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Slovak

The Slovak language in
education in Hungary



* numerically small language communities

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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 the 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 information 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

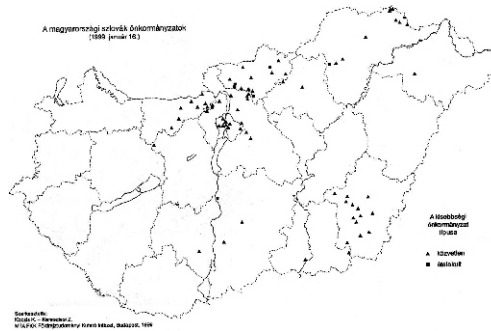
language

The ancestors of the Slovaks probably settled in the area encircled by the Carpathian mountains in the fourth and fifth centuries. This early period of Slavic migration and settlement is preserved in various geographical names of Slavic origin, such as the names of certain towns and geographical areas in Hungary.

After the conquest of the Carpathian Basin by the Hungarians (996), the whole area inhabited by Slovak ethnic communities became part of the Hungarian Kingdom. This coexistence of Slovaks and Hungarians within the framework of one and the same country continued until the time of the Paris peace treaties closing World War I. This symbiosis of almost one thousand years deeply marked the common history of both ethnic groups as well as their cultural, religious and linguistic development. In the course of history, the linguistic borderline between the two communities constantly changed. As a consequence of conscious or spontaneous migrations within the territory of the country, several Slovak linguistic islands were formed in regions originally inhabited by Hungarians, which means that these Slovak communities no longer had any direct geographical connections to the Northern parts inhabited by Slovaks.

Slovak communities living in the territory of what is now Hungary settled in the regions they currently inhabit as a result of the three latest migration waves – mostly consciously organised, but partly spontaneous. After the Ottoman domination at the end of the seventeenth century, the Central and Southern Hungarian regions formerly occupied by the Ottoman Empire became depopulated. The new owners had to tackle the problem of a complete absence of a labour force in these very fertile lowland areas.

In the first wave of colonisation, the primarily Lutheran Slovaks migrated from the territory of present-day Central Slovakia to Békés county. They were followed by Catholics from Western and Central Slovakian regions, a majority of whom settled in the mountains around Buda as well as in Pest, Komárom-Esztergom and Nógrád counties. Finally, the Slovak settlements in Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén county (East-North Hungary) developed, following both the arrival of the Greek-Catholic population from Eastern Slovakia as well as a secondary colonisation by families who had formerly settled in Békés county.



The southward migration of Slovaks from the overpopulated and less fertile Northern regions can in essence be explained by economic constraints and by the prospect of affluence in the fertile southern regions. Others were motivated by the promise of freely exercising their Lutheran religion after the Reformation. It is also important to note that, in spite of the great distance separating Slovak settlements from their Slovak homeland, these regions were parts of the same state, the Kingdom of Hungary.

At the time of the bourgeois revolutions of the nineteenth century, a flourishing relationship still existed between the Slovak homeland and the Slovak linguistic islands of Southern Hungary. Later, partly as a consequence of forced Magyarisation, cultural exchanges between the two regions gradually weakened. Because the Slovak linguistic islands went through different economic developments, the cultural gap separating them from the original Slovak-inhabited areas also grew wider and wider.

In the true sense of the word, Slovaks can be considered a national minority after the conclusion of the Paris peace treaties closing World War I. Since then, not only distance, but also state borders have separated the Slovak communities from their homeland. Between the two world wars, Hungarian governments made an open attempt to speed up assimilation of minorities living in the country's territory in order to dissolve these communities. Economic policy, church relations and education all contributed to this aim.

On the basis of earlier minority policy experiences, an agreement was concluded after World War II between Czechoslovakia and Hungary concerning the exchange of minority populations in the two countries. As a result of this process, which lasted almost two

years, the great majority of the Hungarian Slovaks some 73,000 people including most members of the elite, such as teachers, priests, literary people and actors left their residences and resettled in the then Republic of Czechoslovakia. This wave of resettlement had a decisive effect on the fate of the Slovak minority in Hungary.

The reorganisation of the remaining Slovak communities after the exchange of populations was coordinated by the Democratic Federation of Slovaks in Hungary. In accordance with the possibilities of that period, the reorganised communities developed the framework of their educational and cultural life. Getting only a minimum of support from the kin state, they tried to keep their linguistic, cultural and emotional links to the mother country alive.

After the regime changed (1990), Slovaks living in Hungary have increased their activities. Several new civil organisations were created and minority self-governments were elected at local and national level after the adoption of the Act on the rights of national and ethnic minorities,. As part of the Hungarian public administration system, these self-governments represent and protect the cultural, linguistic, educational and political interests of the Slovak minority community.

The Slovaks living in Hungary left their original linguistic environment before the development of the Slovak literary language. Due to historical events, only a few priests and clergymen maintained relations with the Slovak language reform movement, and therefore the Slovak linguistic islands continued to use their earlier dialects. The dialects used are not identical: they differ from settlement to settlement and they mirror the archetypes of the three major dialects from Western, Middle and Eastern Slovakia.

The fact that the majority of Slovaks living in Hungary belong to three different religious communities has made the situation ever more complicated and has increased the linguistic differences between them. Lutheran Slovaks living in South-East Hungary originally used a dialect from Middle Slovakia which is closest to the present-day Slovak literary language. However, until recently, Lutheran liturgy used the so-called Slovakized Czech language. In addition, printed publications constituting the basis for Slovak civilisation have reached educated readers in this language.

