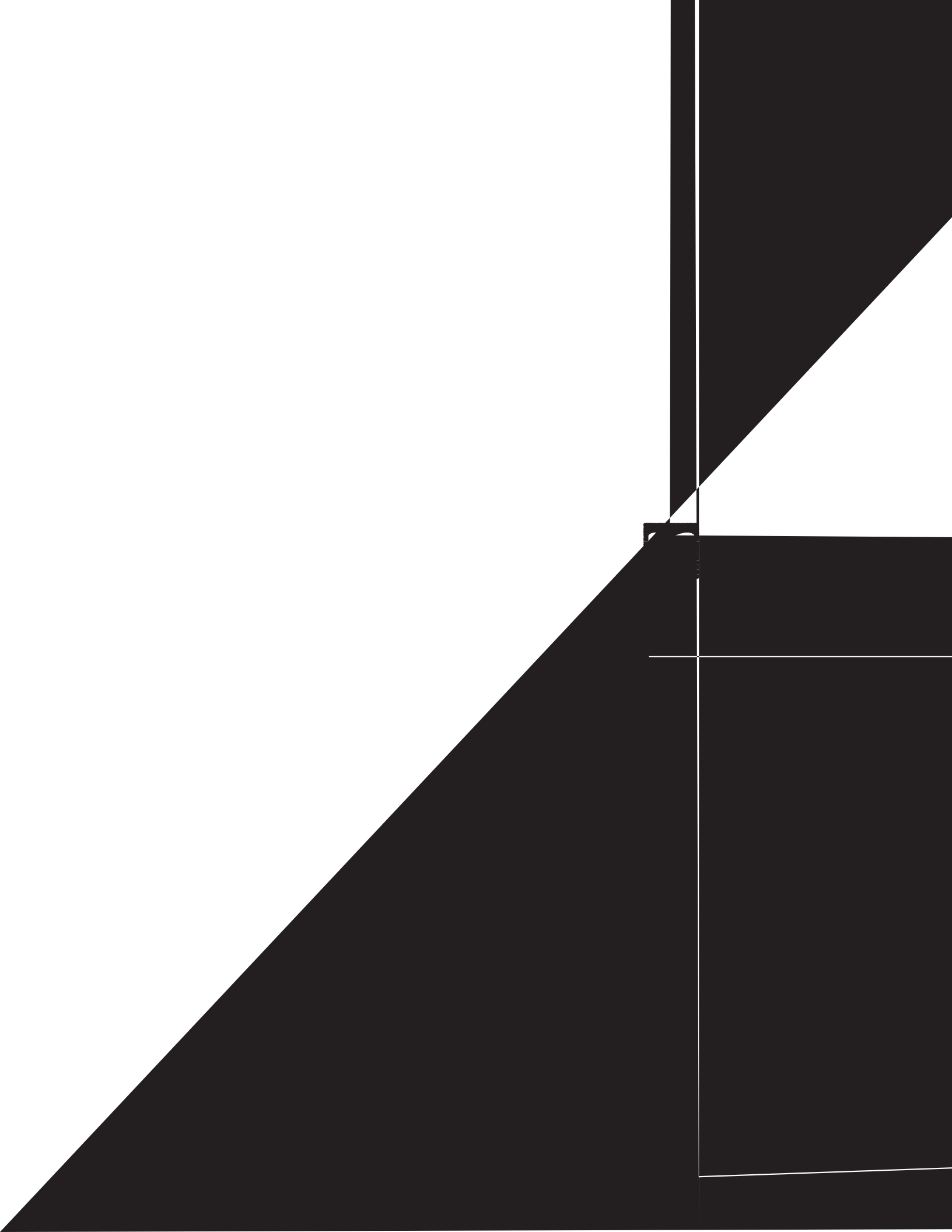

CONTENTS

i **Foreword**

iii **Preface**

1 **Argentina**
Juan Arrieta, Verónica Parreño

7 **Belize**
Rosalind Bradley

15 **Bulgaria**
Nikolay Popov, Georgi Bishkov

23 **Canada**
Francine Jaques, Louis-Philippe Gaudreault

35 **Colombia**
Claudia Sáenz, Martha Rocha
Guillermo García, Eliana Riveros

43 **Cyprus**
Constantinos Papanastasiou, Mary Koutselini

51 **Czech Republic**
Ivana Prochazkova

59 **England**
Liz Twist

69 **France**
Marc Colmant

79 **Germany**
Eva-Maria Lankes, Wilfried Bos,
Renate Valtin

89 **Greece**
Costas Basbas,

The PIRLS 2001 Encyclopedia has been prepared to provide a rich context for interpreting the results from IEA's 2001 Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS). Since its inception almost 50 years ago, IEA (the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement) has been conducting cross-national studies of educational achievement, including periodic assessments of children's reading literacy.

Conducted at the fourth grade in 35 countries around the world, PIRLS 2001 is IEA's most recent study to monitor progress in children's reading literacy. It was a carefully constructed reading assessment, consisting of an innovative test of reading literacy and a variety of questionnaires to collect liety eke 1 Encs9x1 Encs9x1 Encs9x1e ro

Participating Countries

Thirty-five countries joined together to conduct the first PIRLS assessment in 2001.

The Progress in Internationa Reading Literacy Study – PIRLS 2001

The PIRLS 2001 assessment framework[1] defines reading literacy as "the ability to understand and use those written language forms required by society and/or valued by the individual. Young readers can construct meaning from a variety of texts. They read to learn, to participate in communities of readers, and for enjoyment." The framework identifies three aspects of reading literacy to

questionnaire designed to gather information about classroom contexts for developing reading literacy. This questionnaire asked about characteristics of the class tested, such as size, reading level of the students, and the language ability of the students, and about instructional time, materials, and activities for teaching reading and promoting the development of students' reading literacy. Questions about classroom resources, assessment practices, and home-school connections also were included. Additionally, the questionnaire asked teachers for their views on opportunities for professional development and collaboration with other teachers, and for information about their education and training.

The principal of each participating school responded to the school questionnaire. It asked school principals about enrollment and school characteristics, such as where the school is located, resources available in the surrounding area, and indicators of the socio-economic background of the student body; characteristics of reading education in the school; instructional time; school resources, such as the availability of instructional materials and staff; home-school connections; and the school climate.

While PIRLS 2001 is the first in a cycle of assessments designed to measure trends in reading achievement, nine countries that participated in the IEA's 1991 Reading Literacy Study, including Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, New Zealand, Singapore, Slovenia, Sweden, and the United States, also measured achievement trends from 1991 to 2001 by administering the 1991 reading test and student questionnaire to a sample of students in 2001. This provides information about how their children's reading literacy today compares with that of ten years ago.

PIRLS 2001 Reports

The PIRLS International Report[2] describes the reading literacy achievement of fourth grade students in 35 countries, presenting results for literacy overall as well as separately for two purposes for reading – for literary experience and to acquire and use information. To provide an interpretation of the PIRLS literacy scale in terms of students' reading, PIRLS used a scale-anchoring procedure describing performance at four points on the scale, corresponding to four international benchmarks – the Top 10%, the Upper Quarter, the Median, and the Lower Quarter benchmarks. As a way of describing student performance at a range of achievement levels, the international report provides the percentage of students in each country reaching each of these benchmarks. To provide more detail about performance on the PIRLS assessment, student achievement on example items from example passages also is presented.

The International Report includes key findings from the wide range of questionnaire data collected by PIRLS 2001 about students' home and school environments and their experiences in learning to read. These include literacy-related activities in the home, the reading curriculum and school organization for teaching reading, reading instruction and literacy materials in the classroom, school resources and environment, and students' reading habits and attitudes.

The Trends in Reading Literacy[3] report describes changes in performance from 1991 to 2001 on IEA's 1991 Reading Literacy test for the nine PIRLS countries that also participated in the 1991 Reading Literacy Study.

To foster understanding of the methodology employed, the PIRLS 2001 Technical Report[4] describes the design, development, and implementation of the study, and the techniques used to analyze and report the results. In line with IEA's mission to promote cross-national research using data from its studies, the PIRLS 2001 Database and User Guide[5] provide educational researchers and policy analysts access to all of the PIRLS 2001 data in a convenient form, together with software to facilitate analysis and extensive documentation describing all data formats and variables. All of the PIRLS 2001 publications, including the international database, are available from the PIRLS web site (*http://pirls.bc.edu*).

Purpose and Organization of the PIRLS 2001 Encyclopedia

Although the extensive data collected by the PIRLS 2001 questionnaires encapsulated a great deal of information about reading literacy in each country and how children achieve it, there are many important factors – cultural, societal, and economic – that influence the teaching and learning of reading. Many of these are impossible to do justice to in a comparative survey. Many of these

also are structural characteristics of the country, potentially impacting on all students in the same way,

Research in England and Wales, which had major responsibility for developing the reading assessment; the IEA Data Processing Center, responsible for processing and verifying the data from the 35 countries; and Educational Testing Service, which provided software and support for scaling the achievement data.

The Project Management Team, comprising the study directors and senior representatives from the partner organizations, met regularly to review the study's progress, procedures, and schedule. The PIRLS Reading Development Group, comprised of reading experts from a range of countries, contributed invaluable expertise to the development of the reading framework and assessment, while the Questionnaire Development Group, made up of national representatives from six PIRLS countries, helped write the questionnaires and review successive drafts.

Ina V.S. Mullis
Michael O. Martin
Co-Directors, PIRLS 2001

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Juan Arrieta
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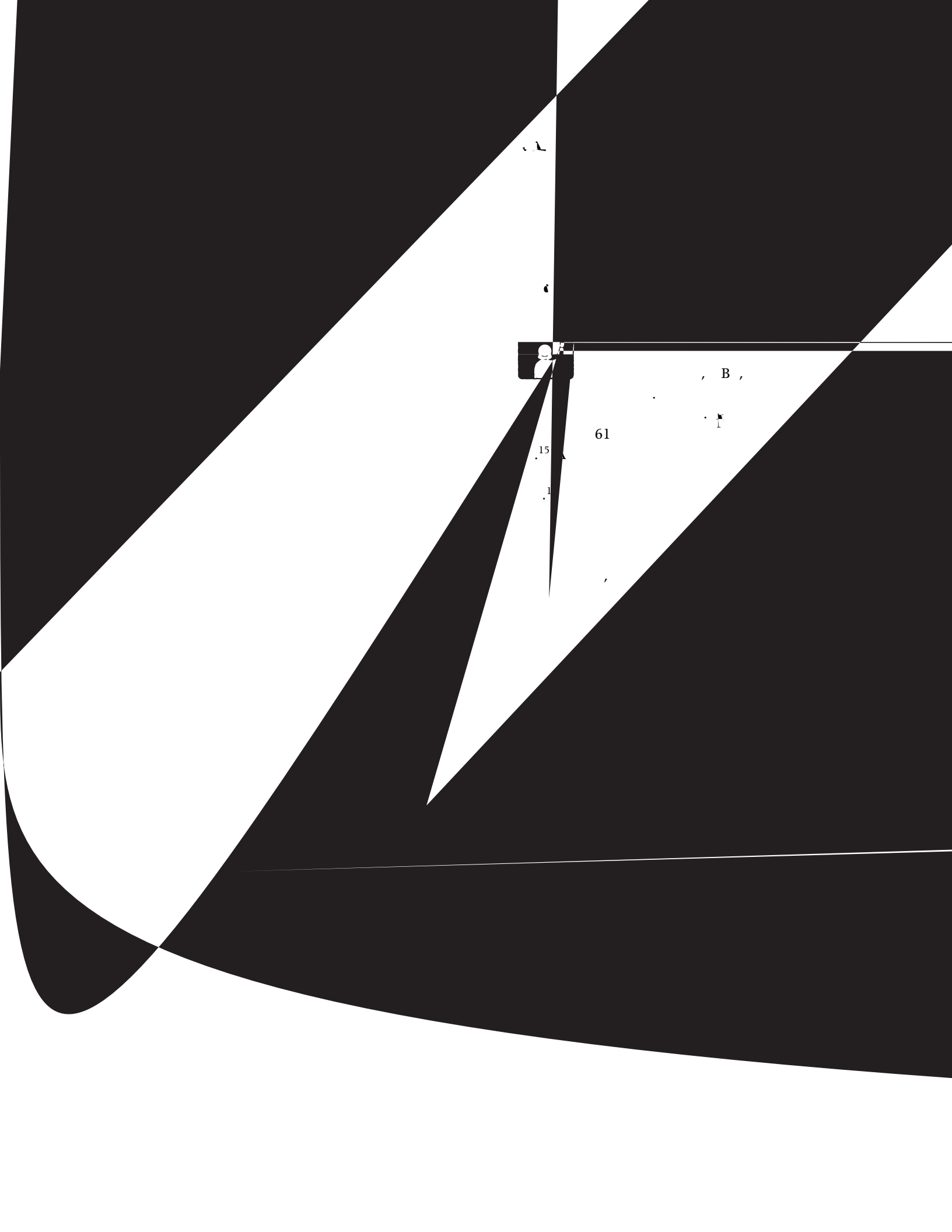
Country Profile: Argentina

Located in southern South America, Argentina is bounded on the north by Bolivia and Paraguay; on the east by Brazil, Uruguay, and the Atlantic Ocean; and on the west by Chile. The second largest South American country, Argentina's area is 2,780,400 square kilometers or 2,808,602 square kilometers including the Falkland Islands, or Islas Malvinas, other sparsely settled southern Atlantic islands, and part of Antarctica.

