

GERMAN

The German language in education in Romania

1st Edition

Regional Dossier series

The German language in education
in Romania

1st Edition

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Universitatea "Lucian Blaga" din Sibiu

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Foreword

background

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

Regional and minority languages are languages traditionally used within a given territory of a state by nationals of that state who form a group numerically smaller than the rest of the state's population; they are different from the official language(s) of that state, and they include neither dialects of the official language(s) of the state nor the languages of migrants.

Education is a key factor for the vitality of these languages. The inclusion of multilingualism in education is also important in fostering individuals' academic success, well-being, and identity. A core aim of the Mercator European Research Centre is therefore to acquire, apply, and disseminate knowledge on regional and minority languages in education in Europe and beyond. The Regional Dossier series plays an important role in achieving this goal.

aim

The aim of the Regional Dossier series is to provide concise descriptions of regional or minority languages in education, mainly in Europe but also in other parts of the world. 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, and pupils, and financial investments. This fixed structure allows easy comparison between the Regional Dossiers in the series.

target group

The Regional Dossiers serve several purposes and are relevant for policymakers, researchers, teachers, teacher educators, students, and journalists who wish to explore developments in regional or minority language education in Europe. They also serve as a first orientation towards further research and function as a source of ideas for improving educational provisions.

link with Eurydice

The Regional Dossiers follow the format of Eurydice – the information network on education in Europe – in order to link the regional descriptions with those of national education systems. Eurydice provides information on the administration and structure of national education systems in the member states of the European Union.

contents

Every Regional Dossier begins with an introduction about the region in question, followed by six chapters that each deal with a specific level of the education system (e.g. primary education). Chapters 8 and 9 cover the main lines of educational research on the minority language under discussion, and the prospects for the minority language in general and in education in particular, respectively. Chapter 10 provides a summary of statistics. Lists of (legal) references and useful addresses regarding the minority language are given at the end of the Regional Dossier.

Mercator's Wiki on Minority Language Learning

Mercator's Wiki on Minority Language Learning serves as an online information platform for regional and minority languages with limited or no presence in the education system, complementing the Regional Dossier series. While sharing a similar aim and target audience as the Regional Dossiers, the Wiki on Minority Language Learning has a more flexible structure to accommodate educational arrangements that are susceptible to change. Contributions to the online platform are managed by the Wiki's main editor at the Mercator European Research Centre.



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The German language in education in Romania

1st Edition

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Summary

German and its status in education in Romania

German is a language of instruction in public and private schools and kindergartens in Romania, as autochthonous minorities in Romania have a right to education in their first language. German can also be chosen as the first foreign language in schools where Romanian is the language of instruction or as the second foreign language. German-language schools and kindergartens can be found primarily in the historical settlement area of the Transylvanian Saxons in Transylvania, but also in large cities such as Bucharest and Timișoara, and other important cities in Western Romania. As most of the German minority emigrated in the 1990s, German-language schools are now mainly attended by pupils from the Romanian majority population. German is taught in the form of German as a first language, a second language, or a third language. There are also German-language subject lessons, for example in the history of the German minority or Protestant religion. Schools with German as the language of instruction endeavour to offer all subjects in German.

German in educational research

Consolidated and institutionalised educational research in German about German education takes place at Babeș-Bolyai University in Cluj-Napoca and at Lucian Blaga University in Sibiu. Some research in this field is also pursued at other universities offering German Studies programmes. The research is carried out by the employed lecturers and professors; as of 2024, there were no doctoral students in educational studies in German. Current research focuses on language acquisition, language didactics, and teacher training in German. Doctoral programmes in German are only available at chairs of German studies, where German language didactics or interdisciplinary topics are often also researched.

Prospects for German in Romania

Currently, interest in a school career in German is very high in Romania, and schools with German as the language of instruction enjoy a good reputation. As long as this attractiveness is maintained, this school system will also be available to the few members of the minority. If access for Romanian citizens who do not belong to the German minority is not restricted in the future, an increase in the number of pupils is possible, provided that the demand for teachers can be met. Whether the schools will be permanently attended by children from the minority is a question of the demographic stabilisation of the minority, which is difficult to predict.

Die deutsche Sprache im rumänischen Bildungswesen

1. Auflage

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Zusammenfassung

Deutsch und sein Status im Bildungswesen in Rumänien

Deutsch ist Unterrichtssprache an öffentlichen und privaten Schulen und Kindergärten in Rumänien, da die autochthonen Minderheiten in Rumänien ein Recht auf Unterricht in ihrer Muttersprache haben. Deutsch ist auch die erste Fremdsprache oder die zweite Fremdsprache in Schulen, in denen Rumänisch die Unterrichtssprache ist. Deutschsprachige Schulen und Kindergärten sind vor allem im historischen Siedlungsgebiet der Siebenbürger Sachsen in Siebenbürgen, aber auch in Großstädten wie Temeswar oder Bukarest zu finden. Da der Großteil der deutschen Minderheit in den 1990er Jahren ausgewandert ist, werden deutschsprachige Schulen inzwischen hauptsächlich von Schüler:innen der rumänischen Mehrheitsbevölkerung besucht. Der Unterricht in Deutsch findet in Form von Deutsch als Muttersprache, als Zweitsprache oder als Drittsprache statt. Darüber hinaus gibt es deutschsprachigen Fachunterricht zum Beispiel im Fach Geschichte der deutschen Minderheit oder evangelische Religion. An deutschsprachigen Schulen wird versucht, alle Fächer in deutscher Sprache anzubieten.

Deutsch in der Bildungsforschung

Erziehungswissenschaftliche Forschung in deutscher Sprache über den Unterricht in deutscher Sprache wird an der Babeş-Bolyai Universität in Cluj-Napoca/Klausenburg und an der “Lucian Blaga” Universität in Sibiu/Hermannstadt betrieben. Es gibt aktuell (Stand: 2024) keine deutschsprachigen Doktorand:innen in Erziehungswissenschaft, die Forschung wird ausschließlich von angestellten Dozent:innen und Professor:innen durchgeführt. Aktuelle Forschungsschwerpunkte bilden Spracherwerb und Sprachdidaktik sowie Fragen der Lehrer:innenbildung in deutscher Sprache. Promotionsprogramme in deutscher Sprache gibt es ausschließlich an Germanistik-Lehrstühlen. Es werden hier oft auch fachdidaktische oder interdisziplinäre Themen erforscht.

Perspektiven für das Deutsche in Rumänien

Aktuell ist das Interesse an einer Schullaufbahn in deutscher Sprache in Rumänien sehr hoch und die Schulen mit deutscher Unterrichtssprache genießen einen guten Ruf in der Gesellschaft. Wenn der Zugang rumänischer Bürger, die nicht Angehörige der deutschen Minderheit sind, in Zukunft nicht eingeschränkt wird, ist ein Anwachsen der Schülerzahlen möglich, sofern der Bedarf an Lehrpersonen gedeckt werden kann.

Limba germană în educație în România

Ediția 1

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Rezumat

Limba germană și statutul limbii germane în învățământul românesc

Limba germană este o limbă de predare în școlile și grădinițele publice și private din România, deoarece minoritățile autohtone din România au dreptul la educație în limba maternă. De asemenea, germana este prima limbă străină sau a doua limbă străină în școlile în care limba română este limba de predare. Școlile și grădinițele cu predare în limba germană se găsesc în principal în zona de locuire istorică a sașilor transilvăneni din Transilvania, dar și în orașe mari precum Timișoara sau București. Întrucât majoritatea minorității germane a emigrat în anii 1990, școlile cu limbă de predare germană sunt acum frecventate în principal de elevi din populația majoritară română. Limba germană este predată sub forma limbii germane ca limbă maternă, ca a doua limbă sau ca a treia limbă. Există, de asemenea, materii predate în limba germană, de exemplu istoria minorității germane sau religia protestantă. În școlile cu limbă de predare germană toate materiile cu excepția limbii și literaturii române se predau în limba germană.

Limba germană în cercetarea educațională

Cercetarea educațională în limba germană se desfășoară la Universitatea Babeș-Bolyai din Cluj-Napoca și la Universitatea "Lucian Blaga" din Sibiu. Cercetarea este realizată de către conferențiarii și profesorii angajați; momentan (2024) nu există doctoranzi de Științe ale Educației care cercetează în limba germană. Cercetările actuale se axează pe achiziția limbii, didactica limbii și formarea profesorilor de limba germană. Programele de doctorat în limba germană sunt disponibile numai la catedrele de germanistică. Deseori se cercetează și subiecte didactice sau interdisciplinare.

Perspectivile limbii germane în România

În prezent, interesul pentru un parcurs școlar în limba germană este foarte mare în România, iar școlile care au ca limbă de predare germana se bucură de o bună reputație în societate. Dacă accesul cetățenilor români care nu sunt membri ai minorității germane nu va fi restricționat în viitor, este posibilă o creștere a numărului de elevi, cu condiția ca cererea de profesori să poată fi satisfăcută.



List of Abbreviations

ARACIS	Agenția Română de Asigurare a Calității în Învățământul Superior (Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education)
CCD	Casa Corpului Didactic (Teacher Training Centre)
CEFR	Common European Framework of Reference for Languages
CNFIP	Consiliul Național pentru Finanțarea Învățământului Superior (National Council for Financing Higher Education)
DAAD	Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst (German Academic Exchange Service)
DFDR	Demokratisches Forum der Deutschen in Rumänien (Democratic Forum of Germans in Romania)
DSD I	Deutsches Sprachdiplom Stufe I (German language diploma level I)
DSD II	Deutsches Sprachdiplom Stufe II (German language diploma level II)
EQF	European Qualifications Framework
GDS	Großes Deutsches Sprachdiplom (Large German Language Diploma)
IfA	Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen (Institute for Foreign Relations)
INS	Institutul Național de Statistică (Romanian National Institute of Statistics)
ISCED	International Standard Classification of Education
KDS	Kleines Deutsches Sprachdiplom (Small German Language Diploma)
KMK	Kultusministerkonferenz (Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs in Germany)
ZfA	Zentralstelle für das Auslandsschulwesen (German Central Agency for Schools Abroad)
ZfL	Zentrum für Lehrerfortbildung in deutscher Sprache (Centre for Continuous Teacher Education in German)
ZOP	Zentrale Oberstufenprüfung (Central High School Examination)

1 Introduction

language

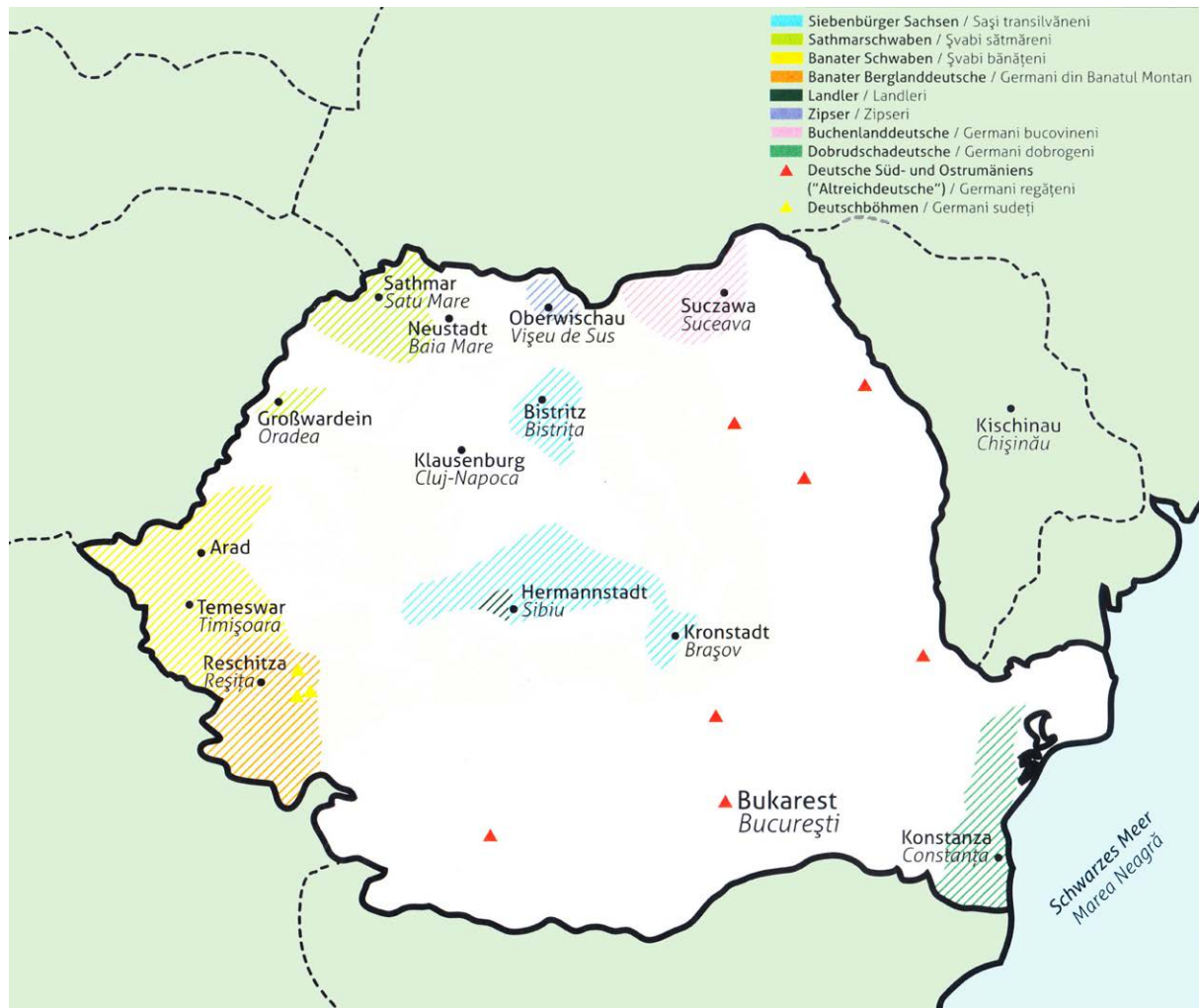
German, a West Germanic language belonging to the Indo-European family, is one of the languages of culture and education in Romania. It is spoken by one of 18 recognised minorities in Romania. German has been spoken in Romania throughout history and continues to be spoken today because various German-speaking groups settled in what is now Romania long before the founding of the modern Romanian state. These German-speaking groups include Transylvanian Saxons (German: *Siebenbürger Sachsen*), Banat Swabians (German: *Banater Schwaben*), Sathmar Swabians (German: *Sathmarschwaben*), Transylvanian Landlers (German: *Landler*), Banat Highland Germans (German: *Banater Berglanddeutsche*), Germans from southern and eastern Romania (German: *Altreichdeutsche*), Zipsers (German: *Zipser*), Bukovina Germans (German: *Bukovinadeutsche*), and Dobruja Germans (German: *Dobrudschadeutsche*), each with their own settlement history and different settlement areas (DFDR, 2024; see Figure 1).

Due to their varied regional origins, the settler groups spoke different dialects, which were used in everyday communication. The first process of linguistic standardisation occurred during the Reformation, which led to the printing of Martin Luther's Small Catechism and other textbooks at the Honterus printing workshop in Kronstadt/Braşov, starting in 1539. From the middle of the 19th century, under the influence of Romantic and nationalistic ideas, greater emphasis was placed on the use of standard German in churches and schools. The dialects, however, continued to be used in everyday communication well into the 20th century. Standard German was generally spoken in interactions between the different dialectal groups. Today, the Romanian state education system targeting these groups uses Standard German.

The oldest settlers, the Transylvanian Saxons, were recruited by the Hungarian King Geza II in the 12th century to fortify the Carpathian arc in return for privileges. These included perpetual personal freedom for themselves and all their descendants, direct jurisdiction under the king, and the right to appoint judges and pastors from their own ranks.