The dialect used in the mostly Catholic Slovak settlements around Budapest is, in general, the one used in Western Slovakia, although some communities here speak the dialect from Middle Slovakia. Thanks to more direct relations with the mother country, Catholic liturgy started using the standard literary Slovak language relatively early.

Greek-Catholic Slovak communities living in Eastern Hungary mostly use the dialect from Eastern Slovakia, which is also the language of these communities, in their religious services.

It is the literary Slovak language that is taught in education. One of its negative effects is that students do not develop strong emotional ties with this language. Schoolchildren - in the best case speaking the local Slovak dialect - learn the literary language at school almost as a foreign language, and in the long run they lose direct relations with the archaic local dialect, lacking modern terms and expressions. This is why the Hungarian language becomes increasingly dominant in their linguistic communication with parents and grandparents.

population

According to census data, the Slovak minority is one of the most quickly assimilating minority groups in Europe. Census data collected in the twentieth century show the following numbers for Slovaks living in the territory of present-day Hungary:

	1920	1930	1941	1949	1960	1980	1990	2001
People with Slovak mother tongue	141,877	104,786	75,877	25,988	30,690	16,054	12,745	11,816
People declaring Slovak minority affiliation	No data	No data	16,677	7,808	14,340	9,101	10,459	17,692
People speaking Slovak	399,176	346,053	270,248	168,192	168,872	86,148	68,852	60,664

Source: Central Statistical Office

Starting from these figures, the Slovak community estimates that it numbers about 100,000-110,000 members. With regard to the strong dual identity of the community, Hungarian minority policy usually takes into consideration these estimates in attempts to meet the community's needs.

language status No language is declared “official language” in the Republic of Hungary. According to the Constitution, „The Republic of Hungary shall protect national and ethnic minorities. It shall ensure their collective participation in public life, the promotion of their culture, the use of their mother tongue, education in their mother tongue, and the right to use their names in their mother tongue.”

The 1993 Act LXXVII on the rights of national and ethnic minorities defines the status of minority languages as follows:

Article 43

The state recognises the mother tongues of minorities as a factor contributing to community cohesion, and supports their teaching - where requested - in educational institutions which are not under the authority of minority municipal governments ...”

Article 13

Persons belonging to a minority have the right to

- a) learn, foster, enrich and pass on their mother tongue, history, culture and traditions;*
- b) participate in education and cultural development in their mother tongue;*

Article 18

(1) Public service television and radio stations - as provided for in a separate Act - will ensure that national and ethnic minority programmes are produced and broadcast on a regular basis.

(2) In territories inhabited by minorities, the government - through international contracts - will promote the reception of radio and television programmes from the kin state.

(3) Minority communities have the right to

- a) initiate the creation of the necessary conditions for kindergarten, primary, secondary and higher education in the mother tongue or 'bilingually' (i.e. in the mother tongue and in Hungarian);*
- b) establish a national educational, training, cultural and scientific institutional structure of their own within the boundaries of existing laws.*

On the other hand, Act I of 1996 on Radio and Television Broadcasting specifies which programmes may be sponsored in public service broadcasting and public broadcasting. The enumeration includes programmes that are presented in the mother

tongues of national and ethnic minorities and that present their life and culture (Art. 25.) Article 26 of the same act stipulates that:

(1) It is the obligation of public service broadcasters to foster the culture and the mother tongue of the national and ethnic minorities living in Hungary, and to provide information in their mother tongues on a regular basis. This responsibility shall be fulfilled in nation-wide broadcasting or, with regard to the geographical location of the minority, in regional or local broadcasting, by broadcasting programmes satisfying the needs of the minority, by providing subtitles in the television as required, or by multi-lingual broadcasting. The duration of national minority programmes on a national or regional aggregate for each national minority may not be less than at the date when this Act enters into force.

(2) The national self-governments of national and ethnic minorities, or in the absence thereof their national organisations, shall decide independently upon the principles of the utilisation of the broadcasting time made available for them by the public service broadcaster. Public service broadcasting agencies shall take into account the decisions of such bodies, but these decisions may not affect the contents of the programme and the editing of broadcasts.

In 1995, Hungary ratified the two most important documents of the Council of Europe regarding minority protection: the Framework Convention on the Protection of National Minorities and the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages. Hungary has undertaken to implement the optional regulations contained in Chapter III of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages in respect of six languages, including Slovak.

*status of
language
education*

Both the 1993 Act LXXIX on public education and Decree No 32/1997 (XI. 5) of the Ministry of Culture and Education (on the Issuance of Guidelines on the Pre-school Instruction of National and Ethnic Minorities and the School Education of National and Ethnic Minorities) are crucial to the status of education of, and in, minority languages in Hungary.

Article 5 of the Act on public education stipulates that “The languages to be used in education in kindergartens, schools and student hostels are the Hungarian language as well as the languages of the national and ethnic minorities. Children belonging to national or ethnic minorities may receive education in

kindergartens, schools and student hostels in their respective native languages or in their native languages and in Hungarian or solely in Hungarian - on the basis of the choice specified in the Act on the rights of national and ethnic minorities."

The present system of education in Hungary is a traditional one that has been in use for decades. New, significant education reforms have not changed this structure. Education in Hungary is compulsory by law for all children aged 6 to 16. The current structure consists of five levels in both public and private schools. The different levels are:

*education
system*

- I. pre-school - early childhood education
- II. primary education lasting 6-8 years (children aged 6-12/14)
- III. secondary education lasting 4-6 years this includes grammar schools, specialised vocational secondary schools and industrial and trade schools (students aged 12/14-18)
- IV. higher education in colleges and universities training in colleges takes 3-4 years followed by a technical diploma whereas university training lasts 5-6 years with a more solid degree (corresponding to a master's degree)
- V. postgraduate education - up to PhD-level.

