language in school. In central parts of Upper Lusatia there are still villages where Upper Sorbian is the first language and the family language of all generations. In Lower Lusatia, only in singular cases the language is passed on to the next generation by family.¹

The Sorbs, together with other West Slavonic tribes, came from north of the Carpathian Mountains during the migration wave of the Slavs in the sixth century. They colonised an area which covered an area between the Oder, Queis and Bober rivers in the east and the Saale in the west. It stretched as far as the Erz and Fichtel Mountains in the south, up to Berlin's northern suburbs. The first documented evidence of the Sorbs is in a Franconian chronicle dating from 631 AD in which they are mentioned as the *Surbi*. The eastward extension of the settlement area of the Germanic peoples, which was associated with their Christianisation and began in the tenth century, led to the establishment of marches that secured the areas that had been conquered and colonised. The Slavonic tribes were eventually subjugated and



THE FREE STATE OF SAXONY

- ▲ kindergartens where children are educated in Upper Sorbian
- ▼ private day care groups
- △ kindergartens with a small offer to learn Upper Sorbian
- primary schools with Upper Sorbian as a medium of instruction
- primary schools with Upper Sorbian as a foreign language
- secondary schools with Upper Sorbian as a medium of instruction
- ★ Sorbian Grammar School with Upper Sorbian as a medium of instruction
- ☆ Grammar School with Upper Sorbian as a foreign language

LAND BRANDENBURG

- ▲ kindergartens where children are educated in Lower Sorbian
- △ kindergartens with a small offer to learn Lower Sorbian
- primary schools with Lower Sorbian as a medium of instruction
- ▣ primary schools with Lower Sorbian as a foreign language
- ◆ secondary school with Lower Sorbian as a medium of instruction
- ◇ secondary school with Lower Sorbian as a foreign language
- ◆ Lower Sorbian Grammar School with WITAJ-education
- ◇ Lower Sorbian Grammar School with Lower Sorbian as a foreign language

■ Sorbian settlement area

Figure 1: Sorbian kindergartens and schools (source: WITAJ Language Centre).

almost completely assimilated. Only the Milzane and Lunsici of the Slavonic tribes of that time were able to defend themselves successfully and survive. The Sorbs in the following periods were able to retain their linguistic and cultural independence in what would later be the area of the German Empire, although they never succeeded in forming their own state and thus achieving political autonomy. The linguistic area colonised by the Slavs diminished in the following centuries due to economic discrimination, legal handicaps, social and national repression and not in the least by natural assimilation. From the thirteenth century onwards, bans on Sorbs becoming members of German guilds as well as restrictions on Sorbs moving into German cities were recorded. Those who nonetheless succeeded in becoming members of guilds or the 'higher classes', usually denounced the Sorbian language. In the sixteenth century, the language area ultimately only covered Upper and Lower Lusatia. Sorbian culture became increasingly a lower class way of living.

Under the influence of the Reformation as well as in the course of the Counter Reformation, the Sorbian language developed into a literary language. The first translation of the New Testament was made in 1548. More than 90% of the Sorbs accepted the Protestant faith. Only in the area around the Cistercian monastery of St. Marienstern (present-day Pančicy-Kukow/Panschwitz-Kuckau) and on the estate belonging to the chapter of the Bautzen Cathedral, the Sorbs remained Catholic after the Reformation. The Catholic Sorbs still form up to 90% of the total population in some localities today. It was only after the Thirty Years' War (1618-1648), which caused a drastic shrinking of the Sorbian language area, that the publication of religious literature in the Sorbian language was continued with increased fervour. In 1815, a territorial restructuring of the Sorbian settlement area took place as a result of the Congress of Vienna. Lower Lusatia and the northern part of Upper Lusatia went to Prussia, while the rest of Upper Lusatia, including the Catholic enclave, went to the existing Kingdom of Saxony. The subsequent administrative division led to a considerable reduction in the proportion of the Sorbian-speaking population in almost all districts.

Especially during the 1840s, in the context of the general political and intellectual trends in Europe, a national Sorbian movement emerged. This movement made a decisive contribution to the preservation and growth of an independent Sorbian culture. A lively national club and association life came into existence.

After the establishment of the German Empire by Otto von Bismarck, the Sorbs came under strong pressure again due to his initiatives for increased Germanisation. The following industrialisation in 1871 also led to the decay of traditional agrarian structures.

The Weimar Constitution of 1919, following the Constitution of 1848, granted the non-German sections of the population the possibility of developing their own culture without hindrance and also to use their mother tongue in official affairs. However, there was a lack of laws to support this.

After a short period of tolerance during the Weimar Republic, the coming into power of the national-socialists signified a period of heavy suppression for the Sorbs. At first, the national socialists tried to define the Sorbs as a German tribe and German culture. From the mid-1930s onwards, the Sorbs, as Slavonic people, were subjected to repressive measures under the fascist dictatorship. Sorbian institutions, language and culture were forbidden and some Sorbs were imprisoned in concentration camps. The Sorbian language and Sorbian club and association life were banned in 1937. Sorbian teachers, pastors, priests and intellectuals were expelled from Lusatia. Seen as an inferior population, the Sorbs just managed to escape being deported. The final resettlement of the Sorbs had already been planned by the *Reichsführer*-SS Heinrich Himmler. A systematic Germanisation meant that especially the younger generation in most of Lusatia could not speak their mother tongue adequately as the language was not passed on to the next generation. Therefore, most Sorbs considered the collapse of the Third Reich as liberation. An understanding existed between the Sorbs and the Soviet occupying forces

due to the language affinity. They backed the efforts to save and support the Sorbian people. The Domowina, which was established as the umbrella organisation of Sorbian clubs and associations in 1912 and banned in 1937, was permitted to resume its activities officially by May 1945.

After World War II, the Sorbs held a rather strong position, especially in Saxony, in contrast to their deprived position in the Nazi era. They were supported by Czech organisations and able to come to a prompt expression of demands on the position of Sorbian. In 1948, the State Parliament of Saxony passed a law concerning the protection of the rights of the Sorbian population, which gave Sorbian a place in public life and made Sorbian education and lesser used languages schools possible. Two years earlier, a Sorbian training college for teachers could open its gates in Radwor/Radibor. In 1947, Budyšin/Bautzen got a Sorbian Oberschule (secondary school). The building of the Serbski dom (Sorbian House) in Bautzen could be started.

The Deutsche Demokratische Republik (German Democratic Republic; hereafter: DDR) came into being in 1949. The new constitution paid attention to the Sorbs in the form of an article on their right to maintain their native language and culture. The state was required to ensure that this right was exercised and therefore pursued a constructive policy on Sorbian.

In 1950, the Land of Brandenburg also passed a verdict on Sorbian rights in Lower Lusatia. The DDR restructured its political system. Federalism was suspended and a centralist system was founded. Thus, in 1952, the *Länder* (federal states) were suspended and *Bezirke* (districts) were established. Lower Lusatia and parts of Upper Lusatia were now part of the district of Chóšebuz/Cottbus and the other parts of Upper Lusatia part of the district of Dresden. In the new system the central state was responsible for, for example, educational policies.

Despite financial aid, the number of Sorbs constantly decreased. The number of people who publicly professed to be Sorbian

diminished considerably faster than the number of active speakers. Following the example of the Soviet Union's ethnic policy, it was not possible, for instance, to establish an independent Sorbian youth organisation outside of the Freie Deutsche Jugend (Free German Youth). At the same time, the DDR pursued a large hearted cultural policy with regard to the Sorbs. This meant increasing institutionalisation of Sorbian culture through generous state support. Organisations, such as the Sorbian Folk Theatre, the State Ensemble for Sorbian Folk Culture, the Sorbian Museum, the Domowina Publishing House and the Sorbian Film Group, were in fact state organisations that were administrated, censored and completely financed by the state. The generous state support for the Sorbs led to a widely held opinion that the Sorbs were a show minority pampered by the state.

At the same time, Sorbian language and culture were seriously threatened by the DDR's policy on industrialisation and energy. The industrialisation of Lusatia, especially through brown coal opencast mining and the resettlement of many citizens from former German areas after World War II, led to the further assimilation of the Sorbian population. Lusatia became the centre of energy provision in the DDR. Next to the immigration of hundreds of thousands of non-Sorbian speakers, many Sorbian speaking people had to move, because of the enforced demolishing of villages. Their enforced departure can be described as an invasive change in the demographic language structure of the German-Sorbian area.

population

The present Sorbian speaking area includes: parts of the counties of Spree-Neiße, Oberspreewald-Lausitz and Dahme-Spreewald and the town of Cottbus in Lower Lusatia. In Upper Lusatia it includes parts of the counties of Bautzen and Görlitz. Mainly due to economic indicated migration processes, many younger Sorbs live outside Lusatia. The core region of the Upper Sorbian language is the Catholic area between the towns of Bautzen, Kamjeřec/Kamenz and Wojerecy/Hoyerswerda. As a matter of fact, the area of the Marienstern convent in Panschwitz-Kuckau

has built up a Roman Catholic and Sorbian island in a German and Protestant sea. In Lower Lusatia and in Protestant areas of Upper Lusatia, the languages are seriously endangered.

Ethnic statistics are prohibited in Germany. There are no exact data on the number of Sorbs or Sorbian speakers. Certainly, the number of Sorbian speakers is lower than the number of Sorbs, because there are a lot of people who identify themselves as Sorbian or Wendish but do not speak the language anymore. According to officially estimated numbers, without exact scientific base, there are 60,000 Sorbs in general, of which about 20,000 live in Lower Lusatia and 40,000 in Upper Lusatia (Staatsministerium für Wissenschaft und Kunst, 2014, p. 12). Estimated numbers of people with active knowledge of the Sorbian languages are 7,000 at most for Lower Sorbian and about 25,000 for the Upper Sorbian language. The aging structure is a very big problem, especially for Lower Sorbian. Most speakers are older than 60 years.

language status The two variants of Sorbian, Lower Sorbian (or Wendish) and Upper Sorbian, now both belong to the category of endangered languages, as stated by Tapani Salminen in his contribution on European languages in the UNESCO Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger.

