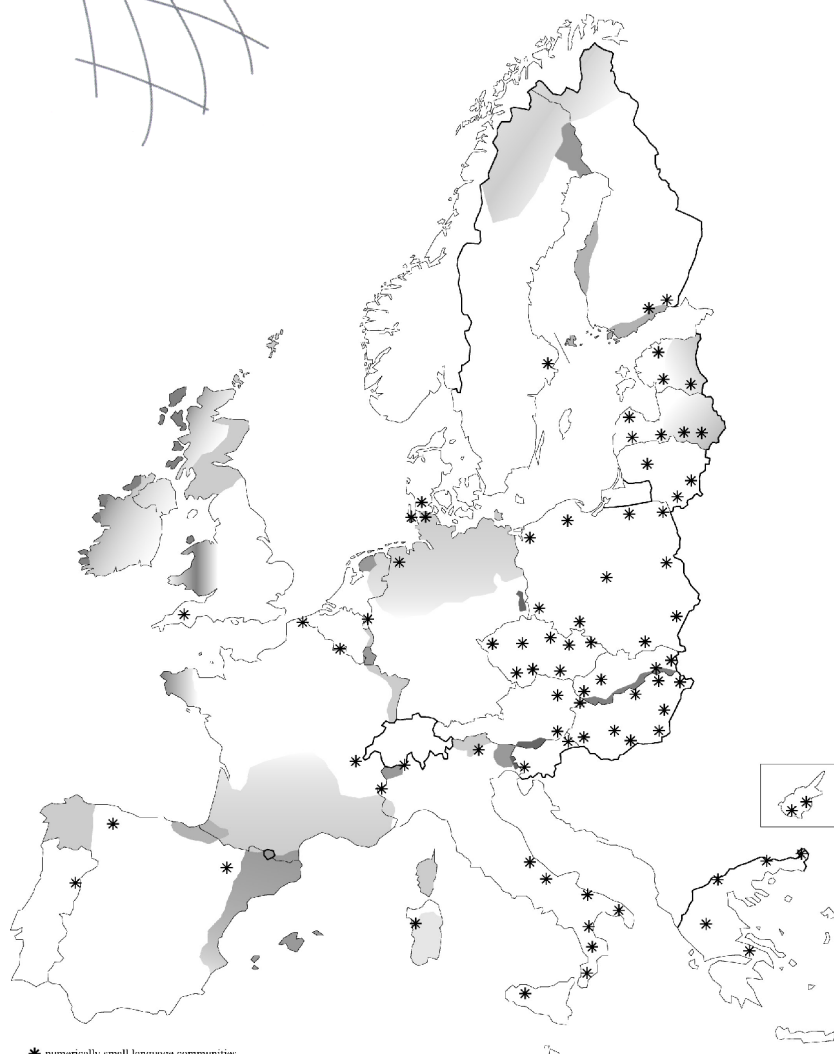




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German

The German language in
education in Belgium



* numerically small language communities

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Tsjerk Bottema has been responsible for the publication of the Mercator regional dossier series from 2004 onwards.

Glossary

G UW:	<i>Gemeinschaftsunterrichtswesen</i>
OS UW:	<i>offizielles subventioniertes Unterrichtswesen</i>
FS UW:	<i>freies subventioniertes Unterrichtswesen</i>

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Foreword

background

For several years now, Mercator-Education has made efforts to achieve one of its principal goals: to gather, store and distribute information on minority language education in European regions. Regional or minority languages are languages which differ from the official language of the state where they are spoken and which 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.

The success of this series of regional dossiers has shown a need for documents stating briefly the most essential features of the educational system of regions with an autochthonous lesser used language. With the establishment of regional dossiers we intend to meet this need.

aim

Regional dossiers aim at providing concise descriptive information and basic educational statistics about minority language education in a specific region of the European Union. This kind of information, such as features of the educational system, recent educational policies, division of responsibilities, main actors, legal arrangements, support structures, and also quantitative information on the number of schools, teachers, pupils and financial investments, can serve several purposes.

target group

Policy makers, 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 provision in their own region.

link with EURYDICE

In order to link these regional descriptions with those of national educational systems, it was decided to follow the format used by EURYDICE, the European education inform-

ation network in the European Union. EURYDICE provides information on the administration and structure of education in member states of the European Union. The information provided in the regional dossiers is focussed on language use at the various levels of education.

contents

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

1

Introduction

The introduction outlines some general political, linguistic and educational aspects of the federal state of Belgium. It is recommended that those readers who already have a background in the linguistic and political situation of Belgium proceed to those parts of the introduction that deal with education in Belgium and in the German-speaking Community of Belgium in particular.

The structure of Belgium as a federal state

To understand the situation of the autochthonous German population of Belgium it is necessary to shed light on the rather intricate structure of Belgium as a federal state.

Founded in 1830 as a unitary state ruled by a French-speaking elite, Belgium now consists of three Communities and three Regions. The 'division' of the state into communities and regions is the result of a slow, consensus-based process of federalization that was triggered shortly after the Second World War by civic upheaval resulting from language-related socio-economic differences between

Dutch and French speakers (in Flanders and Wallonia, respectively).

With the first constitutional reform of 1970/71 the Flemish, Walloon and – to a lesser degree – the Brussels region were created and appointed mainly economic powers. The Dutch, the French and the German Cultural Communities that were also created were changed into language communities with the second constitutional reform of 1980. Since then the Flemish, the French and the German-speaking Communities have each had their own government, executive power and authority in matters relating to individuals (e.g. health care and child welfare), as well as direct power over cultural matters. With the reform of 1988/89 the Communities were appointed school authority (with the exception of the determination of beginning and end of compulsory education attendance, the conditions for issuing certificates and diplomas, and the control over the pension scheme for teaching staff, all of which remained federal competences). The constitutional reform of 1993/94 officially turned Belgium into a federal state (Art. 1 of the Constitution), and a final phase of the constitutional reform in 2001 had consequences mainly for decision-making in the Brussels region (cf. Alen 1995 and Alen 2002 for matters related to the Belgian constitutional reforms).

The slow, consensus-based process of reshaping a unitary state into a federal one has undoubtedly benefited largely from the language-regulating principle of territoriality. Until the beginning of the 1960s, the linguistic principle in effect in Belgium, with rare exceptions, was the personality principle. It was not until the linguistic legislation of 1962/1963 that a precise demarcation of linguistic territories was drawn up and language use in education, administration and the workplace (i.e. between employers and employees) was officially regulated. Since then it has been possible to distinguish different linguistic territories as a function of linguistic planning:

The territories of Flanders and Wallonia that make up the two largest monolingual regions of the country. They are subject to strict monolingualism, with Dutch to the north of the linguistic boundary and French to the south.

2. The bilingual territory of the capital, Brussels. Here Dutch and French each have their own linguistic infrastructure, which in principle prevents one language from being favored to the detriment of the other.

3. Monolingual territories provided with linguistic facilities for the minority (for example, Fouron-Voeren, Comines-Komen, Mouscron-Moeskroen). Because the establishment of a strict linguistic boundary cannot perfectly account for the minorities located on one side or the other of this boundary, Belgian language policy includes protective measures for the Dutch, French, and German border minorities (Old Belgium North, New Belgium Malmédy). The territory officially recognized as German-speaking in eastern Belgium (New Belgium Eupen, New Belgium St. Vith) is equally affected by this ruling, which means that French enjoys certain rights in this German-language sector.

4. Monolingual territories without particular rights for autochthonous speech communities. Despite the fact that wide-ranging protection was assured even to very small minority groups, certain sectors still exist which are deprived of any kind of linguistic protection. This is notably the case for German linguistic territories in Belgian Luxembourg like South Old Belgium (near the town of Arlon/Arel) and Central Old Belgium (near Boholz/Beho north of the Grand Duchy). In these regions French was instituted as the sole administrative language.