The Transylvanian Saxons originally consisted of different groups of settlers, each of whom spoke different dialects and who did not consider themselves as being one united ethnic group until the Reformation and the associated reforms, such as the creation of a uniform church order and school order after the Reformation by Johannes Honterus (1498–1549; Philippi, 2017).

Figure 1 Localisation of subgroups within the German minority in Romania.



Note. Reprinted from DFDR & Deutsche Botschaft Bukarest (2014).

The favourable conditions of settlement on the royal ground enabled the Transylvanian Saxons to thrive in all areas of political and social life. Over the centuries, the Transylvanian Saxons managed to maintain their political privileges and thus also their school system. Until 1541, the Saxons were under the rule of the kings of Hungary and enjoyed these privileges. After the Battle of Mohács in 1526, Transylvania became independent but remained under Ottoman suzerainty. The Ottomans did not interfere in Transylvania's internal affairs, enabling the education system to continue developing. Following the expulsion of the Ottomans and the establishment of Austrian rule over Transylvania at the turn of the 17th to the 18th century, the Saxons largely retained their independence in educational matters. It was only after 1867, when the Principality of Transylvania was ceded to Hungary, that significant efforts were made to align the education system with Hungarian linguistic and cultural norms. Despite these changes, such as the introduction of Hungarian language teaching and the use of Hungarian for history and geography lessons, the German-language school system was largely preserved (Philippi, 2017).

At the time of the founding of Greater Romania after the First World War, when Transylvania joined Romania following the People's Assembly on 1 December 1918, the Transylvanian Saxons still had a widely ramified and recognised confessional school system. At that time, there was a differentiated education system with German as the language of instruction, consisting of 97 early education institutions, 22 kindergartens, 263 primary schools, 6 secondary schools, 9 gymnasiums, 1 higher commercial school, 1 teacher training college, 1 kindergarten teacher training college, 9 trade schools and 3 agricultural schools, financed and developed by the Evangelical Church in Transylvania (Brandsch, 1939, p. 30).

When Transylvania was united with Romania, the “Alba Iulia Declaration” (1918) promised collective rights to minorities, but these rights were not implemented. The individual right to cultivate one's own language and culture was not explicitly formulated in the first Romanian constitution after the war, but it was stipulated in the education laws (Institutul de Științe ale Educației, 2004). The confessional schools of the Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession in Romania (German: *Evangelische Kirche Augsburgischen Bekenntnisses in Rumänien*) were declared private schools and could only accept pupils whose first language (L1) was the language of instruction. Private schools also had to follow the curriculum of the centrally organised education system, meaning other minority language schools may have experienced similar challenges in the interwar period. From 1928, state education was also available in minority languages, but from 1928 until 1995, Romanian history and geography were taught in Romanian.

After the Second World War and the establishment of a communist regime in Romania, the schools of the German minorities were nationalised during the expropriation of the Protestant Church. The confessional German-language school system became part of the state system with instruction in the minority languages. Decree No. 176 of the 1948 Education Reform (Decretul No. 176, 1948) repealed all previous legislation. The decree contained two provisions regarding education in the languages of the “co-resident nationalities” (i.e. minorities). In the principles, Article IV made it compulsory for teaching at all levels to be in the L1 of the co-resident nationalities and that the teaching of the Romanian language should begin in grade I (Institutul de Științe ale Educației, 2004, p. 243). Additionally, it was also decided that the textbooks would be standardised. However, for the teaching in minority languages, the specificity of the minority would be considered by allowing the members of the minority to write the curricula and textbooks for the subjects Minority Literature and Language and Music. Other curricula were generally compulsory, and textbooks, such as those for mathematics or biology, were, and still are, translated into the minority languages.

The right of every minority to cultivate its own language and culture and to be educated in its own language was stated in Art. 22 of the Constitution of 1965 (Constituția Republicii Socialiste România, 1965). The Education Act of 1978 (Legea educației și învățământului, 1978) implemented the provisions of the Constitution and devoted an entire chapter with 5 articles on the teaching of minority languages. These described the right to be educated in the L1 or in the state language and the right of minorities to take state examinations in the language of instruction, that is, in their L1 (Institutul de Științe ale Educației, 2004, p. 382).

German language media (television, radio and newspapers, weekly newspapers and a daily newspaper (*Der Neue Weg* [The New Way], which after 1990 became *Allgemeine Deutsche Zeitung für Rumänien* [General German Newspaper for Romania] and still exists today), were also preserved or newly founded in the Communist Era. Despite the aforementioned public discourse, which was presumably intended to influence foreign policy, an assimilation policy was pursued. Some of the cultural events were forbidden and the history of the minorities was “hushed up” (Köber, 1996, p. 87). German-speaking teachers were also sent to areas where no German minority resided, and in schools with German as the language of instruction, many different subjects were increasingly taught in Romanian (König, 2005, p. 281).

When the Iron Curtain fell in 1989, a large part of the German-speaking population emigrated, mainly to the Federal Republic of Germany and Austria. The German-Romanian Friendship Treaty (“Treaty on Partnership and Cooperation in Europe”), signed shortly after the fall of communism (21 April 1992), was an important support for preserving the identity and cultural heritage of the German-speaking minorities in Romania (DFDR & Deutsche Botschaft Bukarest, 2014, p. 43).

Although most of Romania’s German-speaking citizens left the country after the fall of communism in 1989, the existing school system in the cities was maintained due to the Romanian population’s great interest in German-language education.

population

The first census took place in 1930 in the Kingdom of Romania and recorded 633,488 citizens who identified as belonging to the German minority. The next census, after the Second World War in 1956, showed a significant decline in the population, which almost halved to 384,708 (INS, 2023a). This was partly due to fallen soldiers from the ranks of the minority, migration to Germany, but mainly to the fact that after the Second World War (between 1945 and 1949), the entire German-speaking working population (all men aged between 17 and 45 and all women aged between 18 and 30) was deported to Soviet labour camps (DFDR & Deutsche Botschaft Bukarest, 2014, p. 35). Until 1956, the number of German-speaking people increased, only to decrease steadily thereafter, as emigration began after 1956 and became massive after the fall of the Iron Curtain in 1989. In 1977, the census counted 359,109 self-identifying German people, 111,301 in 1992, 60,088 in 2002, and in 2011, a little more than a half of them remained (36,042; INS, 2023a).

The last census in 2021, which could not take place until 2022 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, recorded 22,907 Germans in Romania, of whom only 15,943 declared German as their L1. Of these 22,907 individuals, 2,699 were still in school, including 637 at universities, 58 at evening school or vocational school, 1,022 at gymnasium, and 560 at primary schools. A further 422 were enrolled in early childhood education institutions, and the vast majority of Romanian Germans had already completed their schooling, amounting to 20,043 individuals. There were 165 German children nationwide below the age of two who were not enrolled in any educational institution (INS, 2023b).

Even though there are no statistical data for this, the German-speaking community probably speaks at least two languages without exception: the L1 German (spoken and learned at home and or in school) and the state language Romanian (learned in school). Since, unlike in many other former communist states in Europe, neither the use of German nor German schools were banned, but rather a continuous schooling in German was guaranteed by the Romanian state even after the Second World War, as well as a German-speaking cultural life persisted, the language level within the German minority in Romania resembles standard German with regional variations.

It can be assumed that a large part of the members of the German minorities are trilingual or multilingual. Most of the members of the German minorities speak one dialect, which varies according to the original area of settlement (e.g. Transylvanian Saxon in different variations depending on the place of settlement, Banat Swabian, Bukovina German, etc.; see also [Figure 1](#)), Romanian, and one foreign language, most commonly English. Due to internal and external migration (to Germany and Austria), the dialects – which are spoken less and less – can no longer be clearly assigned to the regions of settlement.

language status

Immediately after the fall of communism in 1989, the Constitution of Romania (Constituția României, [1991](#)) recognised in Art. 6 the right of minorities to preserve their identity. The electoral law allowed for the nomination of one MP (or member of the Chamber of Deputies) from each minority, even if the candidate did not reach the 5% threshold required to enter Parliament (Legea 208, [2015](#), Art. 56). The Department for Interethnic Relations was established in 1990 to coordinate the government's relations with minorities at government level (DFDR & Deutsche Botschaft Bukarest, [2014](#), p. 43). The government is also advised on minority issues by the Council of National Minorities, which is composed of representatives of all national minorities (Hungarians, Roma, Ukrainians, Germans, Turks, Russian-Lipovans, Tatars, Czechs, Slovaks, Serbs, Croats, Slovenes, Bulgarians, Greeks, Jews, Poles, and Armenians). Of all recognised minorities, the Hungarian minority alone reaches the 5% threshold and is represented by a separate ethnic party.

Romania ratified the European Convention of Human Rights on 18 May 1994 (Council of Europe, [1950](#)) and the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (Council of Europe, [1992](#)) on 6 November 2007; the implementing law took effect on 1 May 2008 (Legea 282, [2007](#)). The Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities was also ratified on 11 May 1995 (Council of Europe, [1995](#)). Provisions in the Romanian Constitution and currently over 90 legal texts regarding minorities and implicitly also the German minority show the implementation of minority protection rights in the internal state law (Legea 33, [1995](#)). Central constitutional regulations according to the current constitution (Constituția României, [1991](#)) are the following:

- Under Title I, Fundamental Principles: Art. 6 (1) in the Constitution guarantees minorities the right to “preserve, develop and maintain their ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious identity”.
- Under Title II, The Right to Education: Art. 32 (3) in the Constitution guarantees minorities the right to education in their L1.
- Under Title III, Public Offices: Art. 62 (2) in the Constitution guarantees each minority the right to appoint one member of parliament, if they reach a number of votes equal to at least 5% of the average number of valid votes cast in the country for the election of a Member of Parliament. Art. 73 (1) (r) stipulates that the status of national minorities shall be established as an organic law. The project of the minority law was rejected by the Senate in 2005 and is currently still at the drafting stage. Since minority provisions are inserted in many different pieces of legislation, a unified minority law is not considered a priority. In the Constitution, for example, Article 128 (1) guarantees that citizens belonging to minorities may express themselves in the minority language in court. This right is regulated in the judiciary laws.

The right to the preservation of cultural and linguistic identity guaranteed by Title I, Art. 6 (1) is supported by various measures and subsidies, for example from the Department of Interethnic Relations or other ministries. The following are currently working in German: a part of the team of the Research Institute for the Humanities in Sibiu/Hermannstadt; a branch of the Romanian Academy of Sciences, which has a long tradition; two state theatres, one in Timișoara/Temeswar and one in Sibiu/Hermannstadt; a weekly newspaper (*Hermannstädter Zeitung*) and a daily newspaper (*Allgemeine Deutsche Zeitung für Rumänien* [General German Newspaper for Romania]); a weekly programme in German on national television (TVR1, TVR2 and TVR international); and 9 radio stations, which broadcast 1- or 2-hour programmes once or up to six times a week (HOG Neuarad, 2008).

The political representation of the German minority is the Democratic Forum of Germans in Romania (*Demokratisches Forum der Deutschen in Rumänien* – DFDR), which has regional and local forums. It is interesting to note that after the fall of communism, the local forums were the first to be established, and only then did the mergers take place. The Democratic Forum of the Germans in Romania not only represents the members of the minority politically but also organises cultural events in German and supports the translation and printing of textbooks for German-language classes through the School Commission:

The DFDR does not act as a party but represents the interests of the German community in political life as an association organised on an ethnic basis. The association is also responsible for social, economic, and cultural projects for the benefit of the German minority. [...] The DFDR considers it its task to secure the conditions for the continued existence and further development of the identity of the German minority. Priority concerns are the preservation and promotion of the education system with German as a language of instruction as well as the existing cultural institutions of the Germans in Romania. (DFDR & Deutsche Botschaft Bukarest, 2014, p. 48; translated from German by the authors)

The Electoral Code, which has given minority organisations the right to nominate candidates at the local, regional, and national levels since 1990, has been used in many places to ensure that German minorities are represented on city and district councils. In Sibiu, the DFDR was elected to the city council with a large majority and has provided the mayor since 2000. This is one example of a broader phenomenon, where the Romanian majority population holds the German minority in high esteem, despite the minority's relatively small size. Sociologists refer to this phenomenon as "Filogermanism fără Germani" (Philogermanism without Germans; Cercel, 2021).

Cultural events and traditional festivals of the DFDR or the local forums are organised in German, usually with simultaneous Romanian translation. In the forums, communication takes place in German. Invitations or posters to cultural or scientific events are often bilingual. Minutes of meetings and general assemblies are written in German.

In schools where the language of instruction is German, report cards may also be communicated in the L1, and notices, parents' evenings, and communication with parents may also take place in German. However, the official language for all official documents is Romanian (Legea învățământului preuniversitar, 2023, Art. 4 (2)).

German has been the language of worship and preaching in the Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession in Romania (German: *Evangelische Kirche Augsburgischen Bekenntnisses in Rumänien*) since the 19th century (before the Reformation, it was Latin, and subsequently, the dialect of the specific congregation was predominant). Occasionally, in some urban congregations, services are also held in Romanian and English. Services for special occasions, weddings, and baptisms are also translated into Romanian because of the proportion of Romanian-speaking guests, but the official language of the Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession is German (Rudolf, 2017, p. 205).

status of language education

German as a language of instruction has a long, relatively uninterrupted tradition (see *language*). However, it is only from the 19th century onwards that one can speak of formal teaching in German. Bishop Friedrich Teutsch writes the following about schools in the 18th century:

The teachers at the primary schools around 1790 had attended several classes of the Gymnasium, perhaps they had only learned something from a schoolmaster [...] in a larger parish they hired "helpers", in a smaller one they hired the cantor who had sung the loudest dictum among the applicants and now he taught the children to read Saxon from the standard German book. (Teutsch, 1923, p. 175; translated from German by the authors)

Today, the Romanian Constitution (Constituția României, 1991), in Article 32 (3), guarantees the right of every national minority to education in its L1. This right is specified in the Law on

Education (Legea educației, 2011). In the most recent laws on Education (Legea învățământului preuniversitar, 2023), published in Monitorul Oficial on 5 July 2023, which came into force in September 2023, there are a total of 99 hits when searching for the term “national minorities”. For example, Art. 1(1) states:

In Romania, education is part of the public service and is provided, within the framework of the present law, in the Romanian language as well as in the languages of the national minorities, in Romanian sign language and in the international lingua franca. (translated from Romanian by the authors)

Section 12 of the former 2011 Law on Education, as well as section 13 and chapter 2 of the current 2023 Law on Education are devoted to special provisions for education in minority languages. Art. 45 para. 3 of the Law on Education from 2011 was particularly relevant in relation to education in minority languages in Romania, especially when it concerns only a small number of pupils. This applies to German too, because:

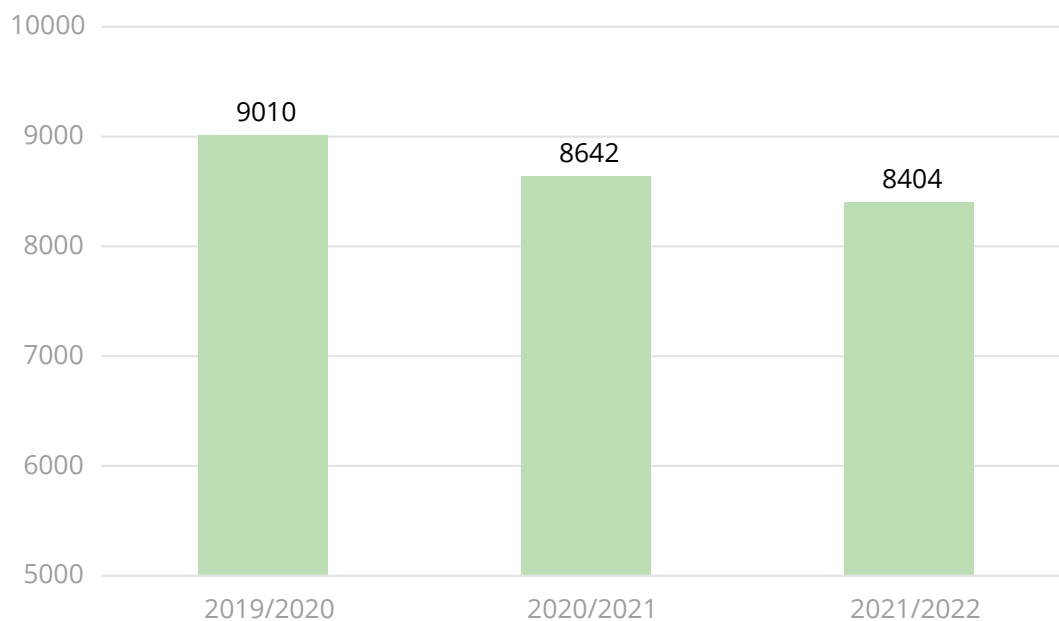
Every Romanian citizen or citizen of the European Union and Switzerland, regardless of his or her L1 and the language in which he or she was previously educated, may enrol and be educated in any form of education in Romanian, in the languages of national minorities or in the international languages of communication. (Legea educației, 2011, Art. 45 para 3; translated from Romanian by the authors).