According to the 2001 census, Argentina had a population of 36,027,041, giving the country an overall population density of 13 persons per square kilometer.[9] Eighty-nine percent of the people live in urban areas.[10] More than one-third of the population lives in or around Buenos Aires, the capital and 041, gia3i Aireii1ird1percent4 53c43 4535.6 93.8302 475.3381 1m0.0053 Tc95.08 1 450 8 102.3857 472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R a B a
University of Belize

L n n L

Due to the diversity of the population, many Belizeans speak more than one language. English or Creole is spoken by more than half of the population, especially by those living in the Belize district.[1] English, however, is the official language and the medium of instruction in schools. Spanish also is widely spoken, particularly in the northern and western districts. A number of other languages such as Garufuna, Maya, and German also are spoken.

E n S

G n n n O n n

A legacy of the colonial period, the education system has emerged as a church-state partnership. The Education Ordinance of 1962 legally granted government more control over the system, however, the churches retain administrative responsibility for

C . P. : B

G h n n S

Belize, originally known as British Honduras, is the only English-speaking country located on the Caribbean coast of Central America. It is bounded on the north by Mexico and on the south and west by Guatemala. The area of the country is 22,965 square kilometers, extending 280 kilometers in length, and measuring, at its widest point, 109 kilometers from east to west.

The country is divided into six districts – Corozal, Orange Walk, Stann Creek, Toledo, Cayo, and Belize. Belize City is the chief commercial hub. Belize has one major airport and two major seaports that connect Belize to the rest of the world. Belmopan is the capital and the core of government operations.

The climate is subtropical, with two seasons: the dry season and the wet season. The dry season is from March to June, with temperatures reaching as high as 38º Celsius or 100º Fahrenheit, inland. The wet season, caused mainly by tropical storms and hurricanes, extends from June to November. Due to the mountains, the southern region receives more rainfall than the rest of the country. The lower amount of rainfall i

primary schools, 29 secondary, and 12 post-secondary.[3]

Preschool Education

Preschool education in Belize is not compulsory, but due to the growing number of women in the labor force, the need for preschools is increasing steadily. The Ministry of Education, through the Preschool Unit, establishes the curriculum and defines its educational and developmental role. The focus of the program at this level is on social skills, concept development, emergent reading, expression, language development, movement, and music. Pupils are stimulated through play. Students attend preschool four hours daily. During 1998-1999, 3,634 pupils were enrolled in preschools across the country.[10] This reflects an increase of 9.7 percent over the previous year.[11]

schools, the program of study varies widely depending on the emphasis of the school. The Ministry of Education is in the process of developing a national core curriculum for secondary schools to guarantee that students at this level r

R n C _ n In n

R n P _

The National Curriculum Guide outlines the policies, principles, and expected outcomes of the curriculum and instruction across subject areas for Belizean primary schools. The language arts outcomes are grouped under the following headings: speaking, listening, reading, and writing. In delivering the curriculum, teachers are encouraged to integrate these components of language in the language program as well as across the disciplines. Recognizing that Belizean students are learning English as a second language, this is critical in that it expands students' access to English by teaching listening, speaking, reading, and writing in standard English across the curriculum.

Literature is an integral part of language learning and teachers are encouraged to use reading as the springboard for speaking and writing activities. The curriculum also promotes the teaching of vocabulary, spelling, grammar, and punctuation in the context of real/meaningful reading and writing tasks. Accordingly, the goal is that upon completion of elementary schooling, a student should:

- Use context clues and cues effectively to communicate when reading orally
- Demonstrate fluency through appropriately applying word identification strategies
- Select material for recreational reading based on personal preference
- Apply functional reading skills (including comprehension skills) in the selection, reading, and interpretation of texts.

R n C _ n S n

Formal reading instruction begins at the age of 5, in the first year of elementary schooling. Children who have been to preschool often come with prereading skills that give them an advantage over those who have not been to preschool. This means that there is often a wide range of reading ability among students even at this early stage. This gap seems to widen as students move up the grades.

At the end of the 5th year of school, students should be able to:

- Use context clues to read a selection
- Apply phonetic clues and word identification strategies to distinguish between words
- Read fluently with appropriate intonation and expression for information and pleasure
- Use context clues to interpret a selection
- Identify main ideas and supporting details
- Discriminate between fact and opinion
- Predict what will happen in a sequence of events
- Identify cause-and-effect relationships
- Make inferences and draw conclusions
- Interpret and follow instructions/directions
- Select material for recreational reading based on personal preference.

At the end of the 8th year of primary school, students should be able to:

-

According to the regulations governing schools, the ratio of students to teacher is 35 to 1. In practice, there is a wide disparity in student-teacher ratios based on size of school and its location. Overall, the average class size is 26 students.

R _ R n S _ n R n In n

The classroom teacher is responsible for the teaching of reading. In some cases in the upper division where subject teaching is the rule, one teacher is responsible for the teaching of reading in several classes or grade levels. Reading specialists are attached to the Ministry of Education and the University of Belize. While they play lit58imT*0 Tw(w)Tj0.97 640 Tm-0.000hery playdivisionading in sevestudents tit5

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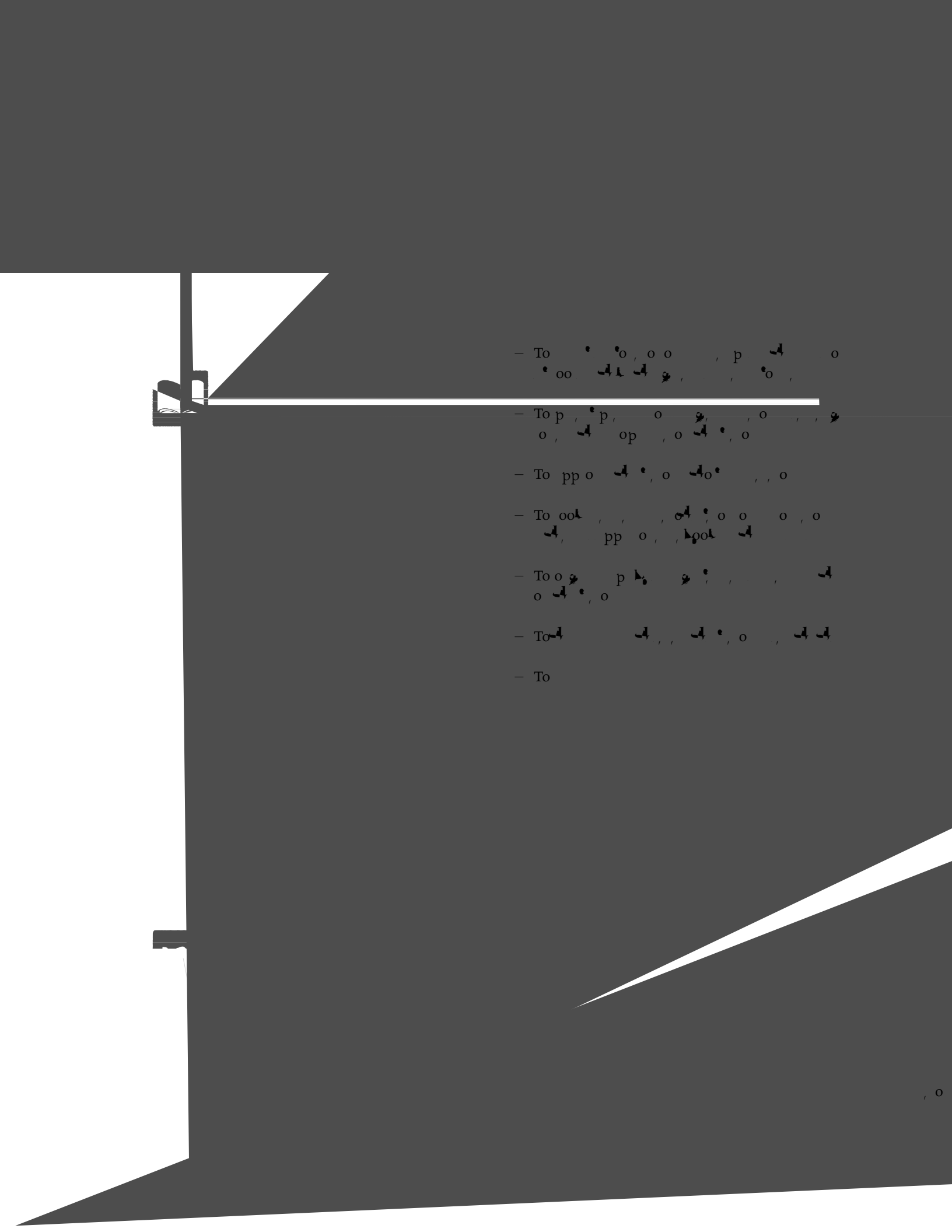
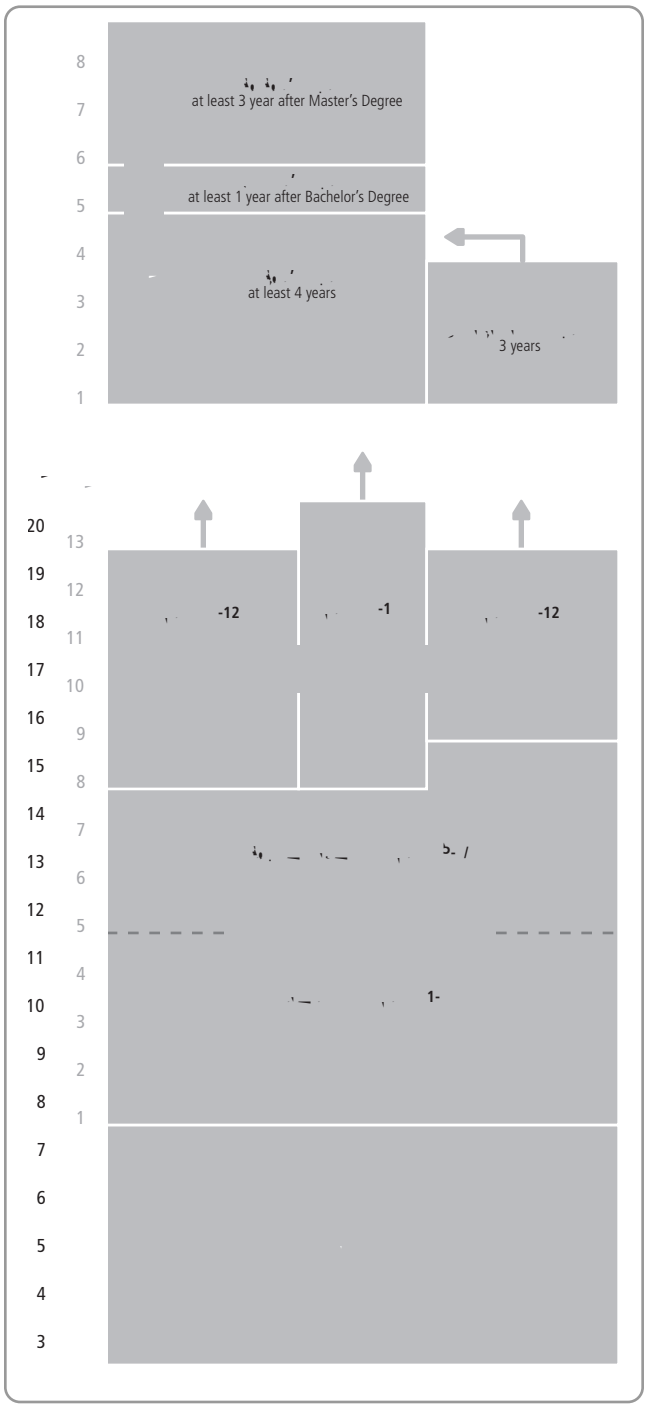


Exhibit 1: Structure of the Educational System in Bulgaria by Levels of Education 2001/02



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– B oo , 1 , o 7/8

– G , 8 , o 12

– S o oo , 1 , o 12

– S o oo , 5 , o 12.