Despite all the negative criticism that fell to the principle of territoriality in the past, it can now be affirmed that Belgium owes a certain socio-political and economic stability to the principle of territoriality. The vehemence and emotion of linguistic conflicts have subsided in the past few years since implementation of the linguistic laws. Some

– mainly political – commotion is only to be heard when in the course of the still ongoing state reform the transfer of additional competences to the regions and the communities is discussed. One could state that the legal establishment of an inner Belgian language frontier permits systematic progression for the three languages in question, French, Dutch and German, and their dialects within their own territories. The overview, however, also reveals the limitations of the territoriality principle, the systematic application of which could well be the source of new conflicts, notably in those areas in which German has no official status (cf. Nelde 1997 on matters relating to language conflict).

*The German
minority speech
communities in
Belgium*

The situation of German as an autochthonous language in Belgium is highly heterogeneous. To clarify this, the German parts of Belgium are usually divided into areas known as Old Belgium and New Belgium in scientific literature. It should be noted, however, that this classification ('Old Belgium' vs. 'New Belgium') is rather unfamiliar to most of the inhabitants of the designated areas as well as to people living outside of them. But because of its clarity this classification is highly useful from a purely linguistic point of view and therefore is used in this context.

Old Belgium, with an estimated total of about 40,000 German speakers, has belonged to the Belgian state since it was founded in 1830 and comprises (since 1839):

1. Old Belgium North, bordering the Netherlands (more specifically, the province of Limburg) to the north, the Flemish Fouron area to the northwest, Wallonia to the west, and the officially German-speaking area of New Belgium Eupen to the east;
2. Old Belgium Central, a small area that lies to the southwest of St. Vith and includes one village (Bocholz) and several hamlets;

3. Old Belgium South that consists of the Arlon (Arel) region along the western border of Luxembourg and borders France to the south.

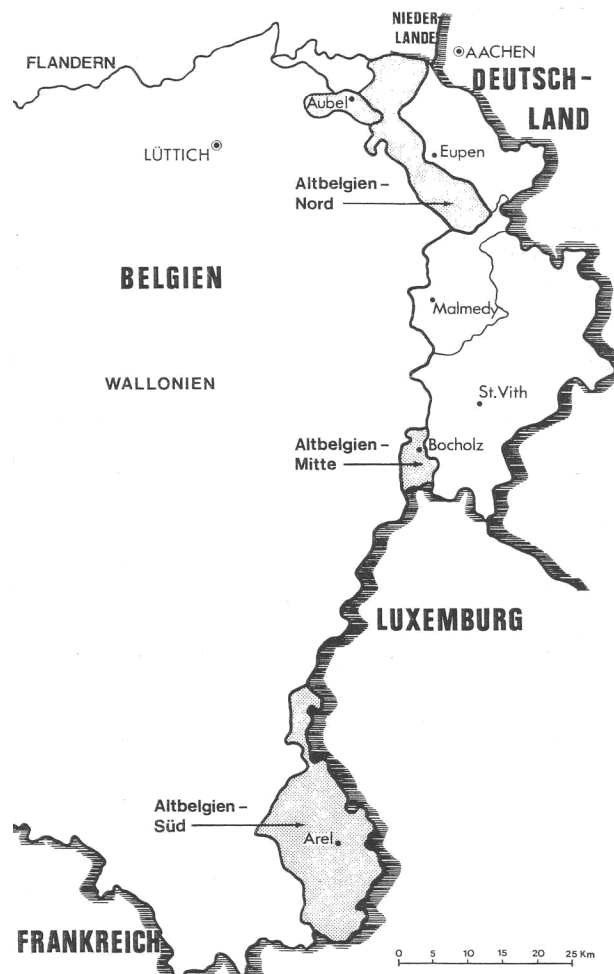
These areas do not form a single, contiguous unit and are not administratively connected to the eastern region, known as New Belgium, which was ceded by Prussia to Belgium following the First World War. The eastern region consists of:

1. New Belgium Eupen, which borders Germany to the east and Old Belgium North to the west;
2. New Belgium Malmedy, which lies to the northwest of St. Vith, is Walloon and has only a small German-speaking minority;
3. New Belgium St. Vith that also borders Germany to the east, New Belgium Malmedy to the northwest, Wallonia to the west and Luxembourg to the south.

The officially German-speaking area of Belgium covers nine municipalities: the four municipalities of Eupen (Kel-mis, Lontzen, Raeren and Eupen) and the five municipalities of St. Vith (Bütgenbach, Büllingen, Amel, St. Vith and Burg Reuland). New Belgium Eupen and New Belgium St. Vith together form the German-speaking Community of Belgium. Like the areas of Old Belgium, New Belgium Malmedy is part of the French Community of the federal state of Belgium.

Population Statistics

According to data for the year 2001 provided by the national institute of statistics, Belgium has 10,263,414 inhabitants on a surface area of 30,545 km². Of this population, 5,952,552 live in the Flemish region (ca. 44% of the total surface area of Belgium), 964,405 in the Brussels region (ca. 0.5 % of the total surface area of Belgium) and 3,346,457 in the Walloon region (ca. 55% of the total



The German-speaking areas in Belgium (Nelde 1979, 8)

surface area of Belgium). 71,036 inhabitants of the Walloon region belong to the officially German-speaking Community, which covers a surface area of 853.6 km². About

84% of these 71,036 inhabitants are Belgians, about 16% are foreigners. The number of French-speaking residents in the German-speaking community amounts to about 5%. In New Belgium Malmedy, the number of German Belgians is now estimated below 20% of the total population of 11,265 inhabitants.

Because the German population in Old Belgium is not officially recognized and does not have the same legal protections and recognition (the so-called 'facilities'), it is far more difficult to provide any exact information on their number. For the whole of Old Belgium, Verdoodt (1968: 5f.) mentions a number of 30,000 to 50,000 German-speaking inhabitants. Using refined research methods, Nelde (1979a) arrives at the following share of German speakers (most of whom are dialect speakers): 70% in Old Belgium North, 77.5 % in Old Belgium Central and 66% in Old Belgium South. These percentages correspond to a number of (far) less than 40,000 German Old Belgians. According to Héraud (1989: 32) the total population of the German areas of Old Belgium corresponds more or less to the number of inhabitants of New Belgium. Nevertheless only half of them are familiar with a German vernacular.

Judging by various sources, recent fieldwork and experts' estimates, we can conclude that the total number of German Belgians is about 100,000.

Language status

Because of geographical, historical and political circumstances both New and Old Belgium show a clear multilingual situation that – in accordance with the legislative principle of monolingual language areas – does not present itself as institutional bilingualism but predominantly as individual di- or triglossia. Accordingly, the speakers have two or more linguistic codes and effect code-switches in many daily situations without difficulty. Thus a particular ('diglossic') structure, contrary to the initial impression of bilingualism, can be seen in this apparently voluntary

choice of domains: apart from the few unimportant contacts in which all idioms are interchangeable, the linguistic domains of each idiom are clearly distinct from one another and most often are mutually exclusive. The choice of language is determined by so many situational, contextual and other extra-linguistic factors that code switching is unlikely outside this structure.

The diglossic situation in Old Belgium where French is the official language can be characterized as follows:

- (1) Old Belgium North: Besides standard French, Lower Franconian/Limburgian dialects are also spoken
- (2) Old Belgium Central: Besides standard French, Moselle Franconian dialects are also spoken
- (3) Old Belgium South: Besides standard French, Moselle Franconian dialects are also spoken

New Belgium shows a triglossic situation:

- (1) New Belgium Eupen: Besides standard German (as the official language) Low Franconian/East Limburgian dialects (in the western part) and Ripuarian dialects (in the eastern part), as well as standard French, are also spoken.
- (2) New Belgium Malmedy: Besides standard French (as the official language), standard German and Walloon dialects are also spoken.
- (3) New Belgium St. Vith: Besides standard German (as the official language), Ripuarian dialects (in the northern part) and Moselle Franconian dialects (in the central and southern part), as well as standard French, are also spoken.