This regulation has been removed in the new law of 2023. In the same wording, it now only applies to educational alternatives (Legea învățământului preuniversitar, 2023, Art. 26 para. 6). As there are still no ministerial provisions on the concrete implementation of these regulations, it is not yet possible to describe whether this will result in changes for the school system in German.

In 2012, when these implementing regulations were adopted, this applied to the teaching of nine minority languages (Hungarian, German, Ukrainian, Serbian, Slovak, Czech, Croatian, Bulgarian, and Romanes). Education in minority languages is regulated by the Education Act of 2023 and its implementing regulations. The new Law on Pre-university Education (Legea învățământului preuniversitar, 2023) does not yet have many published implementing regulations; thus, the legal texts in this Regional Dossier focus on the provisions that are currently in force.

While the teaching of German as a first foreign language has declined sharply and German has remained important as a second foreign language, interest in German-language schools (primary as well as secondary schools) has grown steadily since the fall of communism in 1990 (see Figure 2).

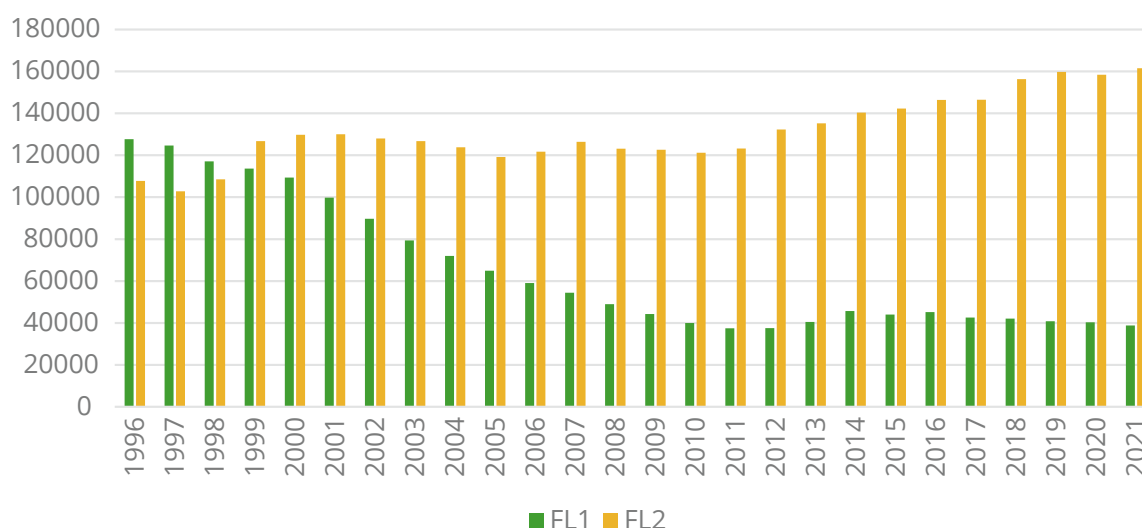
Figure 2 Pupils in schools with German as the language of instruction in Romania in the school years 2019/20 to 2021/22.



Note. Created by the authors with data from INS (2023b).

German can also be taught intensively in a higher number of hours as a first foreign language. However, due to the wave of emigration in the early 1990s, the number of pupils choosing German as their first foreign language has declined sharply since 1990. The number of pupils choosing German as a second foreign language, in contrast, has risen. **Figure 3** shows the pupil numbers for German as a first and second foreign language between 1996 and 2021.

Figure 3 German as first or second foreign language in schools between 1996 and 2021.



Note. Created by the authors with data from INS (2023b).

Nowadays, schools with German as the language of instruction are mainly attended by children with Romanian as L1. They participate in lessons in German as L1 even though German is a foreign language for them. This means that children who only speak Romanian at home also attend classes in German as L1. The background to this phenomenon is, that children who have attended a German-speaking kindergarten can qualify for these classes by passing a language test before starting school. Currently, the interest in German-language education is higher than the number of places in these schools. A study carried out by Zoppelt et al. (2015) sought the views of parents, graduates, and teachers on the strengths, problems and opportunities of German-language schools and on the possible motivations for choosing German-language education. There was a high level of agreement with the statements that attending school in German develops intercultural skills and opens greater opportunities on the labour market (Zoppelt et al., 2015).

A growing challenge for the continuity of German as a language of instruction throughout all educational levels is the acute shortage of teachers (Müller-Heinze, 2019). This has now come to the point that it is no longer possible to guarantee German as the language of instruction for all subjects at the Gymnasium (Romanian: *școala gimnazială* – grammar school) and Lyceum (Romanian: *liceul* – high school). Although a high proportion of the many graduates of German-language schools have studied and could theoretically become qualified teachers, the income prospects in the teaching profession are not particularly attractive.

The initial linguistic situation is highly diverse. In the German-language classes, there are few children whose L1 is German and who do not yet speak Romanian, bilingual children whose parents have been educated in German, but whose acquisition of German is not yet complete, and children who have limited understanding of the language of instruction and can speak a few words. Teachers would have to be excellent linguistic role models and be prepared for the heterogeneous situation (Iunesch, 2012).

Graduates of schools with German as the language of instruction can take the Deutsches Sprachdiplom II (DSD II) examination of the Kultusministerkonferenz (Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Federal Republic of Germany) before the *Bacalaureat* (school leaving examination/general qualification for university entrance) to have the German higher education entrance qualification officially recognised (ZfA, 2025). A large proportion of the pupils also obtain a Cambridge certificate before the Baccalaureate so that they leave the school at least trilingual.

The success rate of the DSD II language diploma examination was very high in the first years after the transition from Communist to Democratic Romania (Weischer, 1995, p. 5), but it has declined in recent years. While between 1995 and 2000, 90% of students passed these examinations, today in some schools the success rate is below 70%. The pre-requisite for good language acquisition and a successful educational career is a well-qualified teacher with a very good knowledge of German. This is currently a challenge because the teaching profession is considerably underfunded with the result that the most competent German speakers do not seek employment in the education system (Zoppelt et al., 2015).

education system

Romania's education system includes state, private, and confessional educational institutions. Compulsory education in Romania lasts 12 years. It starts when children are 4 years old, and lasts up to and including grade 10. After a long political and public debate as part of the "România Educată" reform project (Președintele României, 2021), two new education laws were passed in summer 2023 (Legea învățământului preuniversitar, 2023; Legea învățământului superior, 2023), which aim to modernise the education system in the pre-, primary, and secondary school and higher education sectors. Despite this high ambition, the basic structure of the Romanian education system, as it has existed in recent decades since the end of communism, remains largely the same. The education in the languages of the minorities is included in this system and follows the same structural principles.

Early Education (Educație timpurie and educație preșcolară; 0–6 years)

Early education is structured as early childhood education for children between 0 and 3 years and kindergarten for children between 3 and 6 years. In kindergarten, children go into junior, middle, or senior groups, although age mixed groups have also been created in recent years and in various private institutions. However, age segregation in different groups is the rule, especially in state institutions. All kindergartens have to follow the educational objectives outlined in the *Curriculum pentru educația timpurie* (Curriculum for early childhood education; Ministerul Educației, 2019). According to recent education laws (Legea învățământului preuniversitar, 2023), it is compulsory for children to attend kindergarten once they turn 4 years old, and the starting age will be lowered to 3 years of age in 2030.

Primary school (Școală primară; ISCED 1)

Primary education (International Standard Classification of Education [ISCED] 1) comprises a preparatory grade and classes 1–4 for pupils aged between 6 and 10 years of age. The transition to grade 5, the first class of secondary school, takes place without examination and there is no differentiation thereafter according to performance or content criteria.

Secondary school (Școală gimnazială and Liceu; ISCED 2 and 3)

The Gymnasium (școala gimnazială – grammar school; ISCED 2) comprises grades 5–8 for children aged between 11 and 14 years of age. A national curriculum applies to all gymnasiums. Gymnasium is completed with a national examination at the end of grade 8. Depending on their results, pupils are admitted to the lyceum of their choice. Lyceum (ISCED 3) comprises grades 9–12 and has three tracks: a theoretical path (two profiles: mathematics and sciences & languages and social sciences), a technological path (three profiles: technical, services, and natural resources and environment protection), and a vocational path (five profiles: military, theological, sports, arts, and pedagogical). The best performing pupils mainly choose one of the two specialisations of the mathematics and sciences profile: mathematics-computer science or natural science. Pupils with lower grades in the national examination usually opt for the languages and social sciences profile

or technological classes within the mathematics and science profile. Attending a vocational lyceum is usually based on the career aspirations of the student (or their family).

At the end of the 12th grade, all pupils attending lyceum take their exams. Grades 11 and 12 are no longer compulsory, so after grade 10, parents have to pay for pupils' textbooks. Since the classical vocational schools (Romanian: *școala profesională*) have been disbanded, nearly the entire school system leads to the baccalaureate (secondary school graduation exam). The pass rate was 75.2% in 2023 (Eduedu, 2023). Nevertheless, efforts have been made in recent years to establish a new form of vocational training, namely dual training inspired by the vocational training system in Germany. These schools start from grade 9 and have a duration of 3 years.

Higher education (ISCED 4, 5, 6, 7, 8)

The Romanian higher education system consists of traditional public or private universities and specialised higher education institutions such as medical colleges or polytechnic universities. Since the Bologna Process reform, education has been organised according to the bachelor's/master's system. Doctorates can be obtained at universities if they have a doctoral school. There is a fee for studying, but there are free places and scholarships for high-achieving students and members of underprivileged groups (such as the Roma).

adult education

Romania does not yet have a state-organised system of general adult education. The only established institutions of general adult education are the Adult Education Centres for the Arts (Romanian: *Școalii populare de artă*). According to Art. 185 of the new Law on higher Education (Legea învățământului superior, 2023), adult education should be a task of the universities. Vocational adult education is mainly provided by private companies and agencies.

private and public

In Romania, there are more than 1,000 private schools in total (Asociația Școlilor Particulare, 2023), few of which have German as the language of instruction, since the state school system is available by law for all school-age children. The foundation of private institutions at any school level is regulated by the Law on Pre-university Education (Legea învățământului preuniversitar, 2023). Private educational institutions must be authorized and accredited in Romania regardless of their sponsorship, educational level, or profile. However, concerning pre-school education, overall, only 5.9% of kindergartens in Romania are private, while 94.1% were state kindergartens (Asociația Școlilor Particulare, 2023).

Section 6 in Chapter III (Legea învățământului preuniversitar, 2023) in the new Education Law regulates the foundation and management of private and confessional educational institutions. According to Art. 27 of the law, educational institutions may only be run as

non-profit corporations (Legea învățământului preuniversitar, 2023). Quality assurance criteria apply equally to private and state institutions, and accreditation must be renewed every 5 years. Authorised and accredited private educational institutions can receive state funding. A per capita sum is paid for each child enrolled in school. Salaries are negotiated with the management appointed according to the statutes of each educational institution. Materials and other costs must be paid out of the school fees.

Since there was great interest in German-language education after the fall of communism in 1989, many private kindergartens were founded with German as the language of instruction. There are private schools, for example in Bucharest the German School in a public-private partnership and the private school Fridolin, in Sibiu a Free Democratic School of the Waldkinder S.R.L., and in Hermannstadt/Sibiu the Charlotte Dietrich School of the “Friedrich-Wilhelm-Raiffeisen” School Association. Even though there is a growth in private schools and kindergartens, most pupils learning German nationwide attend state kindergartens or schools.

bilingual education forms

Schools in the language of the German minority could be described as bilingual schools because, on the one hand, teaching of the state language Romanian takes place to the same extent as teaching of the L1 and starts already in the first year of enrolment. On the other hand, due to the shortage of teachers after the fall of communism in 1989, many subjects, which according to the curriculum should be taught in German, cannot be taught in German after grade 5, but are taught in Romanian by Romanian-speaking teachers. It depends very much on the individual school how balanced the ratio of German to Romanian use is. The informal communication in and around school is also nowadays mostly Romanian because there are only a few native German-speaking pupils in each school.

Officially recognised bilingual institutions can be established according to the law (Legea învățământului preuniversitar, 2023, art. 11 and 92). On the website of the Ministry of Education, only decrees and regulations for the languages French, Italian, Spanish, and Portuguese are listed (Ordin 4797, 2017; Ordin 3691, 2021; Ordin 3609, 2022). Art. 92 of the new Education Act (Legea învățământului preuniversitar, 2023) stipulates that bilingual teaching can be started in primary school. Schools or classes in the language of the German minority are not officially called bilingual due to their distinct legal status (each member of the minority has the right, to learn their L1, but there is no constitutional right to learn at a bilingual school).

administration

The entire school system, starting with early education, is governed by the regulations of the Ministry of Education (Romanian: *Ministerul Educației*) and is centralised. This means that the national education laws and emergency decrees are implemented and supervised

in the territory by inspectorates (Romanian: *Inspectoratele școlare județene*). In counties where minorities are strongly represented, a representative of the minority is responsible for the concerns of the respective minority in each school inspectorate. Inspectorates also have a key role regarding the employment of teaching staff.

Textbooks and teaching materials must be centrally approved by the Ministry of Education to be used in class. For classes 1–8 and 9–12, the Ministry of Education publishes a catalogue of authorised textbooks every year (Ministerul Educației, 2023b).

Schools with more than a certain number of pupils are registered as legal entities and can issue regulations on their own responsibility. There is an exception for minority schools, which are considered legal entities regardless of the number of pupils if there is only one school in the minority language in a local area (Legea învățământului preuniversitar, 2023).

inspection

All educational institutions at all levels must either be authorised or accredited in Romania (Legea învățământului preuniversitar, 2023, art. 237-239; Legea învățământului superior, 2023, art. 225-226). The agency responsible for accreditation is ARACIP (Agenția Română de Asigurare a Calității în Învățământul Preuniversitar [Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Pre-University Education]) for pre-university education and ARACIS (Agenția Română de Asigurare a Calității în Învățământul Superior [Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education]) for university education. Accreditation is renewed every 5 years. Accreditation is subject to compliance with all quality standards. This includes internal quality assurance with peer observation and evaluation of teachers. In addition, each educational institution is under the supervision of school inspectorates. The school inspectorates represent the Ministry of Education at district level, and in districts with minority language schools, the deputy district school inspector is elected from among the minorities. The district inspector for German-language education is appointed in consultation with the minority representatives (DFDR). Teachers are observed and evaluated annually by the school management. In a school with a German department, the deputy head is from the minority or German-speaking community.

support structure

There are currently three educational institutions in Romania that provide initial teacher training and initial training for nursery schoolteachers for German language education. Until 1995, initial teacher training for schools with German as the language of instruction was provided by the Pedagogical High School (Pädagogisches Lyzeum, Liceul Pedagogic) in Sibiu, now the National Pedagogical College “Andrei Țaguna” (Colegiul Național Pedagogic “Andrei Țaguna”, 2024). After 1995, teacher training was also transferred to the tertiary level, and there are currently two university courses for the initial training of teachers and educators. The first tertiary training was established as a college and then as a degree

course at the Babeş-Bolyai University in Cluj-Napoca (UBB, 2024). Since 2011, there has also been a bachelor's degree programme for the training of teachers and educators with German as the language of instruction at the "Lucian Blaga" University in Sibiu (ULB, 2024).