*public and
private*

Institutions of public education may be established and maintained by the state, the municipality, the local minority self-government, the national minority self-government, churches registered in the Republic of Hungary, for-profit organisations, foundations and associations that are established and seated in the territory of the Republic of Hungary as well as by private persons, provided that the above legal and natural entities have obtained the right to pursue such an activity based on the provisions of the law.

At present, there are two kindergartens that provide education in Slovak which have been established and are being maintained by the Lutheran church. One primary school has been taken over from the municipality to be maintained by the National Slovak Self-Government. The other schools providing education in, or of, Slovak are public schools maintained by the various municipalities.

*bilingual
education forms*

The number of kindergartens providing pre-school education in Slovak amounts to 66. A total of 2,720 children attend these kindergartens.

There are five bilingual (Slovak-Hungarian) schools in Hungary. Three of them work in Békés county, in South-East Hungary, which has the biggest Slovak population. One of the five schools is attended by children from all over the country, three schools have regional coverage, and one school is a local institution. With regard to the nation-wide and region-wide coverage, three schools are equipped with a student hostel as well. Since 2004, one of these five institutions has been maintained by the National Slovak Self-Government. A total of 814 students attend the five bilingual schools.

The Slovak language and Slovak civilisation are taught in four lessons, and one lesson respectively, a week in 47 more schools throughout the country. The total number of students here is 3,611.

There are three secondary minority educational institutions teaching in Slovak or teaching Slovak. Two of these are secondary grammar schools (with a total of 107 students), and one is a vocational training institution for students already having a general secondary school-leaving certificate of education (17 students). In addition, four more institutions of vocational training teach Slovak as a foreign language in the region along the Slovak-Hungarian border. Altogether, 173 students learn Slovak in these institutions

A total of 143 students study Slovak language and literature and Slovak civilisation at two universities (in Budapest and Piliscsaba) and also at three colleges (in Szeged, Esztergom and Szarvas).

administration

In general, according to the Act on public education, the State is responsible for the operation of the public education system. The education of national and ethnic minorities in Hungary functions as an integral part of the Hungarian educational system. Consequently, it shall provide equal opportunities and basic education that has fundamentally the same content and value and that can serve as a basis for further education.

The main responsibility for education rests with the State, represented in this case by the Ministry of Education. It is this ministry that elaborates the legal provisions regulating the entire vertical range of education (Act on public education, Act on higher education), the National Curriculum - which is compulsory in all institutions of public education - the requirements for the general

secondary school-leaving examination as well as the guidelines on national and ethnic minority education that have to be taken into consideration in minority education, including Slovak education.

With the aim of facilitating the implementation of minority-related professional tasks, the ministry set up the National Committee of Minorities. Each of the thirteen national minority self-governments appoints one member for this committee. Presently, the Slovak delegate is the vice-president of this body. The committee gives its opinion on all draft regulations and documents that affect the issue of minority education. In a majority of cases, the committee has a veto right, in other cases it has the right to initiate a discussion on the issues causing tension and propose measures related to them. The NCM approves the publication of schoolbooks to be used in minority education.

The area of higher education is much more autonomous than that of public education. State responsibilities in this field are restricted to the elaboration and the adoption of the Act on higher education as well as the elaboration of the criteria of the accreditation of the particular specialisations.

It is also the State's competence to elaborate the system of financing public and higher education and to enforce it in the framework of the annual budgetary law.

The State delegates its duty to maintain educational institutions and to carry out tasks related to public education to local municipal governments. According to the Act on public education, it is within the competence of municipalities to adopt the local curriculum, to organise and to run the municipal public educational institutions, to appoint the directors of the institutions or to withdraw their appointment as well as to finance the educational institutions of the settlement. The proportion of central state subsidies amounts to approximately 70 per cent of the costs of public education.

The competences of municipal governments in the area of minority education are limited. In conformity with the provisions of the Act on public education, if a local municipal government maintains an educational institution providing kindergarten care, school education or dormitory services for members of a national or ethnic minority, or an institution contributing to the care of such students with specialised pedagogical services, the maintainer shall obtain

obtain the consent of the local minority self-government concerned (or, in the case of an institution providing services for a region or the entire country, the consent of the national minority self-government concerned), for the following actions regarding that institution:

- a) its establishment, dissolution, the modification of its range of activity, and the choice of its name,
- b) the specification and the modification of its budget,
- c) the evaluation of its professional work,
- d) the approval of its organisational and operational statutes,
- e) the approval of its educational, pedagogical and cultural programme,
- f) the evaluation of these programmes.

In case of an institution of minority education, the consent of the minority self-government shall also be obtained prior to the appointment or the revocation of the head of the institution.

The language used in administration is primarily Hungarian, but the specific legal provisions and documents related to minority education are also published in the minority languages concerned. The language generally used in local public administration is also Hungarian, but depending on the demand of the local population, municipal governments are obliged to ensure the publication of their decisions and to provide other pieces of information also in the language of the minority living in the given settlement.

inspection

The Ministry of Education has established a special organisation, the National Public Education Evaluation and Examination Centre, tasked with the direction, organisation and co-ordination of inspection, measurement, evaluation and quality assurance within the scope of departmental control of public education.

The National Public Education Evaluation and Examination Centre shall co-operate with the National Committee of Minorities to perform its tasks concerning pre-school care, school education and dormitory education organised for national or ethnic minorities.

