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# North Frisian

The North Frisian language  
in education in Germany

2nd edition



\* numerically small language communities

This document was published by the Mercator European Research Centre on Multilingualism and Language Learning with financial support from the Fryske Akademy and the European Commission (DG: Education and Culture) and/or the Province of Fryslân.

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ISSN: 1570 – 1239  
2nd edition

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## Foreword

### *background*

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

### *aim*

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

### *target group*

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

*link with EURYDICE* In order to link these regional descriptions with those of national education systems, the format of the regional dossiers follows the format used by *EURYDICE*, the information network on education in Europe. *EURYDICE* provides information on the administration and structure of national education systems in the member states of the European Union.

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

**I****Introduction***language*

The North Frisian language is spoken today on the west coast of Schleswig-Holstein between the Dano-German border in the north and approximately the small town of Bredstedt in the south, as well as on the islands of Sylt, Föhr, Amrum and Heligoland and some neighbouring islets (Halligen). The Frisian-speaking area is thus part of the District of North Frisia (Kreis Nordfriesland), apart from Heligoland which belongs to the District of Pinneberg. The language consists of nine main dialects, each of which has its own name. The name of the mainland Frisian dialects is based on the concept of Frisian, e.g. Fräsch, Freesk, Fräisch, whereas the island dialects are called after each particular island, viz. Söl'ring (Sylt), Fering (Föhr), Öömring (Amrum) and Halunder (Heligoland). North Frisian is an independent West Germanic or North Sea Germanic language which has, however, over the centuries been heavily influenced by Danish and Low German, and latterly also by High German. It is related to West Frisian in the Netherlands and more closely to Sater Frisian in Lower Saxony (Germany).

North Frisian is traditionally an oral language and little was written in the language before the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century when Frisian began to develop as a written medium. Due to an awareness of the decline of the language there is a tradition of language promotion. This was particularly strong between the two world wars and has again been so since about the mid 1970s. Each dialect has its own orthography, grammar, and vocabulary, most of which can now be considered relatively standardized. Frisian is used in various domains of society on an informal level, such as in the family, community activities, etc. and has partly been introduced into some domains on a more formal level, e.g. education and the church.

### **The Frisian movement**

The Frisian Movement has a long history going back to the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Traditionally the main actors are the Frisian associations. These are the Nordfriesischer Verein with some 25 member associations, the Friisk Forining, based mainly on the mainland, the Öömring Forining on the island of Amrum, and the Rökefloose (Flock of Rooks), a youth organisation based mainly on the mainland. The North Frisian Institute (Nordfriisk Instituut) in Bredstedt also has its own association. The umbrella organisation for all these associations is the Frisian Council.

In 2003 the Frisian Council published a booklet “Modell Nordfriesland” (Model North Frisia) in which suggestions were made for the promotion of the Frisian language and culture in various domains, including education. This can be regarded as a first step towards developing a language planning concept

The financial support afforded the Frisians comes mainly from the “Land” Schleswig-Holstein and from the Federal Government in Berlin. Further support comes from, for example, the District of North Frisia, the town of Bredstedt, and the Danish minority. The funds from the “Land” help support the Frisian institutions as well as promoting the Frisian language and culture. The estimated total for 2006 is €333,000, of which €262,835 are for institutional support and €70,165 for language and culture. The financial support from Berlin is estimated at €250,000. These funds are reserved for project funding.

### *population*

Of the 166,654 inhabitants of North Frisia (March 31, 2005), it is thought some 8-10,000 speak Frisian (5-6%), and about 60,000 (36%) consider themselves to be Frisians. Of the other local regional languages, a large number of people also speak Low German, and some speak Danish

and/or Jutish, a Danish dialect. All the native populace speaks High German.

These past years the total population has remained relatively constant, only increasing gradually in size. In 2005 there were 12,250 out-migrants and 13,006 in-migrants. As tourism is an important economic factor here, this is leading to a more mixed population.

*language status*

The Federal Republic of Germany included the Frisians when ratifying the Council of Europe's "Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities" in 1997, and the Frisian language when ratifying the "European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages" in 1998. Schleswig-Holstein's new constitution, which came into force in 1990, mentions the protection and promotion of the Danish minority and the Frisian people, and in 2004 a law was passed here on the promotion of Frisian in the public sector (Gesetz zur Förderung des Friesischen im öffentlichen Raum). The District of North Frisia also changed its statutes (Hauptsatzung des Kreises Nordfriesland) on 1<sup>st</sup> May 2005 to include the protection and promotion of the cultural independence of the Danish minority and the Frisian people.

There is an ongoing discussion about the possible inclusion of the indigenous linguistic minorities in the federal constitution, but so far this has not been realised.

*status of language education*

Before the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War two decrees were passed in 1925 and 1928 referring to the use of Frisian in school. This resulted in a large number of schools in the language area having some form of tuition in Frisian. In the 1930s Frisian tuition dwindled and came to a standstill during the war. After the war the Government in Kiel passed a new decree in 1947, re-establishing the principles laid down previously.

As there have been no decrees since, Frisian in school can only be offered on a voluntary basis, which means, for example, that there is no obligatory curriculum and that Frisian lessons are often outside the main school hours.

After the war a number of schools re-introduced Frisian tuition. The interest, however, waned and by 1970 there were only few schools teaching Frisian. A resurgence of interest arose as from 1976, and the number of schools teaching Frisian has increased since (cf. p 39). In the school year 2005/06 30 teachers were teaching 1455 pupils 149 hours of Frisian in 27 schools. Frisian is, however, generally restricted to the primary sector, the secondary sector being still underdeveloped, and in primary schools Frisian is usually restricted to but a small number of hours a week.

The Schleswig-Holstein government is at present preparing a new Education Act. One party, the Südschleswiger Wählerverband (SSW – South Schleswig Voters Association), has in this context submitted a proposal that Frisian tuition should be given a legal basis in the schools in North Frisia. It is as yet unknown how this proposal will fare in the parliamentary procedure. Schleswig-Holstein has, however, accepted the obligation in the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages to provide Frisian tuition for pupils “whose families so request and whose number is considered sufficient”, although the Government takes the view that the parents’ wish for Frisian instruction for their children does *de facto* not exist.<sup>1</sup>

In April 2005 the Regional Court of Auditors in Kiel (Landesrechnungshof) published a report on Frisian tuition in state schools and in the schools of the Danish minority in which they came to three main conclusions: a) Frisian tuition cost the state €338,000 in the school year 2003/04. These funds were used primarily in primary education. As,

however, language promotion needs to be a long-term process, the investment hitherto has been unsuitable for language maintenance. b) Frisian tuition should be concentrated in the schools situated in the main language areas in order to allow continued participation in Frisian lessons from primary school through to secondary school. c) As there are no official statistics on the linguistic competence and the ethnic composition of the population, research is needed on the number of Frisian speakers in order to establish the actual need for language promotion in each locality.

