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ROMANSH

The Romansh language in education in Switzerland

| Regional dossiers series |

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Contact information of the authors of Regional dossiers can be found in the Mercator Database of Experts (www.mercator-research.eu).

Marlous Visser has been responsible for the publication of this Mercator Regional dossier.

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Foreword

- background** Regional and minority languages are languages that differ from the official state language. The Mercator Research Centre on Multilingualism and Language Learning uses the definition for these languages defined by the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (ECRML):
- “Regional and minority languages are languages traditionally used within a given territory of a state by nationals of that state who form a group numerically smaller than the rest of the state’s population; they are different from the official language(s) of that state, and they include neither dialects of the official language(s) of the state nor the languages of migrants”. The Mercator Research Centre aims at the acquisition, application and circulation of knowledge about these regional and minority languages in education. An important means to achieve this goal is the Regional dossiers series: documents that provide the most essential features of the education system of regions with a lesser used regional or minority language.
- aim** The aim of the Regional dossiers series is to provide a concise description of European minority languages in education. Aspects that are addressed include features of the education system, recent educational policies, main actors, legal arrangements and support structures, as well as quantitative aspects such as the number of schools, teachers, pupils, and financial investments. Because of the fixed structure the dossiers in the series are easy to compare.
- target group** The dossiers serve several purposes and are relevant for policymakers, researchers, teachers, students and journalists who wish to explore developments in minority language schooling in Europe. They can also serve as a first orientation towards further research, or function as a source of ideas for improving educational provisions in their own region.
- link with Eurydice** The format of the Regional dossiers follows the format of Eurydice - the information network on education in Europe - in order

to link the regional descriptions with those of national education systems. Eurydice provides information on the administration and structure of national education systems in the member states of the European Union.

contents

Every Regional dossier begins with an introduction about the region concerned, followed by six sections that each deals with a specific level of the education system (e.g. primary education). Sections eight and nine cover the main lines of research into education of the concerned minority language, the prospects for the minority language in general and for education in particular. The tenth section gives a summary of statistics. Lists of regulations, publications and useful addresses concerning the minority language, are given at the end of the dossier.

1 Introduction

language

The Romansh language, spoken in the Swiss canton of Grisons (called sometimes Rhaeto-Romansh, following the current German term in Switzerland, "Rätoromanisch"), belongs, along with Ibero-Romance, Gallo-Romance and the Gallo-Italic varieties spoken in Northern Italy and Southern Switzerland, to the Western group of Romance languages that evolved from spoken Latin in the wake of conquest of the area by the Romans by the start of the 3rd century AD.

Up until around 400 AD, the Roman province of "Raetia" (which covered the territory between the Alps and the River Danube) underwent intensive Romanisation. Vulgar Latin, as spoken by Roman soldiers, officials and merchants fused with the region's former languages to become Vulgar Latin with a Rhaetian imprint (this applies only to the areas which were definitely Rhaetic, i.e. Grisons and part of the Dolomites). Through processes of sound shifts and linguistic differentiation, it has gradually developed into the Romance varieties that still exist today.

As part of the reorganisation of the Roman Empire around 300 AD, the province of Raetia was divided in two. What is today Eastern Switzerland, Vorarlberg, the neighbouring portion of Tyrol, the Venosta Valley and parts of Central Switzerland were grouped together to form "Raetia Prima", with Curia Raetorum (present-day Chur) as its capital. The Bavarian and Swabian Uplands to the north of Lake Constance and the northern parts of Tyrol became "Raetia Secunda", with Augusta Vindelicorum (present-day Augsburg) as its capital. Christianity started to spread.

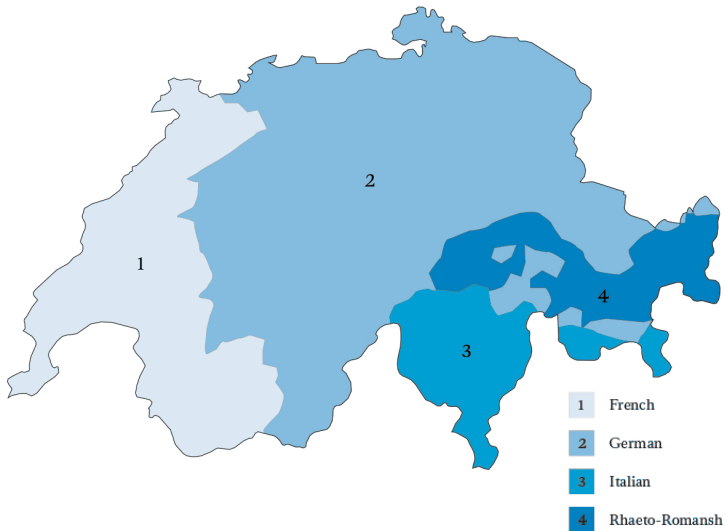
As a more or less autonomous region under ecclesiastical sovereignty ("Raetia Curiensis"), Raetia Prima became part of Kingdom of the Franks. In 806 AD, Charlemagne introduced the Franconian system of administration into Raetia and in 843 the Diocese of Chur became suffrage to the Archdiocese of Mainz. German-speaking aristocracy and officials moved into the lower parts of the valleys, the consequence of which was that German became the language of administration, and Romansh was hardly used in writing. In the wake of the northerly orientation

of Raetia towards the German-speaking world, Romansh has always been heavily influenced by German in vocabulary and morphosyntax.

In his “Saggi ladin”, the Italian linguist Graziadio Isaia Ascoli (1829–1907) advocated for a linguistic type called “ladino” to which he assigned Ladin in the Dolomites (at the time belonging to Austria), Friulan in North-Eastern Italy and Romansh in Switzerland on the basis of a combination of linguistic features. This theory gained large recognition with the publications of the Austrian linguist Theodor Gartner (1843–1925), who used “Rhaeto-Romance” instead of “Ladin” as an umbrella term. The question whether the three geographically separated groups of dialects, Romansh, Ladin and Friulan, form a distinctive language subfamily or should be regarded as a part of a wider Northern Italian dialect continuum, was discussed in the so-called “Questione Ladina”. The idea of a “Ladin unity” was strongly opposed by the linguist Carlo Battisti (1882–1977), who pointed out that the different dialects in question had only a few common aspects and were just as closely related to neighbouring Lombard and Venetian varieties. The Swiss dialectologist Carlo Salvioni (1858–1920) held similar views. Both, Battisti and Salvioni, were influenced by preferences for the Italian irredentism (a nationalist movement during the late 19th and early 20th century), which promoted the annexation to Italy of territories inhabited by an Italian-speaking population and, on the basis of linguistic proximity, the Romansh-speaking area in South-Eastern Switzerland as well.

The four national languages of Switzerland are German, French, Italian and Romansh. The Romansh-speaking area is in the canton of Grisons. 17 of the 26 member cantons of Switzerland are German-speaking, four French-speaking, one Italian-speaking and four have more than one language: three of these are bilingual (French-German), whereas the fourth, Grisons, is officially trilingual (German, Romansh and Italian).