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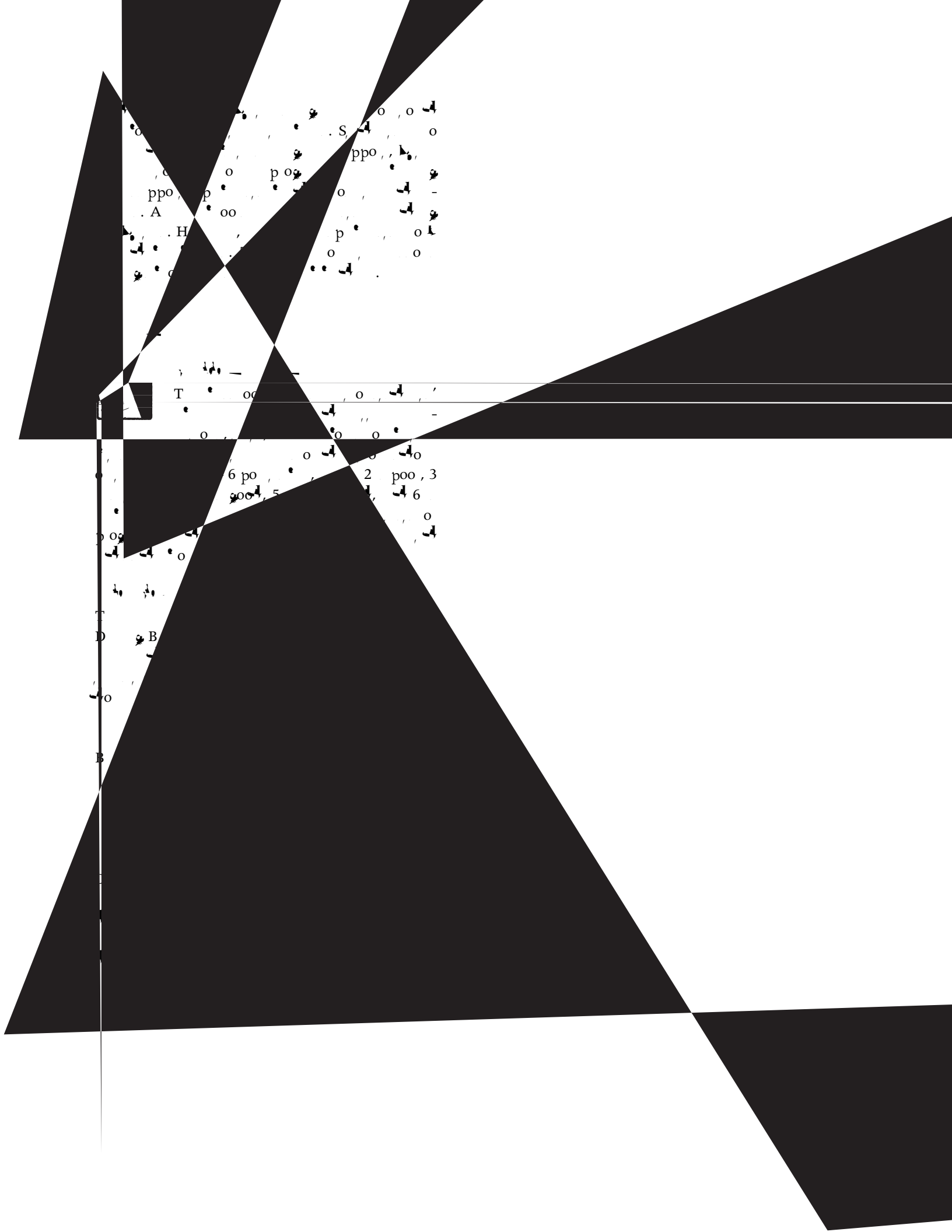

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Language and Literacy

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Geographical Location and Size

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Elementary Education

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Reading Curriculum and Instruction

Reading Policy

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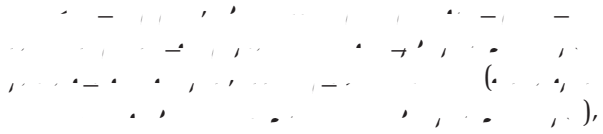

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Second Language Instruction

Reading Disabilities

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Literacy Programs

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Standardized Tests

References

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Educational System

Governance and Organization

There are three government agencies responsible for the educational process in Colombia: Congress, the Ministry of National Education, and Territorial Entities. Congress is responsible for issuing legislation, which gives the national government authority for education. The Ministry of National Education is responsible for educational policies, planning, inspection, supervising, administration, and norms. Territorial Entities are responsible for the administration of regional educational services. Public expenditure on education is 4 percent of GNP.[5]

The Ministry of National Education establishes curricular guidelines that cover 80 percent of the school's curricular development. Mandatory curriculum areas include natural sciences and environmental education, social sciences, history, geography, political constitution and democracy, art, ethics and human values, physical education, recreation and sports, religious education, humanities, spanish and foreign languages, mathematics and technology, and computer science. Educational institutions are free to organize 20 percent of the curriculum through an Institutional Educational Project (PEI). Educational institutions may be both public and private, but they must all comply with the regulations established by law.[6]

Structure of the Education System

In Colombia, the educational system is divided into four levels: preschool education, basic education (primary and secondary cycles), high education and higher education (university studies). Most recently, the Colombian Constitution issued in 1991 established mandatory education for children between

Geographical Location and Size

Located at the Northeastern part of South America, the Republic of Colombia has coasts both in the Atlantic and the Pacific Oceans. Colombia has an area of 1,142,000 square kilometers and a coastline that is 2,900 kilometers long. Its capital is Bogotá D.C., located at the center of the country. Crossing the country from north to south, the Andes are the most important topographic aspect of Colombia. In Colombia, the Andes are divided into three mountain ranges–the Eastern, Western, and Central. The Central range has several volcano peaks, which together make the National Snowcapped Mountain Park. The main rivers are: Magdalena, Cauca, Amazon and Atrato, among others.[7]

Population and Health Statistics

Colombia has a population of approximately 42,000,000 inhabitants, and a population density of 40 persons per square kilometer.[8] Seventy-three percent of the population is urban. The main population centers are found in the West-Center and Caribbean areas.

Settlement by Spaniards, Europeans, Africans, and Native Americans, and, since the 19th century, Arab immigration to the Caribbean coast has given rise to three major ethnic groups of mixed race: Mestizo (Indian and white), Mulato (black and white), and Zambo (Indian and black). The population in the mountain ranges and the high plateau is primarily Mestiza. In the Caribbean Coast region, Mestizos and Mulatos predominate, and in the Pacific Coast region, Mulatos and Zambos.

Life expectancy is 70 years, although this varies according to gender: 67 years for men and 74 years for women. The infant mortality rate in 2001 was 23 deaths per 1,000 live births.[9]

five and fifteen years of age, including one year of preschool education and nine years of basic schooling. It also stated that education should be free of cost in public schools for low-income families.[13]

Preschool Education

Preschool education, aimed at children under six years of age, promotes the child's integral development in biological, cognitive, psychomotor, socio-affective, and spiritual areas. Preschool education

The grade in the scale determines the teaching level allowed for each individual teacher.

Teaching is ruled by the norms established in the Teaching Statutes and in Law 115 of 1994, General Law for Education. Teaching primary school requires certification as a teacher, as well as training in a specific area of knowledge. Other professionals, with education in areas different from pedagogy, may teach some levels or grades, and may also be included in the National Teaching Scale, if they have studied pedagogy for one year, either in Colombia or abroad.[27]

Instruction in reading requires that the teacher be a certified teacher, has completed the institutional practice period, has entered the National Teacher Scale, and presents grades for courses taken in Linguistics or similar areas.

Reading Curriculum and Instruction

Reading Policies

The curricular guidelines established by the Ministry of National Education for the reading and writing areas emphasize the following aspects:

- Promote an authentic construction of knowledge based on reading
- Accept the student as a valid interlocutor in an ongoing learning process
- Continuously evaluate the development of the writing-reading process in children
- Accept constructive mistakes as necessary steps in the process of constructing reading and writing abilities
- Eliminate excessive corrections that interrupt the process, confuse the child and hinder learning
- Give children opportunities for empirical interaction with texts
- Perform writing and reading activities in contexts where they are really required, so that they satisfy real needs, and thus develop communicative competence

Institutional Education Project, and direct their activities to the enhancement of the educational process by contributing new ideas and suggestions to the educational community.[29]

Materials for Reading Instruction

Private institutions or state institutions that offer specialized help may undertake these activities.[36]

In order to identify children with reading disabilities, schools use tests and instruments that evaluate a wide range of factors associated with learning how to read.

Literacy Programs

One of the basic literacy programs presently developed is "*Colombia Crece Leyendo*" ("Colombia Grows by Reading"), jointly undertaken by the Foundation for the Promotion of Reading (Fundalectura), the Ministry of Culture, and the National Library. This program intends to create an interest among the citizens and the mayors of cities throughout the country on the importance of creating Municipal Public Libraries as a development factor. It also provides counseling to municipalities and to librarians on subjects associated with public libraries, such as new technologies, bibliographies, programs for promoting reading, children rooms, and local service information, together with the Public Library Group at the Ministry of Culture.

In order to increase the number of people who read in Colombia, the "Prolectura Network" was created. This network is an informal group made up of different Colombian entities. Its main purpose is to promote reading and literature for children and young people. In pursuing this purpose, the network has established an interchange of information, which produces documents and publications with other entities, publishes and promotes activities in reading, and enhances links with other regional, national, and international association with similar aims.