Further training for teachers falls under the responsibility of teacher training centres (Casa Corpului Didactic – CCD), which are subordinate to the school inspectorates. The *Zentrum für Lehrerfortbildung in deutscher Sprache (ZfL)* (teacher training centre in German) in Mediaş/Mediasch is an exception, as it is directly accountable to the Minister of Education. It is the only institution in Romania to provide further training courses for teachers of German-language schools, while for Romanian-language schools, there is one teacher training centre in each county.

The *Zentralstelle für das Auslandsschulwesen (ZfA; Central Office for Schools Abroad)* supports the German school system by sending teachers from Germany, organising training courses, offering professional advice and participating at the language diploma examinations (*Deutsches Sprachdiplom*). The ZfA is a public authority subordinated to the Foreign Office of the Federal Republic of Germany. Its aim is to support the work of German schools abroad and German teachers who are employed at national schools in the host country for some years.

The Michael & Veronika Schmidt Foundation supports the German-language school system by funding up-to-date teaching materials additional to the textbook provided by the state and awarding scholarships to students of primary school pedagogy. The Teacher Training Centre Mediasch offers various teacher training courses, often with experts from German-speaking countries, so that teachers in German-language schools have access to the latest knowledge in the field of pedagogy. Funding from the German state through the Saxonia Foundation for all teachers comes with an obligation to attend at least one German-language training event per year.

The DFDR has school commissions at the regional and national levels. The School Commission of the Democratic Forum of Germans in Transylvania organises the Transylvanian Teachers' Day (German: *Siebenbürgischer Lehrertag*) every year and supports the publication of textbooks through a textbook coordinator who coordinates the timely translation or production of textbooks in contact with the Ministry of Education and publishers. The School Commission of the Democratic Forum of Germans in Romania publishes school statistics every year and is a reliable contact point for various school-related issues (DFDR, 2024).

2 Pre-school education

target group

Pre-school education (Romanian: *educație timpurie*; ISCED 1) includes day nursery (Romanian: *creșă*) for children from 3 months to 3 years and pre-school education (*educație preșcolară*; 3–6 years) in kindergartens, which mostly consist of a junior group, a middle group, and a senior group, which correspond to children's ages. There are mixed-age-groups, but these are relatively rare. Public pre-school education is free of charge. There are currently no early education (Romanian: *educație timpurie*) facilities for children aged 0–3 in German. For children aged 3–6, there are kindergartens (Romanian: *grădiniță*) with German as the language of instruction. Kindergarten attendance is compulsory as children turn 4 years old. Depending on their age, children are placed in the junior, middle, or senior group.

structure

State kindergartens are free of charge, whereas private kindergartens charge varying monthly fees. There are full-day and half-day kindergartens. Full-day kindergartens start at 08:00, but parents can drop their children off until 09:00 and pick them up from 16:00 onwards. Half-day kindergarten ends at noon. Parents can also pick up their children between 12:00 and 13:00. Even though attendance at the kindergarten was recently made compulsory for children from the age of 4, there is a high fluctuation in attendance.

Most German-language kindergartens are state-run. They are obliged to follow the guidelines of the curriculum for early childhood education (Ministerul Educației, 2019), as are all kindergartens in Romania, but allowed to offer all activities according to the curriculum in German. The basic funding for all accredited institutions, whether state or private, is provided by the Ministry of Education (Ministerul Educației, 2023a). German-speaking kindergartens must comply with all legislative standards (e.g. for pedagogical materials; Ordin 4143, 2022) that apply to kindergartens in Romania and therefore do not differ from Romanian-speaking institutions in terms of structure or services – except for the language of education.

The curriculum for the kindergarten (Ministerul Educației, 2019) specifies the expected language competence in the language of instruction, German, for the school entry phase. There are indicators that apply to the competence area of language development, communication and phonological awareness. After completing kindergarten, children should be able to:

- recount an event or a familiar story in chronological order
- use the correct grammatical form for gender, number, person and time when speaking
- use extended sentences and sentence structures
- sit and listen when reading aloud
- remain seated without interrupting
- recognise upper- and lower-case letters and associate them with the appropriate sound
- understand the function of writing to convey information (labelling work, writing short greetings) (Ministerul Educației, 2019, p. 36; translated from Romanian by the authors)

legislation

The establishment and operation of nursery schools are regulated in a separate chapter of the Law on Pre-university Education (Legea învățământului preuniversitar, 2023). Section 3 Art. 28 regulates pre-school education:

(1) Pre-school education shall be organised in kindergartens with normal, extended or weekly programmes. Kindergartens may be established by units with legal personality or within the framework of a school with legal personality. (2) Municipal administrations and school inspectorates shall ensure the conditions for the gradual generalisation of pre-school education. (Legea învățământului preuniversitar, 2023; translated from Romanian by the authors)

According to the law, additional classes or groups for minorities shall be established if the demand exceeds the capacity (Art. 45 para. 2e; Legea învățământului preuniversitar, 2023). However, this is not feasible, at least at present, given the shortage of German-speaking educators.

According to the actual Law on Education (Legea învățământului preuniversitar, 2023), a group usually consists of 15 pre-school children, with a minimum of 10 and a maximum of 20. Reasoned exceptions may be granted to minorities at the request of the minority representatives, allowing them either to go below the minimum number of children or to exceed the maximum number of children. The dissolution of a group in the minority languages can only take place with the consent of the Ministry of Education and the advice of the Council of Minorities in the Directorate for Interethnic Relations (Art. 23, para. 4b; Legea învățământului preuniversitar, 2023).

The establishment of private kindergartens and day-care centres is open to all recognised religious denominations, associations, and private companies, with the result that the number of private kindergartens with a German section has increased considerably in recent years.

Basic funding for all accredited institutions is provided on a per-capita basis and includes personnel costs, training costs, costs for regular assessment of children, and costs for services. The basic funding is higher for minority language institutions because a multiplication coefficient is applied to the standard per capita amount. The basic funding is set annually by the responsible authority, the National Council for the Financing of Pre-University Education (Consiliul Național pentru Finanțarea Învățământului Preuniversitar – CNFIP), and approved by government decree. In the whole pre-university sector, the funds are disbursed through the local governments (Coaliția pentru educație, 2023, p. 5). Educators are trained at the Pedagogical High School in Sibiu and at the Bachelor of Education and Teacher Training programmes in Cluj-Napoca and Sibiu (see *teacher training* in *Higher education*).

language use

Apart from the small number of native German speakers, many Romanian-speaking children attend kindergartens where German is the language of instruction; 90% of the children do not speak German when they enter kindergarten. Although the “one person-one language” model is well known by teachers, teaching is often bilingual.

The children’s linguistic competence must be developed during their 3 years in kindergarten, because before they enter the preparatory grade (see *Primary education*), they have to take a language test that assesses their comprehension and speaking skills. These language tests are non-standardised and are organised and carried out by the schools themselves.

Keresztes (2012) describes the children’s language competence as follows. After 3 years of kindergarten, language production is still rudimentary, and the children hardly use German among themselves. This is because the children are not required to speak German, especially since the kindergarten teacher understands the children’s L1 (p. 114). As a result, 20% of the children leave kindergarten without any knowledge of German (p. 114).

A survey by Keresztes (2012) showed that most of the children’s parents also do not speak or understand German, but that all parents can speak at least one foreign language, mostly English. The same survey did show, however, that children do sing the German songs they learnt in kindergarten at home (Keresztes, 2012, p. 117). Besides this survey, there are no empirical data on children’s German language level at the end of kindergarten.

Despite attending a kindergarten with German as the language of instruction, only few children have the expected language competence when they start school (outlined in *structure*). The curriculum (Ministerul Educației, 2019) also describes the indicators of language competence in Romanian for children belonging to a minority group. The indicators refer to obligatory minimums also in minority language institutions, but they should be applied in a differentiated way depending on the L1 of the respective child (Ministerul Educației, 2019, p. 22).

teaching materials

In Romania, at all levels of compulsory education, only teaching materials approved by the Ministry of Education may be used in class. All kindergarten years are part of compulsory education but teachers are still largely free to use materials from abroad or download worksheets from the internet, and show short videos from online platforms or German public television, such as the educational website *Seite mit der Maus* ("page with the mouse"; WDR, 2024), which offers many interactive learning opportunities for pre-school and school-children.

Song and poem collections can be chosen freely by teachers. The materials used in the classroom are not standardised and although many educators use collections of materials published in Germany and Austria, they are not used uniformly or consistently.

statistics

In the school year 2019/20, there were 369 early education institutions (for children aged 0–3) in Romania, but none in German; 96% of the institutions are state-run (INS, 2021, p. 25).

In 2019/20, for which the National Institute of Statistics published precise data, there were 5,200 children in kindergartens (age between 3 and 6) in Romania with German as the language of instruction (INS, 2021, p. 25), 1% of the total number of kindergarten children. The National Institute of Statistics does not have a list of kindergartens where German is the language of instruction. There is no publication for other school years on the website of the Institute of Statistics.

The DFDR (2022) produces its own school statistics separately. According to the statistics for the school year 2020/21, there were a total of 129 kindergartens or sections, both public and private, throughout Romania with German as the language of instruction for children between the ages of 3 and 6. The total of 4,989 children were taught in 234 different groups (DFDR, 2022).

In 2022, according to the school statistics of the DFDR (2022), there were 110 kindergartens with a total of 195 groups, a total of 4,400 children, of whom 1,500 would be enrolled in the preparatory class in the autumn of 2023. According to the 2022 census (INS, 2023a), 450 of the 4,400 children in the kindergartens speak German as their L1.

3 Primary education

target group

Primary school (Romanian: *scoală primară*; ISCED 2) is for children aged between 6 and 11. All children who turn 6 by 31 August must be enrolled in the preparatory grade. Primary education is compulsory and includes a preparatory grade and classes 1–4. Children who turn 6 after 31 August can still be enrolled in the preparatory class with a certificate of school readiness.

structure

The Education Act (Legea învățământului preuniversitar, 2023) stipulates class sizes for all primary school classes; special regulations or exceptions apply to minority language classes. According to Art. 23 (para. 1c), a minority language class has an average of 16 pupils, with a minimum of 10 and a maximum of 24 (while Romanian classes have on average 16 pupils, but no fewer than 10 and no more than 22). In urban areas, German departments or schools often had more pupils in a class, from 25 to a maximum of 33 in rare cases. With the new regulations, this will not be the case in the future (see *status of language education*).

Primary class teachers stay with the same class for 5 years. In the cities, religion, English, physical education, and art can be taught by specialist teachers. The workload for a teacher is 18 hours per week, and additional hours are paid at an hourly rate.

Teaching in all schools in Romania must be based on national curricula. These are developed on behalf of the Ministry of Education by commissions within the National Centre for Education Policy and Evaluation (Romanian: *Centrul Național de Politici și Evaluare în Educație*).

Admission to schools or departments where German is the language of instruction may be based on a language test. The language test consists of a picture dictation and an interview with a commission, usually made up by teachers from the school. The test is not required in all institutions. It is only organised when the number of children exceeds the number of places available, and the schools develop their own methodology specifically for the test to make the testing procedure transparent. Children who belong to German minorities and who can prove their affiliation with documents (e.g. membership of the Protestant Church, or birth certificates proving kinship up to the third degree with members of the minority) do not have to take the test and are guaranteed a place in schools where German is the language of instruction.

German is taught in German-language schools in the same number of hours as Romanian is taught in Romanian-language schools. However, 5–7 hours of German are added to the timetable in schools with German as the language of instruction, so children at schools with teaching in the language of a minority follow 5–7 more hours per week compared to children at Romanian-language schools.

The National Curriculum (Centrul Național de Politici și Evaluare în Educație, 2022) applies to schools with German as the language of instruction. It specifies a canon of subjects and leaves a maximum of 1 or 2 hours for the school with content determined by the school. In the preparatory grade, pupils have language and communication (5 hours of communication in the L1, 5 hours of communication in Romanian, 1 hour of another foreign language, mostly English), mathematics and science (4 hours, integrated teaching), human being and society (1 hour of religion, separately according to religious denomination and regardless of the number of pupils), physical education, sports and health education (2 hours of sports, 2 hours of music and movement), art (2 hours of craft and drawing), and personality development (2 hours). In total, the preparatory grade consists of 25 hours per week, of which 20 are taught in German, and 5 hours in Romanian for Romanian language and communication classes.

In the first class, there are 7 hours in the L1 for all minority language classes and 7 hours in Romanian because learning the alphabet, reading, and writing requires a large number of lessons. In the other areas, the number of hours remains the same, with the language of instruction for all classes except Romanian being German. In the second class, the number of hours is 6 for German and 6 for Romanian and in the third and fourth grades 5, respectively, plus the other subjects.

The school may offer a maximum of one optional subject in primary school. In the third grade, civic education is added in the area of human being and society, and in the fourth grade, history and geography are added. Since the number of hours of L1 classes is the same as the number of hours of Romanian, the language and communication area is generally more strongly represented in schools and sections with German as the language of instruction (10 hours per week in the preparatory grade, 14 hours per week in the first grade, 12 hours per week in the second grade, and 10 hours per week in both the third and fourth grades).

legislation

Until 2023, the Education Act (Legea educației, 2011) built the legal framework for all schools in Romania. As of 2023, the Pre-university Education Act (Legea învățământului preuniversitar, 2023) replaced this law. Since the methodology of implementation of this law has not yet been finalised, the 2011 law will continue to be referred to in the following paragraphs, as it still characterises practice in schools. The new law will, however, be referred to where it will lead to significant changes.

The procedure for enrolment in primary school is set out in Ministerial Decree no. 4019 (2024). This stipulates a mandatory school entry examination for children who did not attend kindergarten or who immigrated from another country. For children who do not reach the requirements for enrolment, there is also the possibility of setting up alternative educational schools (Ordin 5571, 2011). Montessori, Waldorf, Jena Plan, Freinet, curative education, and Step by Step are legally recognised for these alternative schools. Step by Step and Montessori enjoy a certain popularity, while only a few institutions work according to the other concepts mentioned. None of them teach in German. A nationwide comparative evaluation of pupils' competences in Romanian and mathematics takes place in the second and fourth grades according to Ministerial Decree no. 3051 (2016). For pupils at schools where minority languages are taught as the L1, competences of that L1 are also evaluated.

The legal basis for the teaching of minority languages is the Education Law (*Legea învățământului preuniversitar*, 2023), in particular Articles 59 and 60, and the Ministerial Order adopting the Implementing Regulation for the provisions on the teaching of minority languages, the teaching of the subjects of communication in the L1, history and traditions of the minority and music, and the teaching of Romanian in minority language schools and units (Ordin 5671, 2012).

Article 4 of the Ministerial Order (Ordin 5671, 2012) stipulates that children belonging to a minority who are enrolled in a class where Romanian is the language of instruction are guaranteed the teaching of the L1, the history and traditions of the minority and music in the L1. Parents have to ask for these lessons, and if there is no teacher able to give these lessons at the school, the schools have to find a solution to provide the lessons. There are no statistical data about the utilisation of this right and a reliable estimation is hardly possible. Conversely, special curricula and textbooks are provided for the teaching of Romanian in minority language schools. Parents, guardians and representatives of the minority may request that Romanian be taught according to the curricula and textbooks of schools with Romanian as the language of instruction (art. 9).