The concept 'standard German' is used in the description of the linguistic situation in New Belgium. To grasp the meaning of this concept, however, one must consider a few noteworthy facts that concern the German language in general. First of all it must be noted that in contrast to

Slavic or Romance languages, the perception of a standard form, certainly in the case of German as a pluricentric Germanic language, is – in a minor way even for German Germans – far less visible, in no way dependent on a standardizing measure, and represented as a standard palette with variants fluctuating away from the norm so that the tension between a linguistic norm and a linguistic change can probably only be described as a continuum-based polarity. The difficulties in describing or categorizing the struggle towards a standard multiply even further under the influence of a foreign pattern of communication. It is mainly the attempt at trying to come to terms on various grammatical levels with a socio-cultural, political and economic world foreign to the German language that leads to variations that clearly leave their mark in countries in which German is a minority language. In the case of New Belgium it can be noted that due to ongoing language contact alongside the Germanic-Romance language border, standard German is characterized by French, and to a much lesser extent, Dutch influences. These influences, the result of language contact in very many areas of life, can be seen especially on the semantic and stylistic level, where loans and calqued expressions are used along with ‘Belgicisms’ and regionalisms that have no counterpart in standard German as used in Germany.

*Status of language
education*

As mentioned above, the linguistic legislation of 1962/63 regulated the language of instruction in schools according to the principle of territoriality. The law of 30 July 1963 on language use in education prescribes Dutch as the language of instruction in Flanders, French in the Walloon part of the country and German in the officially German-speaking part of the country. However, for kindergarten and primary education there are exceptions from this law for those communities with special language facilities (as listed in Art. 3 of the laws of 30 July 1963). This implies that – according to Art. 6 of the law of 30 July 1963 – the French minority in the German-speaking community has a right to

French as a language of instruction in kindergarten and primary school. The German minority in New Belgium Malmedy (officially French speaking while part of the French Community) has a right to German as a language of instruction in kindergarten and primary school, and so has the German minority in Old Belgium North. Whereas the German minority in New Belgium Malmedy still uses German as a language of instruction, the German minority in Old Belgium North has never applied to do so, partly because the linguistic awareness among Old Belgians is very low, and partly because of the complexity of the application procedure.

With the transfer of school authority to the Communities (including the regulation of language use in education) the law of 1963 is being thwarted. As can be read in Art. 129 of the coordinated Belgian constitution of 1994, the Flemish and the French Communities have the power to regulate language use in education, excepting those communes that according to the law of 1963 have a right to language facilities, thus including the German areas of Old Belgium North and New Belgium Malmedy in the French Community. For the Flemish and French Communities this means that the law of 1963 can be modified with the restriction that alterations can never include the communes with language facilities. The German-speaking Community, however, has power over language use in education, including education provided for that part of the population that has a right to language facilities (Art. 130 of the coordinated Belgian Constitution of 1994, including changes made in 1997). This means that the German-speaking Community also has authority to change the law of 1963 with respect to that part of the population that, according to the law of 1963, has a right to language facilities.

Up until now, the Communities have acted in accordance with the territoriality principle, even in new decrees that are gradually reshaping the legal framework of the educa-

tional landscape, meaning that the positions of Dutch, French and German as languages of instruction in the Flemish, French and German-speaking Communities respectively, have remained sound. It is to be expected that the Communities will continue to act in accordance with the territoriality principle in matters of education. However, this will not prevent them from experimenting with the use of more than one language (the territorial language) as the language of instruction in some schools. The French and German-speaking Communities in particular show interest in experimenting with alternative forms of language education (such as bilingual education and immersion programs).

The French Community launched a decree in 1998 on the organization of primary schools (*Décret portant organisation de l'enseignement maternel et primaire ordinaire et modifiant la réglementation de l'enseignement*) that enables forms of immersion education in primary schools that are disposed toward it. As German is one of the languages in addition to Dutch and English that can be used in immersion education in combination with French, this could – at least theoretically – be advantageous for the position of German in the Old Belgian areas.

In the German-speaking Community the government is reshaping the legal framework and shows interest in completely modifying the 1963 law on language use in instruction. Soon after the German-speaking Community was granted the authority to regulate language use in education, it launched a decree on the task of the school boards and the pedagogical and organizational requirements with which schools must comply.¹ This decree was followed by a decree on primary education² and a decree on attainment goals of kindergartens and key competences for primary education and the first level of secondary education, with the exception of vocational secondary education.³ A decree concerning the competences for the second and third levels

of secondary education, as well as the competences for vocational secondary education, will follow soon. And since 2003 a decree is under discussion that aims at reshaping language transmission and language use in instruction.⁴ Clearly the government of the German-speaking Community is trying to match the legal framework to recommendations made by a special committee on language use in education operating within the assembly of the German-speaking Community. This special committee organized a survey on language use and language competence in the schools of the German-speaking Community and discussed the results with experts of Belgian and German universities. The report of the 'Ausschuss für Sprachengebrauch im Unterrichtswesen' [Commission for Language Use in the Educational System] gives valuable information on the current situation of language use in education in the German-speaking Community.⁵

Educational system

A distinction is made in the whole of Belgium among three types of schools according to who organizes them. There are schools that are financed and organized by the Communities (*Gemeinschaftsunterrichtswesen*), schools that are financially supported by the Community but organized and partly financed by a province or a municipality (*offizielles subventioniertes Unterrichtswesen*), and confessional (mainly Catholic) or non-confessional schools that receive financial support from the Community but are neither organized by the Community nor by a province or a municipality (*freies subventioniertes Unterrichtswesen*). Direct responsibility of a school or a group of schools, regardless of the type of school, lies with the school board (*Schulträger*) that transfers daily management of the school or schools to a director (mostly assisted by a secretary and sometimes assisted by an adjunct).

Regarding the different levels of education, a distinction is made between pre-school, primary, secondary and higher education. Primary schools as organizational entities

usually include pre-school education ('kindergarten') and primary education. Children can attend kindergarten on a voluntary basis when they are three years old or will reach the age of three before December 31st of the school year in which they enroll in kindergarten. Primary education is compulsory, starts at the age of 6 and encompasses three cycles of two years each. Once a child has a leaving certificate of primary education or has reached the age of 12 he can attend a secondary school. Three types of secondary education are differentiated: general secondary education, technical secondary education and vocational secondary education. Like primary education, secondary education encompasses three cycles of two years each. Secondary school also is compulsory, usually starts at the age of 12 and ends at the age of 18 (details on compulsory education can be found in the law of 29 June 1983 on compulsory education). Vocational education offers pupils the opportunity for part-time education from the age of 15 onwards (except for vocational education where an additional year can be organized in the third cycle). Pupils with learning difficulties have the option of attending special schools (*Sonderschulen*), of which there are four at primary and one at secondary level.

General secondary and technical secondary education mainly lead pupils to higher education. The German-speaking Community has only short-term higher education (i.e. higher education over a period of three years). Short-term higher education is limited to one nursery training school and two teacher training schools (training kindergarten teachers and primary school teachers). Students interested in long-term higher education (i.e. higher education over a period of at least four years) are referred to institutions in the French or Flemish Communities or have to go to neighboring countries. The adult education that is offered within the German-speaking Community enables people to deepen or refresh certain skills acquired

through secondary and/or higher education or gives them the opportunity to get acquainted with new subjects.