One central point of criticism was the aspect of “voluntary participation” in Frisian lessons. As it was considered that participation was in fact often obligatory, it was suggested that research should be conducted as to the actual number of parents wishing their children to participate in Frisian classes.<sup>2</sup>

The statistical research suggested under c) was rejected by the Schleswig-Holstein Commissioner for Minority Affairs as it would contravene a basic principle of minority politics in Schleswig-Holstein known as the freedom of self-identification, i.e. everyone has the right to consider him- or herself a member of a minority, and this may not be questioned.<sup>3</sup>

The confusion which this report caused has now largely ebbed.<sup>4</sup> It is, however, too early to judge what effect the report will have on the development of Frisian tuition in North Frisia.

#### *education system*

Each “Land” in the Federal Republic of Germany has its own education system. The education system in North Frisia is the same as for the rest of Schleswig-Holstein and is based upon the Education Act of 2<sup>nd</sup> August, 1990, last changed on 21<sup>st</sup> March, 2006 (Schleswig-Holsteinisches Schulgesetz).

A new Education Act has been drafted that is due to come into force in February 2007.

In the present system school generally lasts half a day, although the number of day schools is increasing, with at present more than 200 such schools in Schleswig-Holstein. Children start nine years of obligatory schooling at the age of six. The first four years are spent at primary school (Grundschule). Following this, most children enter the three-tier school system. They may attend a grammar school (Gymnasium) for nine (or sometimes eight) years, leading to A-Levels (Abitur), which qualify them to study at a university, or a secondary modern school (Realschule), which finishes with the school-leaving certificate "Mittlere Reife" after six years, qualifying them for vocational training with higher requirements. A further possibility is the intermediate school (Hauptschule), lasting five years, and which gives pupils a basic, general education and practical, vocation-oriented training. In the course of the school career it is, however, possible to switch between the different types of school.

A fourth type of secondary school is the comprehensive school (Gesamtschule), where children of different interests and capabilities attend the same school, and where all types of school-leaving certificate can be acquired. In the school year 2005/06 there were 25 such schools in Schleswig-Holstein.

Education for children with a handicap or with learning or behavioural difficulties is provided by special schools. Children can attend these schools for the whole of their school career. Integration of disabled children into the ordinary school system has been possible since 1990, and today such "integrative" tuition is provided at half of all primary schools and in an increasing number of secondary schools.

The aim of the new Education Act is to restructure the education system. As from the school year 2010/11 the secondary modern and intermediate schools are to be replaced by a new “regional school” (Regionalschule), offering both types of school-leaving certificate. The grammar school will be retained. A second model as from the school year 2007/08 is to be the “community school” (Gemeinschaftsschule), encompassing all types of school hitherto, with the possibility of all the present comprehensive schools being converted into community schools by the year 2010/11.

*private and public* Schools in Schleswig-Holstein are generally state run. The only exceptions in North Frisia are the officially recognised alternative or private schools belonging to the Danish minority.<sup>5</sup> These come under the aegis of the Danish School Association in South Schleswig (Dansk Skoleforening for Sydslesvig) and are funded by the “Land”, the local districts and communes, the State of Denmark, and by parents’ own contributions.

*bilingual education forms* In the public sector bilingual education was introduced at the beginning of the 1990s, first of all in some grammar schools in the school year 1991/92 and a year later in some secondary modern schools.

At present there are four primary schools in Schleswig-Holstein offering some form of bilingual education. In two schools one stream has all lessons in English in all grades (apart from German), and in one school general studies (Heimat- und Sachunterricht) is taught through the medium of English in all classes. A fourth school has recently started teaching general studies and one of two art lessons through the medium of English in grade 1. It is hoped that this will later be continued in the following grades.

At the secondary level there are at present 28 schools offering bilingual education (21 grammar schools, 5 secondary modern schools, and 2 comprehensive schools). The model here is that pupils have intensive English lessons in the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grades, and then take one subject, usually geography, through the medium of English in the grades 7-10. There are, however, various variations on this model, and some schools, for example, now use English as a medium through to the 13<sup>th</sup> grade, whereas others offer history or biology through the medium of English, or a combination of these subjects. The number of pupils participating also varies, ranging from one stream within a year to all pupils in a school year.

In one school history is taught through the medium of French as from the 10<sup>th</sup> grade. This is a new development and it is intended gradually to expand French into the lower classes. Another school has in cooperation with a school in Denmark introduced a "Europe class" in the grades 11-13 in which lessons are given in Danish, German and English.

There are also 18 schools offering individual teaching units or modules in English.

A working group under the auspices of the IQSH (see under "support structure") has compiled materials for geography through the medium of English for the grades 7-10. Otherwise teachers generally have to develop or procure their own materials.

The number of schools offering bilingual education in the public sector is gradually increasing, depending on the availability of resources etc. The general model for bilingual education also seems to be in a period of transition.

In the private sector the aim of the schools run by the Danish minority is to provide Danish pedagogy for the Danish

minority in South Schleswig and the Frisians connected to the Danish minority. German and Danish lessons are usually taught as mother tongue education, otherwise the language of instruction is Danish. As, however, a large part of the pupils have German as their mother tongue, which they also often speak in informal situations in school, the schools might be considered as representing a form of bilingual schooling, based on a model of immersion education.

*administration*

The “Land” authorities are responsible for the running, content, and general framework of schools including teaching personnel. They control education by means of laws, decrees, and regulations and are also responsible for Frisian in education. The local municipality is in general responsible for non-personnel matters, e.g. the up-keep of the school buildings and material provision, such as furniture.

*inspection*

The Ministry of Education and Women’s Issues (Ministerium für Bildung und Frauen) in Kiel has the overall responsibility for school inspection in Schleswig-Holstein and is directly responsible for grammar, comprehensive, and technical schools. Primary, intermediate, secondary modern and special schools come under the auspices of the 15 school inspectorates in the “Land”, one of which is responsible for the District of North Frisia. The duties of the two inspectors here include supervision, both with respect to personnel and to the correct implementation of the general regulations (education act, school curricula), as well as advising teachers in pedagogical matters. One inspector is also responsible for the teaching of Frisian in school.