Geographical distribution of the languages in Switzerland (2000)

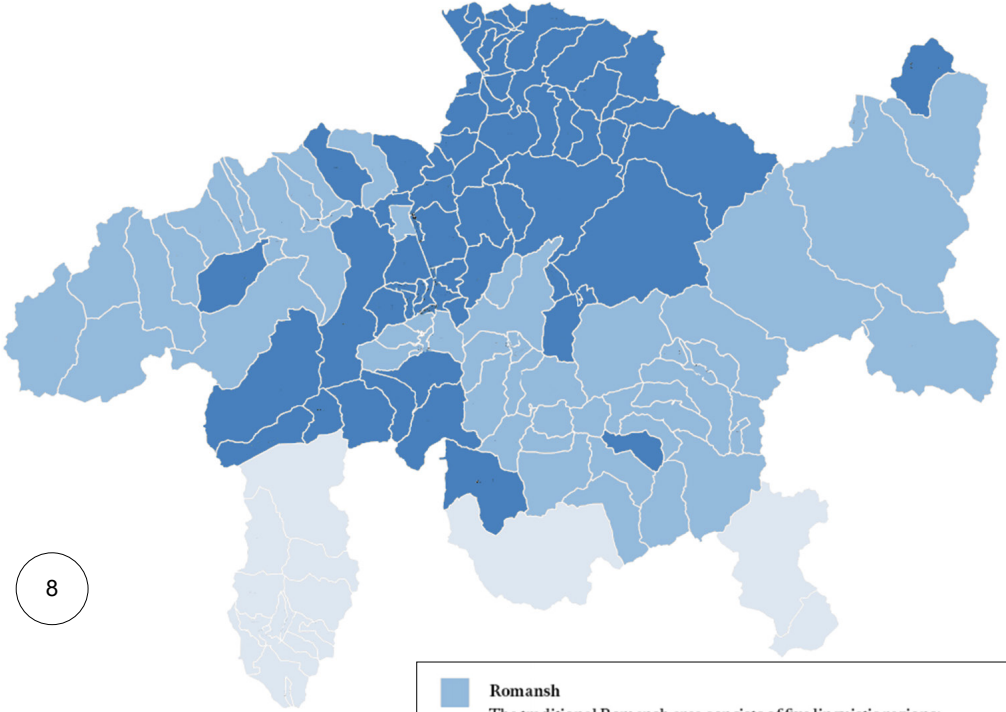


Map 1: Switzerland and its four national languages. (Source: University of Teacher Education of Grisons. Graphics: Mokum, Design Creation & Direction, www.mokum.ch.)

Romansh is divided into five regional dialects called “idioms”: Sursilvan (the idiom of the Vorderrhein/Rain Anterior Valley in western Grisons), Sutsilvan (the smallest Romansh idiom, which is spoken in the Hinterrhein/Rain Posterior Valley), Surmiran (spoken in the territory of Oberhalbstein and the Albula Valley in the centre of Grisons), Puter (the idiom of the Upper Engadin), and Vallader (spoken in the Lower Engadin and the Val Müstair in eastern Grisons), each with its own standardised written language.

In addition, a pan-regional variety called Rumantsch Grischun was introduced in 1982, which is used as uniform written language at federal and cantonal levels as well as by several organisations and administrations especially for official texts.

The three language areas of Grisons



8

The above map shows the language areas of Grisons. Romansh areas are listed as Romansh communities if the quota of 25% (census of 2000) is fulfilled.

Romansh

The traditional Romansh area consists of five linguistic regions: The Surselva comprising the large northwestern part, central Grisons with large portions of the Schams Valley, the Oberhalbstein and the Albula Valley. In the southeast of Grisons the Romansh part is confined to the Engadine and the Munster Valley.

German

The German part is defined by the settlements of the "Walser": The High Valleys (Rheinwald, Vals, Safien, Schanfigg, Prättigau and Davos), the enclave of Obersaxen, the "Germanised" northern Churer Rhein Valley, the Domleschg and the Tyrolean influence of Samnaun.

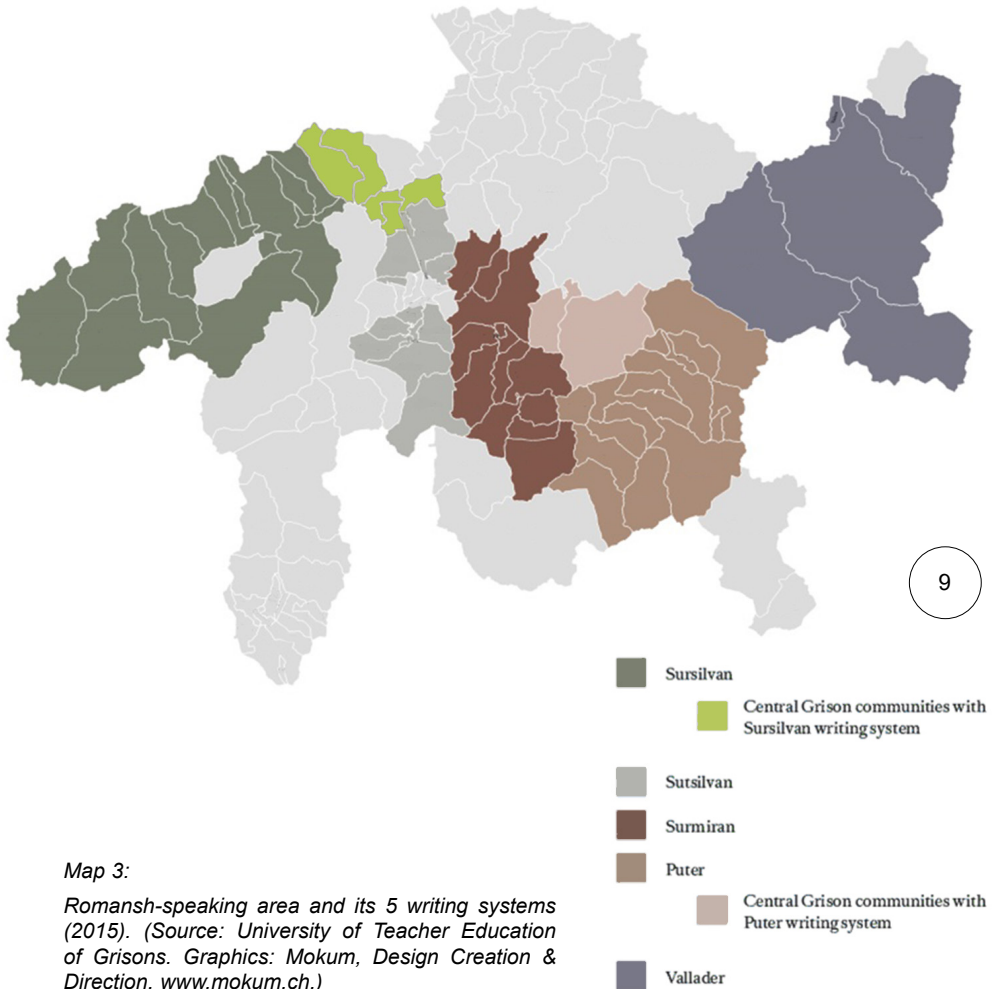
Italian

The four valleys in the south of Grisons – Misox, Calanca, Bergell and Puschlav are Italian speaking regions with strong cultural ties to the Tessin and Italy.