Articles 23 to 29 explicitly regulate primary education in the L1 of minorities. All articles refer to a communicative-functional turn of language teaching. The aim of L1 teaching should be the development of the four main competences (listening, speaking, reading, and writing). The focus of L1 and literature teaching is the understanding and retention of information communicated orally or in writing (Art. 24, Ordin 5671, 2012).

In departments where German is the language of instruction, teachers who are members of the minority must also be elected to management positions (the deputy management) and a representation proportional to the number of pupils must be elected to the school council.

A multiplication coefficient (2.5) is applied to the basic funding of minority language institutions so that the per capita funding for minorities meets the financial needs of institutions with smaller numbers of pupils.

language use

Minority language schools and sections are defined as schools/sections where all subjects except the state language are taught in the minority language (Legea învățământului preuniversitar, 2023). Paragraph 11 of Art. 45 in the latest Law on Pre-university Education (Legea învățământului preuniversitar, 2023) states that teachers must provide evidence of their linguistic competence. However, the linguistic competence of the pupils in the language of instruction is heterogeneous. Even though there is currently no empirical research on this topic, the authors' practical experience in schools with German as the language of instruction leads to the hypothesis that teachers are not dealing with this heterogeneity in a uniform manner; many teachers choose to translate content into Romanian because either they themselves or the pupils have inadequate German language skills. This practice is often chosen based on personal language learning experience. However, in most of the schools, especially in the cities, monolingual teaching takes place in German.

teaching materials

Textbooks and supplementary materials, mostly created by editorial teams consisting of schoolteachers and university lecturers, may only be used if they are listed in the catalogue of educational materials approved by the Ministry of Education (Ministerul Educației, 2023b). All textbooks for compulsory education from grade 0 to 10 are free of charge for pupils and are financed by the Ministry of Education. The textbooks for German, History and Traditions of the German Minority, and Music are prepared by authors with a minority background in German. The actual books used are, for example:

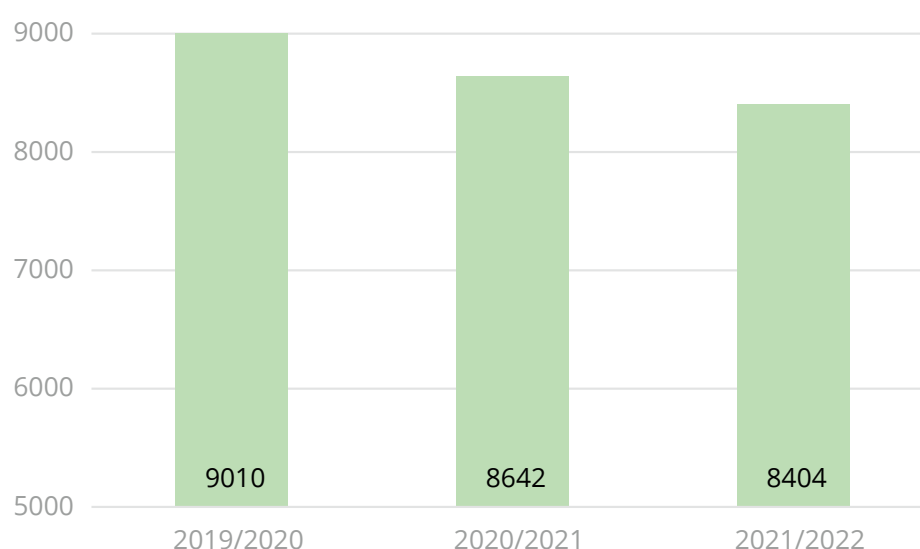
- *Geschichte und Traditionen der deutschen Minderheit in Rumänien* (History and Traditions of the German Minority in Romania) published in 2017 and written by Hannelore Baier, Martin Bottesch, Dieter Nowak, Alfred Wiecken, and Winfried Ziegler for the lessons in History and Traditions of the German Minority for grades 6 and 7.
- *Deutsch als Muttersprache* (German as L1) published in 2022 and written by Veronika Maria Onofrei, Delia Cristina Răulea, Christa Maria Ziegler, and Szendike-Annamaria Armenean for grade 6.
- *Fibel Deutsch als Muttersprache* (Primer German as L1) published in 2018 and written by Elke Dengel and Adriana Hermann in German lessons for grade 1.
- *Musik und Bewegung* (Music and Movement) published in 2021 and written by Adriana Hermann, Brita Falch Leutert, and Jürg Leutert for grade 2.

All other textbooks (e.g. mathematics and environmental studies, civic education, Romanian history, and geography) are translated from Romanian into German. Special textbooks are used to teach Romanian in minority languages.

statistics

The National Institute of Statistics (Institutul Național de Statistică) does not record primary school enrolments separately but primary and lower secondary education (*gimnaziu*) together. Therefore, [Figure 4](#) is based on the statistics of the Democratic Forum of Germans in Romania and includes the total number of pupils in public and private primary schools or schools with sections with German as the language of instruction in Romania. The downward trend can mainly be explained by the general demographics, with the resident population of Romania decreasing between 2011 and 2021, from 20.121 million people to 19.053 million (INS, [2023a](#)).

Figure 4 Pupils enrolled in primary education with German teaching in Romania.



Note. Created by the authors based on data from DFDR ([2022](#)).

There are currently 5 private schools in Romania where German is the language of instruction. In the school year 2021/22, only 320 children were attending private schools with German as the language of instruction, and 8,084 children were attending state-funded public primary schools with German as the language of instruction (DFDR, [2022](#)).

4 Secondary education

target group

Secondary education (Romanian: *Școala Gimnazială* and *Liceul*, ISCED 2 and 3) in Romania is divided into two levels. Lower secondary education is organised in gymnasiums (Romanian: *școala gimnazială*) and covers grades 5 to 8 for pupils aged 11 to 15. This level is the same for all pupils and is completed with a national exam (*Examen Național de Capacitate*), which determines pupils' further educational path. Upper secondary education is organised in lyceums (Romanian: *liceul*) and covers grades 9 to 12/13 for pupils aged 15 to 19. While upper secondary education is divided into three paths, for the purposes of this Regional Dossier, only the theoretical path will be considered in the current chapter. For the technological and vocational paths, see [Vocational education](#).

structure

The Romanian secondary school system consists of gymnasiums (*Școala Gimnazială*) and lyceums (*liceul*). Gymnasiums are attended from grades 5 to 8 following primary school and provide general education. Mandatory standardised national comparative evaluations take place at the end of the final grade of gymnasium and are organised on the same day for all schools in Romania. The exams are compiled every year by the National Centre for Education Policy and Evaluation (Romanian: *Centrul Național de Politici și Evaluare în Educație*) on behalf of the Ministry of Education. The examination procedure is also regulated annually by Ministry of Education decrees (e.g. for 2023/24, see Ordin 6155, [2023](#)).

Following the completion of the national exam, pupils can pursue one of the three available educational paths offered by lyceums. Based on their exam results, pupils can opt for the theoretical pathway, the technological pathway, or the vocational pathway. The theoretical pathway is further divided into two profiles: mathematics and sciences, and languages and social sciences. Further information on the technological and vocational pathways is provided in [Vocational education](#). Lyceum is finished with a special state graduation exam, the baccalaureate. This exam consists of oral and written components and entitles the pupils to study at a university.

Lyceums that consistently perform very well in national evaluations can be promoted to the rank of National College (Romanian: *Colegiul Național*) by the Ministry of Education, which is associated with a higher level of prestige.

The curricula for both gymnasiums and lyceums are determined by the Ministry of Education (Centrul Național de Politici și Evaluare în Educație, [2022](#)). The curriculum for minority

language schools/sections is generally the same as the one for Romanian schools, but they differ in the number of hours for the subjects German as an L1 and Romanian. As Romanian schools only have 4 hours of Romanian, the German schools also have these 4 hours, but an additional 4 hours of German (in grades 5–8). Additionally, the curriculum does not provide for the teaching of a second foreign language, as is the case in Romanian schools and sections, and the minimum and maximum number of compulsory weekly hours is higher.

At the end of gymnasium, pupils in German-speaking schools or German departments at Romanian schools take the national examination, which includes an additional topic for them: German language and literature.

The national examination plays an important role in pupils' transition to lyceum. Following the exam, places are allocated by a computer algorithm, which takes the pupils' grades and the number of available spots into account as it assigns places. In general, preference is given by most pupils to classes with a scientific profile (maths, informatics, or natural sciences), so the number of pupils choosing this is higher than the number of available spots. Depending on the results of the exams, some pupils will be able to pursue the profile of their choice, while others have to settle for their second or third option. Additionally, as there are fewer places available in the German-language lyceums or German-language sections of lyceums than in gymnasiums, national examination results impact graduates of German-language gymnasiums in a second way: some pupils will have to transfer to a lyceum with Romanian as the language of instruction.

In the historical, prestigious secondary schools with German as the language of instruction (Brukenthal Gymnasium in Sibiu, Honterus Gymnasium in Braşov, Josef Haltrich Lyceum in Sighişoara, the Stefan Ludwig Roth Gymnasium in Mediasch/Mediaş, the Goethe College in Bucharest/Bucureşti, the Adam Müller Guttenbrunn Lyceum in Arad, and the Nikolaus Lenau Lyceum in Timişoara) there are usually the following three profiles: Mathematics-Informatics, Natural Sciences, and Philology. In addition to these seven schools, there are numerous German-speaking departments at schools with mainly Romanian teaching, especially in Transylvania. In practice, this means that in some schools there are one or more German-speaking classes per year group. The German department has its own head, subordinated to the school principal and teaches according to the curriculum for German-speaking schools.

legislation

Until September 2023, the National Education Law regulated all education in minority languages (Legea educaţiei, 2011). From September 2023, the Law on Pre-university Education (Legea învăţământului preuniversitar, 2023) has been the base of educational regulations. At the regional level, teaching in gymnasiums and lyceums is also supervised by the District School Inspectorate. The national curriculum and teaching materials are also approved by the Ministry of Education by ministerial decrees, as is the case for primary schools (Centrul Naţional de Politici şi Evaluare în Educaţie, 2022).

The methodology of the national comparative evaluation in grade 8 is regulated by ministerial decrees (latest: Ordin 4248, 2020).

Ministerial decree no. 3122 from 2019 (Ordin 3122, 2019) defines the occupational groups trained at vocational lyceums.

language use

All subjects except Romanian can be taught in German at gymnasiums and lyceums. As teaching is a poorly paid profession, there has been a severe shortage of teachers in Romania after the fall of communism, as people with good language skills preferred much better paid jobs. As a result, not all subjects can currently be taught in German. Teachers of minority languages are required by law to demonstrate language competence. The Central Agency for Schools Abroad (*Zentralstelle für das Auslandsschulwesen – ZfA*) supports the German-language school system by providing specialist teachers. This institution is a public institution of the Federal Republic of Germany and is working worldwide to support German schools.

In schools with Romanian as the language of instruction, German language and literature, history and traditions of the minorities, and music must be offered in German at the request of parents (Art. 4, Ordin 5671, 2012). The history and geography of Romania can be taught in German if the terms and toponyms are learned bilingually (see also *legislation in Primary education*).

teaching materials

With the exception of German and Music, textbooks for all subjects are translated from Romanian. The textbooks for German and Music are written by minority teachers and musicians. Only materials and textbooks approved by the Ministry of Education may be used in class. The catalogue of approved textbooks includes textbooks from grades 5 to 10. No additional materials have been approved for classes with German as the language of instruction. Examples for the German textbooks in use are:

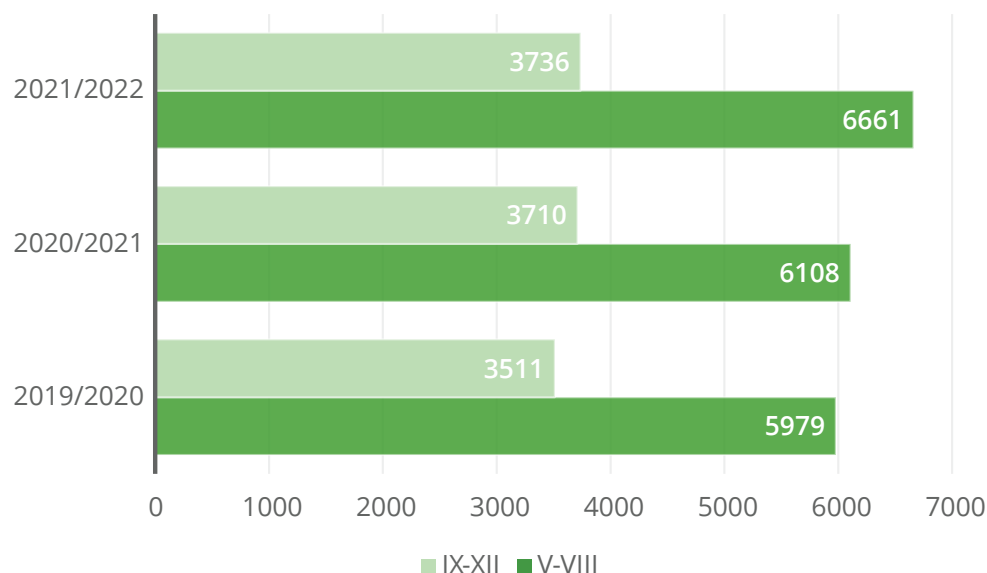
- *Deutsch als Muttersprache. 7. Klasse* (German as mother tongue. 7th grade) written by Astrid-Britta Otiman, Gabriela-Simona Mateiu, and Lorette Cherascu and published in 2022 by klett.
- *Lehrbuch Deutsch Klasse 10. Leben – Gestalten – Verantworten* (Living – Creating – Taking Responsibility) written by Rolf Willaredt and Gabriela-Simona Mateiu and published in 2011 by Schiller.
- *Der Abitur-Leitfaden für deutschsprachige Schulen in Rumänien* (The Abitur guide for German schools in Romania) written by Tita Mihaiu, Inge Sommer, and Annette Frings, published in 2016 by Central.

statistics

As primary and secondary school enrolments are merged at the National Institute of Statistics, the figures for secondary school enrolments are taken from the statistics of the DFDR School Commission (DFDR, 2022). There are a total of 84 secondary schools or German departments at Romanian schools in Romania that offer programmes in German, with 62 lower secondary schools and 22 upper secondary schools (theoretical path).

Figure 5 shows the number of students in German-language gymnasiums and lyceums over the last three academic years. It is evident that only 60% of gymnasium graduates pursue further education in lyceums with German as the language of instruction.

Figure 5 Pupils at gymnasiums and theoretical lyceums with German as the language of instruction.



Note. Created by the authors using data from DFDR (2022) and INS (2023b).

The decrease in the number of pupils is due to the reduction of places in German-language schools, which is a result of the shortage of teachers. Even if not all gymnasium students want to remain at German-language lyceums but switch to Romanian lyceums based on their subject interests, the demand for lyceum places in German is higher than the supply.

5 Vocational education

target group

The target group for vocational education and training (Romanian: *Învățământ profesional*) consists of individuals aged 15 or older. The earliest opportunity to start vocational education and training is after finishing gymnasium. Enrolment in vocational education programmes and schools can partly be free of charge up to the age of 26 (Cedefop, 2021, p. 62).

structure

Vocational education in Romania is possible in several ways. There are schools offering vocational education (leads to EQF 3) and two paths at lyceums (leads to EQF 4 or 5), embedding vocational education in the upper secondary system.