After the German reunification in 1990 and in spite of proposals of the Gemeinsame Verfassungskommission (Joint commission for developing a new constitution), the renewed German Constitution law of 1994 had no section devoted to minorities. Proposals from Sorbian organisations for an undivided Lusatia in the new policy of the former DDR were likewise not fulfilled. In the Bundesrepublik Deutschland (Federal Republic of Germany; hereafter: BRD), which has sixteen federal states, Lower Lusatia became a part of the new Land of Brandenburg and Upper Lusatia was included under the Free State of Saxony. Just as in the early days after World War II, the Sorbs succeeded in convincing the new authorities to support the Sorbian language and culture (Hemminga, 2000, p. 365). In protocol note number

14, which refers to article 35 of the Unification Treaty, the new authorities guarantee, among other things, the protection and development of the Sorbian culture and traditions.²

After the reunification, both the Land of Brandenburg and Saxony passed an article and a law on the Sorbs in their respective constitutions. Moreover, the German government and the regional governments of the Land of Brandenburg and Saxony jointly founded the *Założba za serbski lud/Stiftung für das sorbische Volk* (Foundation for the Sorbian People) in order to solve the acute financial needs of the Sorbian infrastructure and to continue the financial support for nearly every Sorbian activity and organisation. Especially the support by the Federal Government is remarkable, considering its lack of competence in the field of culture and education.

From the 1990s onwards, Sorbian institutions were restructured several times and staff was reduced, but overall the Sorbian institutional infrastructure was well-developed.

In 1997, the BRD signed the European Framework Convention on National Minorities of the Council of Europe, applicable to the Danes, Frisians, Sorbians, the Sinti and Roma in Germany. In 1999, Germany signed the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages applicable to Danish, Frisian, Lower German, Romanes and Sorbian.

The Sorbs are active in international minority organisations, such as the Federal Union of European Nationalities, Youth of European Nationalities, International Council of Organisations of Folklore Festivals and Folk Arts, Minority Dailies Association and other European projects. Traditionally Sorbian relations to other Slavonic people and states are strong.

In the context of European minority policy, the Free State of Saxony and the Land of Brandenburg also developed initiatives to promote the Sorbian language and culture in addition to legal requirements. Together they already organised twice

the competition “Language-friendly community - The Sorbian language lives”. In 2013, a “Plan of measures of the Saxon State Government to encourage and to stimulate the use of the Sorbian language” was published.

**status of
language
education**

Before 1945, the Sorb minority had very limited opportunities for education and development. However, after World War II, an equal rights approach established bilingual programmes from nursery school to university. The demands of the umbrella organisation Domowina concerning Sorbian education were welcome and heard by Saxony’s prime minister and, as mentioned earlier, a Sorbian training college opened in Radibor in 1946. Later it was relocated to Bautzen. Sorbian books could be published again and the 1948 law concerning the protection of the rights of the Sorbs made Sorbian schools possible.

In the early 1950s, a system of two types of schools with Sorbian offers was established: schools of the so-called A-type used the Sorbian language as a medium of instruction and in the B-type schools there was the possibility to learn Sorbian as a foreign language. A-type schools did not exist in the whole Sorbian area. In 1955, there were 11 Sorbian schools of the A-type and 94 schools of the B-type (Schön & Scholze, 2014, p. 347-355). Unfortunately, circumstances soon deteriorated. The directive from the minister for national education of the DDR of October 2nd, 1962, prescribed the use of the German language in the case of chemistry, mathematics, physics and citizenship education. Because of this, Sorbian obtained an inferior position in education. The following directive of April 30th, 1964, made this position even worse. From then on, Sorbian education became dependent on the decision of the parents, that is to say, it became voluntary. A substantial decline in numbers of pupils was the result. In 1963, 11,600 pupils took part in Sorbian education, while a year later only 3,300 pupils received Sorbian education (Pastor, 1997, p. 40-42). After 1965, only courses on history and culture of the Sorbs were included in the curriculum and made compulsory for all educational institutions. In 1968, the directive of 1964 changed again. Schools were now allowed

to advise parents on the education programme. In the latter days of the DDR, the education of Sorbian was equated with the education of foreign languages. This was another attack on the number of Sorbian pupils, because from then onwards Sorbian had to compete with English. A relative advantage was the recognition of Sorbian as a full equal language (ibid., p. 43). However, only one third of the pupils met the educational aims and half of the pupils left school with insufficient knowledge on the Sorbian language. Notwithstanding these bad results, the quality of Sorbian education was not permitted to be criticised during the DDR-regime. In the 1980s, there were 7 Sorbian polytechnic schools of the A-type: schools that had a Sorbian-German bilingual programme and Sorbian as a medium of instruction. There were around 80 polytechnic B-type schools: schools where Sorbian was taught as a second language and where German was the medium of instruction. There were 2 extended secondary schools (today's grammar schools), one in Cottbus in Lower Lusatia (founded in 1952) and the other one in Bautzen in Upper Lusatia (founded in 1947).

education system

The current German school system is governed by the federal principles of the state. That is to say, the legal competence in the domain of education and culture exists on the level of the federal states. Therefore, the structures of the education systems are different.

Kindertagesstätte (nursery schools) are optional, but, since 2013, parents have the right to get a place there for their child from their child's first birthday. Generally, children start to attend school from the age of five or six and it takes nine or ten years. *Grundschule* (primary school) takes four years in most of the federal states. In Berlin and the Land of Brandenburg it lasts six years. The *Sekundarstufe I* (first level of secondary education) is characterised by some types of schools with names depending on the federal state: *Hauptschule*, *Mittelschule*, *Realschule*, *Oberschule*, *Sekundarschule*, *Gesamtschule* and *Gymnasium*. The tendency is to reduce diversity and to have only two types: *Gymnasium* (grammar school) and a second unified type of

secondary school. In Saxony and the Land of Brandenburg it is mainly the Oberschule. The grammar school offers pre-university education including the Sekundarstufe II (second level of secondary education). It ends after the twelfth school year with the *Abitur* (A-level). Some grammar schools in the Land of Brandenburg have special classes which already start from the fifth grade.

federal state	school type	grades
Saxony	Grundschule	1 - 4
	Oberschule	5 - 10
	Gymnasium	5 - 12
Land of Brandenburg	Grundschule	1 - 6
	Oberschule	7 - 10
	Gesamtschule	7 - 13
	Gymnasium	(5) 7 - 12

Table 1: Structure of the school system (Source: WITAJ Language Centre 2015).

Most young people start their vocational education directly after secondary or grammar school. Other students start with their apprenticeship after attending a full-time vocational school. This form of education is characterised by the dual approach, in which private companies and public vocational schools cooperate. This combined education takes three to three and a half years. The following are examples of vocational school types: *Berufsaufbauschule* (vocational preparation school), *Berufsschule* (vocational school), *Berufsfachschule* (vocational and professional school), *Fachoberschule* (professional school with A-level) and *Fachschule* (professional school without A-level).

Higher education is organised in universities and colleges of higher education. To attend these types of education students need their A-level, which can be attained after twelve school years. Studying without A-level is also possible, if the applicants have successfully completed a vocational training and have several years of professional experience.

The German academic system has mainly changed into the European system of Bachelor's (3-4 years) and Master's

(1-2 years) degrees. Some universities also offer a *Diplom* (Diploma, 5 years). A state exam is required in order to study law, medicine and in some federal states it is required in order to become a teacher.

Possibilities to study Lower or Upper Sorbian only exist at the University of Leipzig. In addition, some other universities have sporadic seminars, generally within the framework of Slavonic studies (for example, Dresden, Saarbrücken, Potsdam and outside of Germany).

**private and
public**

In Germany, schools can be run by the state, the district and the municipality or by private organisations. Most schools are state schools. Nearly all schools where Sorbian is taught are also state schools. In Upper Lusatia, Sorbian is taught at one secondary and at one grammar school which both are independent schools. In Lower Lusatia, Sorbian is only taught at one church primary school. The *Niedersorbisches Gymnasium* in Cottbus (Lower Sorbian grammar school) is an establishment of the municipality of Cottbus. In Upper Lusatia the Bautzen District is in charge of the *Sorbisches Gymnasium* in Bautzen (Sorbian grammar school Bautzen).

In the field of early education in the Land of Brandenburg and Saxony, private organisations and public administrations are in charge of nursery schools. In Lower Lusatia, 7 nursery schools are organised by municipalities and 2 are privately owned by the *Serbske šulske towaristwo/Sorbischer Schulverein* (Sorbian School Association). In the Sorbian area of Saxony, there are 24 nursery schools where children are educated in the Sorbian language. Since 2013, a nursery school in Dresden has the first Sorbian group. Dresden is approximately 60 kilometres away from the Sorbian settlement area where more and more young Sorbian families live. Private organisations like the Sorbian School Association, the Christian-Social Educational Services *Miltitz/Miłočicy* and the Workers' Welfare Association are in charge of most of the 25 Sorbian nursery schools.

bilingual education forms With a view to reversing the language shift, Sorbian institutions and associations developed some projects and programmes such as WITAJ and *Konzept 2plus* (2plus concept) in the educational field. *Witaj* is the Sorbian word for welcome. The WITAJ-programme is for children in the Sorbian settlement area of the Land of Brandenburg and Saxony to learn Sorbian in early childhood by the internationally proven methods of immersion. In the Land of Brandenburg, WITAJ also entails bilingual teaching at school. In Saxony, bilingual teaching is connected with the educational *Konzept 2plus* (Sorbian and German plus additional languages). The programmes WITAJ and 2plus are promoted by the Free State of Saxony, by the Land of Brandenburg and by the Foundation for the Sorbian People.