The actors of public education (maintainers, minority self-governments, parents' organisations) may initiate the execution of concrete monitoring. To carry out the examination, the National

Education Evaluation and Examination Centre invites an expert to be included in the experts' register and actively working in the minority education organised for the given minority. The minority education experts can be included in the experts' register upon the proposal from their place of work (usually a minority educational institution), provided that they meet certain professional requirements and obtain the agreement of the National Committee of Minorities.

*support
structure*

Professional assistance to Slovak minority education is provided on three levels. On the basis of a bilateral agreement between the two countries, the Ministry of Education promotes and supports the participation of teachers working in Slovak minority education in professional training and further training in the Republic of Slovakia. Besides, it commissions the preparation of methodological manuals for teachers and it backs and recognises further training courses.

Within its scope of competence, the National Public Education Evaluation and Examination Centre has the task of keeping the experts' register, preparing the general secondary school-leaving examinations, elaborating programmes and organising further training courses which aim at preparing teachers of Slovak language and literature as well as other teachers working in Slovak secondary schools (e.g. teachers of history, civilisation or geography) to prepare for the general secondary school-leaving examinations. The Centre also compiles the boards of examination and prepares and organises the nation-wide student competitions in Slovak language, literature and civilisation. The Centre employs an experienced Slovak desk officer to carry out the above-mentioned tasks.

The National Public Education Evaluation and Examination Centre has seven regional centres. At county level, County Pedagogical Institutes assist the activities of the actors in public education. In counties with the highest number of Slovaks (Békés, Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén, Pest and Komárom-Esztergom counties), full-time Slovak educational desk officers or registered educational experts living in the county concerned contribute to the implementation of the objectives.

In addition to the above-mentioned bodies, the National Slovak Self-Government has also set up its own Educational Committee for professional counselling in educational issues. It is the President of this committee who is the delegate of the National Slovak Self-Government in the National Committee of Minorities. The National Slovak Self-Government has set up and runs a Slovak Methodological Centre for Kindergarten Education, the aim of which is to give professional assistance to kindergarten work and to provide further training courses and methodological material to Slovak kindergarten teachers. On the basis of the centre's positive experience, the National Slovak Self-Government envisages setting up similar institutions in connection with primary and secondary education as well.

2 Pre-School Education

<i>target group</i>	Kindergartens in Hungary are institutions educating children from the age of 3 until the child reaches the level of development necessary for school attendance until age 7 at the latest. In the year a child turns 5, from the first day of the kindergarten's academic year, the child is obliged to participate in preparatory (pre-school) programmes organised within the framework of kindergarten education, which prepare a child for school life.
<i>structure</i>	Kindergarten costs are covered by a normative (per capita) funding from the state budget and by the contribution of the local municipal government.
<i>legislation</i>	<p>The following decrees ensure the legal background to fulfil commitments:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Government Decree No 137/1996 (VIII. 28) on the Issuance of the National Programme for Kindergarten Education2. Decree No 32/1997 (XI. 5) of the Ministry of Culture and Education on the Issuance of Guidelines on the Pre-school Instruction of National and Ethnic Minorities and the School Education of National and Ethnic Minorities.

The local pre-school pedagogical programmes are worked out by the kindergarten, in accordance with the Programme and the guidelines mentioned. The agreement of the local Slovak minority self-governments is needed for approval of the programmes from the respective municipal governments.

language use The Slovak language is used in pre-school education in two forms. The bilingual form is more prevalent. How often the two languages are used in the curriculum depends on the language skills of the children. Emphasis should be laid on the development of the minority language.

teaching material Because of the children's age, teaching material in kindergarten education is primarily composed of colourful drawings, pictures, character forms and other auxiliary educational materials. Earlier, it was the task of the Department of Minorities and Foreign Languages of the Tessedik Sámuel College in Szarvas to compile thematic material (featuring the seasons, the human body, festivities and certain activities) for education purposes and for the organization of activities for the children.

However, after the Methodological Centre for Slovak Kindergarten Education was opened in Békéscsaba in 2003, this Centre has prepared 12 similar thematic booklets and has forwarded them in printed and electronic form (CD) to Slovak kindergartens as well. Compilation and distribution of the publications is financially supported by the State.

Central State subsidies are also provided for the purchase of various books, CDs and cassettes containing poems, nursery rhymes and songs in the Slovak language in Slovakia.

statistics

Academic year	Slovak-medium kindergartens	Number of children	Bilingual kindergartens	Number of children
1999/2000	4	96	69	2.893
2003/2004	7	188	66	2.679

3

Primary Education

target group

In the Hungarian education system, primary education is compulsory, and it usually begins at the age of six. It lasts eight years. Primary education is divided into two phases of four academic years each. The certificate acquired after successfully completing the 8th grade gives proof - irrespective of the type of the school of primary school education.

structure

In the area of compulsory education, the State provides the framework laws. Schools prepare an education programme with a

local curriculum prepared on the basis of the framework curriculum, based on the National Curriculum, but they can also opt for a ready-made curriculum prepared in this way and include it in their teaching programme as a local curriculum. The National Curriculum specifies some 70-75% of the requirements to be achieved in public education. The remaining 25-30% should be filled in according to local demand. In Slovak minority education, for example, the local pedagogical programme shall include the requirements concerning the subjects of Slovak language and literature as well as Slovak civilisation.

legislation

In accordance with the relevant provisions of the Minorities Act, minority primary education shall be organised upon the initiative of the parents of at least eight children.

In conformity with the Act on public education, and on the basis of the choice defined in the Act on the rights of the national and ethnic minorities, children and students belonging to a national or ethnic minority may receive pre-school instruction, school instruction and education in dormitories either in their native language or bilingually, i.e. in the native language and in Hungarian, or else in Hungarian. Instruction and education may also be conducted partially or in full in another language.