Public and private

As mentioned above (cf. point 6) a distinction is made in the whole of Belgium between the following types of schools according to who organizes them: *Gemeinschaftsunterrichtswesen* (GUW), *offizielles subventioniertes Unterrichtswesen* (OSUW), and *freies subventioniertes Unterrichtswesen* (FSUW). The following table gives an overview of the types of schools, the number of branches (*Niederlassungen*), and the total number of pupils in each type of school for pre-primary, primary and secondary education in the school year 2002-2003 in the German-speaking Community.⁶

	GUW		OSUW		FSUW		Total	
	schools	pupils	schools	pupils	schools	pupils	schools	pupils
Pre-primary education	7	388	57	2220	2	194	66	2802
Primary education	8	1128	56	4396	2	513	66	6037
Secondary education	4	2230	0	0	6	2684	10	4914

Administration

Before the reform of 1988/89 the educational administration of the German-speaking Community largely depended on the *Ministère de l'éducation nationale* that took care of education for the French-speaking part of Belgium. Now the French Community has its own educational administration (the *Administration générale de l'Enseignement et de la Recherche Scientifique* as part of the ministry of the French Community), and so has the German-speaking Community: the department of education (*Abteilung Unterrichtswesen*) is part of the ministry of the German-speaking Community, located in the town of Eupen. The department of education assists the government and the assembly of the German-speaking Community (*Rat der Deutschsprachigen Gemeinschaft*) in reshaping and extending the legal frame-

work for the educational landscape in the German-speaking Community and covers issues such as the remuneration of teaching staff and subsidies of the schools. In 2003 the German speaking Community reserved 55.13% of its total budget for education (including payment of the teaching staff and maintenance of infrastructure).

One of the outcomes of the joint work of the government, the assembly and the department of education in the German speaking Community is the above-mentioned decree of 2002 that fixes the attainment goals for kindergartens (*Entwicklungsziele*) and the key competences (*Schlüsselkompetenzen*) for primary education and the first level of secondary education. This decree complements the decrees on the primary schools enacted in 1998 and 1999.

According to the decrees of 1998, 1999 and 2002, each primary and secondary school must write a pedagogical school project (*Schulprojekt*) in which the pedagogical intentions, principles and objectives are sketched out. In addition, each kindergarten must develop a working plan (*Aktivitätenplan*). Primary and secondary schools have to provide a detailed study program (*Studienprogramm*) and, for each subject within each of the three levels, they must act upon a detailed curriculum (*Lehrplan*) provided by the organizing bodies that takes into account the attainment goals and the key competences as described in the decree of 2002. The working plans, study programs and detailed curricula are either created new or follow the pattern of existing models. The 'procedures' as described here are highly comparable to those in the French and the Flemish Communities.

Inspection

In the German-speaking Community schools are evaluated in two ways. According to Art. 68 of the decree of 1998 schools must conduct an internal evaluation organized every three years by the school board. In the course of this evaluation, the school board commissions the pedagogical

council to conduct the evaluation so as to ensure that the school fulfils all the (pedagogical) requirements. In addition to the internal evaluation, an external one must be organized every five years (Art. 72 of the decree of 1998). To allow an external evaluation to take place, the government has its own working group (Art. 70 of the decree of 1998). This group includes a representative of the ministry of the German-speaking Community, a representative of the school board, two representatives from a school of higher education and/or a university and one representative of the inspection (Art. 73).

According to the decree of 2003, the German-speaking Community has 4 to 6 inspectors at its disposal. They are to follow up on the activity plans of kindergartens, the study programs, and the curricular plans of primary and secondary schools to see if the attainment goals and the key competences are properly realized. As previously mentioned, another task of these persons is to give pedagogical advice to teachers when requested. That is why inspectors are called 'pedagogical inspectors/counselors': they have a counseling task as well as an evaluative one.

According to Art.25§1 of the proposal of a decree on language use in education, an inspector (either still active or retired) could be asked to act as a chairman of the examination board testing the language competence of persons who apply for a job as teacher in one of the schools of the German-speaking Community.

Support structure

As pointed out above, schools must provide for a pedagogical school project. As stated in Art. 75 of the decree of 1998, the wording of the pedagogical project (including, among other things, the pedagogical concept, organization, structure, and evaluation criteria) is the task of the pedagogical council of each school that – according to Art. 49 of the decree of 1998 – consists of the director of the school, a representative of the school board and at least five

members of the teaching staff. Other tasks of the pedagogical council include also the purchase of didactic materials, planning and coordination of pedagogical projects and planning of training seminars for teachers (cf. Art. 51 of the decree of 1998 for more details). It is the teachers (or groups of teachers) who see to it that curricular plans for each of the subjects included in the study program are followed. These curricular plans provide information on the goals, contents, key competences, and practical organization of each subject. As stated in the decree of March 24th 2003 regarding the tasks of the pedagogical inspection and counseling in the German-speaking Community,⁷ teachers can always ask for pedagogical counseling provided by pedagogical counselors. For gathering and exchanging subject information, the government of the German-speaking Community quite recently launched an 'online learnbox'.⁸ Besides useful information on school addresses and links to diverse websites it is meant to be an information exchange platform for the teaching staff in the German-speaking Community in the near future. Now that the catalogues of the different (multimedia) libraries are online, this too should facilitate the quest of teachers for interesting textbook and audiovisual materials.⁹

Furthermore there are three psycho-medical centers (one for each type of school: GUW, OSUW, FSUW) that provide counseling in matters of intellectual, psychological, physical and social development of pupils. Here again the support structures are highly comparable to the ones in the French and Flemish Communities.

Bilingual education forms

With its proposal of a new decree on language use in education, the government of the German-speaking Community is on the verge of providing a legal framework for forms of 'bilingual education'. According to this proposal, activities in a foreign language will have to be organized every day in kindergarten, with a minimum of 50 minutes and a maximum of 200 minutes per week. The proposal

further gives primary schools the option of using the first foreign language as a medium of instruction for such subjects as ‘arts and crafts’ and ‘psychomotor and physical activities’. Secondary education will offer the option of using the first foreign language as a language of instruction in up to 50% of the classes in the second and third level and in up to 65% of the classes in the first level¹⁰ (not including foreign language classes). By enacting this decree the government would in a certain way merely regulate the existing heterogeneous ‘bilingual’ practices that are documented in the above-mentioned report of the ‘Ausschuss für Sprachengebrauch im Unterrichtswesen’. It remains to be seen if the decree will succeed in homogenizing the heterogeneous landscape. By giving the schools a great amount of freedom to organize forms of bilingual education, the government seems to have chosen the same way as the French Community with its decree on the organization of primary schools, in which schools are free to provide total or partial immersion education (in Dutch, English or German, cf. Blondin 2000 and 2001 for full details). This immersion possibility could be advantageous for German in Old Belgium. However, judging by statistics on language immersion in the Walloon provinces provided by Blondin (2001, 43) the role of German in immersion programs seems to be highly limited. Because recent extensive research on the use of German in education in the Old Belgian areas is lacking, it is not possible to go into detail here. That is also the main reason why further discussion of the use of German in education will be restricted to the situation in the German-speaking Community.

2

Pre-school education

Target group

Pre-school education applies to children between three and six years old. Although pre-school education is voluntary, statistics show that about 98% of all three-year-olds in the

German-speaking Community regularly attend a kindergarten organized by one of the three organizing bodies.

Structure

Pre-school education is usually organized in two or three groups or classes according to age categories. In some, mainly rural, areas, children of different ages are grouped in one class, a so-called 'composed class'. In this case different age groups have the same teacher.

The main tasks of the kindergartens in the German-speaking Community can be found in the decree of 1999 on the primary schools. According to Art. 16 of this decree the activity plan of each kindergarten should encompass (1) activities focusing on the mother tongue and a foreign language; (2) psychomotor activities; (3) activities stimulating the child's creativity; (4) mathematical and scientific activities; (5) activities aiming at the acquisition of practical and social skills. The precise attainment goals required for each of these activities are described in the decree of 2002.