Other programs created to promote reading in Colombia are aimed primarily at developing public reading networks, transform reading instruction methods, promote the creation and strengthening of school libraries, create media spaces for literary criticism and orientation, and support book marketing.[37]

One of the school programs established to promote reading is called "Itinerant Libraries." This program organizes a small collection of books with different types of texts that may interest children and takes it to different classrooms to be used in reading exercises or taken

Test (LLECE), was administered between 1995 and 1998 under the coordination of UNESCO´s Regional Office for Latin America. This test was part of the "First International Comparative Survey" that evaluated students from third and fourth grades in the areas of language and mathematics in 13 Latin American countries. In the area of language, the survey included reading comprehension, metalinguistic practice, and text production, associated with five types of questions: text identification, distinguishing between the text's author or narrator and audience, identifying the text's message, recognizing specific information in a text, and identifying vocabulary associated with a text's meaning. [42]

Diagnostic Testing

In the evaluation of reading difficulties, pedagogic and achievement tests are used to determine students' abilities and attitudes regarding language, and identify specific problem areas. The administration of such tests may be individual or collective. Some of the tests used are: ACRA for learning strategies; BEHNALE, an evaluation battery to identify abilities needed for learning reading and writing; BLOC, an objective language battery, based on specific criteria; CLT-CLOZE, two language comprehension tests; EDIL, a test that explores individual difficulties with reading; EVOCA, a test estimating mastery of vocabulary; and PROLEC, an evaluation battery applied to the reading processes in children in primary education. These tests are administered by experts working at public institutions, such as psychologists or counselors, or by private institutions specializing in evaluation of these areas.[43]

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G a a L at a S

Situated at the eastern end of the Mediterranean Sea, Cyprus is a small island, 226 kilometers long and 98 kilometers wide, occupying an area of 9,251 square kilometers.[6] Two parallel ranges of mountains stretch from west to east covering roughly half of the island. Since 1974, Turkey has occupied about 37 percent of its area.[7] The country's capital, Nicosia, which is the largest city, is situated in the center of the island.

P at a H a t Stat t

According to the first official census in 1881, the population of Cyprus at that time was 186,173.[8] The population at the end of 2000 was 759,100,[9] and the population of the Greek area of Cyprus (not the part occupied by Turkey) was 671,300. The urban population was nearly 62 percent of the total.[10] The composition of the population for 2000 was 85.2 percent Greek Cypriots (including Armenians, Maronites, and Latins), 11.6 percent Turkish Cypriots, and 3.2 percent foreign residents (mainly British, Greek, Greek-Russians, and Lebanese).[11]

The average life expectancy is 78 years, although average life expectancy for males is about four years less than for females.[12] The infant mortality rate is about seven deaths per 1,000 live births.[13]

P t a S t

Cyprus is an independent, sovereign republic of a presidential type. Under the 1960 Constitution, the executive power is entrusted to the President of the Republic who is elected by universal suffrage for a five-year term of office. The President exercises the executive power through a Council of Ministers appointed by him. Legislative power is exercised by the House of Representatives, consisting of 80

each language skill is defined by particular general aims and objectives.

As stated in the Cyprus Primary Curriculum[30] (p. 79), the primary reading curriculum in Cyprus is modeled on the Greek reading curriculum. Reading textbooks called "My Language" are edited in Greece and sent free of charge for use in Cypriot primary schools.

The general aim of the reading curriculum (p. 82) is to help students read texts with fluency, understand their content, evaluate them in respect of their content and form and be cultivated emotionally and aesthetically.

At the end of grades one and two (objectives are defined for two grades) students must be able to:

- Read with fluency and understand small texts
- Read various texts for acquisition of information and for personal pleasure
- Recognize and recall the basic elements (persons, point of views, ideas, facts) of a text
- Draw conclusions based on information in the text
- Recognize ways of expression (e.g., description, narration).

By the end of grades three and four, all students must be able to:

- Read with fluency and appropriate style with due regard to punctuation marks
- Identify and understand the main elements of a text, putting them in chronological and logical sequence
- Argue for or against using elements from the text
- Understand the meaning of words, phrases and sentences in context
- Identify ways of expression and understand why authors selected them
- Identify the structural elements of a text (e.g. persons-characters, time and place, events).

It also is a curricular goal that students become familiar with the Cypriot and Greek literature. They should enjoy well-written texts and become friends of good books. Finally, students are to acquire reading skills that enable them use reference books effectively in order to concentrate, compare and test information.

R a C a Sta a

Instructional emphases stress a supportive, communicative environment for all students that provides experiences to foster success.

The following are considered features of effective organization of activities: interaction among students and the teacher, cooperative learning in small teams, differentiation of teaching materials, remedial activities, and continuous formative evaluation of the individual and group work.

Teachers also should provide opportunities for inquiry and experimentation; field trips; observations, interviews, presentations, dialogue, and role playing; use of information sources; and projects involving constructions, mapping, and modeling.

Mat a R a I t t

Graded language textbooks are typically used in teaching reading. Other supportive and supplementary materials include: packages of materials prepared by teachers of the first grade; authentic/informative material from newspapers, magazines, advertisements, and leaflets; literature books; and books written at the Curriculum Development Unit of the Ministry of Education entitled *I don't forget and I struggle*. Technology and especially the use of computers for teaching subject areas have been recently introduced in the primary schools on an experimental basis.

Language textbooks (Readers) come from Greece for all the students of primary schools, along with Teachers' Guides which include methodological suggestions for teaching reading. All materials for reading instruction are available in time for every new school year and in appropriate quantities for students and teachers.

I t t a T

The total instructional time across all subjects for primary schools increases as students progress through the grades as follows: 31 periods per week for grades one and two, 34 periods for grade three, and 35 periods for grades four to six. Each teaching

period lasts 40 minutes. Exhibit 1 indicates the time allocated for language instruction and activities during primary school for schools of various sizes.[31]

Ca O a at a Ca S

Since inspectors support cooperative learning in schools, group work is typical during language activities. The maximum number of students is 30 in grade one, and increases to 32 in grades two to six.

R Ra S at Ra I t t

During their pre-service education, all teachers receive courses in reading instruction. Additionally, a number of them follow the Language Direction, with three more courses in language (content and teaching).

S La a Ra t t

English is the second language taught in grades four to six for two periods per week by teachers with one-year training. Reading time is incorporated into the total time of English language teaching.

Ra D ab t

Teachers identify reading disabilities in their classrooms. Depending on the degree of the disability, one of the following alternatives can be implemented:

- Classroom teachers provide individual remedial work or differentiated instruction in response to the needs of each student, or
- If the children have serious disabilities, the case is forwarded to the educational psychologist who decides whether the case should be considered by the District Committee of Special Education.

Lt a P a

The program "Education and Experimental Implementation of the Communicative Approach at the Primary Schools" commenced in 1996. Since

announced a policy of National Standards. Since then, coordinated by the University of Cyprus, a number of working groups have been working toward identifying standards in language, mathematics, and science.

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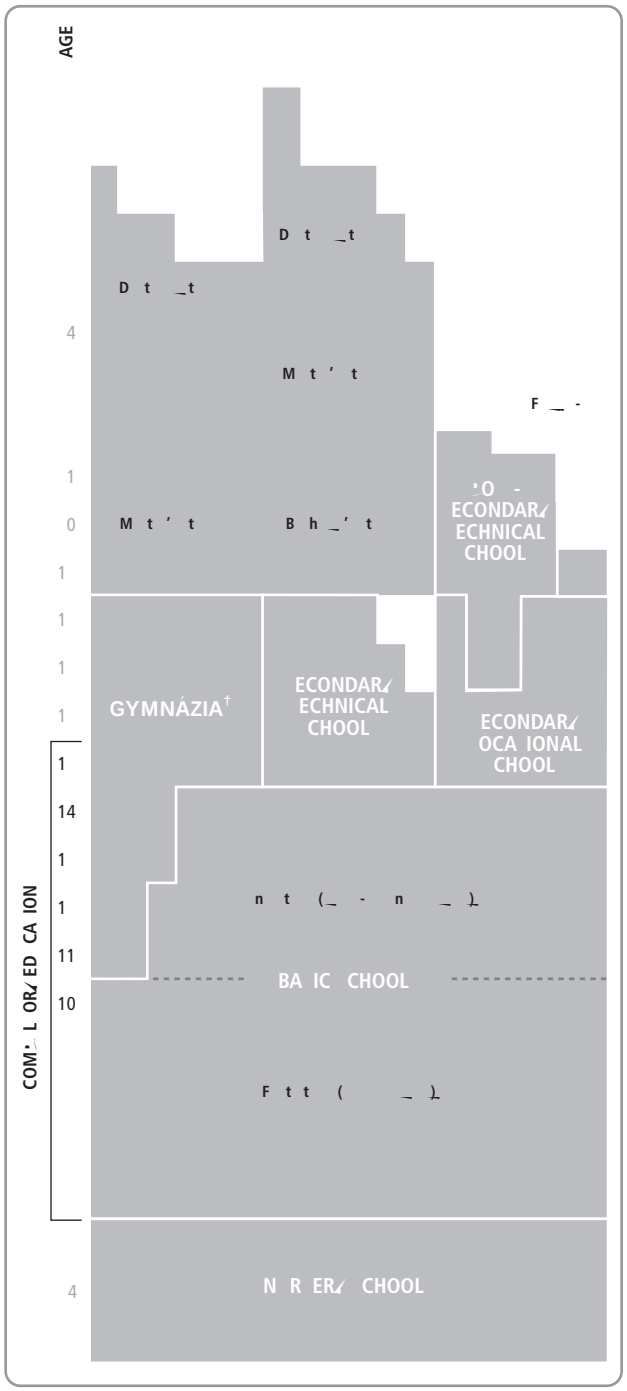
Country Profile: Czech Republic

G h ⊥ t n n

Established January 1993 after the split of Czechoslovakia, the Czech Republic is situated approximately in the geographical center of Europe with an area of 78,864 square kilometers, making it the 21st largest country in Europe. It shares borders with Germany, Poland, Austria, and the Slovak Republic. The Czech Republic consists of three territorial complexes: Bohemia in the western part, and Moravia and Silesia in the eastern part. The country's capital, Prague, is located in the middle of Bohemia. The



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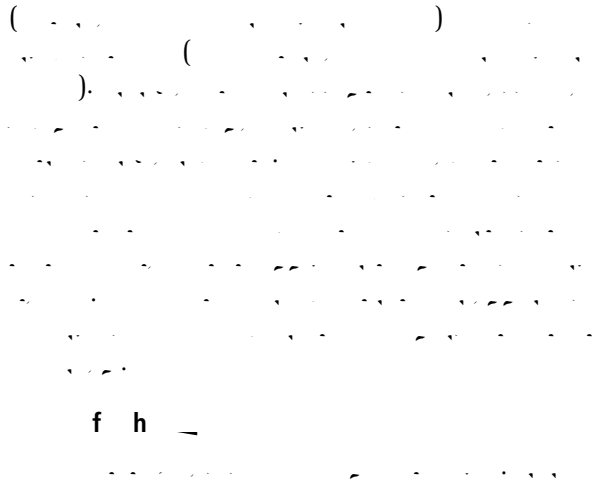

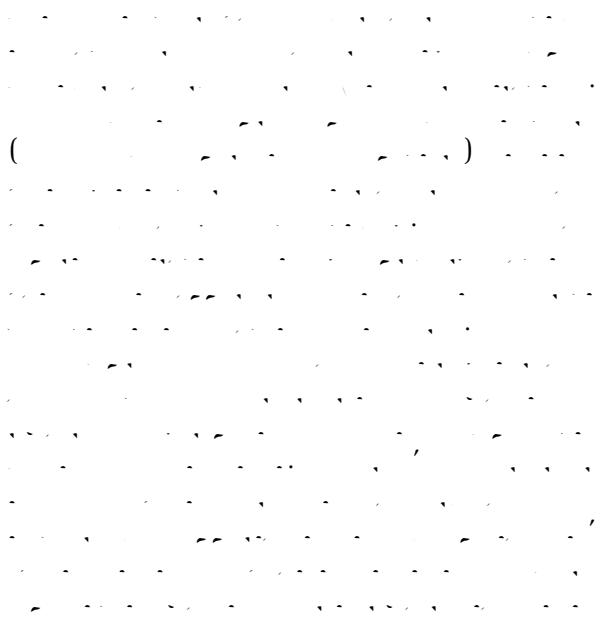

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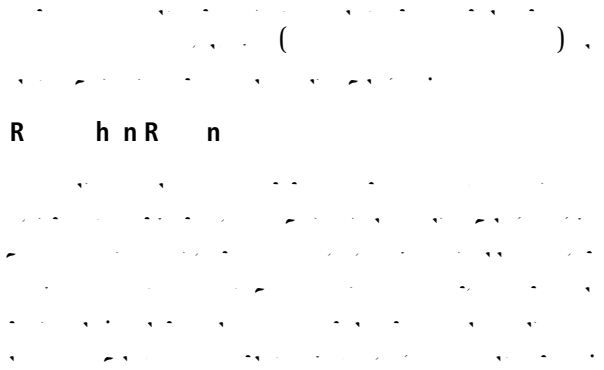