The Sorbian Institute works on the documentation of the Lower Sorbian language and develops a digital text corpus for both Sorbian languages (Lower and Upper Sorbian). The text corpus is the basis for modern tools to learn and use Sorbian, such as digital dictionaries, spelling and grammar checkers or translators. The main aim for the next years is to develop language strategies for the different situations of the Sorbian languages.

administration As noted earlier, the German school system is governed by the federal principles of the state. It means that the federal states are responsible for all the educational affairs. In the Land of Brandenburg and Saxony this includes the curriculum for all Sorbian teaching forms at schools for general and vocational education and at independent schools.

inspection The Ministerium für Bildung, Jugend und Sport (Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport) of the Land of Brandenburg is responsible for general and vocational education, including the apprenticeship and further training of social education workers. The Minister has a Landesschulamt (Supervisory School Authority) to coordinate education and teachers in general, the pedagogical goals and main points of the educational programme. The *Regionalstelle* (regional office) in Cottbus is responsible for all the schools with Lower Sorbian and

coordinates all the topics related to Sorbian. A part of the Supervisory School Authority is the Arbeitsstelle für sorbische/wendische Bildungsentwicklung Cottbus (Department for Sorbian/Wendish Education Development Cottbus; hereafter: ABC), which is in charge of developing Sorbian school curricula and some teaching materials. The ministry cooperates with the Landesschulbeirat (Country's School Advisory Board), an advising council in legal and political questions, where Sorbs also have a seat. In 2006, the Ministry also established the AG Sorbische/Wendische Bildungsthemen (Advising Workgroup for Sorbian/Wendish Education Issues) where ministerial departments, the Supervisory School Authority, the Sorbian educational institutions and, if necessary, schools debate upon current educational Sorbian issues. On parliamentary level, there is also the Serbska rada/Rat für Angelegenheiten der Sorben/Wenden (Sorbian Council) which has an advisory function in the Landtag Brandenburg (Parliament of Brandenburg). In 2006, the Sorbisches/Wendisches Bildungsnetzwerk (Sorbian Educational Network) was founded on a sub-political level where nursery schools, schools, administrations and Sorbian institutions discuss questions of Sorbian educational practices and conceptual issues.

The Sächsisches Staatsministerium für Kultus (Saxon State Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs; hereafter: SMK) is the highest authority in the domain of general and vocational education. The Ministry determines the curriculum, approves teaching and learning materials and cooperates with advisory committees, such as the Landesbildungsrat (Educational Council), Landeselternrat (Parents' Council) and Landesschülerrat (Pupils' Council). Sorbs have two seats in the Educational Council and at the ministry they are included in a workgroup to monitor the implementation of the bilingual Konzept 2plus.

Besides the Ministry of Education, Saxony has the Sächsische Bildungsagentur (Saxon Education Agency; hereafter: SBA) with three regional offices. These regional offices form intermediaries between the schools and the ministry. In the regional office in Bautzen there is a person especially in charge of the Sorbian affairs.

**support
structure**

Bautzen, the district capital of Upper Lusatia, is the centre of Sorbian life. In Bautzen a number of typical Sorbian organisations can be found: among them are the Domowina, the WITAJ Language Centre, the Foundation for the Sorbian People, the Sorbian Schools Association, the Domowina Publishing House, the Sorbian Folk Ensemble, the Sorbian Institute, the German-Sorbian Theatre and the Sorbian Museum. Some of these organisations can be found in the Serbski Dom (Sorbian House).

The centre of Lower Lusatia is called Cottbus. Most of the Sorbian institutions have branches there. In the city centre there is also a Serbski dom (Wendish House) with a public Sorbian library, the Serbska kulturna informacija LODKA (Sorbian cultural Information), the Lower Lusatian branch of the Sorbian Institute, the Domowina, the Foundation for the Sorbian People and Domowina Publishing House. The WITAJ Language Centre with its boarding school, the mentioned ABC and the School for Lower Sorbian Language and Culture are located near the Lower Sorbian Grammar School north of the city centre.

Sorbian institutions publish some educational magazines. The WITAJ Language Centre is in charge of the quarterly magazine *Lutki* (dwarf) written for children, parents and pedagogical staff in nursery schools. The bilingual magazine features articles in Lower Sorbian and Upper Sorbian with some German additions. The WITAJ Language Centre also edits the monthly children's magazine *Plomje* (flame, Lower Sorbian) and *Plomjo* (flame, Upper Sorbian) which is used at schools as well. The third print medium edited by the WITAJ Language Centre is the *Serbska šula*, a professional pedagogical journal in the Upper and Lower Sorbian language. The Sorbian Institute edits *Lětopis*, a scientific journal that appears twice a year and additionally has special editions. Lastly, the Domowina Publishing House edits *Rozhlad*, a monthly cultural journal in Upper and Lower Sorbian.

2 Pre-school education

- target group** As mentioned above, parents in Germany have the right to take their children to nursery schools from the age of one, but it is not compulsory for them to do so. The educational aim of nursery schools is to promote the child's personality and his/her individual skills. In the last year before entering school, children should be well-prepared. Both in Brandenburg and in Saxony there is a training plan for pre-school education.
- structure** Nursery schools are mostly typical kindergartens. Frequently they are referred to as day-care centres in official affairs or publications. They often include an after-school club for pupils from the first to the fourth grade (in Brandenburg to the sixth grade). Although most of the costs for child care are borne by the state and municipalities, parents normally have to pay a charge for these arrangements. This charge depends on whether their income is above a minimum level and if more than one of their children goes to a day-care centre. The education in Sorbian nursery schools or groups does not cost more. In Brandenburg and in Saxony approximately 46% of all children under the age of three years are cared for in publicly funded day-care facilities. Approximately 95% of all children between three to six years attend nursery schools (Statistisches Landesamt Sachsen, 2014; Statistik Berlin Brandenburg, 2014).
- legislation** In Saxony, Sorbian education in day-care centres and its special promotion is established by law in the paragraphs 2 and 20 of the Gesetz über Kindertageseinrichtungen (2009) (Day Care Act) and in the Verordnung über Kindertageseinrichtungen im sorbischen Siedlungsgebiet (2006) (Regulation about day-care facilities in the Sorbian settlement area). Sorbian groups get additional financial support from the State for staff and educational materials. In Brandenburg, the Sorbian education is established by law in article 25 of the Verfassung des Landes Brandenburg (1992) (Constitution of Brandenburg), in paragraph 3 of the Kindertagesstättengesetz (2014) (Day Care Act) and in paragraph 10 of the new Sorben/Wenden-Gesetz

(2014) (Sorbian/Wendish Law, SWG). It is explained that nursery schools in the Sorbian area have to teach Sorbian culture and history. The Sorbian groups get financial support from the Foundation for Sorbian People. According to the new SWG, the federal state of the Land of Brandenburg has to support the training and the further education for nursery teachers and provide Sorbian pedagogical materials.

language use

Altogether, 38 nursery schools and day-care centres in Brandenburg and Saxony educate children in the Sorbian language more or less intensively (see map at p. 6). In 1998, the Sorbian School Association founded the immersive programme WITAJ following a Breton example in France. Children are surrounded by the Sorbian language in nursery school the entire time, in accordance with the principle “one person - one language”. Based on that model, nursery schools in Lower and Upper Lusatia developed their individual WITAJ-model. Most children who are educated in Upper or Lower Sorbian in day-care centres come from German-speaking families.

In the core region of Upper Lusatia between the towns of Bautzen, Kamenz and Hoyerswerda, nearly half of the children speak Sorbian on a native level. In Upper Lusatia the children in Sorbian groups are almost exclusively taken care of by kindergarten teachers who are native Sorbian speakers. Kindergarten teachers in Lower Lusatia and also partly in Slepó/Schleife have learned Sorbian at school and in intensive language courses.

In the nursery schools different forms and methods are used to mediate the Sorbian language. The preferred and most important method is the method of immersion. This means that the nursery teachers are able to speak the Sorbian language on a native speaker level and do this consequently following the WITAJ model of “one person – one language”. Most of the 1,200 children in Lower and Upper Lusatia were educated in Sorbian by this method. When children learn the Sorbian language in this way, they are able to understand their teachers

in a relatively short time. After a few years, they are also able to speak words, short sentences and phrases. When there are children in their group who are native speakers, the other children learn the Sorbian language very fast.

Another form is bilingual language teaching. The teachers talk to all the children in two languages: Sorbian and German. When doing this, they decide in which situations and how intensively they speak Sorbian or German. The child's understanding of the Sorbian language is partly supported by using facial expressions, gestures and educational materials and partly by translating from Sorbian into German. In a few nursery schools the children learn the Sorbian language for only one hour per week. In this form (the supply model) the children get to know Sorbian customs, songs and dances and they learn some Sorbian words and phrases. As aforementioned, some nursery schools (day-care centres) include an after-school club. Children who learn Sorbian at primary school get assistance there when they are doing their Sorbian homework. In these after-school clubs the Sorbian culture is also maintained.

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. The language centre also trains the nursery teachers to work with the materials.

Statistics

region	state	church	independent	total
Lower Lusatia	7	0	2	9
Upper Lusatia	8	3	19	30
Dresden	1	0	1 (day-care)	2

Table 2: Number of nursery schools in 2014 (Source: WITAJ Language Centre, 2014).

institutions in Upper Lusatia	number of institutions	number of children
nursery schools where children are educated in Upper Sorbian by immersion	full immersion: 21	1,021
	partial immersion: 4	137
nursery schools with a small offer to learn Upper Sorbian	5	25
private day-care groups	2	10
total	32	1,193

Table 3: Number of nursery schools and number of children in Upper Lusatia in 2014 (Source: WITAJ Language Centre, 2014).

institutions in Lower Lusatia	number of institutions	number of children
nursery schools where children are educated in Lower Sorbian by immersion	full immersion: 2	110
	partial immersion: 7	144
nursery schools with a small offer to learn Lower Sorbian	2	changeable
total	11	254

Table 4: Number of nursery schools and number of children in Lower Lusatia in 2014 (Source: WITAJ Language Centre, 2014).

3 Primary education

target group

In Brandenburg and Saxony, compulsory education starts at the age of six. In justified cases, children can go to school when they are five years old or if they reach the age of six during the first months of the first school year. In Saxony, it takes students four years to finish primary and in Brandenburg it takes six years. If pupils in Brandenburg perform well at school and get a place in classes specifically designed for talented pupils, they can complete primary school in four years.

Structure

As mentioned above, the German school system is governed by the federal principles of the state and the legal competence in the domain of education and culture exists on the level of the Länder. Therefore, the structures of the education systems are different. Primary education begins at the age of five or six.

In Saxony, primary education takes four years and prepares pupils for secondary education. At the end of the fourth grade, the pupil is supposed to be able to read, write, calculate, work independently and think for oneself. The Saxon State Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs is the highest education authority and determines the education standards, the curriculum and timetables, also for the teaching of the Upper Sorbian language in bilingual lessons or as a foreign language. The content of education is organised by subjects and not by areas of knowledge.