Language use

The language used in kindergartens is German, except for those kindergartens that have been established for the French minority within the German-speaking Community, where the language of instruction is French. The attainment goals related to the mother tongue cover both active and passive skills. Besides improving their mother tongue skills, children in some kindergartens are also exposed to a first foreign language (French in the German kindergartens and German in the French kindergartens). Here the attainment goals mainly focus on listening and comprehension, and in a minor way also on speaking (more details can be found in the decree of 2002). Teachers try to reach the attainment goals by utilizing the first foreign language in a playful way during activities such as story-telling, singing and puppet theatre. Exposure to the first foreign language ranges from 20-30 minutes per week to 60-90 minutes per week, depending on the kindergarten. The fact that in some

kindergartens no first foreign language exposure takes place might have something to do with the fact that some staff show reluctance to confront children with a foreign language at a young age, and/or with the fact that the decree of 1999 includes first foreign language in the attainment goals for kindergarten but is not supported by the law of 1963 on language use, because that law states that first foreign language starts in primary school. This will, however, be solved once the proposed decree of 2003 on language use in schools has been passed. This decree will oblige kindergartens to organize activities in the first foreign language every day in such a way that the total time devoted to the first foreign language amounts to at least 50 minutes but does not exceed 200 minutes per week. The reason to expose children to a foreign language from kindergarten onwards is to increase their interest in language. Pedagogical and linguistic research have clearly shown the benefits of early exposure to a second language if this is done in a pedagogically proper way. This also means that the language competence of the teaching staff must meet certain quality standards. Because the first foreign language (French or German) is now 'taught' by the class teacher who sometimes lacks confidence in the language, some schools plead for regulations that would allow them to employ special foreign language teachers whose mother tongue is the first foreign language, or – if this should not be possible – to ascertain a better consideration of the first foreign language in teacher training within the German-speaking Community.

Teaching material

Kindergarten teachers usually gather and prepare their own materials.

Statistics

The following table gives an overview of the number of kindergartens within the German-speaking Community in the school year 2002-2003, the number of children attending these kindergartens, and the language of instruction used in the kindergartens.¹¹ A distinction is made between

the types of schools according to who organizes them:
GUW, OSUW, and FSUW.

language of instruction	GUW		OSUW		FSUW	
	number of kindergartens	number of pupils	number of kindergartens	number of pupils	number of kindergartens	number of pupils
German	5	260	51	2029	2	194
French	2	128	3	128	0	
Total		388		2220		194

3 Primary education

Target group

Primary education is compulsory and usually applies to children between the ages of six and twelve. Under certain circumstances, the possibility exists of enrolling at the age of five or seven and/or of extending primary education by one or two years.

Structure

Primary school covers six classes divided into three cycles of two years each. In most cases the classes are organized according to age groups. In rural areas sometimes there are not enough pupils to organize six separate classes, so children of different age groups form a composed class.

According to Art. 17 of the decree of 1999 the following subjects must be considered in primary education: (1) mother tongue, (2) psychomotor and physical education, (3) arts and crafts, (4) mathematics, (5) world studies (including history and natural sciences), (6) first foreign language, (7) religion or non-confessional ethics, (8) learning abilities and (9) social behavior, whereby both (8) and (9) are to be considered 'interdisciplinary' (*fachübergreifend*). The key competences are regulated by the decree of 2002 and it is the responsibility of each school to meet these requirements.

Language use

According to the law of 30 July 1963, German is the medium of instruction in primary schools in the German-speaking Community, except for those schools meant for the French-speaking inhabitants of the German-speaking Community, in which French is the medium of instruction. The subject 'German as a mother tongue' especially focuses on deepening the skills that have been acquired in kindergarten. This means that German as a mother tongue envisages the gradual improvement of writing skills, basic language skills such as correct use of grammar, oral communication skills and reading skills and the improvement of oral communication skills and reading skills. Details on the key competences can be found in the decree of 2002. There are usually no major problems in meeting the standards of the decree, although some complaints are heard about the quality of the writing skills, which is said to have declined in comparison to previous years. Since most pupils as well as their teachers are members of the German-speaking Community and most teachers have attended a teacher training school in the German-speaking Community, communication takes place in German, whereby today 'standard German' is the preferred language of the classroom and the use of local variants has lost ground. This does not, however, exclude the fact that the speech patterns of some teachers and pupils are locally colored.

The first foreign language in primary schools is French in German schools and German in French schools. According to the law of 30 July 1963 the subject 'German/French as a foreign language' must start in the third year of primary education and can comprise up to three periods per week in the second cycle (third and fourth year) and up to five periods per week in the third cycle (fifth and sixth year). The same law authorizes the German-speaking Community to start foreign language instruction in the first cycle of primary school with a maximum of three periods per week. It is a common practice for primary schools in the German-

speaking Community to start teaching the first foreign language in the first year. A survey of the special committee on language use of the assembly made clear that some schools even offer more than three periods in the first and second cycle. Some prefer to expose children to French during one hour on a daily basis. It should also be noted that the possibility exists of student exchange with French schools in neighboring villages of the French Community.

The key competences related to the first foreign language in primary school focus on active and passive language competences and are fixed in the decree of 2002. In about 66% of primary schools the class teacher instructs in the first foreign language. The other schools have a special French teacher. Because in a number of cases the French competence of the class teacher is insufficient, some German schools would prefer to have the option of employing French teachers, i.e. teachers whose mother tongue is French. The same applies to French schools, where the German competence of the usually French-speaking teachers is insufficient.

Apart from teaching French/German as a foreign language, according to the law of 1963, primary schools may also use French/German 'to a certain degree' as a medium of instruction. This 'degree' was specified in a Royal decree in 1966 that allowed French as a medium of instruction for up to three periods in the second, and five periods in the third cycle of primary education. The Belgian parliament failed to approve this decree, so it was never put into effect and thus – at least theoretically – every school could act at its own discretion. According to the survey of the committee on language use of the assembly of the German-speaking Community, only a few German schools use French as a medium of instruction for some subjects such as physical education and music, and in French schools the use of German as a medium of instruction apart from German as a foreign language apparently does not occur. Nevertheless

the government of the German-speaking Community seems determined to elucidate the matter of the use of French/German as a medium of instruction in German/French schools. The proposal of a decree on language use indicates a willingness to fix the number of periods devoted to mother tongue education at five and the periods devoted to the first foreign language at three in the first and second cycles, and five in the third cycle of primary education (Art. 5 of the proposal). Schools would also have the option of using French/German as a medium of instruction in connection with arts and crafts as well as psychomotor and physical activities (Art. 3, §5). By enacting this decree the government would, in a certain way, merely regulate existing practices.

Teaching material

A significant portion of the material used in primary education comes from Germany. The disadvantage is that some textbooks are knit to the German situation, which can make it difficult to obtain the right materials for the classrooms. It also happens that some parts of French textbooks are translated by the teachers themselves for subjects pertaining specifically to Belgium (national and regional history, national and regional geography). Needless to say, this has repercussions on the workload of the teaching staff. The creation of a 'learnbox' and the possibility of browsing online in several library catalogues are steps in the right direction but cannot hide the fact that teachers in the German-speaking Community still face infrastructure disadvantages in comparison with their colleagues in the French and certainly the Flemish Community.

Statistics

The following table gives an overview of the number of primary schools within the German-speaking Community in the school year 2002-2003, the number of children attending these schools and the language of instruction used in the schools.¹² A distinction is made between the types of schools according to who organizes them: GUW, OSUW, and FSUW.

language of instruction	GUW		OSUW		FSUW	
	number of primary schools	number of pupils	number of primary school	number of pupils	number of primary schools	number of pupils
German	5	809	50	4076	2	513
French	2	319	3	320	0	
Total		1128		4396		513

4 Secondary education

Target group

Secondary education usually applies to students between the ages of 12 and 18. Once a person has reached the age of 18 he is no longer bound to compulsory education (law of 29 June 1983).