*support structure*

The “Land” of Schleswig-Holstein supports a central body, the “Institute for Quality Development in Schools Schleswig-Holstein” (Institut für Qualitätsentwicklung an Schulen Schleswig-Holstein (IQSH)) in Kiel, which is a service institution for all people involved in school matters. It offers

advice and support in such areas as school development, teacher training, in-service training, and IT services. It also publishes materials on school-related matters. Its target groups include teachers and teacher trainees, headmasters and school inspectorates as well as parents, school children, and kindergarten personnel.

A teacher has been appointed technical consultant for Frisian (*Landesfachberater für Friesisch*) under the auspices of the IQSH whose duties include supervising the programme of in-service training for Frisian teachers. Seminars are organized for Frisian teachers in which they discuss matters of current interest and exchange materials and experience. A further teacher has been seconded part-time to the IQSH, who is responsible for the further development of Frisian in school. Her duties include collecting and developing teaching materials, including some for computer use, organising the Frisian inter-school reading contest, developing the inter-Frisian teachers' network, and generally advising teachers of Frisian. In the primary and intermediate school in Lindholm there is a Frisian workshop where a teacher, also under the auspices of the IQSH, collects and develops Frisian teaching materials, and supports Frisian teaching in kindergarten and adult education.

In the following sections the use and position of Frisian at each level of the education system in North Frisia is discussed in more detail.

## 2 Pre-school education

### *target group*

Provisions for children up to the age of 6 constitute pre-school education. These provisions are not part of compulsory education. The institutions providing pre-school education are in general day nurseries (up to the age of 3) and kindergartens (ages 3-6). On 1<sup>st</sup> August 1996 a federal law came into force that guarantees all children the right to attend kindergarten.

### *structure*

In kindergarten young children can develop language competence, creative aptitudes, and especially social abilities, and they are prepared for school. The responsibility for the kindergartens usually lies with the municipalities and such public organizations as the church, although some are also privately run. They are financed partly by the state, the local district council, the municipality, the institution responsible for the kindergarten, and by parental contributions.

### *legislation*

The system of pre-primary education is based on a law relating to children in nurseries and day-care institutions (Gesetz zur Förderung von Kindern in Tageseinrichtungen und Tagespflagestellen [Kindertagesstättengesetz – KiTaG]) of 12<sup>th</sup> December 1991, last changed on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2006.

Reference is made to Frisian in the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages where Schleswig-Holstein has accepted the obligations under Article 8, paragraph 1, sub-paragraph (a)(iii) “to apply one of the measures provided for under i [to make available pre-school education in the relevant regional or minority languages] and ii [to make available a substantial part of pre-school education in the relevant regional or minority languages] above at least to those pupils whose families so request and whose number is considered sufficient”, and (iv) “if the public authorities have no direct competence in the field of pre-school educa-

tion, to favour and/or encourage the application of the measures referred to under i to iii above”.

#### *language use*

The only use of Frisian at pre-school level used to be in the occasional private initiative where young mothers formed a play-group using Frisian. Then in 1991 the committee responsible for Frisian under the aegis of the Schleswig-Holstein Parliament initiated a project to promote the acquisition of Frisian in kindergarten and primary school. This project, which ran from August 1993 until July 1996, proved to be very successful and resulted in the introduction of Frisian into further kindergartens.

Problems facing Frisian in kindergarten are the lack of a legal framework and a lack of resources to secure an adequate representation of Frisian in pre-school education, such as funding and teachers. Furthermore there is no mechanism systematically ensuring the provision of pre-school education in North Frisian in all places where this is desired.

There is little research available pertaining to language use in kindergarten in North Frisia, this being restricted basically to the above-mentioned project “Frisian in kindergarten” and a partial treatment in the occasional thesis written during a course of studies. Most teaching is, however, through the medium of German, although other languages are also sometimes used, e.g. Low German and English.

#### *teaching material*

Teachers generally develop their own materials, and working groups have been formed under the auspices of the local Frisian associations and/or the Frisian Council for this purpose. The workshop in Lindholm mentioned above also provides material, and the North Frisian Institute in Bredstedt published some files with teaching material that had been translated from West Frisian into four North Frisian dialects in 2002.

*statistics*

In October 2005 there were 119 institutions of pre-school education in North Frisia accommodating 5,059 children. Today there are 15 kindergartens using Frisian as a language of communication to a greater or lesser degree with approximately 500 children.

### 3 Primary education

#### *target group*

The primary school in Schleswig-Holstein caters for pupils aged 6-10 (grades 1-4). There are also school kindergartens (Schulkindergärten) for children who have reached school age but who are not yet sufficiently mature to attend school.

#### *structure*

In the primary school children are taught to work independently, to accept responsibility for their own actions, and to make demands on themselves. They learn to bring tasks to a conclusion, to organize their own time, and to cooperate with other children. Each child's development is monitored, not only with respect to results, but also with respect to the amount of effort invested and the child's individual progress. Demands and steps in learning are adjusted to the child's capabilities, thereby motivating children to take on new challenges.

The first two grades of primary school form one pedagogical unit and can take up to three years, depending on the individual child's needs. In the first three grades teachers assess each child's development in reports, and it is not until the fourth grade that marks are given. The school report halfway through the fourth grade includes a recommendation relating to the type of secondary school considered most suitable for the child. This is, however, not binding and parents can decide themselves which secondary school their child should attend.

#### **Special education**

Education for children with a handicap or with learning or behavioural difficulties is provided by special schools. Integration of disabled children into the ordinary school system has been possible since 1990 and has shown an increase over the past few years. In North Frisia there were 9 schools

for special education (primary and secondary level) catering for 934 pupils in the school year 2004/05. None of these schools teaches Frisian.

The primary school curriculum also applies to special schools except for schools for learning disabled and mentally retarded children.

### *legislation*

The school system in Schleswig-Holstein is based upon the Education Act of 2<sup>nd</sup> August, 1990, last changed on 21<sup>st</sup> March, 2006 (Schleswig-Holsteinisches Schulgesetz).