Liz Twist
National Foundation for Educational Research

Language and Literacy

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Country Profile: England

Geographical Location and Size

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Population and Health Statistics

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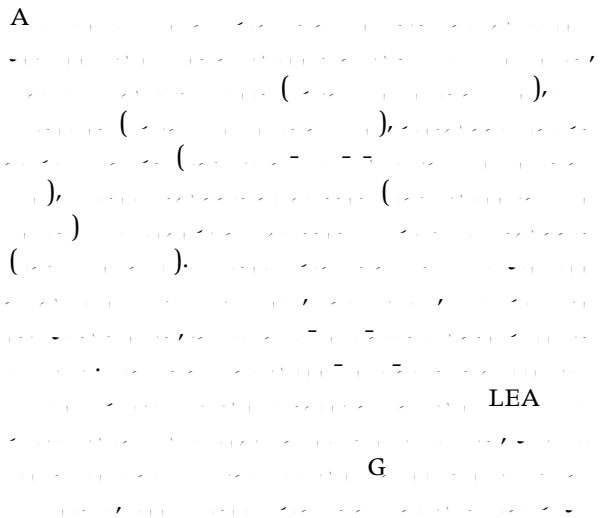
Structure of the Education System

Pre-primary Education



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Ministry of Education

Language and Literacy

France established freedom of the press by law in July 1881. Today, there are about 3,100 titles with an annual printing of 8 billion copies. There are just under a hundred national and regional dailies, excluding specialist papers, and about 12 million copies are printed daily with a circulation of 218 newspapers per 1,000 inhabitants.[1] The regional press, with 409 titles and a combined annual circulation of 2.2 billion has weathered the economic crisis better than the national press.

French, the official language, is spoken by nearly 100 percent of the population. The use of regional dialects and languages is declining. However, various languages associated with recent immigration are spoken in urban areas.

Education System

Governance and Organization

In July 1989, a law was enacted declaring education as the first national priority. The third article of this law stipulated a national objective that in ten years the entire age group reach at least the level of Vocational Aptitude Certificate (CAP), or Vocational Studies Certificate (BEP), and 80 percent complete the end of higher secondary school.

Education always has had great symbolic importance in France. It aims to develop and maintain national unity by providing all pupils with the same education, regardless of their

Geographical Location and Size

France, western Europe's largest country, is located on the edge of the Eurasian continent (between latitudes 41° and 52° North). Forming a hexagon of which no side is longer than 1000 kilometers, France shares its borders with eight neighboring countries: Andorra, Belgium, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg, Monaco, Spain, and Switzerland. Excluding the overseas administrative divisions, the area of mainland France is 550,000 square kilometers with over 3,400 kilometers of coastline (the North Sea, English Channel, Atlantic Ocean, and Mediterranean Sea). In general, the climate is cool in the winter with mild summers. However in southern France, along the Mediterranean Sea, the winters are mild and the summers are hot.

The geographical features of the country are diverse with mostly flat plains or gently rolling hills in the north and west, and mountains in the south and east. Two chains of mountains make natural borders: the Pyrenees border Spain and the Alps border Switzerland and Italy. Mont-Blanc, the highest point in Europe, is located in the French Alps.

France includes a number of outposts and islands all over the world. In all, they cover an area of some 120,000 square kilometers. These regions of France consist primarily of four overseas departments (DOM): Guadeloupe and Martinique in the West Indies, Reunion in the Indian Ocean, and French Guiana in South America. France also has overseas territories.

Population and Health Statistics

As of January 2000, mainland France had a population of 58.7 million – the twenty-first largest population in the world and third largest in the European Union. Including the more than two million inhabitants of the overseas departments and territories, the population of France is 60.4 million.[2]

With an average population of 107 inhabitants per square kilometer, France is relatively densely populated in global terms.[3] The population distribution is highly uneven, however, with half the population occupying just over 10 percent of the surface area and some districts with fewer than ten inhabitants per square kilometer.

Urbanization occurred later in France than in some other European countries. During the 1950s, France started to catch up; recent data indicate 75 percent of the population living in urban areas.[4] Paris, France's

The goal of the art curriculum at this level is to help children to develop sensibility, imagination, and a creative capacity.

Elementary Education

Elementary education, which begins at age 6, is free and compulsory for all children. Schooling at this level usually lasts five years, although it may be increased or decreased by one year according to the knowledge acquired by the pupil. Promotion from primary school to the first class of secondary education is automatic.

Elementary school includes five classes in two cycles: fundamental learning, which begins in the senior section of the nursery school and continues through the first two years of the elementary school; and consolidation of learning, which includes the last three years of elementary school.

Secondary Education

Secondary education is divided into two successive stages: the *collège* (lower-secondary school) and the *lycée* (upper-secondary school). The lower-secondary school takes students from the *sixième* f

three between 46 and 53. Six point six percent work part-time.

Teacher Education

Since 1992, primary teachers must hold a diploma from a post-secondary cycle of studies of at least 3 years. The candidates must be nationals of one of the countries of the European Union.

Initial training on theory and practice, takes place at an IUFM (university institute of teacher education). Candidates are chosen for participating in the first year by their file or possibly after an interview. The competitive examination, required for all pre-elementary and elementary teachers, takes place at the end of the first year of IUFM. Successful students become trainee teachers and are paid for a compulsory year of training. At the end of the compulsory year, they are appointed to a pre-elementary school or an elementary school.

At the end of training, trainees are assessed on their work with the pupils in class, the disciplines studied at the IUFM, and a report written by the trainee concerning a practical aspect of education. If the evaluation is positive, then the trainee teacher becomes a full-fledged primary school teacher with civil service status.

The following is the institutional definition of a primary school teacher:

> "The primary school teacher is a general-purpose teacher, able to teach all the disciplines of the primary school curriculum. He or she has a vocation to teach and to educate from the junior section of pre-elementary school to the last level of elementary school. He or she exercises a profession in constant evolution."

Professional skills are organized according to four main domains:

- The disciplines taught at primary school;
- The situations of learning;
- The behavior of the class and the diversity of pupils; and
- The exercise of educational responsibility and professional ethics.

At the IUFM, training is approached in connection with pupils' class work. Even though it is a disciplinary domain with specific contents, the French language is approached mainly from the following perspectives:

- The problems of learning reading (steps and methods);
- The analysis of textbooks from the first year of the cycle;
- The connection between reading and writing; and
- The evaluation of the competencies in reading.

Teacher In-service Education

Besides the initial vocational training of teachers,

- Read personally at least one book of literature a month
-

Role of Reading Specialists in Reading Instruction

Reading specialists play little or no role in teaching reading in French schools. Assistance with reading difficulties comes from "RASED," a network of teachers and psychologists. Teachers who work within "RASED" are in charge of teaching pupils with learning difficulties, although their assistance is not specific to reading. Their aim is to prevent learning difficulties that some pupils may encounter in school.

Reading Disabilities

French pupils' reading ability is monitored through regular assessment by their teachers. Those who have particular difficulties are given support by their classroom teacher. When they fail to make normal progress while receiving such support, their difficulties are diagnosed by the

Assessment

Classroom Assessment

Every child has a school report that is regularly sent to his or her parents. The school report is a good instrument for connection and communication between teacher and family. It details the results of periodic evaluations, competencies acquired by the pupil, recommendations for the pupil's passage in a class or in a superior cycle, and final decisions made regarding the student. The progress of a pupil in each cycle is decided, on the recommendation of the pupil's teacher, by the cycle teachers council. Parents are regularly informed about their child's school situation.

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Ministry of National Education
http://www.education.gouv.fr

National Agency for Fight Against Illiteracy (ANLCI)
http://www.anlci.fr/

National Reading Observatory (ONL)
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Wilfried Bos
Renate Valtin
University of Hamburg

Lang age and Lite ac

The official national language is German. Learning a first foreign language – mostly English, but also French or Latin – is compulsory beginning in secondary education, so that English is generally understood in Germany.

Germany has a rich literary history, which finds expression in a great variety of daily newspapers. Along with nationwide daily newspapers there are regional local newspapers in most towns. The circulation of daily newspapers is 311 per 1,000 inhabitants.[1] Public libraries are partly held by the , (university libraries) and partly by the cit' (municipal and local libraries). More than million borrowers are registered across the ' public libraries.[2]

Ed cation S tem

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sure their children have somewhere to stay.

schools that include all three types of school (, and). In comprehensive schools, children are assigned to different groups according to their ability.[17]

In 1999, students attended the different types of schools as listed below.

- covers classes 5 and 6, either as part of the various secondary schools or separate from them (7.5 percent)
- provides a sound basis for subsequent vocational training (grades 5 through 9 or 10; 20.0 percent)
- equips young people for subsequent careers in positions located between nt

teachers have been hired in recent years. Therefore, the average age of teachers at primary school is about 48.

Teachers' salaries follow the civil service system: teachers at primary schools are paid at the level of those who complete specialized colleges. All other teacher salaries are comparable to those of other university graduates, such as judges or doctors in the health-care system. More important, every two, three, or four years, civil servants are awarded an automatic salary increase.

Teache Ed cation

Admission to a teacher education program depends on possession of the , a general higher education entrance qualification obtained through the upper-secondary school leaving examination.

Teachers for all types of schools have to complete two training phases. First, there are higher education studies for a period of three to four years, during which future teachers study predominantly one or two academic subjects, not necessarily subjects taught in school. The school related studies include courses in educational theory, sometimes psychology, and in (didactic studies and methods in the academic subjects they study). Higher education studies include practical pre-service training, during which trainees visit schools, in general twice for a period of about 2 or 4 weeks, for observing and practice teaching under the supervision of experienced teachers. This study concludes with part I of the degree examination. The subsequent introduction to school practice (preparatory service) comprises practical involvement in schools and complementary training at seminars. This phase concludes with part II of the degree examination. There have been attempts to merge the two phases of training, but at present they remain separate.

Teachers in Germany are usually prepared for specific kinds of schools, either for primary schools or secondary schools like , , , or vocational schools. Especially regarding teacher education for primary schools, however, there are important differences between the that relate to the following factors.

- . Prior to 1980 (and in the German Democratic Republic until 1990), all training of primary teachers was conducted in colleges of education. More recently, the majority of primary school teachers are trained at universities, like the other types of teachers.

- . In half the , teachers are specifically trained for primary schools. In the others, teachers are trained for a combination of schools, including primary schools where they give lessons in all subjects of the curriculum and in secondary schools where they teach the subject they studied in part I of their training.

-

opportunity for teachers to attend in-service development. This is intended to keep teachers up-to-date on the subjects they teach as well as on broader fields of psychology and sociology in education and didactic methods. Courses are organized regionally or at the , level, often during school hours, and teachers are excused from school duties to attend. The greatest number of further education courses for teachers are offered by the state institutes for continuing and further education which were created in the 1970s.

Reading C ic l m and In t ction

Reading Polic

The three R`s (reading, writing, and arithmetic) are considered important

In t ctional Time

In Grades 1 to 4, a school week is divided into 20 to 25 class periods of 45 minutes each. Instruction time is between 8:00 a.m. and 1:15 p.m. School starts for children between 8:00 and 9:30 and finishes between 11:00 and 1:15. Most , are trying to offer a reliable half-day school for children with fixed beginning and ending times. About 5 to 6 hours a week is devoted to German, which includes reading and writing. The estimation of the exact amount of teaching time in reading is difficult because the states differ in the number of total instruction hours in primary schools as well as in the number of hours for language. The exact amount of time designated for reading also varies according to the practices of teachers, since reading is embedded in German language activities (including reading, writing, spelling, literature, and grammar).