Structure

Secondary education covers six years, subdivided into three levels covering two years each. The first level (*Beobachtungsstufe*) can be described as a stage, offering a large common spectrum of basic knowledge and skills. In the first level a distinction is made between a so-called A-stream (which leads to general and technical education) and a B-stream (which leads to vocational education). In the A-stream, pupils start in a first year of observation (*Beobachtungsjahr*) and afterwards move on to the second common year. Should the year of observation prove too difficult, pupils may switch to the second year of the B-stream that prepares for vocational education. This second year in the B-stream (usually referred to as the first year of vocational education) follows a first year, the so-called adaptation year (*Anpassungsjahr*), aimed at those students who had learning difficulties in primary schools but not to the extent that they had to attend a special school (*Sonderschule*). Theoretically, students from the adaptation year may still switch to the first common year within the A-stream, but they generally pass on to the pre-vocational year (*berufsvorbereitendes Jahr*) that prepares them for

practical training. The A-stream education is composed of a common curriculum (covering religion/ethics, mother tongue, mathematics, sciences, first foreign language, human sciences and physical education) and optional subjects (such as Latin, scientific activities, artistic activities and technical activities). The B-stream adaptation year is composed of a common curriculum (religion/ethics, human sciences, scientific education, technical activities, artistic activities, physical education and sports) plus some periods devoted to pedagogical support and some devoted to remedial courses. In the pre-vocational year (the so-called first year of vocational education) of the B-stream, the common curriculum covers the subjects from the adaptation year minus the technical activities. These technical activities gain more emphasis and are grouped under 'basic technical options' to introduce pupils to at least two professional fields or areas of interest. The periods devoted to pedagogical support and remedial courses continue in the pre-vocational year.

Starting at the second level (*Orientierungsstufe*), the former A-stream splits up into general and technical secondary education and the B-stream leads to vocational education. General education is meant to prepare pupils for higher education and therefore has a transitional character. Technical secondary education is subdivided into transitional technical education (*technischer Übergangsunterricht*) and qualifying technical education (*technischer Befähigungsunterricht*). Transitional technical education prepares students to continue their education in short-term or long-term higher education while also enabling them to enter the job market. Qualifying technical education prepares students for the job market while at the same time keeping open the option of continuing to study in (short-term) higher education. Vocational education (*berufsbildender Befähigungsunterricht*) prepares pupils for a practical profession, e.g. in trade, industry or craftsmanship.

The second level reduces the common core of general subjects and increases the optional components. In general education the pupils are offered a large spectrum of single basic options. In transitional technical education options are grouped, and in the German-speaking Community, the grouped options offered include only electromechanics, applied economics, social and educational sciences and informatics. In qualifying technical education the optional subjects are divided into the following different fields or 'sectors': agriculture, industry, building and civil engineering, hotel business and management and catering, clothing, applied arts, services sector, applied sciences. These grouped basic options are – by name – practically the same in qualifying vocational education, except that the sector of applied sciences is not offered.

At the beginning of the third level (*Bestimmungsstufe*) each pupil defines his course of study. Again the common syllabus is reduced, to the benefit of the optional part. In general education there are several courses including modern languages, sciences, classical education, economics, human sciences, arts and physical education. In transitional technical education pupils in the German-speaking Community continue with the grouped basic options offered in the second level. In qualifying technical education and vocational education too, the grouped basic options of the second level continue in the third level.

The possibility of enrolling in general, technical or vocational education as well as the range of optional subjects offered differs from school to school.¹³

Structure of Secondary Education

Age				
18	7th year			
DETERMINATION LEVEL (THIRD LEVEL)				
17 16	5th and 6th year of general education	5th and 6th year of transitional technical education	5th and 6th year of qualifying technical education	5th and 6th year of vocational education
ORIENTATION LEVEL (SECOND LEVEL)				
15 14	3rd and 4th year of general education	3rd and 4th year of transitional technical education	3rd and 4th year of qualifying technical education	3rd and 4th year of vocational education
OBSERVATION LEVEL (FIRST LEVEL)				
13	2nd common year			1st year of vocational education
12	Adaptation year			Adaptation year

Language use

The language of instruction is German. There is a certain degree of variation in the number of hours devoted to the mother tongue. The number of periods devoted to German in the first cycle is about 5 in all schools (with some exceptions); in the second and third cycle 5 in schools organized by the Community (*Gemeinschaftsunterrichtswesen*) and 4 in (non-)confessional schools (*freies subventioniertes Unterrichtswesen*). As can be seen in the report written by the special committee on language use, there are deviations from this norm (mainly in vocational education). The key competences related to mother tongue education in the first level of secondary education are listed in the decree of 2002 (with the exception of the key competences for vocational education). The key competences for the second and the third level will follow.

The first foreign language in secondary education – following the intention of the law of 30 July 1963 – is French. The number of periods devoted to French as a first foreign language reaches between 5 and 6 periods per week in the

first cycle, covers 5 periods in general, 4 periods in technical and 2 to 6 periods in vocational education. But again there are deviations from school to school. The key competences related to mother tongue education in the first level of secondary education are listed in the decree of 2002 (with the exception of the key competences for vocational education). The key competences for the second and the third level will follow.

As mentioned previously, the law of 1963 offers the option of using French/German 'to a certain degree' as a medium of instruction in primary education. The Royal decree of 1966 proposed that the use of French in the German schools and German in the French schools (including French/German both as a foreign language and as a medium of instruction) could comprise up to 50% in the first three years of secondary education (*Unterstufe*) and up to 2/3 in the last three years (*Oberstufe*). As the Belgian parliament failed to approve this decree, it was never put into effect and each school acts at its own discretion. The consequence is that the use of French as a medium of instruction in German schools in the German-speaking Community is very inconsistent. Some schools located in Eupen used to offer an entire program in French in secondary education although the law of 1963 only allowed for the use of French as a medium of instruction in kindergarten and primary schools throughout the whole school program. What can be noted today is that most schools seem to use French as a medium of instruction for exact sciences (mathematics, biology, chemistry). This obviously relates to the fact that pupils showing interest in exact sciences generally attend universities in the French Community and therefore it is considered advantageous to deal with these subjects and this specific vocabulary in French from the start. In other cases it is noted that the use of French as a medium of instruction sometimes depends on the individual teachers. In some cases teachers are native speakers of French and have only a limited knowledge of

German, which makes it difficult for them to use German throughout their courses. This proves that although, according to the law of 30 July 1963, teachers must prove their knowledge of German in front of an examination board or demonstrate that they have a degree from a school that is officially recognized, the system is not foolproof. The proposal of a new decree on language use in education (Art. 25 – 45 of the proposal) makes note of language knowledge and the evaluation thereof. The government attaches great value to good language competences but is at the same time aware of the fact that in some cases it might be difficult to find teachers with appropriate skills in German. Should this situation arise, the government takes responsibility for appointing a teacher who has language skills that do not meet the requirements set out in the proposed decree for a period of one year (with the possibility of renewing the contract).

According to the proposal, German remains the language of education in the German schools and should be taught with a minimum of four periods per week in general education and three periods per week in technical and vocational education. Above that schools have the opportunity to use French/German in up to 50% of the classes as a language of instruction in the second and third levels and up to 65% of the classes in the first level (the classes do not concern instruction of a foreign language). It is up to each school board to decide the number of periods and the nature of the subjects that are taught in French/German.

Again this could be seen as an attempt by the government to legally come to terms with the existing situation.

Teaching material

As in primary education, materials used in secondary school sometimes have a German origin and are adapted, by the teachers, to the Belgian situation. Sometimes French textbooks (the same as those used in secondary education in the French Community) are used in class (e.g. in mathem-

atics, physics or chemistry), whereby – depending on each individual school – pupils are taught in French or receive explanations in German.