Map 2:

Grisons and its three language areas (source: University of Teacher Education of Grisons. Graphics: Mokum, Design Creation & Direction, www.mokum.ch)

Areas of usage of the 5 writing systems (“idioms”)



Map 3:

Romansh-speaking area and its 5 writing systems (2015). (Source: University of Teacher Education of Grisons. Graphics: Mokum, Design Creation & Direction, www.mokum.ch.)

population

Switzerland has been carrying out a regular population census every ten years since 1850, and one of the parameters that appeared since 1860 is the linguistic affiliation of its inhabitants. Whereas in 1860 and 1870, the questionnaire inquired about the “main language of the household”, from 1880 to 1980 the question was about “native or mother tongue”. In 1980

and 2000, two questions were asked: the first question was about the language of “best command”, the second about the “regularly spoken” language.

In the 2000 census, 35,095 people (0.5% of Swiss inhabitants, of whom 27,038 live in the canton of Grisons) indicated Romansh as the language of “best command”, and 60,816 (0.8% of the Swiss inhabitants, of whom 40,257 live in the canton of Grisons) as a “regularly spoken” language. People with Romansh as their language of “best command” comprised 14.5% of the population of Grisons whereas people with Romansh as a “regularly spoken” language amounted to 21.5% of the canton’s population. In 2010, Switzerland switched to a yearly system that uses a combination of municipal citizen records and a limited number of surveys. Based on this yearly system, the number of people aged 15 and above mentioning Romansh as their main language has been 43,914 in 2015. Spoken by around 0.9% of Switzerland’s 7.7 million inhabitants, Romansh is Switzerland’s least-used national language in terms of number of speakers and the eleventh most spoken language in Switzerland overall. The language area and number of speakers of Romansh have been continually shrinking, though language use remains vigorous in certain areas.

language status Romansh is a language in its own right, recognised by linguistics back in the middle of the 19th century. Despite that, there have always been individual voices and whole tendencies ready to dispute Romansh’s position as a separate language. The first massive attack against a separate Romansh language came in the middle of the First World War from groups of Italian language researchers. Their thesis that Swiss Romansh ought to be regarded as an Italian dialect belonging to the “Alpine Lombard” type was rejected as one-sided and tendentious by Swiss linguists.

Until the end of the 18th century, German was, for practical reasons, regarded as the only official language of Grisons. In 1794 the political authority broke this tradition and proclaimed trilingualism of the State of Grisons. In 1803, Grisons joined the

Swiss Confederation. The new canton subsequently adopted a benevolent attitude towards the Romansh and Italian languages. Every delegate in the cantonal parliament was entitled, at his discretion, to use his own native tongue. Official decrees were recorded and printed in German, Romansh and Italian. The 1880 and 1892 versions of the cantonal constitution contained the express guarantee for all three of Grisons' languages as cantonal languages. That meant basically the same status for the three national languages. However, in practice, the state authorities attempted to "Germanise" the Romansh-speaking districts in the 19th century.

From 1885, a number of organised bodies were founded to counteract these tendencies and promote Romansh language and culture. In 1919, the "Lia Rumantscha" was set up as an umbrella organisation for all associations dealing with Romansh language and culture. The Swiss electorate recognised Romansh as the fourth national language in 1938 and it became a semi-official language at federal level in 1996.

Language policy and legal aspects are rooted in the Swiss constitution. Article 4 defines the four official languages in Switzerland (German, French, Italian and Rhaeto-Romanian); Article 18 recognises the principle of linguistic freedom; in Article 70 the responsibility of the official languages between state and canton is cleared, with the common framework of languages being regulated since 2010. These regulations put the articles of the constitution in effect.

Switzerland signed the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (hereafter referred to as the "Charter") on 8 October 1993. The Federal Council decided to ratify it on 31 October 1997. With this decision, the Charter became part of the Swiss law. The Swiss authorities formally ratified it on 23 December 1997. The Charter became effective regarding Switzerland on 1 April 1998. The charter does not protect individual and collective rights of linguistic minorities. Their utmost goal is the improvement of regional or minority languages and their usage in aspects

of education, law, organisation, media, culture and economy, hoping to improve their respective usage. Switzerland has defined Romansh and Italian as lesser used official languages within the charter and the respective guidelines for promotion.

**status of
language
education**

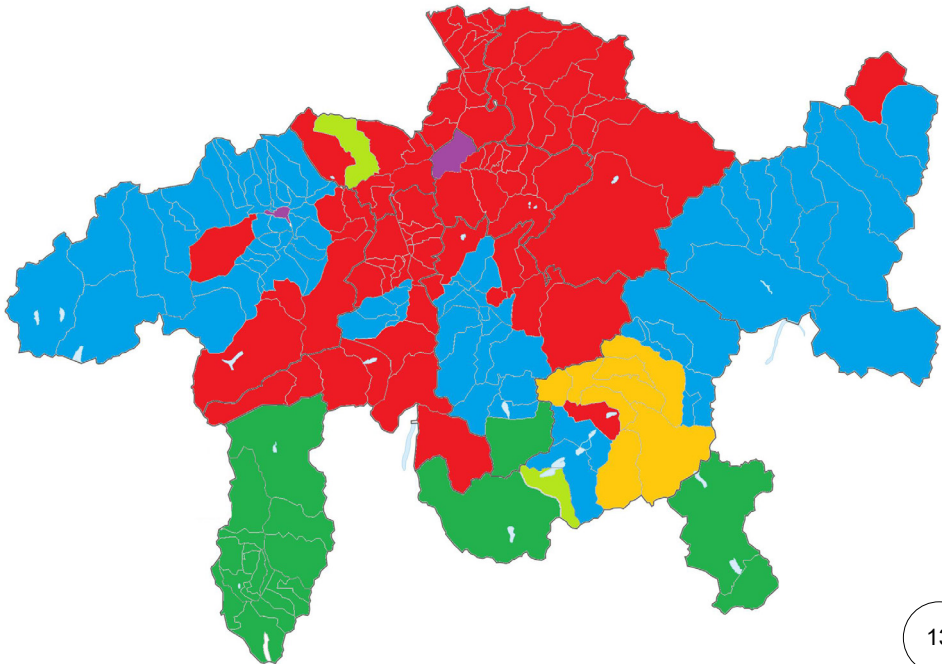
In the Grisons education law, in the legal aspect of implementing that law (BR 421.010) and in the school curricula (School curricula 21), distinctions are made between German-speaking, Italian-speaking and Romansh-speaking elementary schools. The communities themselves decide on what language is to be the language of instruction for their elementary school. The “Romansh schools” have been effectively bilingual for as long as their history can be traced back.

On March 15, 2016, the Grisons government legalised the German Swiss Curriculum 21 for nursery school to third class (grade) of Secondary I, which has been standardised in October 2014 by the Swiss Conference of Cantonal Ministers of Education with some addenda and changes having been made by intercantonal adaptations. The Curriculum 21 is oriented towards competences that are to be acquired through useful knowledge and applicable skills. In the canton of Grisons, it will become effective in 2018/19.

The linguistic situation in Grisons schools is very complex. According to the cantonal language law the communities decide autonomously which of the three cantonal languages (German, Romansh, Italian) are used as their school language and administrative language and which of the other cantonal languages has to be taught as a second language (from 3d grade of primary school; English being taught from 5th grade).