Decree No 32/1997 (XI. 5) of the Ministry of Culture and Education on the Issuance of Guidelines on the Pre-school Instruction of National and Ethnic Minorities and the School Education of National and Ethnic Minorities, which was drafted on the basis of the provisions of the Act on public education, specifies the objectives of minority education, the forms of its organisation, the types of education as well as the nationality-specific requirements of the different subjects of minority-related education (native language and literature, identity) for each language.

Minority education is supported by additional normative (per capita) funding from the State budget. Every year, the Budgetary Act lists the legal titles of demanding this kind of normative funding as well as the amount due for every student. The amounts of minority education normative funding have become differentiated according to the different forms of minority education. The highest amounts are awarded to the education of children in their native language and to bilingual instruction.

language use

Taking into account the linguistic and cultural situation of the Slovaks in Hungary, three forms of education can be defined. In the first model (teaching Slovak as a foreign language, or, as it is called, “schools providing the teaching of a minority language”) education takes place in Hungarian, but the Slovak language is taught to pupils in at least four lessons per week. {This is the most prevalent form in the Hungarian educational system since due to demographic reasons and to the advanced stage of assimilation children entering school hardly speak Slovak or have no Slovak knowledge at all.) Besides literature and language, one lesson per week is dedicated to Slovak studies and civilisation.

Bilingual schools provide instruction in two languages, and subjects other than the minority language are also taught in the minority language. The Guidelines stipulate that 50% of the weekly obligatory classes shall be taught in the native minority language. In Hungary, there are five such bilingual schools, four of which cover an entire region and not just one settlement.

In the so-called native-language school where the medium of instruction is the minority language all subjects apart from Hungarian language and literature are taught in the minority language. Slovaks in Hungary have only one institution organised this way.

teaching material

The development of teaching materials to be used in the education of Slovak children is the responsibility of the State. Schoolbooks imported from the kin states can be used only to a limited extent because of the differences in the curriculum and language use. In spite of this, some schools primarily the bilingual ones in Budapest and in Szarvas do use textbooks and schoolbooks on Slovak language and literature imported from Slovakia.

Schoolbooks and exercise books for teaching Slovak language and literature are continuously being published. Schoolbooks for teaching Slovak civilisation in the first four grades exist, but they have not been compiled for the upper grades yet.

statistics

Academic year	Number of schools	Number of pupils in Slovak-medium education	Number of pupils in bilingual education	Number of pupils in education teaching Slovak as a foreign language	Total number of pupils
1999/2000	59	92	658	3.674	4.424
2003/2004	58	78	876	3.777	4.731

4 Secondary education

target group

Secondary education starts in Hungary with the 9th grade and ends after the 12th (in certain cases after the 13th) grade. This means that the students concerned are 14-18(19) years old. Secondary education as such has three forms and can be offered in classic secondary grammar schools, in specialised vocational secondary schools providing not only vocational training but also a general certificate of secondary education at the end of the studies, and in industrial and trade schools providing exclusively vocational training.

structure

Secondary education I: Industrial and trade schools

After primary school, industrial and trade schools launch a 9th and a 10th grade followed by at least two grades of vocational training. This segment of education is compulsory only during the first phase (9th and a 10th grades), i.e. for children aged 15-16. The 9th and the 10th grades provide general education and help the students' vocational orientation, their preparation for vocational studies and provide some basic elements of vocational training.

With respect to Slovak education in industrial and trade schools, this means that in the first phase, similar to the system of primary education, youngsters study Slovak language, literature and Slovak civilisation or Slovak as a foreign language - in four lessons a week. Later, in the grades of vocational training, they study Slovak vocational terminology and the technical language, also in four lessons a week.

Requirements prescribed by the National Curriculum are valid also with respect to the first phase of industrial and trade schools.

However, they are complemented by the requirements related to Slovak language, literature and civilisation. Elements of knowledge to be taught during the second phase are specified by the provisions of the National Training List. At the same time, the list of subjects taught in Slovak or bilingually - and their content - are contained in the local curriculum of the school, which similar to primary schools - shall be approved and adopted by the maintainer of the school.

The grades of vocational training prepare students for the vocational examination in compliance with the requirements for vocational training programmes as defined in the National Training List.

Secondary education II: Specialised vocational secondary schools

Similar to industrial and trade schools, education in specialised vocational secondary schools is divided into two phases. The first (basic) phase is identical with that of industrial and trade schools. However, in addition to vocational training as grades 11 and 12 of this type of school also prepare students for the general secondary school-leaving examination and for higher education, the teaching of subjects of general education continues in these grades, too, in conformity with the requirements to be met at the general secondary school-leaving examination.

It follows that, in addition to the regulations of the National Curriculum and the National Training List, requirements contained in the Decree of the Ministry of Education on the Requirements for the General Secondary School-leaving Examination also have to be taken into account.

Secondary education III: Secondary grammar schools

The education offered in secondary grammar schools provides general education and prepares students for the general secondary school-leaving examination and for tertiary education. Similar to primary schools, Slovak-medium instruction, bilingual instruction and teaching Slovak as a foreign language constitute the three possible forms of instruction for secondary grammar schools participating in Slovak minority education. Slovak secondary

grammar schools follow the bilingual model in which at least 50% of the subjects are taught in Slovak. This means that Slovak is in general the language of instruction for the humanities and the compulsory skill-development subjects.