In Brandenburg, the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport is the highest education authority. It is responsible for all educational affairs for all grades up to the A-level and for the vocational education like the mentioned ministry in Saxony.

Contrary to Saxony, primary education in Brandenburg has six grades instead of four. Concerning school subjects in the several grades, there are no significant differences to Saxony. In the first two grades, they start with the German language, mathematics, music, sports and art. Pupils who learn Sorbian in Brandenburg

start with Lower Sorbian and pupils in Saxony with Upper Sorbian. English is the first second language students begin to learn and is taught from the third grade onwards in Brandenburg and Saxony. The lessons in the science subjects (e.g. biology and physics) and in the social science subjects (e.g. geography and history) begin in the fifth grade.

Since the German reunification in 1990, the birth rate has been decreasing in East Germany and likewise in the Sorbian settlement area. Therefore, it was more and more difficult in Upper Lusatia to form Sorbian classes with children who are native speakers. That is why the first bilingual class with Sorbian and German pupils was formed in 1999. On the basis of these bilingual classes, the Konzept 2plus was developed, which is now practiced in nine Sorbian primary schools. It continues the idea of the WITAJ-programme. Ten primary schools offer the Sorbian language as a foreign language in the Sorbian settlement area in Saxony.

As mentioned above, in Lower Lusatia there are almost no children who are native Sorbian speakers. Therefore, the WITAJ-programmes started there. Since 2000, when the first children from Lower Sorbian WITAJ-nursery schools came to primary school, Sorbian institutions and primary schools developed the model of bilingual lessons. This WITAJ-education is similar to the Konzept 2plus in Upper Lusatia. WITAJ-education is practiced at six primary schools. At these schools pupils also have the opportunity to learn Sorbian as a foreign language. Eighteen primary schools in Lower Lusatia only offer Sorbian as a foreign language and one school offers Sorbian in extracurricular working groups.

legislation

The constitutions and the laws for the Sorbs guarantee German citizens the right to preserve the Sorbian identity and to cultivate the Sorbian language, culture and tradition, especially through schools, pre-school education and cultural institutions in Brandenburg and in Saxony. In addition, the school laws and special regulations ensure the right to learn the Sorbian

language in the Sorbian settlement area in Brandenburg and Saxony.

According to paragraph 2 of the Schulgesetz für den Freistaat Sachsen (2004) (Saxon Education Act), the Sorbian language is taught as a language of instruction in the status of mother tongue, second language and foreign language. Furthermore, it is defined that basic knowledge about the history and culture of the Sorbs has to be taught at all Saxon schools.

The Ministry of Education has the authority to regulate the special provisions for the work at Sorbian schools and other schools in the Sorbian settlement area. This concerns the organisation of the various forms of language teaching and the subjects in the various grades. Currently, the Ministry is developing a new regulation for the implementation of the Konzept 2plus.

In Brandenburg the Sorbian school affairs are regulated in paragraphs 4 and 5 of Brandenburgisches Schulgesetz (2002) (Brandenburg Education Act), in the special Sorben/Wenden Schulverordnung (2000) (Sorbian/Wendish School regulation) and also in other different school regulations and administrative provisions. Considering the Sorbian/Wendish School regulation and the new SWG, schools in the Sorbian settlement area have to inform parents about the possibilities to learn Sorbian and they have to pay attention to the Sorbian/Wendish culture and history. The SWG also determined that Sorbian/Wendish representatives can participate in school conferences of bilingual schools. The Sorbian/Wendish School regulation defines different forms of Sorbian/Wendish language teaching as a second or foreign language, but these forms do not longer meet the practical requirements. Therefore, a new Sorbian/Wendish School Regulation is currently being worked on in Brandenburg as well.

language use

According to the Konzept 2plus, pupils are supposed to be literate in Sorbian and German in the first grade in primary schools in Upper Lusatia. Both languages are the medium of

instruction in three additional subjects, such as mathematics, general knowledge, music and sports. The teachers decide which language they use more or less intensively. It depends on the topic and on the pupils' language skills. If there are many native speakers in a class, the teachers mostly speak Sorbian. The schools also have the opportunity to teach selected subjects bilingually by making use of two teachers. Team teaching and group lessons form part of the Konzept 2plus. Group lessons are specifically designed for the Sorbian lessons, so that pupils can learn according to their differentiated linguistic abilities. In order to get more resources for team teaching and teaching in groups, schools must annually sign their higher demands at the SBA.

At schools where Sorbian is taught as a foreign language, pupils learn Sorbian one hour a week in grade 1 and three hours weekly in grades 2-4.

Due to the fact that WITAJ-education in Brandenburg is not based on an established concept, the practice of language teaching in schools is rather differentiated. The number of bilingual lessons differs between the schools. The subjects which are taught bilingually depend on the qualifications of the teachers. The typical subjects taught bilingually are mathematics, general science, music and sports.

The bilingual classes vary between 7 and 10 hours a week. It is very difficult to organise these lessons because in the same class some pupils learn Sorbian according to the WITAJ-education model, some pupils learn it as a foreign language and some pupils do not learn Sorbian at all. While so-called WITAJ-pupils have lessons with Lower Sorbian as the medium of instruction, the other pupils have the same subjects in German. It means that the WITAJ-pupils have to learn the topics bilingually in the same time as the other pupils who learn the topics only in German. Despite that, the number of pupils who participate in bilingual lessons is constantly growing.

All available offers to learn Lower Sorbian are optional, that is why there are different combinations possible: (1) pupils who only take part in the foreign language courses, (2) pupils who take part in the foreign language and in the bilingual courses and (3) pupils who only take part in the bilingual courses.

Lower Sorbian as a foreign language is an optional subject. Therefore the Sorbian lessons are additional to the normal school programme. Children who take part have one additional lesson in the first grade and three additional lessons from the second to sixth grade. Some schools have to teach two grades together because of the low numbers of participants. Lower Sorbian lessons have to deal with a lack of attraction and they have to compete with other afternoon school activities, such as music, sports or free time activities. Still, approximately 1,050 pupils learn Lower Sorbian as a foreign language at primary schools.

In the Land of Brandenburg there are two institutions that edit learning materials: the ABC and the WITAJ Language Centre. Both institutions develop materials such as textbooks, working books, CDs and additional materials. They also translate German textbooks. Most of the textbooks and materials are developed by the ABC and WITAJ Language Centre together and edited by the Domowina publishing house. For teaching in primary schools, there are textbooks for pupils who learn Lower Sorbian intensively in the WITAJ-education model and for pupils who learn Lower Sorbian as a foreign language. For the WITAJ lessons there are also textbooks for mathematics and general knowledge. Some teaching materials exist for music and sports.³

In Saxony, only the WITAJ Language Centre is responsible for the production of teaching materials. The Domowina Publishing House is responsible for the publication and distribution of these materials. The language centre produces textbooks, workbooks and additional materials for Upper Sorbian lessons as a mother tongue, second language and foreign language. In bilingual lessons teachers can use Upper Sorbian textbooks and many

additional teaching materials for the subjects mathematics, general knowledge, music and religious instruction.⁴

statistics

Lower Lusatia	number of schools	number of pupils
Lower Sorbian as medium of instruction according to the WITAJ-education and as a foreign language	6	309
Lower Sorbian as a foreign language	17	1,052

Table 5: Number of primary schools and children per school type for academic year 2013/2014 in Lower Lusatia (Source: Supervisory School Authority – Regional Office Cottbus).

Upper Lusatia	number of schools	number of pupils
Upper Sorbian as medium of instruction according to the Konzept 2plus	10	864
Upper Sorbian as a foreign language	12	430

Table 6: Number of primary schools and children per school type for academic year 2013/2014 in Upper Lusatia (Source: Sacon Education Agency – Regional Office Bautzen).

4 Secondary education

target group

Secondary education begins in Saxony in the fifth grade and normally takes six years. It is also possible to leave school after nine school years and finish secondary school in five years, if pupils have big problems with learning.

When pupils attend grammar school, they do their A-level in the twelfth grade after six years. If pupils would like to do their A-level after finishing the tenth grade at secondary school, they have to go to grammar school for three years.

In Brandenburg, secondary education starts in the seventh grade and takes four years. Every pupil has to attend the school for ten years during his/her primary and secondary education. Secondary education at grammar schools also normally starts in the seventh grade and takes six years to the A-level. Only pupils who attend classes for pupils with special aptitudes begin their secondary education in the fifth grade and learn for eight years. Just like in Saxony, it is possible to do the A-level after finishing the secondary school. This also takes three years.

structure

As has been mentioned, since the German reunification in 1990, the birth rate is decreasing in East Germany. Therefore, the secondary school in Chrósćicy/Crostwitz was closed in 2003 and the secondary school in Panschwitz-Kuckau was closed in 2007. Especially in Crostwitz, parents and dedicated Sorbs vehemently protested against the closure of the school, although it was already not possible to form the fifth class in 2001, because the School Agency did not allow it.

Currently, in Upper Lusatia there are six secondary schools where Sorbian is taught by the Konzept 2plus. At two of those six schools, however, not all pupils take part in these intensive language lessons. At some secondary schools it is possible to learn Sorbian in a voluntary offer in the afternoon if teachers can be found for that.

Besides the six secondary schools at different places in Upper Lusatia, Bautzen has the Serbski gymnazij Budyšin (Sorbian Grammar School). This is the only grammar school where Sorbian is also taught by means of the Konzept 2plus. The Sorbian Grammar School is part of the Sorbian School and Community Centre that also includes the primary school with an after-school club, secondary school and boarding school. At two grammar schools in Hoyerswerda, Sorbian is taught as a foreign language or as an extra course in the afternoon.

In Lower Lusatia there are two secondary schools where pupils can learn Sorbian/Wendish and Lower Sorbian voluntarily as a foreign language. Similar to the situation in Upper Lusatia, there is also only one grammar school: the Dolnoserbški gymnasium in Cottbus. All pupils who attend this grammar school have to take part in the Lower Sorbian lessons. Pupils who participated in WITAJ-education at primary school can continue this intensive language learning. Similarly, pupils who are just beginning to learn Lower Sorbian can participate in this form of language learning (see the map at p. 6).