**education
system**

The three language areas in the canton of Grisons typically offer three models. Apart from the three basic types, there have been bilingual schools in various fashions. The graph below shows the regional distribution of the three L1 models and the spread of bilingual schools since 2010.



- German-speaking schools
- Romansh-speaking schools
- Italian-speaking schools
- Bilingual schools (Romansh- German)
- German-speaking schools with bilingual classes (German/Romansh and German/Italian in Chur, and German/Romansh in Ilanz)
- Bilingual schools in equal parts (Romansh-German/Italian-German)

Map 4: School types in the canton of Grisons – major language (2010) (source: University of Teacher Education of Grisons. Graphics: Casanova Druck AG, Chur.)

It is mandatory for communities to provide two years of nursery school education. Attending nursery school is optional. Generally, children start to attend school from the age of five. Primary school lasts six years, from the age of 7 to 12. The “Sekundarstufe I” (first level of secondary education or lower secondary level) is characterised by five types of schools: lower level of Secondary School (“Realschule”), higher level of Secondary School (“Sekundarschule”), Comprehensive School (“Gesamtschule”), Grammar School (“Untergymnasium”) and a third year of Grammar School. It normally takes three years, in the case of “Gymnasium” two years.

The second level of secondary education (Sekundarstufe II) starts optionally after the “Sekundarstufe I”, mostly after the ninth school year with the upper “Gymnasium” or the “Fachmittelschule”. Most young people start their vocational education directly after the first level of secondary school.

**private and
public**

In Switzerland, schools are run by the state, the canton and the municipality or by private organisations. Most schools in Grisons are municipality schools. Romansh is being instructed at the private R. Steiner School in Scuol, at the Hochalpinen Institut Ftan, at the Academia Engiadina in Samedan and at the Gymnasium Kloster Disentis.

Articles 17 of the cantonal school law and articles 12-13 of the regulation on the school act define the legal and curricular requirements for private teaching on elementary school level.

**bilingual
education forms**

Apart from the traditional elementary school there are two models that can be labelled bilingual: the bilingual type substituting a former Romansh or Italian school, which means that it is compulsory for all students attending a given school, and the bilingual type offered as an option within traditionally German schools. The choice rests with the parents. The bilingual schools are compulsory for pupils from seven until the age of fifteen.

In addition to the usual forms of German, Romansh and Italian schools, models with two languages of instruction are also possible. A school of this nature can be helpful for communities with mixed languages to promote and maintain both of them. The Grisons department of education, culture and the environment issued guidelines on 9 November 2001 on how to run schools or particular parts in two languages in the sense of partial immersion. The bilingual schools and classes offer an immersive or partly immersive bilingual type from class 1 to class 9 of elementary school. Article 33 of the cantonal school law deals with the usage of bilingual schools: for the promotion of Italian and Romansh, the government may grant the usage of two official cantonal languages at the same time. There is no actual curriculum for bilingual schools in Grisons. They are based on the various curricula of the respective monolingual types of

school. Another distinction is made according to the contributing languages in class. One possibility sees the “equal parts option” with the same amount of teaching in both languages, the other possibility is “priority based” with the intended promotion of Romansh as a minority language.

administration School supervision is executed by school boards, inspectors, the Grisons department of education, culture and the environment and the government (Art. 39 ff. of the Cantonal school law). Governance and supervision are within the responsibility of school boards. Inspectors supervise and promote all branches of elementary education. Details of regulations are handled by the government. The Grisons department of education, culture and the environment is officially entitled to enforce the law. Offices of the Grisons department of education, culture and the environment comprise the Office of Elementary Education and Sport, for nursery school and elementary education), the Office of Higher Education (AHB for middle schools) and the Office of vocational education (ABB for professional education).

inspection The Grisons department of education, culture and the environment and its departments are responsible for supervision, planning, coordination and supplying teaching material on pre-school, elementary school and secondary school (middle school) level. They also promote professional education, tertiary education and training at intercantonal institutions for students in Grisons, with a strong emphasis in the fields of culture and language. Private local organisations and communities are responsible for private schools. Supervision and governance of Swiss universities are in the hands of the cantons with Romansh as a major field of study being offered at the Universities of Zurich, Fribourg and Geneva.

support structure In Switzerland, the main responsibility for education and culture lies with the cantons. They coordinate their work at the national level. The 26 cantonal ministers of education together form a political body to carry out this work: the Swiss Conference of Cantonal Ministers of Education (Schweizerische Konferenz

der kantonalen Erziehungsdirektoren, hereafter; EDK). Legally binding, intercantonal agreements (known as concordats) form the foundation for the work of the EDK. The EDK has a secondary function and fulfils tasks that cannot be performed by the regions or cantons. The EDK programme of activities describes the current projects of the Conference.

School laws and regulations dealing with foreign language teaching are executed by the cantons. According to the cantonal language law, the communities in Grisons decide autonomously on the languages that are used as mediums of instruction in school.

The University of Teacher Education of Grisons is a teacher training institution for nursery school and elementary school, offering pedagogical support and continuing education for teachers of all levels, assisting with problems in the fields of organisation and governance. The Office of Elementary School and Sport is responsible for the publication and promotion of teaching material in all three cantonal languages.

The linguistic minority of Romansh deserves particular treatment regarding the production of teaching material since there simply are no publishing companies as is the case with Italian and German.

2 Pre-school education

target group	Pre-school education is for children aged four to five. Pre-school education is non-compulsory but attended by nearly all children.
structure	Pre-school is organised in toddler groups and nursery schools (also called kindergarten). As for the nursery schools, there has been a strong development in the last decades. Thanks to the effort of cantons and communities, a large majority of children attend the 2-year nursery school. Nursery schools authorities fulfil their requirements within the vast legal framework of nursery school law.
legislation	Article 7 of Grisons' education law of 21 March 2012 (as of 01.01.2016; BR 421.00) is the basis of the education at pre-school level. Nursery school is basically optional. The school authorities, however, can declare nursery school compulsory for kids with a foreign L1.
language use	All children in the Romansh and Romansh-German area in Grisons are instructed in Romansh. Nursery schools have to face immigration from foreign countries thus yielding multilingualism, in some areas a historical form of multilingualism. In some cantons, linguistic integration is the prime task for immigrant kids, in other areas, this development fosters cantonal languages as well.
teaching material	The canton of Grisons provides the necessary teaching materials in Romansh for the Romansh-medium primary schools. These are handled by the canton's own committee on didactic materials and its own publishing house for didactic materials.
statistics	In the canton of Grisons an overall number of 3328 children were attending nursery school in 2015/16. As for the language areas, these kids were attending nursery schools of their respective L1 in their communities. Various

communities (13) in the bilingual Romansh-German area run nursery schools in both languages.

nursery schools in the canton of Grisons		
language areas	number of nursery schools	number of children in nursery schools
German-speaking areas	106	2.955
Romansh-speaking areas	37	624
Italian-speaking areas	12	231

Table 1: Number of children at nursery schools in the canton of Grisons in 2015/2016. (Source: Educational, cultural and environmental department of the canton of Grisons, <http://www.bista.gr.ch>, extract from education statistics.)