Cla oom O gani ation and Cla Si e

During primary schooling, children usually attend the school whose catchment area includes their home. The classes are arranged according to grade, but the age of the children in a class can vary enormously according to parents' application and to the physical and mental maturity of the child. School enrollment takes place from ages 5 to 7. Furthermore, there are some children who have to repeat the previous year. In most classes, most of the time ex-cathedra teaching (, , – , , – –) is practiced. Some teachers divide their class into small groups according to children's ability.

The average number of pupils in a class in primary school is about 22.4.[25] In primary schools, class size normally is higher than in the Gymnasium.

In the first two school years, children in classr

Lite ac P og am

In Germany, there are no national literacy programs or programs specific to the , . It is up to the teachers or to the schools to make some special efforts (e.g., projects, an evening of lectures, visits to public libraries, or an exhibition of books).

Adult education institutions offer courses of alphabetization for adults.

A e ment

Cla oom A e ment

Continuous assessment of pupils' achievement is an important part of the professional role of a German teacher. Children receive marks for their performance in oral and written tasks. Marks are awarded in whole numbers on a scale from 1 (very good) to 6 (insufficient). In the middle and at the end of a school year, children receive certificates with marks. During the first grade, and in some , also for second grade, pupils receive a report giving a detailed description of their progress and weaknesses in specific areas of learning. Progressing to the next grade depends on meeting the minimum demands in all relevant subjects. The assessment criteria are mentioned in the curricula of some , .

National o Regional E amination

There are no national examinations at the primary school level.

Standa di ed Te t

The use of standardized tests is not common in German schools. A variety of standardized reading and spelling tests exist, but they are used mainly for identifying reading difficulties or for research purposes. In very rare cases, teachers use tests on their own initiative.

Diagno tic Te ting

If a pupil fails in reading and spelling and if the teacher wants to have the child diagnosed as "reading and spelling disabled," the child may be referred to a school psychologist who will administer reading, spelling, and intelligence tests. Screening tests are not used.

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Department of Preschool Education,
National and Kapodistrian University

Language and Literacy

Spoken by the large majority of the total population, Greek is the official language of Greece. Muslims are Greece's religious minority group, and primarily their native language (Turkish or P

Country Profile: Greece

Geographical Location and Size

Greece lies on the southern point of the Balkan Peninsula, which also is the southeast border of the European Union. Although Greece consists of many different geographical landforms, a large part of the country is mountainous. Greece also has innumerable islands, both small and large; many are in the Ionian Sea (to the west) but most are in the Aegean Sea (to the east). Demographic and economic changes, especially in the 1970's, led to the migration of a large part of the population to urban areas.

Population and Health Statistics

Of the total population of 11 million[3], 60 percent[4] lives in urban areas. Approximately 3.5 million people live in Athens, the capital of Greece and its largest city.[5]

The infant mortality rate is 6 deaths per 1000 live births.[6] As in most western countries, women have a higher average lifespan (81 years of age) than men (75 years of age).[7]

Political System

Greece is a republic and has a constitutional parliamentary democracy system of government. Citizens of Greece vote every four years to choose the 300 members of the *Kinovouloio* (the Parliament), who select the Prime Minister. The President, elected every five years by the parliament, is the leader of the country. In accordance with the Constitution, the President has limited, mainly ceremonial duties. The Prime Minister, as the leader of the majority party, chooses the members of the cabinet and essentially holds all power.

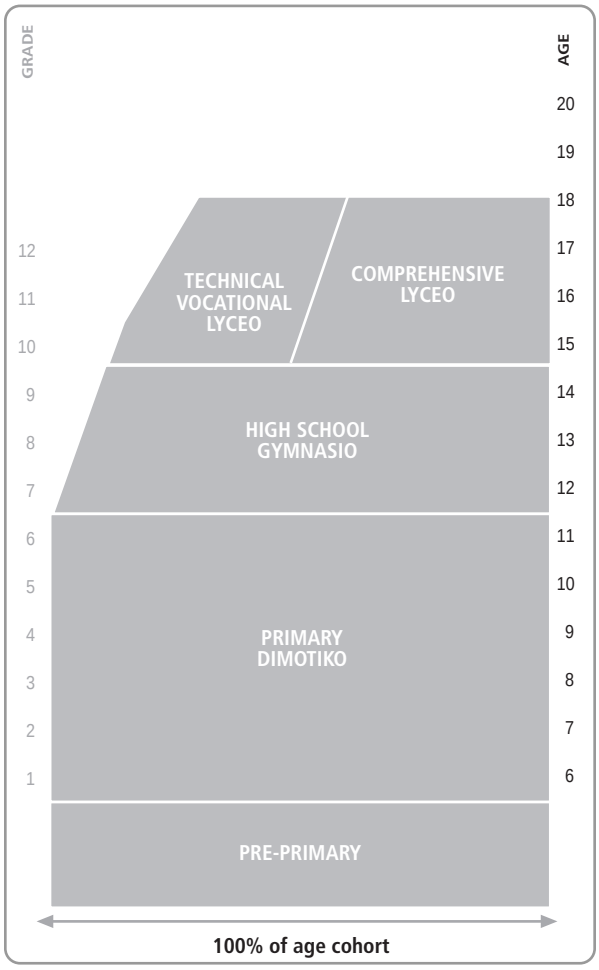
Prefects and mayors, elected every four years, theoretically have power over local issues, although in practice their duties are limited. The Government decides the financing of prefectures and municipalities.

Structure of the Education System

Since the foundation of the New Greek State in 1828, education has been a crucial issue. According to the Constitution, education is one of the basic missions of the state. Thus, from early on, free education for all Greeks has been established in state schools. Since the 1980-81 school year, attendance has been compulsory for children from 5 to 15 years of age.

The structure of Greek education is presented in Exhibit 1.

Exhibit 1: Structure of the Greek Education System



Kindergarten enrollment is optional for all children who have reached the age of 4 years and 6 months by October 1st. If the number of students per teacher is low, the minimum age for entering kindergarten is lowered to 3 years and 6 months.

Dimotiko is the second level of primary education. It is comprehensive and lasts 6 years. All children that were born 6 years before the year of their enrollment must attend the first grade of primary school. Therefore, students in the first grade are between 5.7 and 6.7 years of age. Access to each next grade is automatic since there are no examinations in Dimotiko.

Secondary education consists of two levels. The first is Gymnasio (high school), which lasts three years and concludes the 9 years of compulsory education. In high school, all graduates of primary schools are enrolled without entrance examinations, but there are examinations to enter the next grade. Schools at this level offer general education since they are considered to be the follow-up of primary schools, but there are a few schools specializing in sports or music.

The second level is Lyceum, which also lasts three years. Students enroll in Lyceum after passing examinations at the end of the 3rd grade of Gymnasium. Two types of lyceum exist: the comprehensive, which leads to university studies and which the majority of students attend, and the technical vocational schools, in which students are trained to work in technical professions.

About 5 percent of primary school students and 6 percent of high school students attend private schools.[11] These schools operate under the same rules and curriculum as public schools.

There also is an informal type of private tuition/schooling (crammer schools) known as *frontistirio,* whereby parents pay a teacher to come to their home and help their children with school subjects, usually language and science. Although it is considered to be illegal, there is a broad acceptance of this phenomenon.

Duration and Timing of the School Year

Courses begin each year in the second week of September and usually finish on June 15th for primary schools and June 1st for secondary schools. Examinations in secondary schools take place in the period from June 1st to June 20th. During the school year, schools break for Christmas and Easter for two weeks each, and 6 holy days are scattered through the school year. There are usually about 170 school days for primary schools and 155 (or 175 with the examinations days) for secondary schools.

Teachers and Teacher Education

Teaching Force

According to recent data, women comprise 57 percent of the primary school teachers.[12] Few schoolteachers are under 30 years of age (6%), more than half (58.2%) are between 31 and 40, about a quarter (24%) are between 41 and 50, and 12 percent are above 50 years of age.[13]

Teacher Education

Until 1986 when they were abolished, pedagogic academies offering two-year courses were where primary schoolteachers studied. In 1984, pedagogic departments of primary education began to operate in the universities. In these new departments, courses last eight semesters. Today, eight pedagogic departments function throughout Greece, each deciding its own course structure.

All departments offer courses in sociology, psychology, pedagogics, and teaching instruction. In order to graduate from the University, a student must complete certain required courses specified by each department, as well as a number of courses that can be selected depending on the student's interests. Essentially, therefore, teacher's education covers certain basic principles, but is differentiated according to department and personal interests.

Until recently, the Ministry of Education made all teaching appointments exclusively on the basis of Epetirida, which is essentially a priority list based on graduation data from the university. In 1999, a new system was begun whereby a percentage of schoolteachers was appointed by the Epetirida but the rest appointed after examinations organized by ASEP (an independent authority for appointments). However, by 2001, almost all schoolteachers were still chosen from Epetirida.

Teachers in primary schools are not required to specialize in specific subjects. Each schoolteacher teaches all subjects in the class. Only foreign languages, physical education, and in certain cases computers are taught by specialized staff.

Teachers who are graduates of two-year pedagogic academies must attend additional courses to reach the educational standard of teachers who are graduates of universities. The duration of these additional courses depends on the number of years they have been teaching. PEKs (Regional Training

are not always carried out by the "in-class curriculum." According to Gotovos, in school there is only "simple transmission of knowledge" which prepares the students for the final examinations to enter the university.[14] Teaching in school still is subject-centered, while the type of schoolwork and the instruction is teacher-centered.[15]

Although the curriculum has been reviewed recently, there has not been any change in the textbooks or the teachers' syllabus for the last 15 years. Every-day educational practice still focuses on transmitting and acquiring fixed knowledge.

Reading Curriculum and Standards

According to the Pedagogic Institute, the language curriculum is structured as shown in Exhibit 2. There is a separation between the lower (A-B) and upper (C-F) grades of primary school.

In the last three grades of primary school, foreign language courses are introduced, primarily English. The curriculum time allotted is 3 hours per week. In some schools, a second foreign language is introduced, usually French or German. Even when these subjects are taught in schools, many parents choose to send their children to *frontistiria* (a type of private tutorial school) to learn foreign languages.

Materials for Reading Instruction

Textbooks and extra aids form the basis of reading instruction. The structure of the textbook generally leaves opportunities for initiative and innovation on the part of the schoolteacher.

Texts from the textbooks can be replaced with others taken from the wider social environment of the student (articles, statements, letters, advertisements, literature, etc.). Suitable replacements include more current texts, texts that relate to the

have been imposed. The evaluation of students is the day-to-day job of the teacher. Methods of evaluation can include:

- Written tests that last from a few minutes up to an instructional hour
- Verbal or written comprehension questions of various types
- Topics for expansion to assess the ability to organize content in paragraphs and wider notional texts
- Short answers, verbal or written
- Topics of brief content, verbal or written
- Questions of judgment
- Tasks of combined creativity
- Closed or objective type questions to evaluate grammar, spelling, and vocabulary
- Text with verbal or written comprehension questions, which refer also to structure, style and vocabulary
- Topics for elaboration and layout of content
- Evaluation sheets
- Text of limited extent (copy), to check calligraphy or spelling
- Any text that a student produces or any action that is carried out in the students' own words.

The variety of linguistic expressions correspond to a wide spectrum of language types. This compels the student to adapt the form of speech to the "demands" of each text. The intention of texts requires, for example, layout in paragraphs, accuracy, brevity, clarity, rich vocabulary, and plot.

In summary, the main evaluation criterion is the effectiveness (proven or likely) of all kinds of speech for the goal that the student sets, which may be analyzed using individual criteria of evaluation, including the appropriateness of vocabulary and style, the correctness of syntax and morphology, spelling, and the general picture of the text (written or verbal).

Errors are dealt with instructively as an indication of the level of the student's communication skills. Incorrect use of vocabulary; insufficient vocabulary, spelling and grammatical errors; and difficulty in using the subjunctive either in the adaptation of speech to circumstances or in the comprehension and use of exact speech, are used as a means of diagnosis that allows the teacher to plan a program of corrective interventions.