In both Brandenburg and Saxony, general education prepares pupils at secondary schools for the vocational education at different professional schools. It means that they can also go to a vocational school which offers a graduation at A-level and prepares them for higher education. Most pupils go to grammar schools to prepare themselves for higher and university education.

At Sorbian secondary schools in Upper Lusatia, where Sorbian is taught by the Konzept 2plus, Sorbian lessons are compulsory for all pupils up to the tenth grade. However, it is not compulsory for them to take an examination in the Upper Sorbian language. At these schools Sorbian is tested as a second mother tongue. Therefore, pupils can choose between Sorbian and German as an examination subject in the tenth grade. The same applies for the A-level at the twelfth grade at the Sorbian Grammar School in Bautzen.

At the mentioned schools, the Sorbian language is therefore not valid as a foreign language. This means that pupils who want to do their A-level have to learn two other foreign languages. The school and the graduation certificates are issued in Upper Sorbian and in German for all pupils at these schools.

In Brandenburg the situation is different. Lower Sorbian lessons are only compulsory up to the twelfth grade for pupils who go to grammar school at the Dolnosorbiski gymnasium in Cottbus. However, Lower Sorbian is tested at this school and all other schools in Brandenburg as a second language. For this reason, German is a compulsory examination subject for all pupils at secondary and grammar schools. 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 Dolnosorbiski gymnasium in Cottbus.

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 (mentioned in the section *inspection*) have a right to take part in the discussion. Nonetheless, decisions can also be passed without their consent.

legislation

The legal basis for secondary and grammar schools are regulated in the same documents in which the primary education is regulated. Normally, secondary schools in Saxony must have two classes with no less than twenty pupils in every grade but exceptions are possible. In paragraph 4a of the Saxon Education Act, it is defined, among others, that schools can differ from this directive in order to uphold the rights of the Sorbian people. In Brandenburg, the Sorbian/Wendish School Regulation defines that Sorbian/Wendish is taught in groups. If there are not enough pupils for a group in one grade, it is possible to teach the pupils of two grades together. At the Lower Sorbian Grammar School all pupils have to learn Lower Sorbian.

language use

In the previous section about primary education, the different forms of language teaching have already been described in essential points. At the two secondary schools in Lower Lusatia, pupils can choose Sorbian/Wendish as a second foreign language. One of the secondary schools has also started with Lower Sorbian as the medium of instruction in art and history lessons. Teachers do not speak Lower Sorbian the whole time, but rather in parts when they use some typical instruction phrases or when they explain how to say some terms in Lower Sorbian.

At grammar school, teachers use the Lower Sorbian language as the medium of instruction from the seventh to the tenth grade in some subjects, such as music, sports, ethics and history. In the ninth and tenth grade all pupils take part in these bilingual lessons, but in the seventh and eighth grade this only concerns those pupils who took part in the WITAJ-education at primary school. In view of the language use in Lower Lusatia, it must be considered that not all teachers are native speakers. Most of them learned Sorbian/Wendish at school and university or in additional qualification studies. That is why only some of them speak Sorbian/Wendish on a native speakers' level.

In Upper Lusatia the majority of the teachers are native speakers. The other teachers also have learned Upper Sorbian in the way described for Lower Lusatia or learn it even while they are already employed as a teacher. However, this does not mean that all teachers at schools where Sorbian is intensively taught in bilingual lessons speak or learn Sorbian.

According to the Konzept 2plus, pupils at secondary schools in Upper Lusatia have Sorbian lessons and bilingual lessons in five additional subjects like mathematics, geography, biology, history, music and sports.

The choice of subjects depends on the teacher's language skills. A teacher must be able to teach the subjects both in German and Upper Sorbian. Nevertheless, bilingual teaching

mostly focuses on the mentioned subjects and the Sorbian textbooks are primarily developed for these subjects.

Many pupils who attend the Sorbian Grammar School in Bautzen are native speakers. That is why it is possible to form so-called mother tongue classes. In these classes, teachers speak Upper Sorbian as much as possible in all subjects. It is also common that the pupils speak Upper Sorbian in and outside the school among themselves.

As mentioned in the section about structure of secondary education, at some secondary schools and two grammar schools in Hoyerswerda, Sorbian is taught as a foreign language or as an extra course in the afternoon. These arrangements vary relatively strong in the time that is spent on it, depending on the students' interest and language abilities and whether teachers are available. Therefore, every year these schools negotiate with the regional office of the SBA in Bautzen about how the different forms of Upper Sorbian teaching can be organised according to the needs.

**teaching
material**

The institutions that develop and publish the Lower Sorbian and Upper Sorbian teaching materials have already been mentioned in the previous section. According to the different forms of language teaching in Lower Lusatia and Upper Lusatia, there are also various teaching materials for secondary education as for primary education.⁵

In Lower Lusatia, it is possible to teach history, ethics and music with Lower Sorbian textbooks. Sometimes pupils also use learning materials in Lower Sorbian as well as German. The subjects that can be taught with Upper Sorbian textbooks in Upper Lusatia are history, geography, biology, music, religious education and informatics. In addition, terminologies for physics and chemistry are available. For Sorbian history and religious instruction, the WITAJ Language Centre develops its own textbooks. These are not translated textbooks from German educational publishers, such as the textbooks for the others subjects.

The Sächsisches Bildungsinstitut (Saxon Educational Institute), produces some materials together with teachers for lessons based on the Konzept 2plus.

statistics

Lower Lusatia	number of schools	number of pupils
secondary school (Bórkowy/Burg) with Lower Sorbian as a medium of instruction according to the WITAJ-education	1	3
Lower Sorbian Grammar school (Cottbus) with Lower Sorbian as a medium of instruction according to the WITAJ-education	1	186
secondary schools (Burg, Cottbus) with Lower Sorbian as a foreign language	2	14
Lower Sorbian Grammar school (Cottbus) with Lower Sorbian as a foreign language	1	503

Table 7: Number of secondary schools and children per school type in 2013/2014 in Lower Lusatia (Source: Supervisory School Authority – Regional Office Cottbus).

Upper Lusatia	number of schools	number of pupils
secondary schools with Upper Sorbian as medium of instruction according to the Konzept 2plus	6	748
Sorbian Grammar School Bautzen with Upper Sorbian as a medium of instruction according to the Konzept 2plus	1	422
Lessing Grammar school Hoyerswerda with Upper Sorbian as medium of instruction, but less than required by the Konzept 2plus	1	22

Table 8: Number of secondary schools and children per school type in 2013/2014 in Upper Lusatia (Source: Saxon Education Agency – Regional Office Bautzen).

5 Vocational education

target group Vocational education in the Land of Brandenburg and in Saxony is aimed at school-leavers who have already completed nine or ten years of mandatory education. It also targets grammar school graduates who do not want to study at universities. In addition, adults attend vocational schools. They do either a full-time or a part-time program.

structure In Lower and Upper Lusatia it is only possible for kindergarten teachers to learn Sorbian during vocational education. Both in Cottbus and in Bautzen there is a centre for vocational training, in which many different professions can be learned. In these centres it is also possible to learn the profession of kindergarten teacher. All future kindergarten teachers who attend the Sorbian professional school for social education, which is part of the centre for vocational training in Bautzen, must learn Upper Sorbian. In Cottbus there is an extra course offered to learn Sorbian/Wendish for the students at the Oberstufenzentrum (Centre for Vocational Training).

In Lower Lusatia it is not easy to find students who speak Lower Sorbian very well. There are not native speakers anymore among the kindergarten teachers and the youth care workers. All of them learned the Lower Sorbian language at school or they still have to learn it during their vocational training and alongside their job. Not many are willing to take on this additional challenge. Therefore, it is especially difficult in Lower Lusatia to broaden the range of WITAJ groups and to preserve the existing groups.

The certificates that the graduates receive after completing their training are recognised throughout Germany. The graduates are qualified for educational work in public, charitable, religious or other free and private institutions. The participation in Sorbian lessons is written on the certificates. In Saxony the graduates get bilingual (German/Upper Sorbian) certificates and in Brandenburg the certificates are written in German.

legislation

The regulations for professional schools in Saxony and Brandenburg define the selection procedure in case there are more applicants for the training than apprenticeship places: Fachschulverordnung Sozialwesen (2003) (Regulation on Social Services in Vocational Education) and Schulordnung Fachschule (2009) (School Regulation for Vocational Education). Based on this selection procedure, professional schools in Saxony (5%) and in Brandenburg (10%) have the possibility to allocate the training places under the hardship provision, a provision similar to a scholarship which is granted to Sorbian students because they are members of a minority. At the Sorbian Professional Schools for Social Education there are usually more applicants than places. An agreement between the SMK and the Centre for Vocational Training Bautzen allows that Sorbian applicants can also apply for the hardship provision if they cannot be accepted because of their good grade-point average. At the professional school in Cottbus, the head teacher decides on these cases himself. The prerequisite is that applicants wish to participate in Lower Sorbian lessons.

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The curriculum for kindergarten teachers and youth care workers in Saxony also includes a special provision for the Centre for Vocational Training Bautzen (Sächsisches Staatsministerium für Kultus, 2008). As a consequence, students who qualify as kindergarten teachers or youth care workers have 160 hours of Upper Sorbian lessons during their apprenticeship at this school. Students who speak Sorbian at native speaker level have intensive Upper Sorbian lessons to prepare themselves for the work in WITAJ groups.

For the professional school in Cottbus there are no specific legal regulations. The school, however, decided to offer Lower Sorbian lessons as part of the elective subjects.

language use

As mentioned, it is compulsory for all students at the professional school in Bautzen to learn Upper Sorbian. However, 160 school hours during three years of training are not enough to acquire high level skills in the language. Nevertheless, it is important that

the students are able to understand a little bit of Sorbian and that they know the main facts about the Sorbian history and culture. In music lessons they also learn some typical Sorbian songs.

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

If kindergarten teachers start to work in a nursery school in Brandenburg or Saxony with Sorbian groups, they can continue to learn Lower or Upper Sorbian in courses for adults. Although it is only possible for kindergarten teachers and youth care workers to learn Sorbian during vocational training, there are still many people in Upper and Lower Lusatia who work in other professions and speak Sorbian in their daily work.