3 Primary education

target group Primary education is compulsory and aimed at children aged seven to twelve.

structure After the first cycle, which covers the lower school (first three classes of primary education), the second basic learning cycle is for children aged seven to nine (fourth to sixth class) and employs the concept of teaching various subjects. In the last year of this second cycle children are prepared for lower secondary education.

There are two types of elementary schools in the Romansh area:

- The traditional Romansh school attended by the majority of pupils and the bilingual elementary school substituting the traditional Romansh school in certain communities. Currently, there are six Romansh schools offering such a system, and two offering it as an alternative to the German speaking school.
- The traditional Romansh elementary school is some sort of bilingual school with the goal to achieve a higher level of bilingualism (Romansh and German).

These bilingual schools are led by different guidelines: the equal model with both languages being used in equal parts and the eclectic models.

legislation Training and continuing education in the areas of elementary, higher and vocational education is in the hands of the Grisons department of education, culture and the environment. The government is responsible for the legal framework. Grisons' education law of 21 March 2012 (as of 01.01.2016; BR 421.00) reflects the education at the elementary school. The governmental regulation on the school act of 25 September 2012 is the constitutional premise of the school law with various regulations for school authorities, curricula, financial aspects, issues of organisation and rights and duties for teachers and students.

Article 33 of the cantonal school law deals with the usage of bilingual schools: For the promotion of Italian and Romansh, the government may grant the usage of two official cantonal languages at the same time. There is no actual curriculum for bilingual schools in Grisons. They are based on the various curricula of the respective types of school in Grisons.

language use

The language of instruction (L1) in the German speaking schools is German, in Italian speaking schools it is Italian, and in Romansh schools it is Romansh. Articles 30 and 31 of the cantonal school law explains details as to how the instruction of foreign languages is to be used: on primary level, one cantonal language and English are mandatory. The first foreign language in Romansh and Italian schools is German. The first foreign language for German schools is Italian. Instruction of the first foreign language starts in the third class of primary school, English starts in the fifth. For German schools the authorities may decide to offer Romansh instead of Italian and vice versa as electives.

**teaching
material**

The government is responsible for the choice of teaching material. It provides the necessary teaching materials in Romansh for the Romansh-medium primary schools. These are handled by the Office of Culture of Grisons, the canton's own committee on didactic materials and its own publishing house for didactic materials. A listing of the teaching material is published yearly for the obligatory part of the elementary levels in Grisons. The listed materials are in line with the curriculum of the obligatory and recommended teaching material.

The decisive threshold for the selection of material is the German Swiss Curriculum 21. Romansh will not display a huge amount of teaching material. The Romansh and Italian schools, however, do offer teaching material for Maths and English. Romansh will have an appropriate pack of teaching material in 2018/19. Apart from the listed material, any additional supplements may be used to achieve the required goals. Non-accredited material has to be officially granted by the government.

statistics In the school year 2015/16 an overall of 17.962 pupils attended public elementary schools showing the following statistics according to L1.

languages	monolingual (traditional) schools		bilingual schools	
	number	pupils	number	pupils
German	52	11.102 (62%)	-	-
Romansh	33	2.075 (12%)	6 (+2**)	442 (+ ca. 100)
Italian	12	1.641 (9%)	1	10
other languages	0	3.144 (18%)*	-	-

Table 2: Pupils at elementary schools regarding their L1 in 2015/2016. (Source: Grisons department of education, culture and the environment, <http://www.bista.gr.ch>, extract from education statistics.)

* These pupils attend schools in any of the three language areas of Grisons.

** Optional Romansh, in addition to German.

4 Secondary education

target group Secondary school is divided into two levels: Lower secondary school (Secondary I), this level of education is compulsory for pupils from thirteen until the age of sixteen, and Upper-secondary school (Secondary II), this level of education is attended by pupils from sixteen to the age of twenty.

structure The lower-secondary education is divided into three levels: a lower-secondary school, a secondary intermediate school and the lower classes of an academically demanding grammar school. It provides access to either vocational education or the continuing schools.

The upper secondary or middle school education is offered by seven private schools and the Grisons Grammar School. This type of school has three main types for general education: a grammar school, a technical college, and a business secondary school. Two private schools offer Romansh and a bilingual graduation exam.

The grammar schools are non-compulsory secondary schools that prepare towards a “*baccalauréat*” and admission to higher education.

legislation Article 9 of Grisons’ education law of 21 March 2012 (as of 01.01.2016; BR 421.00) lays the education at the lower secondary-school levels. Primary and Secondary I school are mandatory.

The Office of Higher Education is the executive branch for private middle schools, governing finances, organising admission and final exams and various tasks.

language use The Secondary I syllabus displays one cantonal language plus English. Official languages not taught as mandatory courses have to be adequately offered.

As far as intermediate schools (upper secondary or secondary II schools) are concerned, article 5 of the regulation governing the school-leaving/university-qualification examination “Matura” (baccalaureate) makes a special reference to the native tongue

as a key subject. Its second paragraph reads: *“German, Italian and Romansh are to be examined as the students’ native tongue. [...] Students of Romansh shall be examined in Romansh in combination with the language defined as the native tongue for the purpose of article 9a of the Swiss National Ordinance on Recognition of the Matura.”* This provision was revoked in 2003 when the legal basis of the previous “Matura” was replaced with a new “Matura” regulation. Grisons amended its cantonal law on upper-secondary schools on September 1998, including a massive upgrading of the position of Romansh. In the 1999/2000 academic year, it became possible to sit a bilingual (Romansh/German) “Matura”. In addition to Romansh itself, at least three subjects must be taught in Romansh. In two private schools, the Academia Engiadina in Samedan and the Institut Otalpin in Ftan, only one subject is taught in Romansh. The amended law on upper-secondary education now makes it possible to choose Romansh as the students’ first language (with the full amount of lessons), as a foreign language or a voluntary option.

On Secondary I level in German speaking Grisons the language of instruction is German, with either Italian or Romansh and English as foreign languages. In Italian speaking parts the L1 is Italian, the L2 are German and English. In Romansh schools L1 are Romansh and German, the L2 is English. According to regional specifics, electives are either Romansh, Italian or French.

teaching material

Primary and Secondary I teaching material and the according selection are handled by the government. The Office of Elementary Education and Sport decides on the teaching material. The government selects the obligatory teaching material.

statistics

The statistical display of schools and students at Secondary I level regarding L1 is as follows:

	monolingual (traditional) schools		bilingual schools	
	number	pupils	number	pupils
German	30	2.110 (78%)	-	-
Romansh	16	253 (9%)	2 (+1**)	123 (+ ca. 80)
Italian	4	100 (4%)	-	
other languages	0	251 (9%)*		

Table 3: Pupils at secondary schools regarding their L1 in 2015/2016. (Source: Grisons department of education, culture and the environment, <http://www.bista.gr.ch>, extract from education statistics.)

* These pupils attend schools in any of the three language areas of Grisons.