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Language and Literacy

Country Profile: Hong Kong, SAR

Geographical Location and Size

The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR), with its superb natural harbor on the China's southern coast, is one of the world's major

Duration and Timing of the School Year

Secondary Schools

Primary Schools

Instructional Time

Materials for Reading Education

ıbilities

Standardized Tests

References

Hong Kong 2000

Hong Kong 2000

Hong Kong 2000

Hong Kong 2000

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Learning to Learn: The way forward in curriculum development

Reading to Learn: The promotion of a reading culture at school

Learning to Learn: Chinese key learning area

Learning of Chinese Language: Learning domains

Learning to Learn: Chinese key learning area

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Learning to Learn: Chinese key learning area

Collected Essays in Chinese Language Teaching

ILE Journal

Learning to Learn: Chinese key learning area

Learning to Learn: The way forward in curriculum development

Learning to Learn: Life long learning, whole person development

Hong Kong 2000

Extensive Reading Scheme

Education Commission Report

Extensive Reading Scheme

Suggested Reading

Life Long Learning, Whole Person Development: Education reform

Chinese Language Education for the 21st Century: A Hong Kong perspective

A Study on the Promotion and Implementation of Extensive Reading in Schools

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Co n r Profile: H ngar

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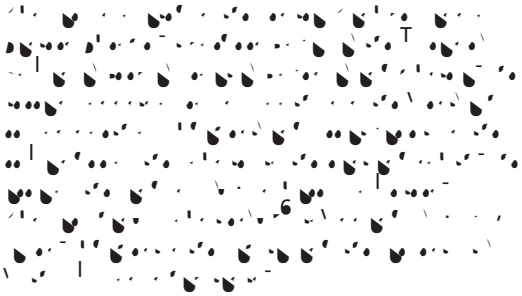

Pop la ion and Heal h S a i ic

Teache and Teache Ed+ ca ion

Teaching Fo ce

Women comprise the majority of the teaching force at the elementary level – 92 percent of all primary school teachers are female.[11]

Teache Ed+ ca ion

In Hungary, those who wish to become teachers enroll in one of three programs:

- Teachers' colleges offer a three-year course for those who plan to teach grades 1 to 4
- Teachers' colleges offer a four-year program for those who plan to teach distinct subjects in grades 5 through 8.
- Secondary school teachers take a five-year program offered by universities.

Exhibit 2 shows the number of schools and teachers in Hungary.

Since 1990, the number of students in Hungarian schools has decreased by approximately 15 percent, the number of teachers by approximately 8 percent.[12]

The overall training for teachers is generally 600 hours. Future teachers are taught General

Pedagogy and Psychology (minimum 330 hours) and General or Subject Specific Methodology (minimum 120 hours). Teachers also have to have at least 150 hours of field practice.

Teache In- e ice Ed- ca ion

A recent study showed that the teacher training courses offered in Hungary focused on the various subjects taught by the teacher, on assessing the pupils' knowledge, on acquiring better interpersonal skills, or on leadership issues. The courses varied in length. Usually they were financed in equal portions by the school or by the participants, but some courses were free.

Reading G- io- l- m and In - c ion

Reading Polic

The main task of *literacy education* is to make students fond of reading – to awaken and strengthen the joy of reading. The basis of literacy education is to work on textual and contextual exercises connected to reading and to learn basic literary theory. This improves responsiveness to the beauty and expressive nature of language. The content of literary works offers great opportunity to create a general approach towards the world. Engaging with a variety of texts enables students to appreciate national culture, develop moral and aesthetic values, and enrich their feelings. According to the National KERET Curriculum the objectives in reading by the end of grade 4 include:

- Developing reading – aloud or silent.
- Developing "sensitive" reading of fiction and non-fiction through reading, analysis, and explanation.

implementation of the national curriculum in 1978, the teaching of reading became hurried. The importance of reading out loud decreased and the time set aside for speech improvement also decreased. After 1989, however, reading programs reintroduced reading texts out loud, and are now focused on the connection of speech and reading.

Based on the list of textbooks available for Hungarian schools, the following describes a number of the major reading programs currently in use.

- *Reading out loud/analytical-syntetical program* by András Romankovics, Julia Romankovics-Tóth, and Ildikó Meixner. Introduced in 1978, teaching reading is based on pictograms and recognition of letters. Teaching reading is heavily based on stories, silent reading is a focus.

- *Global method/ Reading out loud, analyzing, and combining* by Róbert Ligeti, Katalin Kuti-Sahin-Tóth. Used since 1980, this program starts out with a set of 87 pictograms based on the vocabulary of 4 to 5-year-olds. Learning the pictograms is followed by phonic work, and teaching writing is delayed.

- *Linguistic, literary, and communications program* by Zsolnai. Available since 1985, this approach entails a combination of the synthetic and global methods. The program also focuses on thematic analyses of the texts. Teaching writing and reading is a parallel process.

- *Intensive-combined reading program* by Gabriella Lovász. This program was introduced in 1987. It is a combined method that teaches reading at a fast pace with the help of lines and pictograms.

- *Heuristic program* by Tolnai Gyuláné. Introduced in 1991, this program uses rhymes and stories to help pupils memorize letters. The main focus is on teaching reading through various games.

Other programs include the

to be important (such as literacy) and set the aim of repeating the tests at regular intervals. Later

Einar Gudmundsson
Uni e. i t f Iceland

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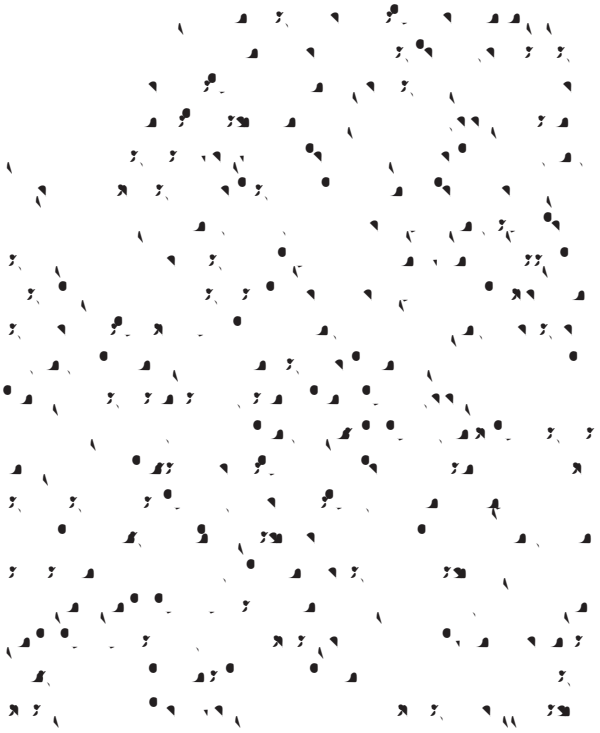

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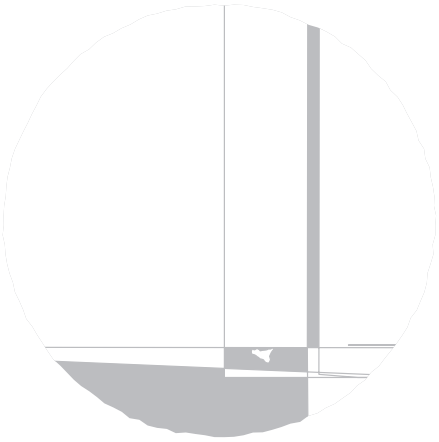
Country Profile: Iceland

G a a L a a S

Iceland is an island located in the North Atlantic Ocean, 278 kilometers southeast of Greenland, 798 kilometers northwest of Scotland and 970 kilometers west of Norway. The area of the country is 103,000 square kilometers. Iceland has more than 4,800 kilometers of coastline. The country's capital, Reykjavik, is the world's northernmost capital. The Mid-Atlantic Rift, which runs through the middle of the country, is responsible for over 30 active volcanoes as well as the geologic activity that creates geothermal energy. Glaciers cover roughly one-tenth of the country's area.



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Of the original settlers who arrived in the ninth and tenth centuries, most were from Norway. To this day, the population of Iceland remains homogeneous. Immigration, mostly from European countries, has not had a major effect on the structure of the population. The people of Iceland live mainly along the coastal belt of the island; over 80 percent of the island is uninhabited because of the terrain. In 2000, the population was 278,000, with a population density of approximately 3 inhabitants per square kilometer.[5] The largest city is Reykjavik, with 60 percent of the country's total population living in the city and among its outlying communities.

Standards of public health in Iceland rank among the highest in the world. Both central and local government finance the medical and welfare systems. The country's infant mortality rate in 2000 was 3.1 deaths per 1,000 live births.[6] The average life expectancy at birth in 2000 was 80 years.[7] The Evangelical Lutheran Church, to which 93 percent of the population belong, is the official State church.

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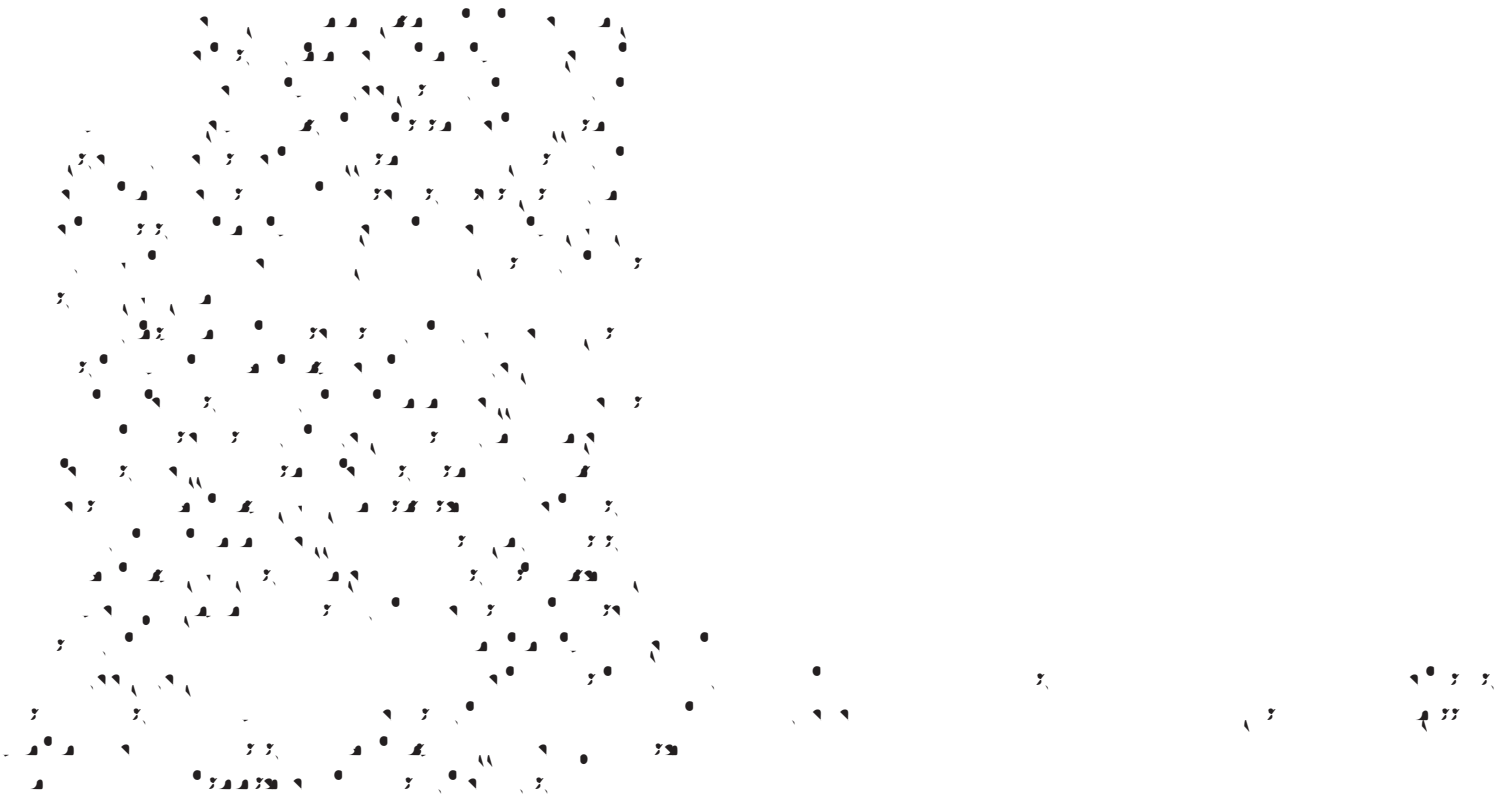