In Upper Lusatia, all native speakers speak Sorbian in their daily work, if they communicate with other Sorbs. This applies to the saleswoman, the craftsman or the doctor as well as the Protestant pastor and the Catholic priest. Most of them are also willing to improve their language abilities in the field of specialised vocabulary with the help of dictionaries and the use of Sorbian media.

In Lower Lusatia, the staff in Sorbian and municipal institutions, politicians, priests and artists primarily speak Lower Sorbian in their daily work.

The fact that the 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 broadcast 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.

**teaching
material**

There are no specific textbooks for vocational training in the Sorbian languages. In Lower and Upper Sorbian lessons at the two mentioned professional schools for kindergarten teachers and youth care workers, teachers use textbooks and dictionaries for adults which are published by the Domowina Publishing House. In addition, teachers and students can use digital dictionaries for Lower and Upper Sorbian. For teaching knowledge of Lower and Upper Sorbian language and culture, children's books, youth literature and other related publications are also used.

When the kindergarten teachers prepare for their special work in WITAJ groups, they can use materials that are provided by the WITAJ Language Centre for the education in kindergartens. The Sorbian teachers at the professional school in Bautzen developed a curriculum for these special lessons that includes modern didactical knowledge for the bilingual education in the early childhood.⁶

An important task for the future is to provide opportunities to learn Lower and Upper Sorbian online. This offer with attractive learning tools should be primarily addressed to adults in different professional groups.

statistics

class	number of students per year in all classes
Lower Lusatia	
Sorbian as a foreign language (voluntary offer)	5 - 10
Upper Lusatia	
Sorbian as a foreign language for all students	200
additional intensive Upper Sorbian lessons for work in WITAJ groups	5 - 15

Table 9: Average number of students in Lower and Upper Lusatia (Sources: Centre for Vocational Training Cottbus, 2014; Sorbian professional school for social education Bautzen, 2014).

6 Higher education

structure

The only university in Germany with degrees in Sorbian studies is the University of Leipzig. The teaching of Sorbian at the University of Leipzig has a long history stretching back to the early eighteenth century, with the foundation of the Wendish Theological College in 1716 as one of the University's first student colleges. The Institut za sorabistiku/Institut für Sorabistik (Institut for Sorbian Studies) was established in 1951 as the first and only university establishment in Germany to offer the discipline of Sorbian studies: the Language and Culture of the Sorbs in Lower and Upper Lusatia. Initially, this establishment was mainly meant for the training of Sorbian teachers and those willing to work at Sorbian institutions. The Institute of Sorbian Studies later broadened its scope: it took into account other professional fields in response to the growing significance and recognition of minorities and small groups of peoples within Europe. Upper and Lower Sorbian studies at the University of Leipzig has traditionally been regarded as a course for native speakers of Sorbian. However, it is also incorporated into German and international Slavonic studies, as well as into European minority research. In addition to the existing course in Sorbian Studies/Linguistics, the other options are Sorbian literature and history, Sorbian teaching and methodology and Sorbian ethnology.

The following degrees can be achieved at the Institute of Sorbian Studies:

- Bachelor's degree in Sorbian studies with Sorbian languages, literature and culture (students can choose between Lower or Upper Sorbian). The study takes six semesters;
- Master's degree in Sorbian Studies, a programme which has main topics that are similar to the BA degree. This study takes four semesters;
- State Exam based on the Sorbian teacher training programme for Sorbian teachers in Lower and Upper Lusatia. The length of study depends on the type of school (primary school: eight semesters, secondary school: nine semesters and grammar school: ten semesters);

- Joint International BA in Minority Languages with Sorbian studies and modules in Celtic studies. The study takes six semesters: four semesters at the home university and two semesters at the Polish partner university in Szczecin (Institut za Sorabistiku, 2015).

Teachers who studied other school subjects, but who speak Lower or Upper Sorbian at an advanced level and are willing to improve their language skills, are also welcome at Sorbian schools in Lower and Upper Lusatia.

Some universities in other parts of Germany (e.g. Dresden, Potsdam, Tübingen, Kiel, Magdeburg and Berlin) also pay attention to the Sorbs in Lower and Upper Lusatia in their Slavic studies and linguistics as well as in historical, political, educational, geographical, cultural or other studies. However, they do not regularly offer special lessons for Sorbian studies.

legislation

The SWG declares a close cooperation between Brandenburg and Saxony in scientific issues in paragraph 9.

The Verordnung des Sächsischen Staatsministeriums für Kultus über die Erste Staatsprüfung für Lehrämter an Schulen im Freistaat Sachsen (2012) (Regulation of the Saxon State Ministry of Education on the First State Examination for teaching at schools in the Free State of Saxony) defines the contents of the Sorbian studies in which proof of achievement must be provided for permission to the state examination. In addition, the components of the written and oral examinations are described.

The Sächsisches Hochschulzulassungsgesetz (2009) (Saxon University Admission Act) refers to the Saxon Constitution in the selection procedure. Therefore, the selection procedure has to pay attention to applicants who choose the Sorbian studies in their combination of subjects. This consideration has to be made with regard to the obligations arising from the Saxon Constitution towards the Sorbian people.

language use Students who study at the University of Leipzig and want to become a teacher for the Lower or Upper Sorbian language, have to take part in courses for Sorbian linguistics, literature, culture and didactics. The written and oral examinations relate to these contents.

At the Institute of Sorbian Studies there are not enough lecturers that are able to teach their subject in Lower and Upper Sorbian. That is why some subjects are only taught in Upper Sorbian. This is especially problematic for those students from Lower Lusatia that only learned Lower Sorbian as a foreign language. Upper Sorbian students, who are usually native speakers, can follow the lessons in the Lower Sorbian language very well.

The University Library and the Deutsche Bücherei (German library), both located in Leipzig, maintain extensive stocks of Sorbian literature, newspapers and magazines, as well as specialist journals on Sorbian studies. Finally, the *Sora-bija* student group comprises students of Sorbian nationality studying in various faculties. It organises lectures, discussions and traditional festivals.

teacher training The training of students in Upper and Lower Sorbian for teaching positions at primary, secondary and grammar schools is an important task of the Institute for Sorbian Studies at the University of Leipzig. For this task, the Institute receives expert support from colleagues of the Sorbian Institute in Bautzen in the delivery of specialised courses in Sorbian history and folklore. Both institutes can look back over many years of experience and successful cooperation in teaching and research at university level.

pre-school training

Both in Brandenburg and Saxony, workers can only be permanently employed if they have the appropriate training, for example as a kindergarten teacher, educator, remedial teacher, social worker or certified social pedagogue. In both federal states this is governed by the Kita-Personalverordnung (1993)

(Regulation on the qualification of the educational staff). In addition, professionals in Brandenburg and Saxony are obligated to constantly participate in further training.

Further training courses on diverse themes are offered by many educational institutions. Special courses for educators in Upper and Lower Sorbian kindergartens are also offered by the WITAJ Language Centre and additionally in Lower Lusatia by the School for Lower Sorbian Language and Culture and in Upper Lusatia by the Serbske kubłanske srjedžiščo LIPA z.t./ Sorbisches Familien- und Bildungszentrum LIPA e.V. (Sorbian Family and Education Centre "LIPA" registered association).

primary training

In the DDR, primary school teachers were trained together with kindergarten teachers at Institutes for Teacher Training. Only after the German reunification, primary school teachers were trained at universities just as teachers for other school types.

Both in Lower and Upper Lusatia many teachers work in primary schools who studied at the former Institutes for Teacher Training in the DDR time. The Supervisory School Authorities of Brandenburg and Saxony organise their further training in Sorbian language today. In Lower Lusatia the ABC is also responsible for this further training. These institutions also organise further training for bilingual teaching.

secondary training

Teacher training in Saxony is divided into higher education and preparation service. The previous Bachelor's and Master's teacher training programmes have been replaced by state examination degree courses. The universities have offered specific teacher training courses for the different types of schools since the winter semester of 2012/2013. These courses end with the first state examination.

Practical pedagogic training in the form of a preparatory service takes place at the teacher training institutes of the SBA and at schools. It ends with the second state examination. All teachers

have to study two subjects. The Sorbian languages can be studied in different combinations with another subject.

The length of the study period depends on the school type. Primary school teachers study for eight semesters, secondary school teachers for nine and grammar school teachers for ten. The Institute of Sorbian Studies does not educate Sorbian teachers for schools for children with special needs.

If teachers who are already working in schools wish to obtain a teaching license for another subject, they follow a part-time program next to their job. It is possible to obtain the Master's degree in Lower Sorbian at the Institute of Sorbian Studies at the University of Leipzig. It is a further educational programme for teachers from Brandenburg who wish to become additionally qualified as teachers of Lower Sorbian.

in-service training

The Education Act in Saxony states that in-service training courses for all teachers are compulsory.

The training programme is structured according to school types and subjects. It also includes further training for general educational and psychological issues which are aimed at teachers of all school types. In addition, the training programme offers courses for specific target groups such as school managers or teachers with special tasks. The further training courses for Lower Sorbian teachers are organised by the ABC and for Upper Sorbian teachers by the Saxon Educational Institute. Some special courses for teachers are also offered by the WITAJ Language Centre in Bautzen.

statistics

	number of students
Lower Sorbian students	2 - 6
Upper Sorbian students	30 - 34
total	32 - 40

Table 10: Average number of students in all university years (Source: Institute of Sorbian Studies at the University of Leipzig, 2014).

7 Adult education

structure and language courses

Volkshochschulen (adult education centres) are typical adult education institutions with a long tradition in Germany. These institutions are normally owned by counties and municipalities and get public financial support. Therefore, participants have to pay a relatively small fee. The adult education centres offer courses for professional qualifications as well as for a wide variety of personal interests. This includes language courses. In Upper Lusatia and Lower Lusatia they also offer possibilities to learn Upper and Lower Sorbian at different levels. In Lower Lusatia, the Šula za dolnosěrbsku rěc a kulturu/Schule für niedersorbische Sprache und Kultur (School for Lower Sorbian Language and Culture) is similar to adult education centres.