In the case of lyceum education, it is possible to attend technological lyceums (Romanian: *Liceul technologic*) or vocational lyceums (Romanian: *Liceul vocațional*), which both start at grade 9. Technological lyceums either have a technical profile with further specialisations, a profile related to the field of services, or a profile regarding natural resources and environmental protection. Vocational lyceums have the following profiles: military, theological, sports, arts, and pedagogical. Vocational training in lyceums lasts between 3 and 4 years.

There are opportunities for further vocational training after the completion of initial training at secondary professional schools (Romanian: *școli din învățământul profesional-învățământ secundar*) and post-secondary non-tertiary schools or master schools (Romanian: *școli postliceală și școli de maiștri*; Ministerul Educației, 2023c). In addition to Romanian state actors, the development and expansion of the vocational training system is supported by German companies and the German-Romanian Chamber of Foreign Trade (Deutsche Botschaft Bukarest, 2023).

Since 2012, there have been efforts to establish and expand the German-style dual vocational school system, mainly on the initiative of German companies with branches in Romania. Whereas vocational education and training consists of theory lessons, practical courses, and work placements, in dual training, there is a training contract with a company during which work and class time are alternated. Following the first legislation in 2017, there are now schools with dual education programmes in several large cities. Although the initiative came from German companies, the training is usually in Romanian (CNDIPT, 2023b).

The final certificates awarded at schools with a vocational profile provide access to the labour market. At the same time, the baccalaureate can be obtained at the vocational lyceums too, which gives access to higher education.

legislation

Vocational education and training was regulated by the 2011 Education Act (Legea educației, 2011) until summer 2023, and since September 2023 by the Law on pre-university education (Legea învățământului preuniversitar, 2023). Before 2011, there were only weak regulations regarding vocational training, because after the collapse of communism, the existing vocational schools were closed and the intention was to concentrate vocational training only in lyceums with a vocational profile. This course was maintained by the legislation even after 2011. However, as more and more voices from the business community called for an expansion of vocational education beyond the lyceum, new model projects were created, such as for dual training programmes. As a result, the 2023 law, while retaining the basic structures, places a strong emphasis on the establishment and expansion of dual vocational training in private-public partnership as it is established in Germany (Legea învățământului preuniversitar, 2023, Art. 22). By a decree from 1998 (Hotărârea Guvernului nr. 855, 1998), modified in 2016 (Hotărârea Guvernului nr. 907, 2016), the National Centre for Technical and Vocational Education and Training Development (Romanian: *Centrul Național de Dezvoltare a Învățământului Profesional și Tehnic*) is responsible for support and control of the Vocational Education, and by Emergency ordinance from 2018 (Ordonanța de urgență a Guvernului nr. 59, 2018) the National Authority for Dual Education (Romanian: *Autoritatea Națională pentru Învățământ Dual*) is responsible for the dual schools.

language use

Until 2001, vocational training courses and courses at the few master schools were offered in German. Today, only the “Andrei Șaguna” Pedagogical Lyceum in Sibiu offers German-language vocational training for educators and primary school teachers (for more information, see [teacher training](#)). However, German as a foreign language lessons are available at some of the vocational lyceums.

teaching materials

In vocational education, textbooks accredited by the Ministry of Education are used. In the German-language training course for educators and primary school teachers at the Pedagogical Lyceum, they are used in German translation. Textbooks for vocational classes 9 and 10 are free of charge for pupils and are financed by the Ministry of Education. In the dual schools, the teaching materials are also financed by industry partners.

statistics

There are 1,150 schools offering vocational training in Romania, 31 of which are privately run. One vocational lyceum (Colegiul Național “Andrei Șaguna” in Sibiu) offers a German-language training course in kindergarten education and primary school teaching. In the school year 2021/22, 218 students attended the German section of this institution (DFDR, 2022).

In the school year 2021/22, 23,854 pupils started training at a non-lyceum school with a vocational profile (CNDIPT, 2023a), but none of them did so in German. Back in 2000, there were still 16 pupils enrolled in German-language programmes in vocational schools but finished school in 2001. Since then, there have been no German vocational schools. Before this time, German-language post-secondary non-tertiary schools and master schools, which offered in-depth vocational training after a first level degree, had an average of 100 students enrolled in the 1990s (16 German-speaking teachers in 1994; INS, 2023b).

6 Higher education

structure

The Romanian higher education system consists of 46 state universities under the authority of the Romanian Ministry of Education, 7 military academies and 34 private universities (Ministerul Educației, 2024). The three largest universities are Babeș-Bolyai University in Cluj-Napoca, the University of Bucharest, and the Polytechnic University of Bucharest.

In accordance with the Bologna Process, of which Romania has been a full member since 1999, higher education is divided into 3- or 4-year bachelor's programmes with 180 or 240 European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) credits, 1- or 2-year master's programmes (Romanian: *masterat*), and 3- or 4-year doctoral programmes (Romanian: *doctorat*). Tuition fees for enrolment, participation in each semester, and the final examinations must be paid. But as every Romanian citizen has the right to public education, there are fee-free places for high-achieving students and students from underprivileged groups, such as Roma. Furthermore, there are some programmes with low demand that are promoted by free study places. Some companies or foundations also offer grants for students.

Universities have the option of setting up courses in minority languages and internationally used languages. The most multilingual university is the Babeș-Bolyai University in Cluj-Napoca, which offers courses with Romanian, Hungarian, German, English, and French as the languages of instruction (UBB, 2017).

German Studies (German Language and Literature, Applied Modern Languages, etc.) can be found at many universities; there are over 20 degree programmes at bachelor's and master's level. They are popular because of the very good income possibilities on the Romanian labour market for employees with German language skills (more than 9,500 German companies have branches in Romania; Deutsch-Rumänische Industrie- und Handelskammer, 2023, p. 4). There are over 80 state university degree programmes taught in German, excluding German Studies (ARACIS, 2023; DAAD, 2023), such as the following:

- Babeș-Bolyai University in Cluj: Business Administration, International Relations and European Studies, Elementary and Preschool Education, Communication and Public Relations, Ecology and Environmental Protection, Tourism Geography, Geography, Journalism, and Computer Science;
- Academy of Economic Studies in Bucharest: Business Administration, Management entrepreneurial (master's);
- University of the West in Timișoara: International Relations and European Studies, Drama, Accounting, and Business Informatics;

- Technical University of Cluj: Automotive Engineering;
- Lucian Blaga University of Sibiu: Primary and Pre-school Education and Protestant Theology;
- Polytechnic University of Bucharest: Applied Electronics, Applied Computer Science in Industrial Engineering, Industrial Engineering in the fields of Electrical Engineering, Electronics and Energy, Industrial Engineering in Mechanical Engineering, Mechanical Engineering and Industrial Engineering, and Business Administration;
- Transilvania University Braşov: Applied Computer Science; and
- Polytechnic University of Timișoara: Civil Engineering.

All programmes in Romania must be evaluated every 5 years by the Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (Agenția Română de Asigurare a Calității în Învățământul Superior; ARACIS) and are (re)accredited if the evaluation is successful. Standards are not more flexible for minorities, even though they have far fewer resources than the majority. Accreditation is therefore usually more difficult to achieve for courses in minority languages.

legislation

Until 2023, the Romanian higher education system was organised on the basis of the National Education Act of 2011 (Legea educației, 2011). Since September 2023, the legal basis has been the Law on Higher Education (Legea învățământului superior, 2023). According to this law, all universities can offer courses in the languages of national minorities. Babeș-Bolyai University has the legal status of a multicultural and multilingual university in the Romanian, Hungarian and German languages (Art. 262, Legea învățământului superior, 2023). This status indicates the political desire to ensure that minorities are also represented at universities. However, it does not entail any obligations or rights that differ from other universities in the country but gives this university a higher prestige in Romania's scientific landscape.

Study programmes are accredited according to a governmental Ordinance from 2005 (Ordonanță de urgență nr. 75, 2005) and were last updated in 2021 (Ordonanță de urgență a Guvernului nr. 22, 2022) by the Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ARACIS). It is also responsible for the accreditation of German-language study programmes, to which it applies the same standards as for the Romanian ones, although they have to deal with different circumstances.

language use

The programmes offered in the language of the German minority are taught by lecturers with different L1s. The permanent lecturers and professors (Romanian: *titulari*) are mainly Romanians who have learnt German as an additional language. There are also native speakers from the German minority and lecturers from Germany or Austria. External and associate lecturers are mostly native German speakers from Central Europe (Germany, Austria, Switzerland, and South Tyrol).

Due to the reduced size and age structure of the German minority, there are few students who speak German as their L1. Apart from exchange students (Erasmus) and other exceptions, German is the second or third language for the majority of students, in addition to their Romanian L1.

teacher training

Teacher training in Romania takes place at universities. Traditionally, it also took place in parallel at vocational lyceums with a pedagogical profile for kindergarten educators and primary school teachers. However, from 2024 onwards, these institutions will only be allowed to award licences to work in kindergartens. Until the new education laws came into force in 2023, universities offered combined bachelor's study programmes (*Pedagogia Învăţământului Primar şi Preşcolar* – Pedagogy for Primary and Preschool Education, 180 ECTS credits) that qualified students to work in kindergartens and as primary school teachers. Enrolment for these study programmes is only permitted until the academic year 2026/27. From the academic year 2027/28, universities will have to offer separate bachelor's programmes that qualify students to work either in kindergartens (*Educaţia Timpurie* [Early Childhood Education], 180 ECTS credits) or primary schools (*Pedagogia Învăţământului Primar* [Primary School Education], 180 ECTS credits).

To teach at a secondary school, it was previously possible to complete the psycho-pedagogical module (30 ECTS credits) either for level 1 (lower secondary school) or level 2 (upper secondary school), which combined psychological, pedagogical, and didactic qualifications, in addition to the actual subject study programme (e.g. mathematics). This authorises the teaching of the respective subject at a secondary school. Many students complete the module in parallel with their studies to have the security of being able to switch to teaching if they cannot find another job. However, as salaries in the private sector are generally better than in the education sector, despite large pay rises in recent times, not many take this route. There is therefore a great shortage of teachers, especially for science subjects.

Following the 2023 education reform, all future secondary school teachers will be required to complete a didactic master's degree in their subject (90 ECTS credits). Universities are currently developing these programmes. Thus, in the year 2024, it was still possible to enrol in the psycho-pedagogical module.

The education degree programme (*Pedagogia Învăţământului Primar şi Preşcolar* – Pedagogy for Primary and Preschool Education) can be completed full-time or part time as a distance learning course. The quality requirements and the framework curriculum are specified and monitored by ARACIS.

Minorities have the constitutional right to education in their L1 (Constituţia României, 1991, Art. 32 (3)): "The right of persons belonging to national minorities to learn their L1 and the right to be educated in that language is guaranteed; the modalities for exercising these

rights are specified by law” (translated from Romanian by the authors). Universities can also offer teacher training programmes in the languages of the minorities. These have to use the same criteria and curricula as the Romanian-language programmes but can supplement them with minority-specific elements.

■ *pre-school and primary teacher training*

Pre- and primary school teachers in Romania are trained in university degree programmes and at pedagogical lyceums. At the universities, students receive a bachelor’s degree (180 ECTS credits), and at the lyceums, a baccalaureate with a professional qualification (ISECD 4).

German-language training for educators and primary school teachers is currently provided by the following three state institutions: the Pedagogical Lyceum “Andrei Țaguna” in Sibiu, the Babeș-Bolyai University in Cluj-Napoca, and the Lucian Blaga University in Sibiu.

Historically, the training of primary school and kindergarten teachers was organised in institutions under the auspices of the Evangelical Church: the Teacher Training Seminary (German: *Theologisch-pädagogisches Seminar*) in Sibiu, the Teacher Training Seminary for female teachers (German: *Lehrerinnenbildungsanstalt*) in Sighișoara/Schäßburg and the Kindergarten Teacher Training Institute in Brașov. There was also a Catholic School for Teacher Training in Timișoara/Temeschwar. After the Second World War, these confessional institutions were abolished. Since then, education has been organised by the state.

Pre-university pre-school and primary training lasts 4 years at the Pedagogical Lyceum “Andrei Țaguna” in Sibiu. Admission is by entrance examination. Regular internships in kindergartens and primary schools are included in the curriculum. The degree qualifies students for pedagogical work in kindergartens and primary schools. It offers the baccalaureate so it qualifies students for university entrance. The pedagogical work of the German-speaking Romanian teachers is supported by a teacher sent from and paid by Germany via the Central Agency for Schools Abroad (ZfA).

The university level training programmes (Romanian: *Pedagogia învățământului primar și preșcolar în limba germană–PIPPge*; German: *Grund- und Vorschulpädagogik in deutscher Sprache* – Primary and pre-school education in the German language –, 180 ECTS credits) in Cluj-Napoca (UBB, [n.d.-b](#)) and Sibiu (UBB, [n.d.-a](#)) are following the curriculum for teacher training set by the Romanian Ministry of Education. Admission to the programme is via an entrance interview and a written exam, in which German language skills and basic pedagogical aptitudes are tested. Most of the teaching is in German, but some courses are held in the Romanian language. In addition, the curriculum is supplemented by German language, literature, and didactics (for further details on the curriculum, see [Lunesch & Pfützner, 2022](#)).

The curricula for the approved university programmes in pre-primary and primary

pedagogy are developed by the Ministry of Education and are binding in terms of structure and content. For the two German-language programmes in Cluj-Napoca and Sibiu, it is possible to offer as many modules in German as possible. The final examinations for these programmes are generally held in German. There are several extracurricular activities of the two programmes, which are partly supported by grants from the Donauschwäbische Kulturstiftung des Landes Baden-Württemberg (Germany), the DAAD, THE ÖAD, and the Austrian State of Carinthia.

The programme leads to a bachelor's degree (Romanian: *licență*), which entitles the holder to take the examination for the state teaching service (Romanian: *definitivat*), after which they are allowed to teach for a limited period of time. If they want to apply for a permanent position as a teacher, the teacher tenure exam (Romanian: *Titularizare*) must be passed. Until 2023, this career path was also possible for alumni of the "Andrei Șaguna" Pedagogical Lyceum. However, the new law from 2023 allows educators starting their education there from 2024 onwards only to work in kindergartens after graduation.

■ *Secondary teacher training*

To teach in secondary schools in Romania, teachers need to have a bachelor's degree (180 ECTS credits) and a master's degree (60 ECTS credits) qualifying them to teach the subject. Additionally, they have to have completed the psycho-pedagogical module with two levels. Level I (30 ECTS credits) has to be completed to teach in gymnasiums up to grade 8 and level II (30 ECTS credits) to teach in lyceum in grades 9–12. The module can be studied in parallel with a degree course or part-time while working in a school.

The same regulations apply to the teaching in German language. The psycho-pedagogical module can be taken in parallel with the German language studies at the Babeș-Bolyai University of Cluj-Napoca for all subjects. German teachers can also take the psycho-pedagogical module at any other university where German is taught and thus acquire the right to teach in German.

According to the 2023 educational reform, there is political pressure to substitute the pedagogical module with didactic master's programmes (Ghimiși, 2023) so that after a certain bachelor's degree students have to study one of the new didactic master's (90 ECTS credits) with a focus on a specific subject, such as German, English, or geography. Most universities are currently developing these master's programmes, and some have already been established (Hotărârea Guvernului nr. 413, 2024).

■ *in-service teacher training*

According to Article 187 of the Law on pre-university education (Legea învățământului preuniversitar, 2023), teachers have the right and the duty to undertake periodic in-service training. They must attend at least one accredited training programme every 2 years, which is to ensure their continuing professional development.

The Didactic Houses at the county level are supposed to provide courses at regional and municipal level, though these courses are only in Romanian.