Frisian was first used in education on the island of Sylt in 1909. This, however, was soon partly forbidden by the Prussian Ministry of Education. A decree dated 19<sup>th</sup> February 1925 allowed Frisian to be taught in school in order to help prevent the decline of the language. A further decree of 19<sup>th</sup> May 1928 specified certain measures for the teaching of Frisian. Following the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War a decree of 17<sup>th</sup> October 1947 principally reinstated the principles laid down before the war, emphasising, however, that Frisian classes were voluntary. The next legislation was not until 1986 when the curriculum allowed Frisian to be taught as part of German lessons, which was then extended in the curriculum of 1997 to allow Frisian to be included in all subjects.

For primary education Schleswig-Holstein has accepted under Article 8 of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages the obligation under paragraph 1, subparagraph (b)(iv) “to apply one of the measures provided for under i [to make available primary education in the relevant regional or minority languages; ii. to make available a substantial part of primary education in the relevant regional or minority languages] to iii [to provide, within primary education, for the teaching of the relevant regional or minority languages as an integral part of the curriculum] above at

least to those pupils whose families so request and whose number is considered sufficient”.

As from the school year 2006/07 English is being introduced into the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade in state primary schools as an obligatory subject with two hours a week. As from the school year 2007/08 the additional English lessons will be both in the 3<sup>rd</sup> and the 4<sup>th</sup> grade. At present English is being offered in the 4<sup>th</sup> grade on a more informal level. What effect the introduction of English in primary schools will have on Frisian tuition is as yet unknown. It would, however, appear that the question as to how further languages (Frisian, Low German, Danish) might be combined with English in primary school has not been adequately discussed.<sup>6</sup> The main problem here might be a lack of resources.

#### *language use*

The language used in state schools is generally German. On a more informal basis some pupils and/or teachers may use Frisian and/or Low German.

#### **Frisian as a subject**

Frisian used to be taught mostly in the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grades but has now been extended to a fair degree to include the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grades. In general there are one or two lessons a week but in 5 cases up to four lessons a week. The total number of lessons given each grade in the 23 schools teaching Frisian are: 1<sup>st</sup> grade = 19, 2<sup>nd</sup> grade = 29, 3<sup>rd</sup> grade = 39, 4<sup>th</sup> grade = 35.

Frisian can only be taught on a voluntary basis. There is, however, the suggestion to have Frisian made available as an optional subject in the normal curriculum.

To encourage the use of Frisian inter-school reading competitions (Vorlesewettbewerb) are held every four years in most Frisian dialects, both for primary and secondary

schools. The latter stages, especially the grand finale, are well covered by the media.

### **Frisian as a medium of instruction**

Frisian is rarely used as a medium of instruction outside Frisian lessons except in the Danish-Frisian school in Risum which uses the three languages of Danish, Frisian, and German. This is also the reason why this school has a special status. There was, however, a successful experiment on bilingual education in Fahretoft in 2005 where for a short period of time mathematics was taught through the medium of Frisian.

### **Teachers**

The teachers of Frisian can be divided into categories according to various criteria: a) those with mother-tongue and those with acquired linguistic competence, b) those who are trained teachers and those who have had no formal training, and c) those trained teachers who have studied Frisian and those who have not. There is no research available concerning the Frisian competence of the teachers in North Frisia.

### *teaching material*

In general Frisian teachers have to make their own material, but in more recent years material has been published that was produced by a group of teachers as well as the material mentioned in the section “Pre-school education”, which is also suitable for primary education and which the North Frisian Institute in Bredstedt translated from West Frisian. Further support comes from the workshop in Lindholm (cf. p. 14) and the IQSH. University scholars have also published a number of school materials. Finally, there are the meetings of the Frisian teachers where they also exchange materials and ideas.

Teaching materials are generally financed through public funds that the Frisian Council administers and/or with the help of the Frisian associations.

*statistics*

There are 58 state and 13 private primary schools in North Frisia. Of the state schools 15 are combined with intermediate schools and 6 with secondary modern schools. In the school year 2005/06 there was a total of 7,701 pupils in private and state primary education.

Frisian is taught in 22 primary schools (state and private) as well as in the primary section of the school on Heligoland. These are practically all the schools in the actual language area including some villages where Frisian is scarcely used any longer in daily life. There were 1,280 pupils participating in Frisian lessons in the school year 2005/06.

## 4 Secondary education

*target group* Secondary education in Schleswig-Holstein caters for pupils aged 10-19 (grades 5-13), although the actual time spent in secondary education depends on the type of school attended.

*structure* Four different types of school are responsible for secondary education. In the three-tier system the grammar school (Gymnasium) is attended by pupils aged between 10 and 19 with nine grades, the secondary modern school (Realschule) caters for pupils aged between 10 and 16 (six grades), and the intermediate school (Hauptschule) for pupils aged between 10 and 15 or 16 (five or six grades). The comprehensive schools (Gesamtschulen) represent an alternative system that integrates all three types of school previously mentioned.

*legislation* As with primary education, secondary education in Schleswig-Holstein is based upon the Education Act of 2<sup>nd</sup> August, 1990, last changed on 21<sup>st</sup> March, 2006 (Schleswig-Holsteinisches Schulgesetz).

For secondary education Schleswig-Holstein has accepted under Article 8 of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages the obligation under paragraph 1, subparagraph (c)(iv) “to apply one of the measures provided for under i [to make available secondary education in the relevant regional or minority languages; ii. to make available a substantial part of secondary education in the relevant regional or minority languages] to iii [to provide, within secondary education, for the teaching of the relevant regional or minority languages as an integral part of the curriculum] above at least to those pupils who, or where appropriate whose families, so wish in a number considered sufficient”.

*language use*

The language used in state schools is generally German. On a more informal basis some pupils and/or teachers may use Frisian and/or Low German.

**Frisian as a subject**

Frisian is taught in 2 grammar schools (in Niebüll in the grades 5 and 6, and in Wyk on the island of Föhr in the grades 5, 12, and 13), one secondary modern school, 4 intermediate schools (including 2 private schools), and in the secondary section of the school on Heligoland with a total of 31 lessons.

One problem is that Frisian is generally only offered as an additional subject, outside the core curriculum and with very limited weight in the assessment of the general school performance. Hence there is little incentive for pupils to avail themselves of this possibility.