Studies in the secondary grammar school are closed with the general secondary school-leaving examination, during which students having participated in Slovak-Hungarian bilingual education have to sit for the examination in Slovak: not only in the subject of Slovak language and literature but also in two other subjects. The certificate they get for the exam is equivalent to the state language proficiency certificate.

legislation

Similar to the provisions regulating the organisation of minority pre-school and primary school education, the Minorities Act and the Act on Public Education stipulate that upon the request of eight parents, it is mandatory to establish the conditions for Slovak-medium instruction or the teaching of the Slovak language in secondary education.

Additional regulations relating to secondary education in Slovak are contained in Decree No. 24/1997 (VI. 5) of the Ministry of Culture and Public Education on the Issuance of Examination Regulations for the Examination of Basic Education and in Government Decree No. 100/1997 (VI.13.) on the Issuance of the Examination Regulations for the General Secondary School-leaving Examination, which together define the requirements of the organisation and the contents of the secondary school-leaving examination also for the Slovak language. The detailed requirements of the school-leaving examination in Slovak language and literature as well as Slovak civilisation have also been worked out.

language use

In vocational training, the teaching of the Slovak language serves primarily as a basis for the ulterior teaching of some special subjects (such as commerce and marketing, management, business geography) in Slovak or bilingually. Most examples of the Slovak-medium instruction of special subjects can be seen in the Slovak-Hungarian border region, in the field of training for commerce and for the catering trade. Country-wide, there are five institutions of vocational training (industrial and trade schools as well as specialised vocational secondary schools) also teaching in the Slovak language. One of them is located in Budapest, the others

work in the border region (Komárom, Balassagyarmat, Sátoraljaújhely).

One of the two secondary grammar schools is in Budapest, the second in Békéscsaba, considered the spiritual centre, the “capital city” of the Slovak community living in Hungary.

teaching materials

The development of teaching materials is the task of the State at this level, too. However, a lack of qualified experts makes preparation more difficult. The schoolbooks to be used in the bilingual secondary grammar schools on Slovak language and literature as well as on Slovak civilisation have either already been dealt with, or renewal and publication are under way. Translating the schoolbooks necessary for the instruction of other subjects in Slovak is also a continuous process. Besides Slovak language and literature, Slovak civilisation, history and geography, subjects developing various skills are also taught in Slovak in the two bilingual Slovak grammar schools. Certain schoolbooks and other auxiliary teaching materials maps, graphs are imported from the Slovak Republic.

Vocational training institutions primarily use technical schoolbooks that have been published in Slovakia. In certain trades and professions, schoolbooks are used which have been translated from Hungarian into Slovak, but their number is very limited.

statistics

Academic year	Number of industrial and trade schools and specialised vocational secondary schools	Number of students in Slovak vocational training	Number of secondary grammar schools	Number of students in Slovak secondary grammar schools
1997/1998	3	76	2	119
2004/2005	5	191	2	107

5

Higher education

structure

There are four educational levels in the Hungarian higher education system. These levels are: higher vocational training (2 years), college (3-4 years), university (4-6 years) and doctoral programmes (3 years) or other specialised postgraduate programmes (2 years).

There are 18 state universities, 12 state colleges, 26 church-owned institutions and 9 foundation colleges. Law No LXXX of 1993 on higher education established a normative financing system and defined four budget headings: normative support per student (proportional to the number of students), training and maintenance (proportional to the number of students and also depending on the specialisations offered), programme development, and finally research.

In conformity with the higher education convergence programme within the European Union, Hungary will introduce the linear higher education model with several cycles from the 2006/2007 academic year onwards. This model, with a three-level structure (Bachelor, Master and PhD), will ensure a larger degree of educational exchange within the Union.

The Slovak language is used in higher education at two universities and three colleges. The departments concerned primarily offer teacher training for Slovak-language public education. Besides, the specialisation for Slovak studies (Slovakistics) is also offered at university level. The geographical distribution of institutions with a Slovak Department corresponds to the distribution of the Slovak population.

According to Hungarian law, higher education institutions are professionally independent legal entities with an autonomous governing body that has the exclusive right to provide university and college graduate education, specialised education, and also PhD and DLA education.

The regulation of the entrance examinations to the institutions of higher education has recently created the possibility for minority students to pass their entrance examinations in their own native language.

legislation

According to the Act on Higher Education, Hungarian is the general language of higher education. However, studies may be conducted in any national and ethnic minority language.

Diplomas must be issued in Hungarian or in Hungarian and in Latin. In the case of national and ethnic minority education, they can be issued in the given minority language. Furthermore (as an exception, and in accordance with the decision of the higher education institution) they can be issued in the language the studies were conducted in.

The qualification requirements for certain degrees from faculties of arts and letters and social sciences – including degrees in Slovak minority studies at college or university level. have been published in accordance with the provisions of the Act on Higher Education.

language use

At university level, there is a Slovak Department in the Faculty of Humanities of the Pázmány Péter Catholic University, and a sub-department at the Institute of Slavonic and Baltic Philology of the Eötvös Loránd University of Sciences. The Juhász Gyula Teacher Training College of the University of Szeged, the Vitéz János Roman Catholic Teacher Training College of Esztergom as well as the Tessedik Sámuel College of Szarvas have a Slovak Department.

The above institutions use their own manuals and lecture notes to train their students. The publication of these materials is financially supported by the State.

teacher training

For various reasons - such as a limited professional background and a small number of potential students - Hungarian higher education is in a position to offer teacher training only in the fields of Slovak language and literature, primary school education and kindergarten education. The programmes offered by the autonomous Slovak minority departments or sub-departments at the different institutions of higher education have recently been accredited. Bilateral agreements between the two states provide for the employment of language Masters from Slovakia in the minority departments.