In Upper Lusatia, the Sorbian Family and Education Centre “LIPA” offers Upper Sorbian language courses on behalf of the adult education centre. In both institutions courses on the Sorbian culture and history are also offered. Among other things, the production and creation of Sorbian costumes can be learned. Both institutions are also partly financed by the Stiftung für das sorbische Volk/Založba za serbski lud (Foundation for the Sorbian People).

Furthermore, some other institutions and initiatives in Lower and Upper Lusatia organise Sorbian language courses at different places. Especially the associations and groups of the Domowina organise such courses for their members and other interested parties. The WITAJ Language Centre also regularly provides language courses. In Lower Lusatia, these courses are mostly aimed at kindergarten teachers. In Upper Lusatia, parents are often interested in these language courses of the WITAJ Language Centre. They want to be able to help their children with their homework when they learn Upper Sorbian at school after visiting WITAJ kindergartens or groups.

There is still no official option for the certification of language skills, but the WITAJ Language Centre is currently developing certification documents according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages.

language use All the institutions and organisations which offer language courses try to apply the Lower Sorbian and Upper Sorbian language as intensively as possible depending on the language skills of the participants.

statistics

Lower Lusatia	number of courses/year	number of participants/year (in all courses)
School for Lower Sorbian Language and culture	35 - 50	250 - 300

Table 11: Average number of courses and participants per year in Lower Lusatia (Source: School for Lower Sorbian Language and Culture, 2015).

Upper Lusatia	number of courses/year	number of participants/year (in all courses)
WITAJ Language Centre	4 - 6	40 - 60
adult education centre Bautzen	3 - 5	20 - 30
Sorbian Family and Education Centre "LIPA"	1 - 2	7 - 10

Table 12: Average number of courses and participants per year in Upper Lusatia (Source: WITAJ Language Centre, 2015).

It is not possible to specify all statistics regarding numbers of participants, because adults also learn Lower or Upper Sorbian on the basis of private interest and activities in self-organised groups. Therefore, the number of current participants and the number of places where they learn, varies a lot. Approximately three to six of such groups exist in Lower and Upper Lusatia. In addition, some discussion groups exist in Upper Lusatia where the participants speak Sorbian together and expand their language skills.

In Lower Lusatia, the School for Lower Sorbian Language and Culture organises many one-day projects with communication and cultural activities where participants can use and practise their Lower Sorbian language skills. The school organised 29 of such activities for 546 participants in 2014.

8 Educational research

Sorbian-oriented research is institutionally represented by the Serbski institut z.t. in Bautzen (Sorbian Institute) and the Institut for Sorbian Studies at the University of Leipzig. The Sorbian Institute was established by the Free State of Saxony together with the Land of Brandenburg as a non-university research institute with a department for Lower Sorbian studies in Cottbus in 1992. Its main tasks are the research and cultivation of the Sorbian language, history and culture. This includes research on ethnic minority issues in Europe. The legal form of the institute is a registered association and it is financed by the Foundation for the Sorbian People. The Sorbian Institute includes the Sorbian Central Library and the Sorbian culture archive. The institute cooperates with partners in Germany and with universities in the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Poland and Russia. The institute also cooperates with the International Slavists Committee, the European Research Institute for Culture in Bonn and the European Bureau for Lesser-Used Languages in Dublin. Every two years the Sorbian Institute organises the International Summer School of Sorbian language and culture together with the Institute for Sorbian Studies in Leipzig for fifty participants which has worldwide interest. The main tasks of the Institute for Sorbian Studies in Leipzig are the teachers' education and the scientific research in both Sorbian languages, language didactics, language history, the Sorbian literature and parallels between Sorbian and other Slavic literatures. The Institute also collaborates with various scientific research and educational establishments.

The Sorbian scientific society Maćica Serbska, which was founded more than 160 years ago, has a recognised position in public life. There are about 120 members in Lower and Upper Lusatia that are voluntarily active in scientific work in fields such as language, literature, art, history and folklore. The society provides a link between the Sorbian population and institutional science. In addition, the Maćica Serbska takes responsibility for the Upper Sorbian and Lower Sorbian Language Commissions

who observe the language development and decide what counts as a linguistic norm.

The WITAJ Language Centre in Bautzen with its Lower Sorbian department in Cottbus supports the scientific work by publishing pedagogical materials. Its scientific workers develop language planning strategies. The ABC in Cottbus works on school topics referring to the Lower Sorbian language.

9 Prospects

Public support corresponds to the political will to include the Sorbs as an autochthonous minority in Brandenburg and Saxony and thus also in the BRD. An important basis for this is the new Sorbian/Wendish Law in Brandenburg, the current initiatives for a new Sorbian/Wendish School regulation and the evaluation of the WITAJ-education at schools.

In Saxony, the “Plan of measures of the Saxon State Government to encourage and to stimulate the use of the Sorbian language” leads to positive developments. Although there are legal provisions for the application of the Sorbian languages in public space, the application of the Sorbian language in the municipal offices is only possible in a few cases because of a lack of Sorbian-speaking staff. The District Office of Bautzen started a special initiative in 2012 and offered Sorbian courses to all employees. Almost 150 people took advantage of this offer, but only a few of them are interested in more courses to improve their Sorbian language skills. To compensate the pressure of German language assimilation effectively, more language-enhancing measures are necessary in filling vacancies.

Reliable financing by the Federal Government of Germany, the Free State of Saxony and the Land of Brandenburg is important for the fulfilment of the tasks of the Foundation for the Sorbian People. The future of the Sorbian people has always been sceptically looked upon. All the actors involved are aware that the future of the Sorbian people will jointly be decided by the will of the Sorbs as a minority and the will of the majority population in Lower and Upper Lusatia.

The governmental framework together with the language promotion and the bilingual education allows the members of the Sorbian people to freely confess to be a Sorb or Wendish person, to use the Lower and Upper Sorbian language, to maintain their culture and traditions and to communicate this to the next generation. Hope is especially placed on the WITAJ project. It

will be successful when the first WITAJ children become parents and also want their children to follow wish this bilingual education and pursue this cultural identity.

10 Summary statistics

	Saxony		Brandenburg		total	
	schools/ institutions	pupils/ students/ participants	schools/ institutions	pupils/ students/ participants	schools/ institutions	pupils/ students/ participants
nursery schools	32	1,193	11	254	43	1,447
primary schools	22	1,294	23	1,361	55	2,655
secondary schools	6	748	2	17	8	765
grammar schools	2	444	1	689	3	1,133
vocational training centre	1	200	1	5-10	2	210
University of Leipzig		30-34		2-6		32-40
adult education	3	67-100	1	250-300	4	317-400

Table 13: Number of institutions with Lower - and Upper Sorbian language educational provisions and learners (Source: compiled by Beate Brézan and Měto Nowak).

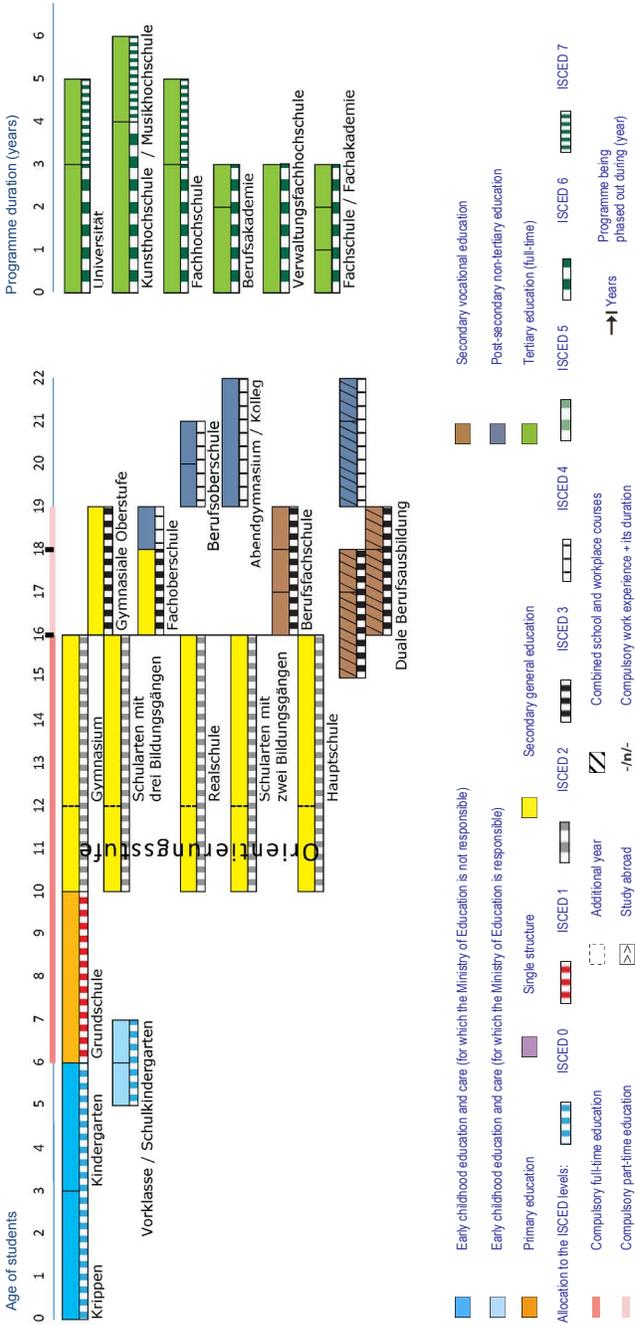
school year	pupils in Lower Lusatia	pupils in Upper Lusatia
2000/2001	83	206
2005/2006	166	739
2010/2011	196	1,009
2013/2014	257	1,193

Table 14: Number of pupils who were educated in Lower or Upper Sorbian in nursery schools between the school years 2000/2001 and 2013/2014 (Source: WITAJ Language Centre, 2015).

school year	pupils in Lower Lusatia	pupils in Upper Lusatia
2000/2001	1,559	3,033
2005/2006	1,883	2,204
2010/2011	1,988	2,379
2013/2014	2,020	2,486

Table 15: Number of pupils who learned Lower or Upper Sorbian in the different schools between the school years 2000/2001 and 2013/2014 (Source: Supervisory School Authority – Regional Office Cottbus/Chóšebuz and Saxon Education Agency - Regional Office Bautzen/Budyšin, compiled by Beate Brézan and Měto Nowak).