A working group was set up in 2004 with the Schleswig-Holstein Commissioner for Minority Issues, and representatives of the supervisory school authorities, the IQSH, and the Frisians, providing a basis for long-term planning. Initiatives resulting from here are a working group that has just completed preparing a curriculum for Frisian in the grades 7-10, and a second working group planning a text book for these grades. It is hoped that it might thus be possible to offer Frisian in secondary schools as an official optional core subject.

A third initiative was a project that started on the island of Sylt in August 2005 encompassing both a secondary modern and an intermediate school. Here pupils in two study groups (*Arbeitsgemeinschaften*) in the 5<sup>th</sup> grade were taught in Frisian for two hours a week. It was hoped that the project, which was subject to evaluation by the school authorities, could be continued up to the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grades. At

the end of the school year 2005/06 the project came to an end, partly due to structural problems. It is, however, hoped that a further project might be possible in the future, using the experience gained hitherto.

### **Frisian as a medium of instruction**

Frisian is scarcely used as a medium of instruction except in the Danish-Frisian school in Risum where Frisian is an explicit medium of instruction.

*teaching material* In general the Frisian teachers have to make their own materials. However, as already mentioned, a working group has been constituted under the aegis of the IQSH with the aim of providing materials for the grades 7-10.

*statistics* In North Frisia there are 6 state grammar schools, 18 secondary modern (17 state and 1 private), 41 intermediate schools (28 state and 13 private) of which 3 are combined with secondary modern schools, 7 with secondary modern and primary schools, and 26 with primary schools, and 2 private comprehensive schools. In the school year 2005/06 there was a total of 12,879 pupils in private and state secondary education.

## 5 Vocational education

### *target group*

Vocational education is for students who have completed their initial school training and who wish to continue to gain basic or technical qualifications for a particular trade or field of employment.

### *structure*

Vocational education covers various types of vocational training:

- a) The “Berufsschule” prepares students after leaving school for an apprenticeship and accompanies them through it. Teaching takes place one or two days a week or in blocks. Students attend a Berufsschule until they have completed an apprenticeship or have come of age. They can acquire a leaving certificate equivalent to the intermediate school or secondary modern school-leaving certificate, or a certificate entitling them to attend a Fachhochschule (cf. chapter 6).
- b) The “Berufsfachschule” gives students a full-time vocational training lasting two or three years.
- c) The “Fachoberschule” qualifies students after completing an apprenticeship for a place in a Fachhochschule. Prerequisite is in general a secondary modern school-leaving certificate. Full-time teaching takes one year, part-time teaching two years.
- d) The “Berufsoberschule” further develops the knowledge and abilities of students with the secondary modern school-leaving certificate and at least a two-year apprenticeship or five years working experience, and qualifies the students to attend a university. The full-time course lasts two years, the part-time course four years.
- e) The “Fachgymnasium” qualifies students with an above average secondary modern school-leaving certificate to attend university or to start a comparable training course. The full-time course takes three years.

- f) The “Fachschule” gives students with the intermediate or secondary modern school-leaving certificate further training after completing their initial training and at least one year’s work experience. The full-time course generally lasts two years. After one year the students receive a certificate equivalent to the secondary modern school-leaving certificate, after two years it is possible to gain a certificate entitling the student to attend a Fachhochschule.

Frisian was introduced into the College for Social Pedagogy (Fachschule für Sozialpädagogik) in Niebüll in February 2003, where students can take Frisian as an optional subject. At present 12 students are studying Frisian three hours a week.

*legislation*

Vocational education in Schleswig-Holstein is based upon the Education Act of 2<sup>nd</sup> August, 1990, last changed on 21<sup>st</sup> March, 2006 (Schleswig-Holsteinisches Schulgesetz).

No obligation has been accepted for vocational education under Article 8 of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages.

*language use*

The language used in vocational education is generally German.

*teaching material*

The teacher in the College for Social Pedagogy uses materials made available by the Frisian institutions, e.g. the Frisian Council, and some she makes herself.

*statistics*

In the school year 2005/06 there were 11 schools of vocational education in North Frisia with 6,816 students (2 Berufsschulen, 2 Berufsfachschulen, 1 Fachoberschule, 2 Fachgymnasien, 2 Fachschulen and 2 others).

## 6 Higher education

### *structure*

Higher education includes higher professional education (Fachhochschule) and university education.

Frisian language and literature can be studied at the University of Kiel as a main and a subsidiary subject for a Masters Degree (M.A.) and Doctorate (Dr. phil.). The University of Kiel is also preparing the introduction of B.A. and M.A. courses, which are due to come into effect in the winter semester 2007/08.

Research is conducted in the Department of Frisian Studies at the University of Kiel, including the North Frisian Dictionary Centre (Nordfriesische Wörterbuchstelle), focusing primarily on lexicography, dialectology, grammatical theory, sociolinguistics, and European linguistic minorities. There are two full time members of staff responsible for teaching and research. A further member of staff is working on a research project (dictionary of Old Frisian), and some language courses are given by externals on an hourly basis.

Following the retirement of the professor of Frisian Studies in Flensburg in September 1996, the chair was cut. Tuition was then by means of teaching assignments on an hourly basis. By means of compensation an honorary professorship for the “History and Historical Regional Studies of North Frisia” (Honorarprofessur für die Geschichte und die geschichtliche Landeskunde Nordfrieslands) was awarded in 2000. More recently two part-time lecturers have been appointed, each with the remit to teach one course and to write a thesis.

In both locations the number of students enrolled for Frisian is relatively small (Kiel 41, Flensburg 16), but there is also a fair number who attend courses without actually studying the subject as such.

*legislation*

Tertiary education is governed by the Law Concerning the Institutes of Further Education and the University Clinical Centre in Schleswig-Holstein of 4<sup>th</sup> May 2000 (Gesetz über die Hochschulen und Klinika im Lande Schleswig-Holstein), last changed on 10<sup>th</sup> December 2004 (Gesetz zur Änderung des Hochschulgesetzes). A new law on tertiary education has been drafted and is due to come into effect on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2007. The Decree on the First State Examinations for Teachers (Landesverordnung über die Ersten Staatsprüfungen der Lehrkräfte) of 5<sup>th</sup> October 1999, a revised version of which was published on 11<sup>th</sup> September 2003, and later changed on 14<sup>th</sup> September 2004, states that students studying to become teachers of German at the Universities of Kiel and Flensburg are obliged to take a course in either Frisian or Low German as part of their studies.