Statistics

The heterogeneity of the secondary education situation in the German-speaking Community makes it rather difficult to shed statistical light on the use of French as a language of instruction. It is, however, possible to give an idea of the number of pupils in secondary education who – in the school year 2002-2003 – either have French or German as their ‘mother tongue’.¹⁴ A distinction is made between G UW and FSUW. There is no communal or provincial secondary education (*offizielles subventioniertes Unterrichtswesen*) in the German-speaking Community.

language of pupils	number of pupils	
	G UW (4 schools)	FSUW (5 schools)
German	1608	2423
French	622	218
Total	2230	2641

5

Higher education

Target group

Higher education in the German-speaking Community aims at those students, 18 years and older, who have a degree in secondary education and show an interest in the nursing profession or want to become a kindergarten or primary school teacher. Students with other interests must attend institutions of higher education outside the German-speaking Community.

Structure

Currently there are three institutions of higher education in the German-speaking Community. One offers training in nursing (*Krankenpflegehochschule*). The other two offer training as a kindergarten and primary school teacher (*Kindergärtner / Primarlehrer*). One of these last institu-

tions is run by the Community; the other is in private (Catholic) hands. Because the number of students at the three institutions of higher education is relatively small, plans are being made to bring the three of them together to create one institute that offers all of the training options.

The training at the three institutes takes three years, i.e. 6 semesters. Since there are no high schools offering academic training at high school or university level many youngsters leave the German-speaking Community for a certain period and go to Louvain-la-Neuve, Liège, Brussels, Verviers, Mons or Leuven where they enroll in university studies or studies of four-year higher education. Others cross the border and attend courses mainly at German universities.

The language of instruction in higher education in the German-speaking Community is German. As the students usually come from the German-speaking area, there is little problem regarding the linguistic competence of the persons enrolling for kindergarten or primary school teacher training.

Contrary to the past when primary school teachers for German-speaking Belgium were trained solely in French, today there is no serious problem of language proficiency on the part of teachers, certainly no greater than that in monolingual, majority language schools, where problems may be of a standard versus dialect nature rather than those of one standard language influencing another. The report of the committee on language use revealed that some change might be needed in the system of educating kindergarten and primary school teachers if the German-speaking Community wants the teachers to meet the criteria as set out in the proposal for a new decree on language use in education. More attention will have to be paid to competence in French as the first foreign language.

It remains somewhat awkward that students interested in a career as a secondary school teacher usually (must) attend a university (or high school) within Belgium in which French or Dutch (usually) is the language of instruction¹⁵. Even those students who want to study German at university level will have to do that – at least within Belgium – at an institution where German is taught as a foreign language and are sometimes confronted with professors strictly employing the ‘inner-German standard norm’ and as such disregarding peculiarities of the German used in the German-speaking Community in Belgium.

Statistics

The following table shows the number of students for each of the training possibilities offered in higher education in the German-speaking Community for the academic year 2002-2003.¹⁶

type of training	number of students
kindergarten teacher	38
primary school teacher	91
nursing	27

6

Adult education

Target group

Adult education in the German-speaking Community aims at people with no degree as well as people with a degree of secondary and/or higher education interested in reorienting or deepening their skills.

Structure

The German-speaking Community, which has the lowest unemployment rate within Belgium (6.8% while the average Belgian unemployment rate was 12.6% in October 2003), offers a wide range of adult education. Besides a number of private institutions that offer language education there are five institutions of *schulische Weiterbildung* controlled by the German-speaking Community: they offer a

program that covers housekeeping as well as foreign languages, accounting and informatics. The language of instruction in all these institutions is German. There is a special program that aims at vocational training of personnel in the agricultural sector intended for independent farmers and people working in the agricultural industry. There is also a job center (*Arbeitsamt*) in the German-speaking Community that offers guidance, socio-professional training programs and re-training to unemployed people. Recently the government (with help from the European Social Fund) started the so-called WIB Project (*Weiterbildung-Information-Beratung*, meaning training-information-counseling) that should help people to find training courses and job opportunities within the *Euregio Maas-Rhein* (comprising the Belgian provinces of Limburg and Liège, the Dutch province of Limburg, the German region of Aachen and the German-speaking Community of Belgium, cf. www.euregio-mr.org) and/or the Großregion (another *Euregio* that covers Saarland and Rhineland-Palatinate in Germany, Lorraine in France, the Grand-Duchy of Luxembourg and the French and German-speaking Communities in Belgium, cf. www.grossregion.net).

7

Educational research

Specific research on aspects of education in the German-speaking Community is rather rare. Usually it is part of more broadly oriented socio- or contact-linguistic studies. In this respect useful basic information on German in Belgium can be found in *Deutsch als Muttersprache in Belgien* [German as a mother tongue in Belgium] (1979b), edited by Peter Nelde. An update of certain aspects of the book is provided in *Deutsch als Umgangs- und Muttersprache in der Europäischen Gemeinschaft* [German as colloquial language and mother tongue in the European Community] (1989, edited by Rudolf Kern), in which education is one of the main themes. The disadvantage of

this book from a contemporary point of view is that it mainly contains contributions of a symposium held in 1987 and therefore does not reflect on the state reform of 1988/89 that transferred school authority to the Communities. The same applies to the report on the use of German in primary education in Belgium written by S.J. Hannahs and Peter Nelde in 1988 on the authority of the *Fryske Akademy*. The work of André Alen (a.o. 1995) as well as the article written by Gerd Henkes (2000) on the situation of the German-speaking Community on the verge of the 21st century are recommended for information on the diverse phases of state reform and the transfer of authorities from the federal level to the level of the Communities. This could serve as a good background while browsing through materials provided on the website of the department of education of the German-speaking Community¹⁷ and reading the thorough report produced by the committee on language use in education of the assembly of the German-speaking Community.¹⁸ The committee on language use has conducted the most recent survey on language use in schools within the German-speaking Community. From a scientific point of view it would be interesting to link its findings to previous (socio)linguistic findings and to kick off new research so as to keep a finger on the pulse of language education in officially German-speaking Belgium. Doing so one should try not to lose track of the situation in those areas where German is still spoken, lacks any official status and features only marginally in (scientific) literature.

8

Prospects

It is clear that the German-speaking Community of Belgium finds itself in a period of transition as far as the educational landscape is concerned. Since the German-speaking Community gained authority in matters of education with the state reform of 1989 it first made efforts

to establish a solid administration. Now that this process has reached completion, efforts are being made to gradually reshape the legal educational framework – a process that the government hopes to end within the next few years. With the proposal of a new decree on language transmission and language use in education (*Entwurf eines Dekrets über die Sprachvermittlung und den Sprachgebrauch im Unterrichtswesen* [Draft of a decree regarding placement and language use in education systems]) that will probably be passed after the elections on the level of the Communities in June 2004, the German-speaking Community has shown its determination to put an end to the confusion that has characterized the use of language in education ever since the German-speaking Community gained autonomy within the Belgian state. When this decree is passed it will surely take the schools a few years to fully adapt to the new regulations but it can be expected that the decree will prove of great help in further embedding German as the territorial language whilst leaving room for other languages (mainly French) to equip pupils with the skills needed for the linguistic reality of the language contact zone they find themselves in. As to the areas outside the German-speaking Community, it remains to be seen to what extent the theoretical possibility of using German in immersion programs will actually be put into practice. Furthering the use of German as a medium of instruction in education could be a way of preventing a further decline of German as an autochthonous language in the Old Belgian areas. As research of Nelde in the 1970s and 1980s and a recent study in Southern Old Belgium (Darquennes 2004) show, in Old Belgium the density of the population still actively using (a variety of) German is declining. Adhering to the principle of non-linearity of language shift (cf. a.o. Nelde/Weber 2002) it might be somewhat premature to predict the complete disappearance of German in Old Belgium within the next generations, but efforts explicitly aiming at a revitalization of German in these areas certainly would do no harm.

9 Summary statistics

All the statistics are based on information available at www.unterrichtsverwaltung.be. More detailed information can be found at the same address.