German language training courses for teachers are provided by the *Zentrum für Lehrerfortbildung in deutscher Sprache* (Centre for Continuous Teacher Training in German) in Mediaş/Mediasch. The centre was established by law in 1998 (ZfL, 2023a) and is directly subordinate to the Ministry of Education, as it provides teacher training throughout the whole country. There are regional centres in Sibiu, Braşov, Miercurea Ciuc, Satu Mare, Timişoara, and Reşiţa. In the school year 2022/23, a total of 2,352 teachers and educators participated in 132 courses offered by the centre (ZfL, 2023b). The COVID-19 pandemic changed the work of the centre considerably. For example, most of the courses are now offered online, whereas before the pandemic this type of course did not exist.

There are also opportunities to upgrade qualifications at universities and obtain special teaching qualifications, didactic degrees I and II. The didactic degrees testify “the acquisition [...] of a high level of professional maturity and expertise, which recommends [the teacher] as a generator of good practices in the school educational environment” (Art. 18, Ordin 5720, 2009) and entitle teachers to a higher salary. Obtaining each of the degrees requires a part-time course for the specialisation in one field of teaching. Teachers of German language can take the degree examinations at all faculties which offer German studies and has the right to organise degree exams. For all other school subjects taught in German, only the Babeş-Bolyai University in Cluj-Napoca offers qualifications and examinations for didactic degrees I and II.

As a new form of continuous training, mentoring for new teachers is being developed (Petrache & Mara, 2023). Between April 2021 and December 2023, the PROF project (Romanian: *Profesionalizarea carierei didactice* [Professionalisation of teaching career]) trained around 28,000 mentors to support young teachers in their first years of work (Ministerul Educaţiei, 2021).

There is no separate programme for teachers of German as a foreign language within the PROF project. However, the University of Bucharest, in cooperation with the Goethe Institute, has been running a programme called “Berufsstart Deutschlehrer*in” (career start German teacher) since 2020 for new teachers and for the qualification of mentors for teachers teaching German. The course for career starters lasts 6 months and is taught in a blended learning format with 6 lessons per week. The mentor training online course lasts one year and 20 scholarships are awarded annually by the Goethe Institute to attend the courses (Goethe Institut, 2023).

statistics

As of 2021, there were approximately 6,300 students learning the German language in Romania, most of whom in Bucharest, Cluj-Napoca, and Iaşi (Auswärtiges Amt, 2021, p. 16). A considerable number of them were studying the psycho-pedagogical module in parallel

with the university programme to potentially work as teachers in secondary schools. There are no nationwide statistics on how many German studies students take this module, but at “Lucian Blaga” University, for example, most German studies students follow the module. Eight lecturers, who are L1 German speakers, are sent to Romanian Universities by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) to support the universities in teaching German. At the Colegiul Național Pedagogic “Andrei Țaguna” (National Pedagogical College “Andrei Țaguna”), every year approximately half of the between 50 and 60 students in the final class complete the baccalaureate with a vocational qualification as an educator in German (DFDR, 2022).

At the “Lucian Blaga” University, since 2014, about 10 students per year graduate from the bachelor’s programme in Primary and Pre-school Education in German. There is one professor, three lecturers, and several associated and external lecturers from Germany and Austria.

structure and language courses

There is currently no state-organised system of general adult education in Romania. In 2017, however, the government decided to establish community centres for lifelong learning (Romanian: *centre comunitare de învățare permanentă*; Hotărârea Guvernului nr. 598, 2017). Established institutions of general adult education are only the adult education centres for arts (Romanian: *Școală populară de artă* – Popular art school).

German language courses in adult education are offered by a wide variety of private providers, such as the Goethe Institute in Bucharest (a branch of the globally active Goethe Institute based in Germany), the German cultural centres in Cluj-Napoca/Klausenburg, Iași/Jassy, Brașov/Kronstadt, Timișoara/Temeschwar, and Sibiu/Hermannstadt, and by universities.

The Goethe Institute, in collaboration with the cultural centres, provides language courses at all proficiency levels up to C2, in accordance with the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), through both in-person and blended learning formats. Until 2012, there had been the following three different final examinations offered by the Goethe Institute: the *Zentrale Oberstufenprüfung* (ZOP), the *Kleines Deutsches Sprachdiplom* (KDS; Small German Language Diploma), and the *Großes Deutsches Sprachdiplom* (GDS) – Large German Language Diploma). Since 2012, these examinations have been combined under the C2 examination (*Großes Deutsches Sprachdiplom*).

The certificates of the Goethe Institute are widely recognised at official and private institutions in Germany, including universities. Learning materials are offered free of charge through the homepage of the Goethe Institute in Romania. The courses are fee-paying.

In addition to the language courses, the German cultural centres also organise cultural events, such as photography workshops, book presentations, film screenings, and discussion evenings in German.

Before 1990, there were German-language adult education institutions in many cities with a German population. Following the emigration of the German population to Germany, these institutions have largely closed. There is a single remaining German-speaking adult education association in Reșița/Reschitza, the *Kultur- und Erwachsenenbildungsverein Deutsche Vortragsreihe Reschitza* (Cultural and Adult Education Association German Lecture Series Reschitza), which was founded in 1987 and is hosted by the *Demokratisches Forum der Banater Berglanddeutschen* (Democratic Forum of Banat Highland Germans).

Other activities in the field of adult education in German language are carried out mainly in informal forms and are offered by the local and nationwide organisations of the German minority. For example, the Democratic Forum of Germans in Sibiu (German: *Demokratisches Forum der Deutschen in Hermannstadt*) organises the Hermannstädter Gespräche (Sibiu Talks), a discussion series on political and social issues in cooperation with the IfA (German: *Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen*; Institute for Foreign Cultural Relations in Stuttgart).

Thanks to the financial support of the Department for Interethnic Relations in the General Secretariat of the Government of Romania (Romanian: *Departamentul pentru Relații Interetnice din cadrul Guvernului României*), the German minority is able to publish numerous German-language (as well as Romanian-language and bilingual) books every year. The regular book presentations are popular, with many of the events taking place in bilingual form or with simultaneous translation in German and Romanian.

Alongside these activities, the Protestant Church (*Evangelische Landeskirche, A.B.*) and the German Democratic Forum offer other informal educational opportunities in German for teenager and young adults, especially in the field of cultural education. There are no institutional courses for learning the different language varieties, such as Transylvanian Saxon.

legislation

According to Art. 185 of the new Law on Higher Education from 2023, adult education should be a task of the universities (Legea învățământului superior, 2023). Currently, however, vocational adult education is mainly carried out by private enterprises and agencies.

language use

German is predominantly spoken at the events of the Deutsche Vortragsreihe Reschitza, events of the Democratic Forum, and during church services. In addition, there are bilingual events and those in Romanian. The different dialects of German in Romania are typically not used in public events, only in private conversations. Exceptions are the occasional worship services offered in certain dialects, organised on special occasions, such as church anniversaries or other special events.

statistics

In 2020, 4,600 people took part in the Goethe Institute's language courses in Romania (in the Goethe Institute in Bucharest and the German cultural centres in Cluj-Napoca/Klausenburg, Iași/Jassy, Brașov/Kronstadt, Timișoara/Temeschwar, and Sibiu/Hermannstadt) and 6,483 students attended German courses at universities (Auswärtiges Amt, 2021).

The German Lecture Series Reschitza held 21 cultural and historical adult education events in German, partly in cooperation, in 2023 (DFBB, 2023).

The Democratic Forum of Germans in Romania, with financial support from the Department for Interethnic Relations, published 50 books in 2015, 50 in 2016, 85 in 2017, 61 in 2018, and 98 in 2019 and 2020, respectively (DFDR, 2023).

8 Educational research

Although several other universities with German Studies programmes have conducted research in the educational or related fields, educational research in German is only institutionalised at two universities in Romania, namely Babeş-Bolyai University in Cluj-Napoca and Lucian Blaga University in Sibiu. These universities also offer degree programmes in education in the German language (Romanian: *Pedagogia învățământului primar și preșcolar în limba germană*; German: *Grund- und Vorschulpädagogik in deutscher Sprache* [Primary and pre-school education in the German language]). Educational research has been carried out at these universities in the fields of German language didactics (Iunesch, 2012), drama education in the context of German language (Bartalis, 2017), teacher education for minority schools (Iunesch, 2013, 2021; Iunesch & Pfützner, 2022; Pfützner, 2022), societal perceptions of German-language education (Zoppelt et al., 2015), German-language pre-school education (Keresztes, 2021), and German-language school education (Bottesch, 1997).

In the field of linguistic research, it is worth mentioning the Transylvanian-Saxon Dictionary (Siebenbürgisch-Sächsisches Wörterbuch), a key work published since 1924 (the latest volume from 2014), with a total of 10 volumes published until now (with entries from A–Sch). The continuation of the dictionary is currently the responsibility of the Research Institute for Humanities in Sibiu, (Academia Română – Institutul de Cercetări Socio-Umane din Sibiu, 2024) Another important publication is the Audio Atlas of Transylvanian-Saxon Dialects (German: *Audioatlas Siebenbürgisch-Sächsischer Dialekte*; Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München, 2017). These two are the major research projects aimed at preserving the knowledge of the non-standard variants of the German language spoken in Romania

Empirical data collection on German-language kindergartens and schools is carried out annually by the School Commission of the Democratic Forum of Germans in Romania (German: *Schulkommission des Demokratischen Forums der Deutschen in Rumänien*) and the National Statistical Office (Romanian: *Institutul Național de Statistică*). However, they only publish the data and make them available for research (INS, 2023b), without conducting further research themselves.

Between 2007 and 2014, the Cluj-Napoca-based journal *Neue Didaktik* (New Didactics) mainly published didactic research on German-language teaching, though the journal has not been active since. Since 2001, *Zett. Zeitschrift des Zentrums für Lehrerbildung* (Journal of the Centre for Teacher Education) has been published in German by the Zentrum für Lehrerfortbildung (Centre for Continuous Teacher Education). However, it does not publish original research, but it popularises research findings for use in school contexts. In addition, there are occasional articles with reference to educational science, especially in the context of teaching German language and culture in the journal *Germanistische Beiträge* (German Studies Contributions) published by the “Lucian Blaga” University of Sibiu.

As result of a recently completed major research project, two comprehensive volumes on the situation of German language and culture in the period 1919–1933 were published by Andrei Corbea-Hoişie and Rudolf Gräf (2023a, 2023b). The books include studies dealing with the educational situation of the German minority during this period (Balan, 2023; Ceaşu, 2023; Nistor & Hariuc, 2023; Poledna, 2023; Schuster, 2023; Spiridon & Badecean, 2023). Research results regarding the field of education were also published in a recent issue of *Jassyer Beiträge zur Germanistik* (Zup et al., 2021).

Furthermore, there has been research in Germany, especially on the history of German-language education in Romania in the context of the *Arbeitskreis für Siebenbürgische Landeskunde* (Research Group on Transylvanian Regional Studies). Central works in this context have been presented by Walter König (1996, 2005), who focused on the education system of the Transylvanian Saxons, as well as by Paul Philippi (1996, 2010). There are a few studies on German education in other regions, for example about German schools in Bessarabia (Fassel, 2000). Due to the relatively small number of researchers interested in educational issues, the research focus of the research group is currently in other areas of research; thus, there have been no publications on educational science or educational history in recent years.

The most important research results regarding the history of German teaching can be summarised as follows: from a historical perspective, there was a very close connection between the church and the school of the German minority, as well as – in the Protestant tradition – a great appreciation of education and culture in the minority, which explains the long preservation of this school system, even in times of political upheaval (König, 1996).

Research on current issues emphasises the importance of language didactic expertise for teachers and the use of modern methods for teaching German as a foreign or a second language. These methodological adaptations from other contexts (German as foreign or second language in Germany) are considered important to meet the needs of heterogeneous learner groups with regard to the competence in the language of instruction (Aschenbrenner, 2024; Bartalis-Binder, 2024; Maurer et al., 2024).

9 Prospects

legislation and education policies

The future of education with German as the language of instruction in Romania is difficult to predict. At present, it is an attractive educational alternative for Romanian citizens, which would not legally exist if there was no active German-speaking minority. As long as there is a high overall demand for German schools, they will remain available to the few remaining members of the minority.

It is likely that it will continue to be attractive for Romanian families to send their children to schools where German is taught as L1, since they will learn a modern foreign European language at a high level and thus have good opportunities on the Romanian and European markets, especially the German and Austrian labour markets, provided that the shortage of teachers (Müller-Heinze, 2019) is reduced in the foreseeable future. Whether the schools will be attended by a higher number of children from the German minority is a function of the demographic situation of the minority, though a substantial increase is rather improbable in the short or medium term if the trends remain the same. However, since it seems to be more the rule than the exception that children in bilingual German-Romanian families learn both languages, and parents tend to send their children to German-language schools, a certain optimism seems appropriate.

As far as the future of the German minority is concerned, it can only be hoped that the optimistic statements made by the executive director of the DFDR on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of the Treaty on Partnership and Cooperation in Europe in 2022 will prove to be true:

We cannot know in detail what the next 30 years will bring. What I can say with certainty, however, is that in 30 or 50 years, there will still be Germans in Romania who love and care for their language, who fight for the preservation of German schools, who campaign for the restoration of fortified churches, who continue to write and create German literature, who fight in political bodies for the aims of the community, who will continue to be mediators between two countries in the common house of Europe. (Jósza, 2022, p. 65; translated from German by the authors)

Since the right of minorities to be educated in their own language is enshrined in the Romanian constitution (Constituția României, 1991, Art. 32(3)) and has a tradition in education legislation, the legal framework certainly enables for the future development of the German-language school system. However, to maintain the attractiveness of German-language schooling, it is important to address the shortage of qualified teachers in primary and secondary schools as well as universities (Council of Europe, 2023). This will only be possible if the status and income of teachers in Romania are decisively improved in the future.

Many individuals in Romania are deeply committed to the ideal of preserving German-language education for the future. However, the number of those who are willing to accept a lower income and financial insecurity for this ideal is smaller than the number of teachers needed to maintain the system. Only systemic changes – in other words, a significant improvement in the social and financial status of teachers and educators in general – could therefore secure this traditional school system.

Another crucial issue is the development of specific quality assurance standards for minority language higher level education. The quality standards developed by ARACIS for the tertiary sector apply equally to all study programmes in Romania and do not consider the specific needs of minorities. If minority language institutions and/or programmes have to meet the same standards as the Romanian majority ones in order to be accredited, their long term existence may be in peril, given the far inferior resources of a minority, particularly in terms of teacher recruitment. The new regulations (*Legea învățământului superior*, 2023), which provide for separate university programmes for kindergarten education and primary school teaching, further exacerbate the problem, because the number of students in each of the study programmes will become smaller – and at the same time the demand for university lecturers will increase.

Regarding future research, the main need lies in didactic issues in the context of a school system that is changing from a school system by and for the German minority to a German-language education system used by the few members of German minority, but mainly by the Romanian majority population. More (international) research is needed about didactic concepts, in schools and teacher training, which are particularly suitable for maintaining or even improving quality under these circumstances. More empirical research on minority language use is needed to address this issue. There are approaches to this (Lunesch, 2012), but larger third party-funded projects with larger research teams would be needed to collect the relevant empirical data.

In addition to these current didactic questions, there are numerous open questions in historical educational research regarding the history of German-language education. In particular, the period between 1945 and 1989 should be focused on as there are (still) contemporary witnesses who can provide information about this epoch.

Moreover, it would be desirable to maintain the German-language institutions as a means of promoting intercultural understanding and cooperation. It is hoped that decision-makers are aware of this objective and that the system can evolve in the future to foster such a culture.

10 Summary of statistics

Table 1 Number of schools and pupils (with German as L1) for pre-school to secondary education, by school type, in Romania in the academic year 2020/21.