In addition to training in Hungary, it is also possible to receive grants that allow participation in full-time or part-time tertiary education in Slovakia. These scholarships enable those interested to become trained not only as teachers but also to receive training in any other specialised area. However, most applicants graduate in teacher training institutions or at faculties of humanities in the Slovak Republic.

The training of Slovak kindergarten teachers is organised at the Department of Minorities and Foreign Languages of the Tessedik Sámuel College in Szarvas. The same college also trains Slovak minority primary school teachers, something which is also offered by the Slovak Minority Department of the Esztergom-based Vitéz János Roman Catholic Teacher Training College. Both colleges offer students a one-semester part-time training course in Slovakia.

Teacher training for the upper grades of the primary school takes place at the Department of Slovak Language and Literature of the Juhász Gyula Teacher Training College of the University of Szeged. The College statutes stipulate that the specialisation course for Slovak language and literature can be taken together with any other specialisation. Students are obliged to take part in part-time training in Slovakia.

In addition to training possibilities through scholarships in the kin state, teachers for secondary education are trained in the Institute of Slavonic and Baltic Philology of the Faculty of Humanities of the Eötvös Loránd University in Budapest. Besides being offered specific pedagogical training, students can also choose a specialisation in general Slovakistics, which ensures the education of Slovak intelligentsia. This university is run by the State.

The other centre for the training of specialists in humanities (Slovak studies, Slovakistics) is the Slovak Department of the Faculty of Humanities of the Pázmány Péter Catholic University, run by the Catholic Church. Although this Department has not been specifically designed to train teachers, students also have the possibility to take up pedagogical studies in order to graduate as secondary school teachers.

statistics

The following statistics present the number of students studying Slovak language and literature in different forms of higher education:

Academic year	In colleges for future kindergarten teachers	In colleges for future first phase primary school teachers	In colleges for future second phase primary school teachers	At universities	Total
1998/1999	8	8	46	197	259
2003/2004	13	13	38	79	143

6

Adult education

Slovak language teaching for adults is organised at different places, with different contents and at different levels. From the point of view of the development of Slovak language use, the most important element lies in the system of further training courses for teachers organised by the Slovak departments of universities and colleges and subsidised by the State. These further training courses are generally combined with part-time training in the kin state.

Other organisations active outside the area of higher education also have the possibility to organise similar further teacher training programmes and to have these accredited. For example, the National Slovak Self-Government has elaborated its programmes and regularly organises accredited further training programmes involving lecturers from Slovakia. At the end of these courses, participants receive a certificate. Attendance is taken into consideration when they participate in further compulsory teacher training.

Thanks to a continuous interest in the Slovak language, some language schools also organise Slovak language courses on a for-profit basis: from elementary to advanced level, preparing for the state language exam. (In Hungary, it is possible to take Slovak language proficiency exams acknowledged by the State.)

Parallel to the establishment of Slovak minority self-governments, there is a growing demand for the use of the Slovak language in administration. This is why Slovak minority self-governments and also some Slovak civil organisations organise specific language courses - primarily set up for their own members, but also for others - for the instruction of administrative terminology.

The Budapest-based Slovak Institute of the Slovak Republic also organises Slovak language courses for adults, offering interesting possibilities for those who have already achieved higher levels of language skills to improve their knowledge and to get acquainted with Slovak culture.

7

Educational Research

Research related to Slovak minority education is carried out by several actors. The Slovak community of Hungary has set up its own research institute, one of the main objectives of which is to carry out research into issues connected to Slovak education. Lately, they have dealt with the history of Slovak teacher training in Békéscsaba; with the language use of the Slovak intelligentsia in Hungary; with Slovak language education in some settlements inhabited by Slovaks, and with some sociolinguistic aspects of Hungarian-Slovak bilingualism among primary school pupils. Research findings show significant changes in the attitudes towards the Slovak language. Primary and secondary school students increasingly feel that studying English or German is more

important than studying Slovak. Research conclusions confirm the decrease of language use, also among intellectuals. The Slovak Research Institute continuously publishes its findings.

The Institute of Societal Research carried out a series of surveys that are important from the point of view of Slovak education. Parent expectations concerning education among national minorities including the Slovak minority were assessed. The surveys' findings show a similarity with those from the above-mentioned research projects: Slovak parents in general feel that learning world languages and teaching subjects to further general knowledge for the advancement of learning are more important than teaching the Slovak language. This survey has not been put forward as an independent publication.

The Centre for Curriculum Development of the National Institute of Public Education, which has since then been dissolved, also carried out different surveys in the field of Slovak education in Hungary. The obvious aim of this work was to specify the directions of curriculum development. In this process, the focus primarily lay not on the subject of Slovak language and literature (traditionally taught for decades), but on the assessment of the first experiences gathered in teaching a relatively new subject: Slovak civilisation. Teaching this subject was taking place in the majority of the institutions examined in Slovak, generally in a form that integrated the material with the other subjects. One of the study's conclusions led to an awareness that the publication of Slovak civilisation schoolbooks and auxiliary teaching materials had to be speeded up. The survey's findings were published in the various publications of this Institute.

Research concerning education primarily higher education is also carried out at the Slovak departments of universities and colleges. This is mostly related to the special subjects taught at these departments as well as to the subjects analysed in the students' final dissertations, documenting the presence of the Slovak language and culture in Hungary. Part of this research is accessible in printed form, and some other findings can be found on the departments' Internet websites or in their libraries.