Although the linguistic situation in North Frisia and on Heligoland differs from the rest of Schleswig-Holstein, the only separate regulation partially for Frisian is a decree on the appointment of teachers during the professional training period (Landesverordnung über die Einstellung in den Vorbereitungsdienst von Laufbahnen der Lehrerinnen und Lehrer) of 16<sup>th</sup> June 2004, which states that 60% of the training posts for primary and intermediate schools (Grund- und Hauptschulen) can be reserved for certain subjects lacking teaching staff, such as Frisian.

For tertiary education Schleswig-Holstein has accepted under Article 8 of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages the obligation under paragraph 1, subparagraph (e) “to provide facilities for the study of these languages as university and higher education subjects”.

*language use*

The official language in higher education is German. Other languages can be used for teaching if the circumstances warrant it. There is, however, no official ruling on this matter.

*teacher training*

Teacher training is provided at the Universities of Kiel and Flensburg. In Kiel students first take a course of studies that lead to the first State Examination. In Flensburg students take two courses of studies, leading first to a B.A. and then to an M.A. degree (see below). There then follows a two-year period of practical training that is divided into two parts: the acquisition of teaching experience in school and participation in training courses organised by the IQSH (cf. p. 13) This ends with the second State Examination.

The IQSH has appointed a supervisor (Studienleiter) for Frisian so that student teachers can be trained to teach the language. He is responsible for primary, intermediate, and secondary modern schools. Problems do, however, sometimes arise with respect to the location for training as it is, for example, difficult to post a teacher trainee on the North Frisian islands. Thus teacher trainees are expected to transfer their knowledge from one dialect area to another. One teacher trainee was, however, given a training post on the island of Sylt in 2003.

**Primary training**

Teacher training in Frisian at the primary level is provided at the University of Flensburg. Until recently students here studied two subjects, one of which could be Frisian. Frisian could also be studied as a supplementary third subject, either in an “Erweiterungsstudium” comprising a full course of studies, or as an “Ergänzungsstudium” consisting of a reduced course of studies. Students who enrolled up to the winter semester 2004/05 are allowed to complete their course of studies under this system.

In the winter semester 2005/06 the University of Flensburg introduced a new course system in accordance with the Bologna Declaration of 1999, leading to a Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) in Mediation Studies (Vermittlungswissenschaften).

Here students study two subjects and take further courses in more general studies. As it was not possible to offer a full course in Frisian Studies, Frisian can now only be studied as part of German Studies, encompassing two modules therein. Furthermore, as stated earlier (cf. p. 29), all students of German are obliged to take a course in Frisian or Low German as one module in their studies.

The B.A. degree is designed to last six semesters and gives students a general qualification. Prospective teachers then follow a further course of studies lasting two semesters for primary, intermediate, and secondary modern schools, and four semesters for special schools, leading to a Master of Arts (M.A.) degree. This is equivalent to the earlier first State Examination.

### **Secondary training**

Teacher training at the secondary level is provided at the Universities of Kiel and Flensburg. In Kiel students are trained for grammar school and secondary modern school. They are required to study two main subjects, and Frisian can be chosen as a supplementary third subject, either in an “Erweiterungsstudium” or an “Ergänzungsstudium” (see above).

In Flensburg students are trained for the secondary modern and the intermediate school. Following the initial B.A. course of studies, they take an M.A. course for the respective teaching qualification, as described above. There are also courses of studies leading to a teaching qualification for vocational schools, but these have not yet been converted to the B.A./M.A. structure.

*statistics*

There are four state and three private institutes of higher professional education in Schleswig-Holstein providing education for some 17,400 students, one academy of fine arts and one conservatory with some 600 and 450 students respectively, and three universities with a total of approximately 28,000 students (summer semester 2005). There are no institutes of higher education in North Frisia. As shown above, some provision for Frisian exists in Kiel and Flensburg.

## 7

**Adult education**

High unemployment, the demand for greater mobility, a rapidly changing employment market, and continuing developments in technology, information and communications systems provide a need for adult education and further training.

*structure and  
language courses*

Schleswig-Holstein proves an exception in Germany as it has no law pertaining explicitly to adult education. Thus reference has to be made to § 9 of the constitution, which guarantees the right to adult education. The law “Bildungsfreistellungs- und Qualifizierungsgesetz” of June 7<sup>th</sup>, 1990 also recognizes the right to adult education and the institutions offering such education. All employees in Schleswig-Holstein are, for example, entitled to up to five days paid leave p.a. to participate in adult education courses. It is, however, possible that this law may be changed in the near future.

Adult education is provided by the “Volkshochschulen” (centres of adult education) and the “Kulturring” (cultural associations) although the latter are restricted to the former Duchy of Schleswig. The “Volkshochschulen” are either run by the local municipality, or they are private organizations recognized by the state (eingetragener Verein). They are principally financed by the “Land”, the local district, the municipality, and by participants’ fees. A “Kulturring” is an organization consisting of the various cultural institutions in a municipality or an independent cultural organisation.

The training sector (Berufsorientierte Weiterbildung an Volkshochschulen) offers a wide range of courses (e.g. computers, commerce, languages, and social work) with the possibility of gaining further qualifications.

In the education sector it is possible to gain the school-leaving certificate for intermediate and secondary modern schools as well as acquiring the right to attend a Fachhochschule.

Another means of adult education are the evening classes at grammar school (Abendgymnasium) leading to a higher school-leaving certificate.

People who are over the age of 19 and who have been working for at least three years or who already have a professional qualification, and who have the school-leaving certificate for the secondary modern school (Realschulabschluss) or similar can attend evening classes at a grammar school. The courses usually last three, at the most four years and end with an examination for the school-leaving certificate for grammar schools (Abiturprüfung). There are three schools offering such courses in Flensburg, Kiel and Lübeck. In the school year 2005/06 there were 349 pupils attending such classes. Frisian is not used in any of the courses.

### **Frisian courses**

Frisian courses are held by Frisian associations, the Volkshochschulen, the Kulturringen, and private individuals. In the winter of 2005/06 some 180 people took part in 17 language courses of which five were run by Frisian associations, eight by Volkshochschulen, two by Kulturringen (partly in conjunction with the Danish evening school), and two by private individuals.

In addition to the courses mentioned here, the Friisk Forining holds each autumn a week's "Frisian Autumn High School" (Friisk Harfsthuuchschölj) in which young and old take part together in sundry activities solely through the medium of Frisian.