Number of pupils in each type of school for pre-primary, primary and secondary education in the school year 2002-2003

	GUW		OSUW		FSUW		Total	
	schools	pupils	schools	pupils	schools	pupils	schools	pupils
Pre-primary education	7	388	57	2220	2	194	66	2802
Primary education	8	1128	56	4396	2	513	66	6037
Secondary education	4	2230	0	0	6	2684	10	4914

Language of instruction in kindergarten in the school year 2002-2003

language of instruction	GUW		OSUW		FSUW	
	number of kindergartens	number of pupils	number of kindergartens	number of pupils	number of kindergartens	number of pupils
German	5	260	51	2029	2	194
French	2	128	3	128	0	
Total		388		2220		194

Language of instruction in primary school in the school year 2002-2003

language of instruction	GUW		OSUW		FSUW	
	number of primary schools	number of pupils	number of primary school	number of pupils	number of primary schools	number of pupils
German	5	809	50	4076	2	513
French	2	319	3	320	0	
Total		1128		4396		513

Mother tongue of pupils in secondary education in the school year 2002-2003

Language of pupils	number of pupils	
	GUW (4 schools)	FSUW (5 schools)
German	1608	2423
French	622	218
Total	2230	2641

Training possibilities offered in higher education in the academic year 2002-2003

type of training	number of students
kindergarten teacher	38
primary school teacher	91
nursing	27

Endnotes

1. *Dekret vom 31. August 1998 über den Auftrag an die Schulträger und das Schulpersonal sowie über die allgemeinen pädagogischen und organisatorischen Bestimmungen für die Regelschulen [Decree dated August 31st 1998, on the mission of school providers and school personnel and on the general pedagogical and organisational provisions governing mainstream primary and lower secondary schools].*
2. *Dekret vom 26. April 1999 über das Regelgrundschulwesen [Decree dated April 16th, 1999, on mainstream primary and secondary education].*
3. *Dekret vom 16. Dezember 2002 über die Festlegung der Entwicklungsziele für den Kindergarten und der Schlüsselkompetenzen für den Primarschulbereich und für die erste Stufe des Sekundarunterrichts mit Ausnahme des berufsbildenden Unterrichts und zur Abänderung des Dekretes vom 31. August 1998 über den Auftrag an die Schulträger und das Schulpersonal sowie über die allgemeinen pädagogischen und organisatorischen Bestimmungen für die Regelschulen und des Dekretes vom 26. April über das Regelgrundschulwesen.*
[Decree dated December 16th, 2002 on the establishment of developmental goals for pre-schools (kindergartens) and the key competences for primary schools and the first level of secondary schools except for vocational education and about the amendment of the decree dated August 31st, 1998, on the mission of school providers and school personnel and on the general pedagogical and organisational provisions governing mainstream primary and lower secondary schools, and of the decree dated April 26th on mainstream primary and lower secondary education].
4. *Entwurf eines Dekretes über die Sprachvermittlung und den Sprachgebrauch im Unterrichtswesen [Draft of a decree on language transmission and the use of languages in education, latest version: September 17th 2003].*
5. Downloadable under www.dglive.be/downloadables/bericht.pdf
6. Statistics based on information available at www.unterrichtsverwaltung.be
7. *Dekret vom 24. März 2003 über die Einsetzung und die Festlegung der Aufgaben der pädagogischen Inspektion und Beratung für das Unterrichtswesen in der Deutschsprachigen Gemeinschaft [Decree dated March 24th, 2003, on the establishment*

and implementation of the tasks of pedagogical inspection and counselling for the educational system in the German-speaking Community].

8. www.learnbox.be
9. cf. www.mediadg.be
10. It should be noted that this is only possible when the school also offers parallel classes where the use of the first foreign language as a language of instruction only amounts to 50% (Art.5§3 of the proposal).
11. Statistics based on information available at www.unterrichtsverwaltung.be
12. Statistics based on information available at www.unterrichtsverwaltung.be
13. A virtual visit of different (types of) schools via www.learnbox.be might help to shed light on the rather heterogeneous situation.
14. Statistics based on information available at www.unterrichtsverwaltung.be
15. Most students coming from the German-speaking Community go to a university or high school that is part of the French Community; only a minority of the students enrolls in such institutions that are part of the Flemish Community
16. Statistics based on information available at www.unterrichtsverwaltung.be
17. www.unterrichtsverwaltung.be
18. See www.dglive.be/downloadables/bericht.pdf

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Relevant laws and decrees

law of 30 July 1963	<i>Use of Languages in Education Act</i>
law of 29 June 1983	<i>Mandatory School Attendance Act</i>
Royal decree of 29 June 1984	<i>Royal Decree on the organization of the secondary school system</i>
decree of 31 August 1998	<i>Decree on the mission of school providers and school personnel and on the general pedagogical and organizational provisions governing mainstream primary and lower secondary schools.</i>
decree of 26 April 1999	<i>Decree on mainstream primary and secondary education</i>
decree of 16 December 2002	<i>Decree on the establishment of developmental goals for pre-schools (kindergartens) and the key competences for primary schools and the first level of secondary schools except for vocational education and about the amendment of the decree dated August 31st, 1998, on the mission of school providers and school personnel and on the general pedagogical and organizational provisions governing mainstream primary and lower secondary schools, and of the decree dated April 26th on mainstream primary and lower secondary education.</i>
decree of 24 March 2003	<i>Decree on the establishment and implementation of the tasks of pedagogical inspection and counseling for the educational system in the German-speaking Community</i>
proposal of decree (2003)	<i>Draft of a decree on language transmission und the use of languages in education</i>

Online sources

www.belgium.be [portal site of the Belgian government]
www.fgov.be [official site of the Belgian government]
www.senaat.be [official site of the Belgian senate, offering the full text of the Belgian Constitution]
www.vlaanderen.be [official site of the Flemish Community]
www.cfwb.be [official site of the French Community]
www.dglive.be [official site of the German-speaking Community]
www.unterrichtswesen.be [site on educational aspects in the German-speaking Community with information on legislation, school organization, statistical information, etc.]

www.staatsblad.be [site offering access to legislative text relevant to the Belgian federal state]
www.ond.vlaanderen.be [site on education in the Flemish Community]
www.ond.vlaanderen.be/edulex [site offering access to legislative text relevant to the Flemish Community]
www.cdadoc.cfwb.be/gallilex [site offering access to legislative text relevant to the French Community]
www.agers.cfwb.be [site on education in the French Community]
www.learnbox.de [site on education in the German-speaking Community, meant as an educational server]
www.mediadg.be [site offering online access to the catalogues of (multimedia) libraries in the German-speaking Community]
www.grossregion.net [site of the European *Großregion*]
www.euregio-mr.org [site of the Euregio Maas-Rhein]

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Other websites on minority languages

<i>Mercator</i>	www.mercator-central.org General site of the Mercator-project. It will lead you to the three specialized centres:
<i>Mercator-Education</i>	www.mercator-education.org Homepage of Mercator-Education; European Network for regional or minority languages and education. The site contains the series of regional dossiers, a database with organisations and bibliography and many rated links to minority languages.
<i>Mercator-Media</i>	www.aber.ac.uk/~merc/ Homepage of Mercator-Media. It provides information on media and minority languages in the EU.
<i>Mercator-Legislation</i>	www.ciemen.org/mercator Homepage of Mercator-Legislation. It provides information on minority languages and legislation in the EU.
<i>European Union</i>	http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/langmin.html At the website of the European Union an explanation is given of its support for regional or minority languages.
<i>Council of Europe</i>	http://conventions.coe.int/ <i>European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages</i> . (1992) and <i>Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities</i> (1995) European Treaty Series/Série des traités européens ETS 148 and 157, Strasbourg.
<i>Eurydice</i>	www.eurydice.org Eurydice is the information network on education in Europe. The site provides information on all European education systems and education policies.
<i>EBLUL</i>	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.
<i>Eurolang</i>	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

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