** Optional Romansh, in addition to German.

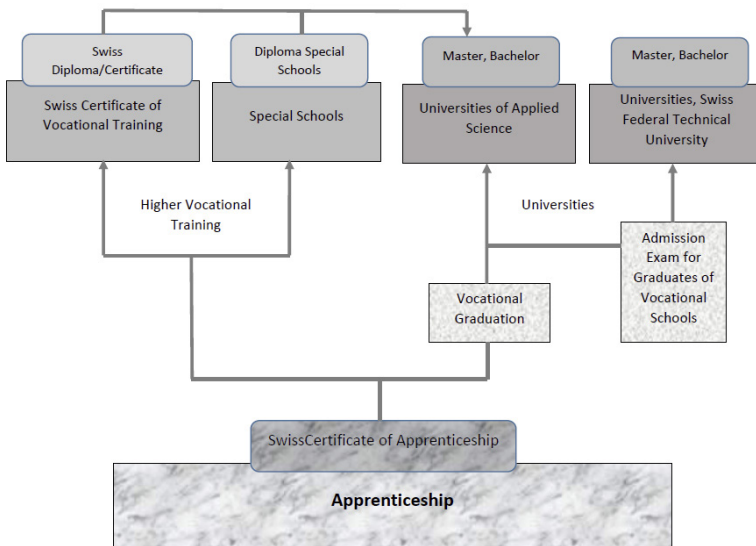
At the Secondary II level, there are approximately 80-100 Romansh pupils from all valleys with studies at the five middle schools ("Gymnasium" -- Grisons Grammar School), offering Romansh as subject.

5 Vocational education

target group As is the case with upper secondary education, vocational education is for adolescents from sixteen to twenty years.

structure This form of education is characterised by the “dual approach”, in which private companies and public vocational schools cooperate. This combined education takes three to four years. In addition to their professional training (apprenticeship, including school and continuing education) students can achieve the certificate of vocational training parallel or in a post-training approach.

The graduates of an apprenticeship attend vocational schools in Grisons in various locations or in external professional schools.



Graph 1: Apprenticeship, including school and continuing education in Switzerland (source: NZZ am Sonntag, March 5th, 2017).

legislation Within the division of powers in Switzerland, it is the mission of the Confederation to determine the vocational-training curricula for the vast majority of professions. It has not been considered

necessary to consider important teaching Romansh in these curricula. The Office of Vocational Training is responsible for the realisation of legal educational standards in the canton. In Grisons, professional interest groups and schools jointly cooperate on all levels of their partnership. Vocational training is seen as a pillar of mutual professional and educational development. Various vocational graduations are possible: adult education, professional schools, clerical schools etc., offering education and accommodation in all kinds of variations. Supervision and coordination in vocational education are the responsibility of the Office of Vocational Education (service department of Grisons department of education, culture and the environment).

language use

The usage of Romansh in vocational school is marginal. The commercial colleges in the Rain Anterior Valley (Ilanz/Glion) and in the Upper Engadine (Samedan) offer a compulsory one hour per week of Romansh. At the commercial vocational colleges in the Upper Engadine (Samedan), instruction is in German as a matter of principle, but Romansh trainees do have the option to keep up their native tongue in special block courses organised for them.

teaching material

The government may declare the mandatory teaching material, with the responsibility in the hands of the Office of Higher Education.

statistics

In 2015/16 5795 students graduated from a vocational school in Grisons, with 73% being German speakers, 12% Romansh, 5% Italian and 10% having a different L1. Currently, no differentiation according to languages is available.

6 Higher education

structure

Higher education in Romansh is offered in Switzerland by the University of Zurich, the universities of Fribourg and Geneva, the University of Teacher Education of Grisons and the School of Applied Linguistics (SAL) in Zurich. The Universities of Zurich and Fribourg offer wide-ranging curricula concerning the Romansh language and literature. The Department of Romance Languages and Literatures of the University of Zurich has had an extraordinary professorship in Romansh language and literature since 1985 (vacant from 1996 to 2001), a position for assistant professorship, and, since 2001, a position for a lecturer in Romansh linguistics. The University of Fribourg has had a professorship in Romansh since 1991 (which was integrated in the Department of Multilingualism and Foreign Language Didactics in 2009) and, since 2013, a position for an external lecturer. At the Institute of Multilingualism in Fribourg (under the auspices of the University of Fribourg and the University of Teacher Education of Fribourg), an assistant professorship funded by the University of Teacher Education of Grisons was established in 2011. The University of Geneva has a position for a lecturer of Romansh language and literature at the department of Romance languages and literatures.

legislation

Guidelines for Romansh at Swiss universities are dealt with at universities. Details are available at the respective websites. Swissuniversities is responsible for the coordination and realisation of their rules. The legal framework of the University of Teacher Education of Grisons is as follows: state law for the promotion and coordination of Swiss universities, cantonal law for higher education and research, and the regulation of cantonal universities, regulations for achieving the teaching license for L1 and L2, mutual recognition of diplomas for pre-school and elementary education and various internal regulations regarding the organisation of the University of Teacher Education of Grisons.

language use At the Universities of Zurich and Fribourg, Romansh can be chosen as a minor subject of study. The University of Fribourg is the only place where it is possible to study Romansh as a full subject for secondary teachers and where Romansh can be part, at the Master level, of a main subject (“Multilingualism studies with a Rhaeto-Romance option”). At the University of Teacher Education of Zurich, Romansh is offered in an optional domain and can be upgraded after the basic diploma so as to form a recognised subject. The School of Applied Linguistics (SAL) in Zurich uses the Romansh language for its preparatory, basic and diploma courses.

teacher-training Pre-school and elementary school teachers are trained in the three official cantonal languages German, Romansh and Italian by the University of Teacher Education of Grisons. Students can earn a bachelor’s degree in nursery school or primary school education. They can choose between two different tracks of studies: a track with one first language and one second language (and optionally another second language), and a track with two first languages (and optionally one or two additional second languages) which enable them to become bilingual (Romansh/German, Italian/German) teachers.

Secondary school teachers are trained at the University of Fribourg and at the University of Teacher Education of Zurich. Romansh speaking students can earn their diploma to a great extent in their mother tongue.

Teachers for grammar schools in Grisons are trained at the universities of Zurich and Fribourg. They have to earn their diploma for higher teaching education at university departments. In Zurich and Fribourg these studies are partially offered in the field of didactics of the respective subject. The latter is in the responsibility of universities and is also offered in Romansh.

pre-school training

The training of pre-school teachers has been administered by the University of Teacher Education of Grisons since 2003. It offers

courses for a master's degree jointly with other institutions and the school of orthopedagogy. Students who wish to become a nursery or primary school teacher acquire competences in their 26-week internship in the three years of their training. They can enrol in courses and modules in all three cantonal languages.

primary training

The training of primary teachers is also administered by the University of Teacher Education of Grisons. The canton of Grisons guarantees the training of Romansh-speaking primary-school teachers at the University of Teacher Education of Grisons as an independent public institution. Multilingualism is the prerequisite for its unique significance. Students enrol in courses and modules in all three cantonal languages.

secondary training

Secondary school teachers are trained at the University of Fribourg and at the University of Teacher Education of Zurich. Primary school teachers have the option to earn a Master's Degree in Secondary Teaching at the Department of Continuing Studies of University of Teacher Education in Zurich.

in-service training

The study at the universities of teacher education offers internships from the start guaranteeing competences for the students' professional career.