- language use* German is generally used in all courses except in language courses where the target language may also be the medium.
- statistics* In Schleswig-Holstein there are 156 centres of adult education, of which 12 are situated in North Frisia. Some 450,000 people attended a large variety of courses in Schleswig-Holstein in 2005 of whom 14,966 (3,3%) were enrolled in North Frisia. There are 33 “Kulturringen” in the “Kreis Nordfriesland”.

## **8 Educational research**

Apart from the very limited research in connection with the project mentioned under Frisian in kindergarten (cf. chapter 2), practically the only work available on Frisian in education is either documentary or historical in nature, or has been conducted by students in connection with a thesis. There is, however, a dire need for comprehensive research on Frisian in education as a prerequisite for developing a language planning concept based partly on education.

Despite the lack of scientific research, valuable information can be gained from the minority reports published by the Schleswig-Holstein Parliament each legislative period as well as from the reports compiled by the Federal Ministry of the Interior in connection with the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages and the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, which are well complemented by the reports submitted by the respective expert committees.

## 9

**Prospects**

With the advent of the Council of Europe's two conventions, viz. the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages and the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, a new era of minority politics and thus of minority languages in education was introduced. Now reports are compiled at regular intervals, allowing a critical appraisal of developments. These reports, together with the surveys published by parliament in Kiel each legislative period, give a good general overview of the state of the art. They are, however, more structural and quantitative in nature, describing the working groups and counting the number of pupils participating in Frisian tuition, and say little about more qualitative aspects of education, e.g. the evaluation of teaching. They are also not scientific reports and thus cannot compensate the need for more detailed scientific research in the field, and indeed the need for a regular detailed report on advances made in minority language education, as set out under Article 8 (i) of the European Charter. The reports do, however, have the advantage that minority languages remain on the political agenda.

Some problems that have been identified with respect to Frisian in education are a deficient legal framework and the lack of adequate resources. Thus, for example, the Frisians do receive financial support from public sources, but a good part of it is restricted to project funding, endangering continuity. There is also the need for more precise planning.<sup>7</sup> There is no overall concept for Frisian in education, incorporating the results of international research in this field, and embedded in a more general concept of language planning for Frisian as a whole. Nor is there sufficient scientific accompaniment of Frisian in education, as shown by the dearth of scientific research in this field. The negative effect of cutting the Frisian professorship in Flensburg in 1996 has in the course of time become quite evident here.

Two more recent problems are the possible consequences of the report published by the Regional Court of Auditors in Kiel on Frisian in education, and the introduction of English in primary education. In both instances it will be interesting to see developments.

### **Pre-school**

These past years have shown an encouraging growth in the number of pre-school groups using Frisian. However, the lack of a legal framework and resources are causing problems, and it is difficult to say how long a movement can be sustained without such support.

### **Primary and secondary education**

One problem still facing Frisian in primary and secondary education is the lack of qualified teachers. Thus the situation of Frisian Studies at the Universities of Kiel and Flensburg will partly determine the future of Frisian in school.

On a more encouraging note, recent initiatives taken by different working groups for Frisian are providing a more solid base for the subject.

### **Vocational and adult education**

A positive development is that Frisian has now been introduced in the Fachschule in Niebüll in the context of vocational education. In adult education Frisian courses remain popular.

### **Higher education**

In higher education it is uncertain what effect the introduction of the B.A. and M.A. courses will have. In Flensburg it has led to the abandonment of Frisian as an independent course of studies, whereas in Kiel it is hoped that it will still be possible to study Frisian in different configurations.

**I 0 Summary statistics<sup>8</sup>****Education in North-Frisia**

<b>type of education</b>	<b>number of schools in North Frisia</b>	<b>enrolment</b>
<b>pre-school</b>	119	5,059
<b>primary</b>	71	7,701
<b>special</b>	9	934
<b>general secondary</b>	67	12,879
<b>secondary vocational</b>	11	6,816
<b>outside North Frisia</b>		
<b>higher colleges</b>	(9)	(18,450)
<b>universities</b>	(3)	(28,000)

**The development of Frisian in school**

<b>school year</b>	<b>82/83</b>	<b>83/84</b>	<b>84/85</b>	<b>85/86</b>	<b>86/87</b>	<b>87/88</b>	<b>88/89</b>	<b>89/90</b>	<b>90/91</b>	<b>91/92</b>
<b>teachers</b>	14	12	13	19	20	18	22	21	23	22
<b>schools</b>	18	21	26	33	35	35	36	38	36	35
<b>pupils</b>	574	536	592	839	819	740	912	908	948	912
<b>lessons</b>	74	79	84	128	142	129	149	153	153	140

<b>school year</b>	<b>92/93</b>	<b>93/94</b>	<b>94/95</b>	<b>95/96</b>	<b>96/97</b>	<b>97/98</b>	<b>98/99</b>	<b>99/00</b>	<b>00/01</b>	<b>01/02</b>
<b>teachers</b>	23	23	22	23	22	23	24	23	27	29
<b>schools</b>	37	36	34	32	28	26	28	27	27	25
<b>pupils</b>	1,003	992	1,055	1,106	1,155	1,133	1,250	1,295	1,321	1,343
<b>lessons</b>	149	148	142	150	144	143	154	144	143	148

<b>school year</b>	<b>02/03</b>	<b>03/04</b>	<b>04/05</b>	<b>05/06</b>
<b>teachers</b>	29	26	28	30
<b>schools</b>	25	25	26	28
<b>pupils</b>	1,473	1,343	1,362	1,466
<b>lessons</b>	154	133	143	153