The structure of the education system in Germany 2014/2015



Source: Eurydice (2014/2015)

Endnotes

- 1 The information in sections 'origin', 'reformation' and 'national movement' has been taken over from the article "The Sorbs – a People Indigenous to Germany" by Ludmila Budar. Educational Research Workshop on "Minority Education", Bautzen (Saxony), 11-14 October 1994.
- 2 Vertrag zwischen der Bundesrepublik Deutschland und der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik über die Herstellung der Einheit Deutschlands (Einigungsvertrag) [Unification Treaty] (1990). Available at: stiftung.sorben.com/usf/einigungsvertrag.pdf [accessed November 2015].
- 3 A list of Lower Sorbian school books you can find at: http://www.witaj-sprachzentrum.de/files/Poskitk_ds_web_3.pdf.
- 4 A list of Upper Sorbian school books you can find at: http://www.witaj-sprachzentrum.de/files/Poskitk_2015_hs_WEB.pdf.
- 5 See endnote 3 and 4.
- 6 Šenk, Hubertus (2008). Konzeption. In *10 lět modelowy projekt Witaj. 10 Jahre Modellprojekt Witaj 1998-2008*. Available at: www.sorbischer-schulverein.de/downloads/2008-10-Jahre-Witaj.pdf [accessed November 2015].

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All official laws and regulations which are important for Sorbs in Lower and Upper Lusatia are available in an overview at: <http://www.domowina.de/uploads/media/rechtsvorschriften.pdf>.

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other publications available at:

www.witaj-sprachzentrum.de/index.php/de/download/

www.witaj-sprachzentrum.de/index.php/de/literatur

Addresses

official bodies

Arbeitsstelle für sorbische/wendische Bildungsentwicklung Cottbus (ABC) (Department for Sorbian/Wendish Education Development)
Sielower Straße/Žylojska droga 37
03044 Cottbus/Chóšebuz
W www.abc.brandenburg.de

Ministerium für Bildung, Jugend und Sport des Landes Brandenburg (Ministry of Education)
Heinrich-Mann-Allee 107
14473 Potsdam
W www.mbjs.brandenburg.de

Sächsisches Bildungsinstitut (SBI) (Saxon Education Institut)
Dresdner Straße 78c
01445 Radebeul
W www.sbi.smk.sachsen.de

Sächsische Staatsministerium für Kultus (Ministry of Education)
Carolaplatz 1
01097 Dresden
W www.smk.sachsen.de

Stiftung für das sorbische Volk/Založba za serbski lud (Foundation for the Sorbian People)
Postplatz/ Póstowe naměsto 2
02625 Bautzen/Budyšin
W www.stiftung.sorben.com

universities

Universität Leipzig, Institut für Sorabistik/Institut za sorabistiku (Institute for Sorbian Studies)
Beethovenstraße 15
04107 Leipzig
W www.sorb.philol.uni-leipzig.de/start/

Sorbian organisations and institutions

Deutsch-Sorbisches Volkstheater Bautzen/Němsko-serbske ludowe dźiwadło Budyšin (German-Sorbian Folk Theatre)
Seminarstraße/Seminarska 12
02625 Bautzen/Budyšin
W www.theater-bautzen.de

Domowina - Bund Lausitzer Sorben e.V./Domowina - Zwězk Łužyskich Serbow z.t./Domowina - Zwjazk Łužiskich Serbow z.t.
(Union of Lusatian Sorbs)
Postplatz/Póstowe naměsto 2
02625 Bautzen/Budyšin
W www.domowina.de

Domowina - Regionalverband Niederlausitz e.V./Domowina župa Dolna Łužyca z.t. (Regional Union of Lusatian Sorbs)
A.-Bebel-Str./Droga A. Bebela 82
03046 Cottbus/Chóšebuz
W www.domowina.de

Domowina - WITAJ-Sprachzentrum/Rěčny centrum WITAJ
(WITAJ Language Centre)
Postplatz/Póstowe naměsto 2
02625 Bautzen/Budyšin
Rěčny centrum WITAJ
Sielower StraÙe/Zylojska droga 39
03044 Cottbus/Chóšebuz
W www.recny-centrum-witaj.de

Schule für Niedersorbische Sprache und Kultur/Šula za dolnosorbisku rěc a kulturu (School for Lower Sorbian Language and Culture)
Sielower StraÙe/Zylojska droga 37
03044 Cottbus/Chóšebuz
W www.sorbische-wendische-sprachschule.de

Sorbische Kulturinformation "Lodka"/Serbska kulturna informacija "LODKA" (Lower Sorbian Cultural Information)
A.-Bebel-Str./Droga A. Bebela 82
03046 Cottbus/Chóšebuz
W www.lodka.sorben.com

Sorbische Kulturinformation "SKI"/Serbska kulturna informacija
(Upper Sorbian Cultural Information)
Postplatz/Póstowe naměsto 2
02625 Bautzen/Budyšin
W www.ski.sorben.com

Sorbischer Schulverein e.V./Serbske šulske towaristwo z.t./Serbske šulske towarstwo (Sorbian School Association)
Postplatz/Póstowe naměsto 2
02625 Bautzen/Budyšin
W www.sorbischer-schulverein.de

Sorbisches Institut Cottbus/Serbski institut wótnožka Chóšebuz
(Sorbian Institute Cottbus)
A.-Bebel-Str./Droga A. Bebela 82
03046 Cottbus/Chóšebuz
W www.serbski-institut.de

Sorbisches Institut e.V./Serbski institut z.t. (Sorbian Institute)

Bahnhofstraße/Dwórnišćowa 6

02625 Bautzen/Budyšin

Sorbisches Museum Bautzen/Serbski muzej Budyšin

(Sorbian Museum)

Ortenburg/ Na hrodže 3-5

02625 Bautzen/Budyšin

W www.museum.sorben.com

Sorbisches National-Ensemble/Serbski ludowy ansambl

(Ensemble for Sorbian Folk Culture)

Äußere Lauenstraße/ Wonkowa Lawska 2

02625 Bautzen/Budyšin

W www.sne-bautzen.de

Wendisches Museum Cottbus/Serbski muzej Chóšebuz

(Sorbian Museum)

Mühlenstraße/Młyńska droga 12

03046 Cottbus/Chóšebuz

W www.wendisches-museum.de

Sorbian media institutions

Domowina-Verlag/Ludowe nakladnistwo Domowina

(Sorbian Publishing House)

Tuchmacherstraße/Sukelnska 27

02625 Bautzen/Budyšin

W www.domowina-verlag.de

MDR Sorbisches Programm (Radio Upper Sorbian)

MDR-Studio Bautzen

Postplatz /Póstowe naměsto 2

Postfach 1707

02607 Bautzen/Budyšin

W www.mdr.de/sorbisches-programm

Nowy Casnik (Lower Sorbian/German Newspaper)

Straße der Jugend/Droga młožiny 54

03050 Cottbus/Chóšebuz

W www.nowycasnik.de

rbb Sorbisches/Wendisches Programme (Radio Lower Sorbian)

Berliner Straße/Barlinska droga 155

03046 Cottbus/Chóšebuz

W www.rbb-online.de/sorben

Serbske Nowiny (Upper Sorbian Newspaper)

Tuchmacherstraße/Sukelnska 27

02625 Bautzen/Budyšin

W www.serbske-nowiny.de

Other websites on minority languages

- Mercator Research Centre** www.mercator-research.eu
Homepage of the Mercator European Research Centre on Multilingualism and Language Learning. The website contains the series of Regional dossiers, a database with organisations, a bibliography, information on current activities, and many links to relevant websites.
- Mercator Network** www.mercator-network.eu
General site of the Mercator European Network of Language Diversity Centres. It gives information about the network and leads you to the homepages of the network partners.
- European Commission** <http://ec.europa.eu/languages>
The website of the European Commission gives information about the EU's support for language diversity.
- Council of Europe** <http://conventions.coe.int>
European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (1992) and Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (1995). European Treaty Series 148 and 157, Strasbourg.
- Eurydice** <http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurydice>
Eurydice is the information network on education in Europe. The site provides information on all European education systems and education policies.

What can the Mercator Research Centre offer you?

mission & goals The Mercator European Research Centre on Multilingualism and Language Learning addresses the growing interest in multilingualism and the increasing need of language communities to exchange experiences and to cooperate in a European context. The centre is based in Ljouwert/Leeuwarden, the capital of Fryslân – the bilingual province of the Netherlands – and hosted at the Fryske Akademy (Frisian Academy). The Mercator Research Centre focuses on research, policy and practice in the field of multilingualism and language learning. The centre aims to be an independent and recognised organisation for researchers, policymakers and professionals in education. The centre endeavours to promote linguistic diversity within Europe. The starting point lies in the field of regional and minority languages. Yet, immigrant languages and smaller state languages are also a topic of study. The centre's main focus is the creation, circulation and application of knowledge in the field of language learning at school, at home and through cultural participation.

partners In 1987, Mercator Education started cooperation with two partners in a network structure: Mercator Media hosted at the University of Wales in Aberystwyth and Mercator Legislation hosted at the Ciemen Foundation in Barcelona. This network has developed into the Mercator European Network of Language Diversity Centres, which consists of the three aforementioned partners as well Stockholm University in Sweden and the Research Institute for Linguistics of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences in Hungary. Besides, the Mercator Research Centre, the successor of Mercator Education, expands its network in close cooperation with a number of other partner organisations working in the same field. This cooperation includes partners in Fryslân, as well as partners in the Netherlands and in Europe. The provincial government of Fryslân is the main funding body of the Mercator Research Centre. Projects and activities are funded by the EU as well as by the authorities of other regions in Europe with an active policy to support their regional or minority language and its culture.

research The Mercator Research Centre develops a research programme on the basis of the data collections available. Research activities focus on various aspects of bilingual and trilingual education, such as interaction in multilingual classrooms, language proficiency in different languages and teachers' qualifications for the multilingual classroom. Whenever possible, research will be carried out in a comparative European perspective. Research results are disseminated through publications and conferences in collaboration with European partners.

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

q&a Through the Question and Answer service available on our website (www.mercator-research.eu), we can inform you on any subject related to education in minority or regional languages in Europe. The specialists in our extensive database of experts can also provide relevant information.

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