Starting with the study of preschool and primary school education there are more options: A Masters programme offering majors in German (L1) and any L2, Mathematics and Science, Special Needs and Orthopedagogics; furthermore, a Bachelor's Degree for Primary/Preschool students wishing to achieve a license in L1 and at least one L2. This includes a track for Romansh. Finally, students can also earn a Master's Degree in School Development.

statistics

The University of Teacher Education of Grisons is of medium size comprising approx. 450 students (2016/17). This is an

ideal size for the teacher training school enabling it to react swiftly to educational changes and thus warrant innovative solutions. Primary school teachers (15-20 Romansh students per year on average) as well as nursery-school teachers (2-4 Romansh students per year on average) are trained at tertiary level.

At the University of Geneva, where Romansh can be studied as a foreign language, 8-10 students choose Romansh as a complementary subject during one academic year. In Zurich and Fribourg, where the major field of study by native Romansh students is Romansh language and literature, fewer students are currently enrolled per academic year.

At the School of Applied Linguistics (SAL) in Zurich, the number of Romansh-speaking students is very small (approx. 1-2 per year).

7 Adult education

- structure and language courses** Every year, summer courses and adult-education courses are held in the Romansh-speaking regions, organised by the language and cultural organisations labelled “Scuntrada e Furmaziun” (= coming together and learn). In addition to this, the Lia Rumantscha (an organisation for the preservation of the Romansh language and culture) also organises and supports integration courses for adults and cultural events in Romansh-speaking areas for parents and children. Romansh language courses are also held outside of Grisons by several private schools (Migros-Klub Schools, etc.).
- language use** The language of instruction is the respective “idiom” and the official Rumantsch Grischun. In Sent a project featuring total immersion of the local linguistic variety has been launched. The participants are fully immersed in the foreign language environment – a diametrical approach to language learning.
- statistics** Approximately 350 – 400 people attend Romansh courses organised by the Lia Rumantscha as well as by the several regional language organisations. The number of students outside of Grisons who enrol in language course is usually small.

8 Educational research

Romansh-oriented educational research is institutionally represented by the University of Teacher's Education of Graubünden (Department of research, development and services), the "Institut für Kulturforschung Graubünden" (IKG), the Institute of Multilingualism in Fribourg and by the Department of Multilingualism and Foreign Language Teaching at the University of Fribourg. Research at the University of Teacher Education of Grisons is tripartite: School in alpine regions, multilingualism and school, and technology. The research focus is on educational development, didactics of multilingualism, L1 and L2 teaching, designing teaching material, evaluation of schools, MINT projects and organising conferences.

Trilingualism means conducting research in all three cantonal languages. The Institute of Multilingualism in Fribourg, the IKG and the Department of Multilingualism and Foreign Language Teaching at the University of Fribourg are actively conducting research in Romansh language and culture, independently, through third party initiatives and through school evaluations. There is an intensive cooperation between the above-mentioned institutions, legally embedded by contracts. The University of Teacher Education of Grisons is part of the national scientific network of multilingualism with its focus on educational and sociological topics in Grisons. The research department at the University of Teacher Education of Grisons cooperates with numerous other teachers colleges and research departments nationally and internationally.

9 Prospects

The 19th century was a period of evolution, bringing with it many changes that had a negative effect on the Romansh language and culture. Over the last hundred years or so, the opening up of the Alps brought the construction of railways and roads and transformations in society have led, in some location at least, to an extensive mixing of the Romansh population with immigrants speaking other languages. Industry and tourism have attracted German-speaking immigrants in particular. At the same time, changes in the structure of the economy (the shift from the primary to the tertiary sector) have caused many Romansh people to leave their homeland for the industrial and administrative centres of German-speaking Switzerland, resulting in the over-aging of the village population.

Economic and demographic changes have resulted in a substantial geographical demise of Romansh in the last decades. The number of Romansh speakers is constantly decreasing with Romansh being substituted by a rising number of German, and even English words and phrases. Lexical changes and the tendency towards grammatical simplification are evident. Language change results in language decay and is a form of change in society. This will inevitably lead to a loss of language competence of Romansh and a lack of identification. The current varieties of Romansh may cease to be usable and may be subjected to a further loss of prestige.

The challenge is not only a political, but a sociological one. Public support corresponds with the political intention to include Romansh and Italian as autochthonous minority languages in the canton of Grisons and also in the Swiss Confederation. At cantonal level since 1880/92 and at federal level since 1938, Romansh as a national language has been, in formal terms at least, on equal levels with the other Grisons/Swiss national languages. The federal constitution of 5 October 2007 (with its language article, number 5) and the amended version of the cantonal constitution of 19 October 2006, operative from 1 January

2008 (with its language article, number 3) provide the legal bases for the consistent promotion of language minorities in Switzerland and in the canton of Grisons. Specific laws and edicts at federal and cantonal levels govern the use of Romansh in detail.

According to the periodic reports which the Swiss federal authorities submitted to the Council of Europe in the years 2001 to 2012 in accordance with the European Charter for Regional or Minority languages, its language minorities are adequately protected thanks to federalism and the guarantee of constitutional rights, excluding discrimination. In its reports, the Federal Government of Switzerland (Federal Council) maintains that most of the powers concerning language policy rest with the cantons.

In practice, the equality for Romansh with the other Swiss and Grisons national languages has still not been achieved. The constantly decreasing use of Romansh in economy and society, the huge influx of foreigners and the rising pressure of the dominant languages German and English in school are important factors in the demise of autochthonous languages.

Reliable financing by the Federal Government of Switzerland and the Cantonal Government of Grisons is important for the fulfilment of the tasks of the Lia Rumantscha and its affiliated language and cultural associations.

All the representatives involved are aware that the future of the Romansh language and culture will jointly be decided by the intention of the Romansh population as a minority and of the majority population in Switzerland. The governmental framework with language promotion and school education permit the members of the Romansh community to use the Romansh language in all its varieties, to maintain their culture and traditions and to pass on this heritage to the next generation. The Romansh language in society and education in Grisons will be successful only if the young Romansh people are willing to use their native language consistently, to pursue their cultural identity and transmit the Romansh language and culture.

10. Summary of statistics

nursery schools in the canton of Grisons		
language areas	number of nursery schools	number of children in nursery schools
German-speaking areas	106	2.955
Romansh-speaking areas	37	624
Italian-speaking areas	12	231

Table 1: Number of children at nursery schools in the canton of Grisons in 2015/2016. (Source: Educational, cultural and environmental department of the canton of Grisons, <http://www.bista.gr.ch>, extract from education statistics.)

languages	monolingual (traditional) schools		bilingual schools	
	number	pupils	number	pupils
German	52	11.102 (62%)	-	-
Romansh	33	2.075 (12%)	6 (+2**)	442 (+ ca. 100)
Italian	12	1.641 (9%)	1	10
other languages	0	3.144 (18%)*	-	-

Table 2: Pupils at elementary schools regarding their L1 in 2015/2016. (Source: Grisons department of education, culture and the environment, <http://www.bista.gr.ch>, extract from education statistics.)

* These pupils attend schools in any of the three language areas of Grisons.