Education level		Schools	Pupils	Pupils with German as L1
Pre-school education	Public kindergartens offering German as language of instruction	129	4,989	450
	Private kindergartens offering German as language of instruction	---	---	---
Primary education	Public primary schools with German as language of instruction	57	8,084	---
	Private schools with German as language of instruction	5	320	---
Secondary education	Public gymnasiums (<i>școala gimnazială</i>) with German as language of instruction	57	6,108	---
	Private gymnasiums (<i>școala gimnazială</i>) with German as language of instruction	5	159	---
	Public high schools (<i>Liceul</i>) with German as language of instruction	21	3,698	---
	Private high schools (<i>Liceul</i>) with German as language of instruction	1	39	---

Note. Data from DFDR (2022) and INS (2023a).

Table 2 Number of students attending German as a foreign language lessons in Romania (2020).

Institution	Students
Goethe Institute	4,600
Universities	6,483

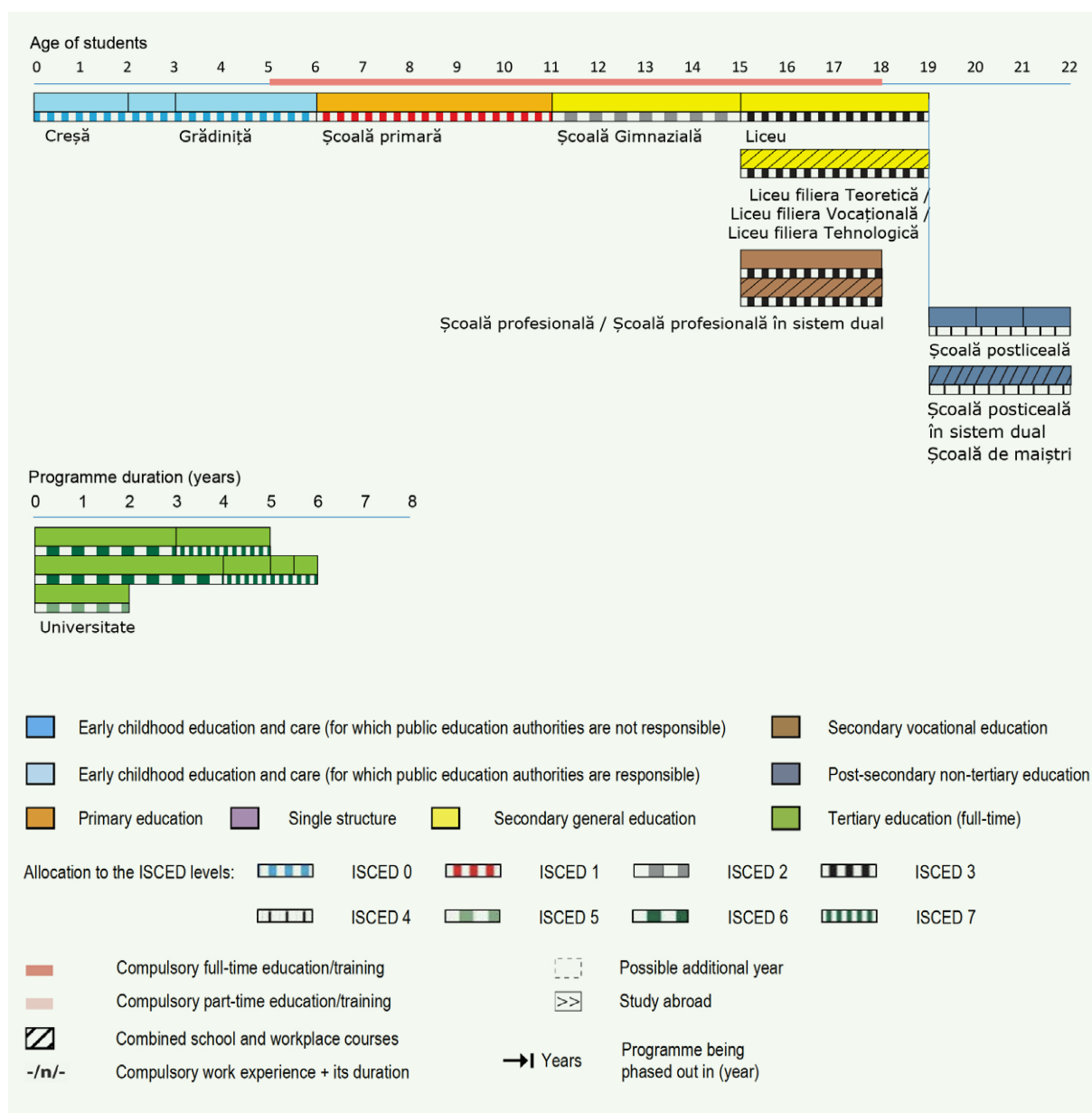
Note. Data from Auswärtiges Amt (2021).

Table 3 Number of books published by the Demokratisches Forum der Deutschen in Rumänien between 2015 and 2020.

Year	No. of books
2015	50
2016	50
2017	85
2018	61
2019	98
2020	98

Note. Data from DFDR (2023).

Education system in Romania



Note. Reprinted from European Commission, European Education and Culture Executive Agency, and Eurydice (2023, p. 27).

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Useful addresses

Associations and non-governmental organisations

Demokratisches Forum der Deutschen in Rumänien

Democratic Forum of Germans in Romania

Str. Gen Magheru nr. 1-3, RO-50185 Sibiu

T: +40 269217841

W: www.fdgr.ro

Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst (DAAD) in Rumänien

German Academic Exchange Service, Office Bucharest

Str. Buzești nr. 61, bl. A6, et. 9, ap. 59, RO-011013 București

T: +40 737052828 and +40 725993247

W: www.daad.ro/ro/

Deutsch-rumänische Industrie- und Handelskammer

German-Romanian Chamber of Commerce and Industry

Calea Grivitei nr. 82-98, et. 1, RO-010735 București

T: +40 212231531

W: www.ahkrumaenien.ro/

German cultural and language centres

Begegnungs- und Kulturzentrum Friedrich Teutsch der Evangelischen Kirche A. B. in Rumänien

Friedrich Teutsch Meeting and Cultural Centre of the Evangelical Church A. B. in Romania

Str. Mitropoliei nr. 30, RO-550179 Sibiu

T: +40 269206730

W: www.teutsch.ro

Deutsches Kulturzentrum Hermannstadt

German Culture Center Sibiu

Str. Timotei Popovici nr. 9, RO-55 01 64 Sibiu

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W: www.kulturzentrum-hermannstadt.ro/de/

Deutsches Kulturzentrum Kronstadt

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T: +40 268473104
W: www.ccgbv.ro/de/

Deutsches Kulturzentrum Temeswar

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T: +40 256407058
W: www.ccgtn.ro/?lang=de

Deutsches Kulturzentrum Iași

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W: www.kulturzentrum-iasi.ro/de/

Deutsches Kulturzentrum Klausenburg

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T: +40 264594492
W: www.kulturzentrum-klausenburg.ro/

Friedrich Schiller Kulturhaus Bukarest

Cultural Center "Friedrich Schiller" Bucharest
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T: +40 0213192688
W: www.casaschiller.ro

Goethe Institut Bukarest

Goethe Institute Bucharest
Calea Dorobanti nr. 32, RO-010573 București
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W: www.goethe.de/ins/ro/de/index.html

Jugendzentrum Seligstadt

Youth Centre Seligstadt
Evangelisches Pfarramt A.B., Fogarasch, Piața Republicii nr. 16, RO-505200 Făgăraș
T: +40 268211994
W: www.seligstadt.ro

Kinderuni Bekokten

University for Children Bărcut

Renate und Johannes Klein, Bărcut, nr. 57, RO-507216 Bărcut

T: +04 268211994

W: www.kinderuni.ro/bekokten/

Evangelische Landeskirche A.B. in Rumänien

Evangelical Church A.B. in Romania

Str. Gen. Magheru nr. 4, RO-550185 Sibiu

T: +40 269230202

W: www.evang.ro

Governmental organisations**Departamentul pentru Relații Interetnice, Secretariatului General al Guvernului**

Department for Interethnic Relations, General Secretariat of the Government.

Strada Paris nr. 65, Sector 1, CP 011815 București

T: +40 212314424

W: www.dri.gov.ro/w/

Die Zentralstelle für das Auslandsschulwesen (ZfA) in Bukarest

Central Agency for Schools Abroad, Office Bucharest

ZfA - Deutsche Auslandsschularbeit International, c/o Deutsche Botschaft Bukarest/

Ambasada Germaniei, Str. Cpt. Av. Gheorghe Demetriade nr. 6-8, RO-011849 București

T: +40 722214844

W: www.auslandsschulwesen.de

Institutul Național de Statistică

Romanian National Institute for Statistics

Bd. Libertății nr. 16, Sector 5, RO-050706 București

T: +40 213181824

W: www.insse.ro/cms/ro

Ministerul Educației

Ministry of Education

Str. General Berthelot nr. 28-30, Sector 1, RO-010168 București

T: +40 214056200

W: www.edu.ro

Newspapers

Allgemeine Deutsche Zeitung für Rumänien

Daily German Newspaper for Romania

Str. Banul Dumitrache no. 40, RO-023764 București

T: +40 213178915

W: www.adz.ro

Herrmannstädter Zeitung

Weekly local newspaper for Sibiu

Str. Tipografilor no. 12, RO-550164 Sibiu/Hermannstadt

T: +40 269213422

W: www.hermannstaedter.ro

Schools

Deutsches Goethe Kolleg Bukarest

Public German High School in Bucharest

Str. Stanislav Cihoschi nr. 17, Sector 1, RO-010592 București

T: +40 212113425

W: www.colegiulgoethe.ro

Gesellschaft der Germanisten Rumäniens

Society of Germanists of Romania

Str. Pitar Moș nr. 7-11, Sector 1, RO-010451 București

W: www.ggr.ro/new_site/index.php

Teacher training centre and teacher organisation

Deutschlehrerverband Rumäniens/ Asociația Profesorilor de Limba Germană din România

Association of German Teachers in Romania

Str. Bățiște nr. 15, sector 2, RO-020932 București

T: +40 771076637

W: www.deutschlehrerverband.ro

Zentrum für Lehrerfortbildung in deutscher Sprache Mediasch

Centre for Teacher Training in German Mediaș

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W: www.zfl.ro

Institutes and universities

Arbeitskreis für Siebenbürgische Landeskunde und Siebenbürgen-Institut an der Universität Heidelberg

Research Group for Transylvanian Regional Studies and Transylvania Institute at the University of Heidelberg

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W: www.siebenbuergen-institut.de

Institutul Pentru Studierea Problemelor Minorităților Naționale

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referee

A previous draft of this Regional Dossier was reviewed by *Levente Székedi*, PhD. Székedi is a sociologist and assistant professor at Partium Christian University, a regional Hungarian-language university in Oradea, Romania. His long-term research project is on the history of ethnic Hungarian social sciences in Romania. Székedi has also participated in several applied and minority-related sociological studies.

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Other websites on minority languages

Mercator European Research Centre on Multilingualism and Language Learning

www.mercator-research.eu

Homepage of the Mercator European Research Centre on Multilingualism and Language Learning. The website contains the Regional Dossier series, the Wiki on Minority Language Learning, publications, information on current activities and projects, and many links to relevant websites.

Mercator Network

www.mercator-research.eu/en/about-us/networks/

General information about the Mercator European Network of Language Diversity Centres.

Mercator's Wiki on Minority Language Learning

www.wiki.mercator-research.eu

Managed by the Mercator European Research Centre, this online platform complements the Regional Dossier series by providing up-to-date information on the education of regional and minority languages with limited or no presence in the education system.

European Commission

www.education.ec.europa.eu/focus-topics/improving-quality/multilingualism/linguistic-diversity

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

Council of Europe

www.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

www.eurydice.eacea.ec.europa.eu

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

European Parliament Committee – supporting analyses database

www.europarl.europa.eu/committees/en/home

This database contains research papers produced by the European Parliament's research service. A study for the CULT Committee, conducted by the Mercator European Research Centre, was published in 2017: *Minority Languages and Education: Best Practices and Pitfalls*.

NPLD

www.npld.eu

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

FUEN

www.fuen.org

The Federal Union of European Nationalities (FUEN) is the umbrella organisation of the autochthonous, national minorities/ethnic groups in Europe and represents the interests of European minorities at the regional, national, and European levels.

ELEN

www.elen.ngo

The European Language Equality Network (ELEN) is a non-governmental organisation that has as its goal the promotion and protection of European lesser-used (i.e. regional, minority, endangered, indigenous, co-official, and smaller national) languages, to work towards linguistic equality for these languages, and multilingualism, under the broader framework of human rights, and to be a voice for the speakers of these languages at all levels.

YEN

www.yeni.org

Youth of European Nationalities (YEN) is the largest network of youth organisations of autochthonous, national, and linguistic minorities in Europe.



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- Gàidhlig:** The Gaelic language in education in Scotland (2017, 2nd ed.)
- Galician:** The Galician language in education in Spain (2016, 2nd ed.)
- German:** The German language in education in Alsace, France (2024, 3rd ed.)
The German language in education in Belgium (2004)
The German language in education in Denmark (2015)
The German language in education in Romania (2025)
The German language in education in South Tyrol (Italy) (2017, 2nd ed.)
- Hungarian:** The Hungarian language in education in Romania (2019)
The Hungarian language in education in Slovakia (2020, 2nd ed.)
The Hungarian language in education in Slovenia (2024, 2nd ed.)
The Hungarian language in education in Ukraine (2019)
- Irish:** The Irish language in education in Northern Ireland (2019, 3rd ed.)
The Irish language in education in the Republic of Ireland (2016, 2nd ed.)
- Italian:** The Italian language in education in Slovenia (2023, 2nd ed.)
The Italian language in education in Switzerland (2020; [Italian translation available](#))
- Karelian:** The Karelian language in education in the Republic of Karelia in Russia (2024)
- Kashubian:** The Kashubian language in education in Poland (2004)
- Ladin:** The Ladin language in education in Italy (2016, 2nd ed.)
- Latgalian:** The Latgalian language in education in Latvia (2022, 2nd ed.)
- Lithuanian:** The Lithuanian language in education in Poland (2023, 2nd ed.)
- Maltese:** The Maltese language in education in Malta (2024, 2nd ed.)
- Manx Gaelic:** The Manx Gaelic language in education in the Isle of Man (2016)
- Meänkieli and Sweden Finnish:** The Finnic languages in education in Sweden (2001)
- Mongolian:** The Mongolian language in education in the People's Republic of China (2019)
- Nenets, Khanty and Selkup:** The Nenets, Khanty and Selkup languages in education in the Yamal Region in Russia (2016; [Russian translation available](#))

North Frisian: The North Frisian language in education in Germany (2015, 3rd ed.)

Occitan: The Occitan language in education in France (2019, 2nd ed.)

Polish: The Polish language in education in Lithuania (2006)

Romani and Beash: The Romani and Beash languages in education in Hungary (2020, 2nd ed.)

Romansh: The Romansh language in education in Switzerland (2017)

Sámi: The Sámi language in education in Sweden (2020, 2nd ed.)

Scots: The Scots language in education in Scotland (2017, 2nd ed.)

Serbian: The Serbian language in education in Hungary (2014)

Slovak: The Slovak language in education in Hungary (2005)

Slovene: The Slovene language in education in Austria (2023, 3rd ed.)
The Slovene language in education in Italy (2020, 3rd ed.)

Sorbian: The Sorbian language in education in Germany (2016, 2nd ed.)

Swedish: The Swedish language in education in Finland (2013, 2nd ed.)

Turkish: The Turkish language in education in Greece (2019, 2nd ed.)

Udmurt: The Udmurt language in education in the Udmurt Republic in Russia (2019; Russian translation available)

Ukrainian and Ruthenian: The Ukrainian and Ruthenian languages in education in Poland (2006)

Ulster-Scots: The Ulster-Scots language in education in Northern Ireland (2020)

Võro: The Võro language in education in Estonia (2019, 2nd ed.)

Welsh: The Welsh language in education in the UK (2014, 2nd ed.)

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