**Lessons and pupils according to type of school in the school year 2005/06**

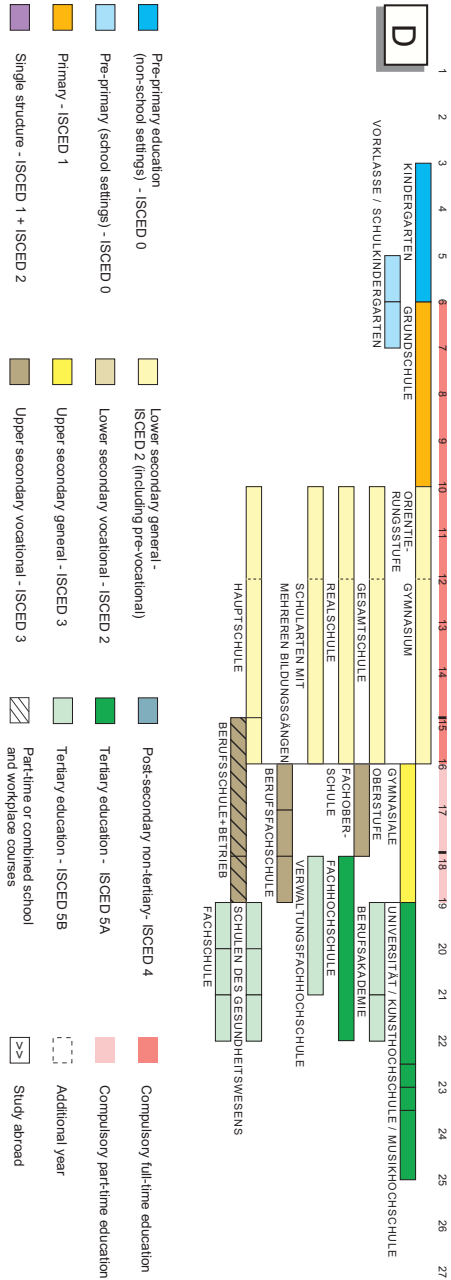
	<b>Grundschule</b>	<b>Hauptschule</b>	<b>Realschule</b>	<b>Gymnasium</b>	<b>Danish Schools</b>
<b>lessons</b>	115 = 75.2%	15 = 9.8%	4 = 2.6%	4 = 2.6%	15 = 9.8%
<b>pupils</b>	1,242 = 84.7%	84 = 5.7%	11 = 0.8%	56 = 3.8%	73 = 5%

(Grundschule = primary school, Hauptschule = intermediate school, Realschule = secondary modern school, Gymnasium = grammar school)

## Endnotes

- 1 Bundesministerium des Innern (2003). *Second Report submitted by the Federal Republic of Germany under Article 15, paragraph 1, of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages*. [Bonn], p. 165.
- 2 Landesrechnungshof Schleswig-Holstein (2005). Friesischunterricht an den öffentlichen Schulen sowie an den privaten Schulen der dänischen Minderheit. In: *Bemerkungen 2005 des Landesrechnungshofs Schleswig-Holstein mit Bericht zur Landshaushaltsrechnung 2003*. Kiel, pp. 198-205.
- 3 Landesrechnungshof Schleswig-Holstein (note 2), p. 204.
- 4 Bundesministerium des Innern (2006). Appendix II: Comments of the Federal Republic of Germany on the report of the Committee of Experts presented to the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe in accordance with Article 16 of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, p. 137.
- 5 Usually the schools run by the Danish minority are called private schools (private Schulen). However, the term “alternative schools” (Ersatzschulen) is also used, e.g. in the report “Minderheiten- und Volksgruppenpolitik in Schleswig-Holstein 2000-2005” published by the “Land” Schleswig-Holstein in 2003, p. 53.
- 6 The problem had already been identified in the Second Report on the European Charter, p. 167.
- 7 cf. Oeter, S. and Walker A. (2006). The Case of the Federal Republic of Germany. In: Spiliopoulou Åkermark, S., Huss, L., Oeter, S., and Walker A. (eds.). *International Obligations and National Debates: Minorities around the Baltic Sea*. Mariehamn: Åland Islands Peace Institute, pp. 268ff.
- 8 Statistics after: Walker (2001) and subsequently updated, using the statistics compiled each year for the Ministry of Education and Women’s Issues.

# Education system in Germany



Source: Eurydice.

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### **Educational advice centre and in-service training**

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e-mail: [iqsh@iqsh.de](mailto:iqsh@iqsh.de)  
[www.iqsh.de](http://www.iqsh.de)

### **Adult education centres**

Landesverband der Volkshochschulen  
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e-mail: [lv@vhs-sh.de](mailto:lv@vhs-sh.de)  
[www.vhs-sh.de](http://www.vhs-sh.de)

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### **North Frisian associations**

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Fax: 04661-9008127  
e-mail: pust@friesenrat.de  
www.friesenrat.de

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e-mail: nfverein@t-online.de  
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<http://www.nordfriiskinstituut.de>

## Other websites on minority languages

- Mercator*                    **[www.mercator-central.org](http://www.mercator-central.org)**  
 General site of the Mercator-project. It will lead you to the three specialised centres:
- Mercator  
 Research Centre*            **[www.mercator-research.eu](http://www.mercator-research.eu)**  
 Homepage of the Mercator European Research Centre on Multilingualism and Language Learning. The website contains the series of regional dossiers, a database with organisations, a bibliography, and many related links to minority languages.
- Mercator-Media*            **[www.aber.ac.uk/~merwww/](http://www.aber.ac.uk/~merwww/)**  
 Homepage of Mercator-Media. It provides information on media and minority languages in the EU.
- Mercator-  
 Legislation*                **[www.ciemen.org/mercator](http://www.ciemen.org/mercator)**  
 Homepage of Mercator-Legislation. It provides information on minority languages and legislation in the EU.
- European  
 Commission*                **[http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/lang/languages/langmin/langmin\\_en.html](http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/lang/languages/langmin/langmin_en.html)**  
 At the website of the European Commission information is given on the EU's support for regional or minority languages.
- Council of Europe*        **<http://conventions.coe.int>**  
*European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages* (1992) and *Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities* (1995). European Treaty Series ETS 148 and 157, Strasbourg.
- Eurydice*                    **[www.eurydice.org](http://www.eurydice.org)**  
 Eurydice is the information network on education in Europe. The sites provides information on all European education systems and education policies.

*EBLUL*

**[www.eblul.org](http://www.eblul.org)**

Homepage of the European Bureau for Lesser Used Languages. This site provides general information on lesser used languages as well as on projects, publications, and events.

*Eurolang*

**[www.eurolang.net](http://www.eurolang.net)**

Eurolang provides coverage of the concerns felt in the minority language regions in the European Union. Eurolang is EBLUL's news service.

## **What can the Mercator Research Centre offer you?**

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The Mercator European Research Centre on Multilingualism and Language Learning is part of an information service and research network of three centres. They provide reliable and in-depth information on regional or minority languages in co-operation with many experts throughout Europe. Mercator-Media resides at the University of Wales (Aberystwyth) and Mercator-Legislation at Ciemen (Barcelona).

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Through the Question and Answer Service we can inform you about any subject related to education in minority or regional languages in the European Union.

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