** Optional Romansh, in addition to German.

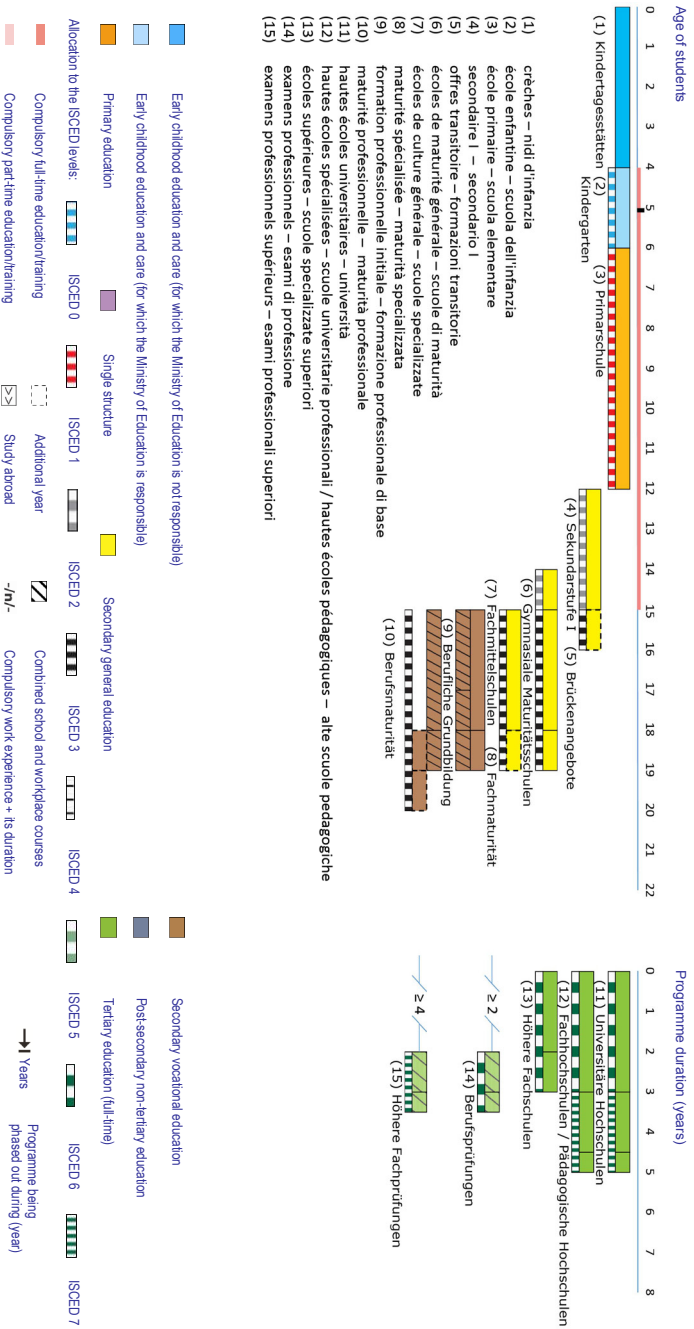
	monolingual (traditional) schools		bilingual schools	
	number	pupils	number	pupils
German	30	2.110 (78%)	-	-
Romansh	16	253 (9%)	2 (+1**)	123 (+ ca. 80)
Italian	4	100 (4%)	-	
other languages	0	251 (9%)*		

Table 3: Pupils at secondary schools regarding their L1 in 2015/2016. (Source: Grisons department of education, culture and the environment, <http://www.bista.gr.ch>, extract from education statistics.)

* These pupils attend schools in any of the three language areas of Grisons.

** Optional Romansh, in addition to German.

The structure of the education system in Switzerland in 2016/2017



Source: Eurydice (2016 / 2017)

References and further reading

regulations

All official laws and regulations which are important for Romansh in Switzerland and in Grisons are available in an overview at: <http://www.bak.admin.ch> and www.gr.ch.

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The Office of Culture is a service institution of the Grisons department of education, culture and the environment. The framework of the office comprises various institutions of culture, offering a multitude of services trying to promote cultural activities, research and maintain valuable Grisons assets.

education

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The Office of elementary school is a service department of the Educational, cultural and environmental department of the canton in Grisons, putting into effect the political aspects of the government regarding elementary schools.

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The Office of Higher Education is a service institution of the Educational, cultural and environmental department of the canton in Grisons, politically reporting to the government and the educational department, also responsible for middle schools, and the tertiary level, encompassing colleges, research institutions, vocational departments and institutes of higher learning and continuing education.

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The University of Teacher Education of Grisons (PHGR) provides the training for primary and preschool education, offers continuing education and internships, conducts action research in the areas of school and society; it also grants support to third parties.

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Lia Rumantscha is the umbrella organisation of all Romansh language and cultural associations, founded in 1919.

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The Federal Office of Culture is responsible for the Confederation's culture policy and for the promotion, preservation and mediation of cultural diversity. It promotes culture production in areas such as art and film; it oversees museums and collections, supports the preservation of historic monuments and is actively involved in cultural education.

**Institut de plurilinguisme (Université de Fribourg / Haute École
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**Wissenschaftliches Kompetenzzentrum für Mehrsprachigkeit
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Other websites on minority languages

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

European Parliament Committee – supporting analyses database

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/committees/en/supporting-analyses-search.html>.

In this database you will find research papers produced by the European Parliament's research service. A study for the CULT Committee, conducted by Mercator, is published in 2017: *Minority Languages and Education: Best Practices and Pitfalls*.

NPLD

<http://www.npld.eu/>

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

FUEN

<https://www.fuen.org/>

The Federal Union of European Nationalities is the umbrella organisation of the autochthonous, national minorities/ethnic groups in Europe and represents the interests of European minorities on regional, national and European level.

What can the Mercator Research Centre offer you?

mission & goals The Mercator European Research Centre on Multilingualism and Language Learning addresses the growing interest in multilingualism and endeavours to promote linguistic diversity within Europe. The centre focuses on research, policy, and practice in the field of multilingualism and language learning. Through the creation, circulation and application of knowledge in the field of language learning at school, at home and through cultural participation, the Mercator Research Centre aims to provide for the increasing need of language communities to exchange experiences and to cooperate. Not only in European context, but also beyond the borders of Europe. Though the main focus lies in the field of regional and minority languages, immigrant languages are topic of study as well.

partners

Since 1987 the Mercator Research Centre forms a network structure with two partners: Mercator Media, hosted at the University of Wales in Aberystwyth, and Mercator Legislation, hosted at the Ciemen Foundation and the University of Barcelona in Barcelona. Together with the Stockholm University in Sweden and the Research Institute for Linguistics of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences in Hungary, these partners formed the Mercator European Network of Language Diversity Centres. Mercator also works closely with a number of other partner organisations researching in the same field. This cooperation includes partners in the province Fryslân and other parts of the Netherlands, as well as partners across Europe. The main funding body of the Mercator Research Centre is the provincial government of Fryslân. The EU and regional authorities in Europe fund projects and activities as well.

research

The research activities of the Mercator Research Centre focus on various aspects of bilingual and trilingual education such as language proficiency in different languages, interaction in the multilingual classroom, and teachers' qualifications for working in a multilingual classroom. Latest developments look at how educational models for minority languages can also cater for immigrant pupils. Whenever possible, research is carried out in a comparative European perspective. Whenever possible, research is carried out in a comparative perspective. Results are disseminated through publications, conferences and publications in collaboration with Mercator's partners.

conferences

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

q&a

If you have any questions, please contact us at:
mercator@fryske-akademy.nl.



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