8 Prospects

Parallel to the development of Slovak-Hungarian economic relations and the consolidation of Slovak minority self-governance, the expectations towards Slovak language teaching have changed. Demand for studying in bilingual institutions has increased and Slovak-medium vocational training has gradually been spreading. These two phenomena constitute a serious challenge for Slovak language teacher training, since employment possibilities for guest teachers from Slovakia are limited and the demand for teachers able to teach special subjects in Slovak keeps growing.

Changes concerning the maintenance of Slovak public educational institutions constitute another trend of development implied by the strengthening cultural autonomy of the Slovak minority. As already mentioned, the National Slovak Self-Government has made use of its right enshrined in law and has taken over the operation of the biggest bilingual Slovak school of Hungary. The Self-Government also envisages taking over the other bilingual institutions.

In the area of adult education, a rise in demand can be witnessed aimed at learning general or specialised Slovak. Meeting this demand and this might also be achieved on a for-profit basis - requires continuous attention.

9 Summary statistics

Data on the Slovak population of Hungary and their language use

	1920	1930	1941	1949	1960	1980	1990	2001
Number of Slovak mother tongue speakers	141877	104786	75877	25988	30690	16054	12745	11816
Number of people with Slovak nationality	No data	No data	16677	7808	14340	9101	10459	17692
Number of people speaking Slovak	399176	346053	270248	168192	168872	86148	68852	60664

Source: Central Statistical Office

Slovak in kindergartens

Academic year	Kindergartens with Slovak working language	Number of children	Bilingual kindergartens	Number of children
1999/2000	4	96	69	2.893
2003/2004	7	188	66	2.679

Slovak in primary schools

Academic year	Number of schools	Number of pupils in Slovak-medium education	Number of pupils in bilingual education	Number of pupils in education teaching Slovak as a foreign language	Total number of pupils
1999/2000	59	92	658	3.674	4.424
2003/2004	58	78	876	3.777	4.731

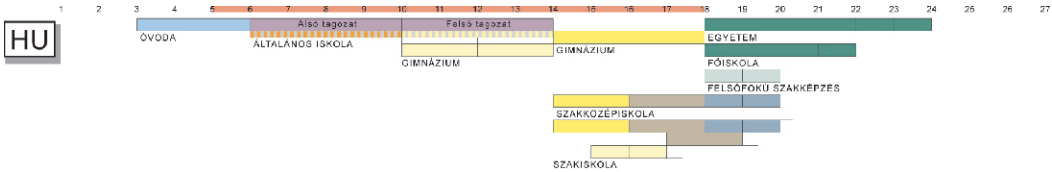
Slovak in secondary schools

Academic year	In colleges for future kindergarten teachers	In colleges for future first phase primary school teachers	In colleges for future second phase primary school teachers	At universities	Total
1998/1999	8	8	46	197	259
2003/2004	13	13	38	79	143

Slovak in higher education

Academic year	Number of industrial and trade schools and specialised vocational secondary schools	Number of students in Slovak vocational training	Number of secondary grammar schools	Number of students in Slovak secondary grammar schools
1997/1998	3	76	2	119
2004/2005	5	191	2	107

Education system in Hungary (Eurydice)



Organisation of the education system in Hungary (2002/2003;
check www.eurydice.org)

References and further reading

Regulations

- The Constitution (Act no. XX of 1949) (Guaranteeing education in the native languages of minorities.)
- Act LXXVII of 1993 on the Rights of National and Ethnic Minorities (Ensuring individual and collective minority rights.)
- Act LX of 1999 on the Promulgation of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages of the Council of Europe
- Act XXXIV of 1999 on the Promulgation of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities of the Council of Europe
- Act LXXIX of 1993 on Public Education (Guaranteeing education in minority languages as well as education of minority languages and defining their framework and contents. It also guarantees the financial base of minority education.)
- Act LXXX of 1993 on Higher Education (Guaranteeing the rights of national minorities in the field of higher education.)
- Decree No 32/1997 (XI. 5) of the Ministry of Culture and Education on the Issuance of the Guidelines on the Pre-school Instruction of National and Ethnic Minorities and the School Education of National and Ethnic Minorities (The decree contains general and specified requirements for the subjects of Slovak language and literature as well as Slovak civilisation in the different types of institutions and on the different levels of public education.)
- Government Decree 130/1995 (X. 26) Korm. on the National Curriculum (The decree specifies the distinctive elements of national and ethnic minority education.)

- Decree No 24/1997 (VI. 5) of the Minister of Culture and Public Education on the Issuance of Examination Regulations for Basic Education Examinations
(The decree contains the detailed requirements of the basic examinations in Slovak language and literature as well as in Slovak civilisation.)

- Government Decree No 100/1997 (VI.13.) on the Issuance of the Examination Regulations for the General Secondary School-leaving Examination
(The decree contains detailed requirements regarding the general secondary school-leaving examination in Slovak language and literature as well as in Slovak civilisation.)

- Government Decree No 129/2001 (VII. 13.) on the training requirements of minority studies at college or university level
(This decree specifies the contents and the requirements for teacher training in the field of Slovak language and literature.)

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Other websites on minority languages

- Mercator* **www.mercator-central.org** - General site of the Mercator-project. It will lead you to the three specialized centres:
- Mercator-Education* **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.
- Mercator-Media* **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** - Homepage of Mercator-Legislation. It provides information on minority languages and legislation in the EU.
- European Union* **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.
- Council of Europe* **conventions.coe.int** - European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (1992) and Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (1995). European Treaty Series/Série des traités européens ETS 148 and 157, Strasbourg.
- Eurydice* **www.eurydice.org** - Eurydice is the information network on education in Europe. The site provides information on all European education systems and education policies.
- EBLUL* **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** - 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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