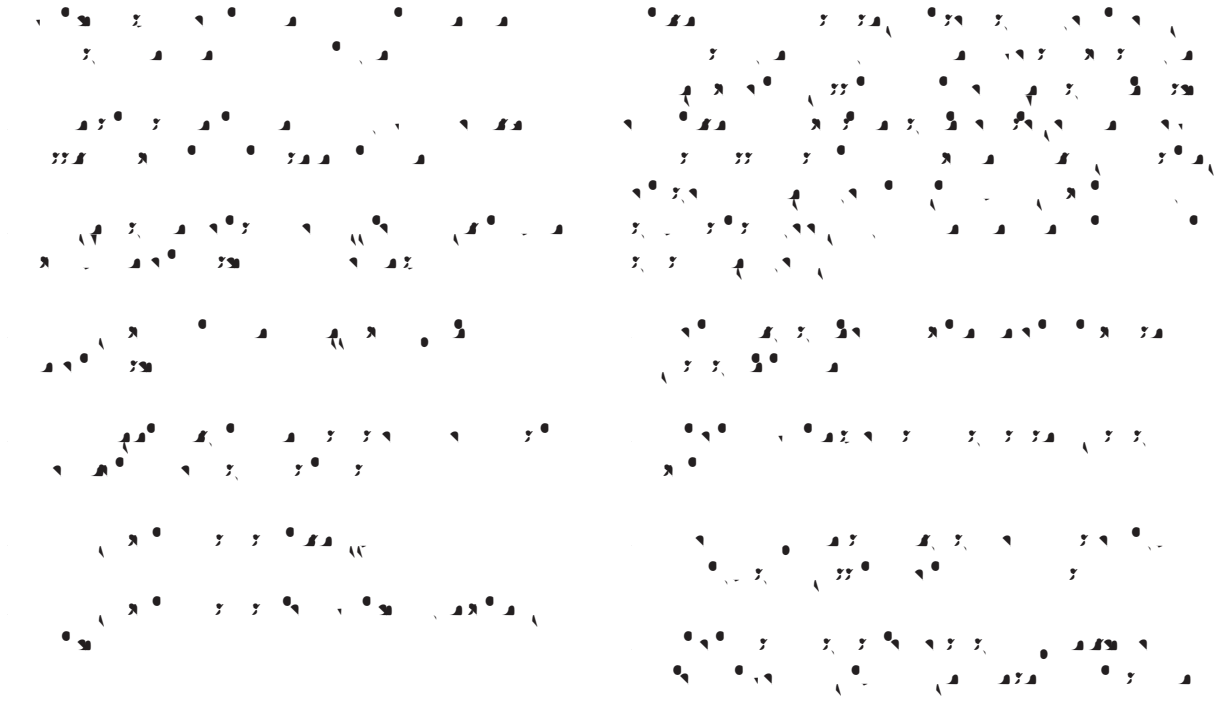

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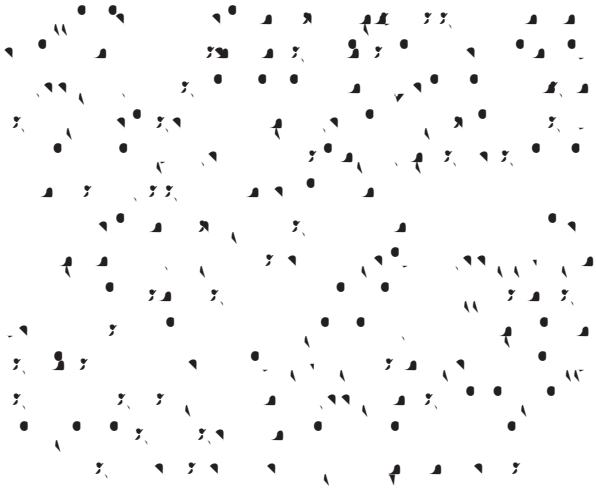

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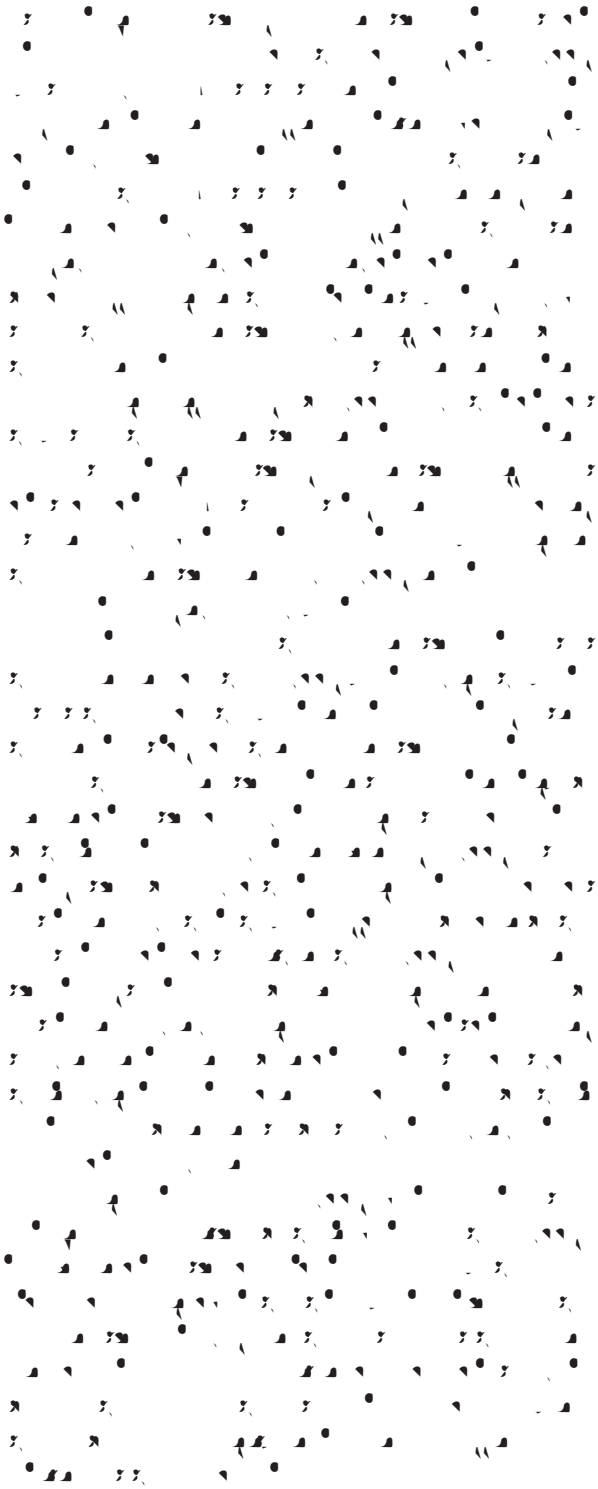

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Ministry of Educati

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cation System

Governance and Organization

Structure of the Education System

Country Profile: Islamic Republic of Iran

Geographical Location and Size

The Islamic Republic of Iran, with an area of 1,648,195 square kilometers, is situated in western Asia. It is a mountainous land with three different climatic conditions: humid, mountainous and semi-arid, and desert. The country is bounded by the Caspian Sea and the republics of Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan, Kazakhistan, Armenia, and Russia on the North, Afghanistan and Pakistan on the East, the Oman Sea and Persian Gulf on the South, and Iraq and Turkey on the West.

Population and Health Statistics

According to the 2001 census, the population of Iran is about 63 million,[5] with about 66 percent being of Persian origin, 25 percent Turkish, 5 percent Kurdish, and 4 percent Arab.[6] About 63 percent of the population are urban dwellers and the rest live in rural areas.[7] Most of the population is Muslim (99.4%), while less than 0.3% are Christians, Jews, Zoroastians, or members of other religious minorities.[8]

By launching several immunization, disease control, family planning, water supply, and health education programs, the country's health care system has improved health indicators, such as infant mortality rate and life expectancy. In 2001, the infant mortality rate had been reduced to about 26 per 1,000 live births per year, and the life expectancy had risen to 69.[9]

Political System

The Iranian government is founded on the basis of

Teachers and Teacher Education

Teaching Force

Teacher Education

Materials for Reading Instruction

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National Examinations

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Standardized Tests

Diagnostic Testing

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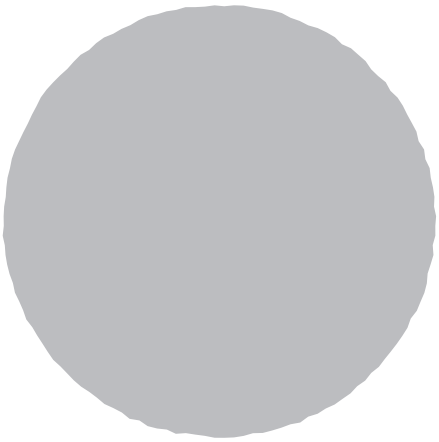
Geographical Location and Size

Israel is situated along the eastern coast of the Mediterranean sea. It borders Lebanon and Syria on the North, Jordan in the East, Egypt (the Sinai peninsula) on the South, and the Mediterranean coastline on the West.[7] The country's capital is Jerusalem, which is located in the Judean Hills. The climate is moderate with hot and humid summers along the coast, drier weather in the Northern Galilee and the hills of Jerusalem, and an arid climate in the South.



Population and Health Statistics

The population of Israel today is 6.37 million with a density of 288 persons per square kilometer.[8,9] Ninety-one percent of the total population can be considered urban.[10] Most of the population lives along the coastal plain, while the southern region is much less populous, with only 63 people per square kilometer.[11] Approximately 78 percent (4.96 million) of the total population is Jewish, 18 percent (.97 million) is Muslim, 2 percent (.135 million) is Christian, and 1.6 percent (.104 million) is Druze.[12] Most of the non-Jewish population speaks Arabic as the mother tongue.

The average life expectancy in Israel is 76.6 years.[13] It varies by sex and ethnicity as follows: 80.7 and 77.1 years for Jewish women and men, respectively; 78.1 and 74.9 years for Arab women and men, respectively.[14] Infant mortality is 5.6 deaths per 1,000 live births.[15]

Political System

Israel was established as a Jewish state and a parliamentary democracy in 1948. The legislative branch is the parliament called the Knesset. It consists of 120 parliament members. Elections are usually held at least every four years. Since no party has ever had an absolute majority, generally, the head of the largest party is called upon by the President of the state to be the Prime Minister and create a coalition government. The government, the executive branch, consists of 20 to 25 ministers who are chosen from among the parties of the coalition. Local councils for municipalities (urban, rural, and district) are elected every five years by the members of the pertinent community. The judicial branch, the Supreme Court consists of 13 judges (2000), elected for life.

- Implementing a five-year affirmative action plan with regard to Arab education.
- Reducing violence and preventing drug use.
- Promoting science and technology education (Harrari report).
- Implementing the recommendations of two national reports for strengthening democratic 1The
- A reduction in the number of subject areas studied simultaneously
- An increase in student autonomy, enabling students to develop independent study skills and allowing them to pursue personal areas of interest
- Alternative means of evaluation in a variety of areas: critical thinking, creativity, originality, ethical consideration, and taking a stand with reference to others in society
- The centrality of the educational role of the homeroom teacher and a focus on the subject matter teacher as an educator.

Pupils and Students in the Education System

The number of pupils and students enrolled in the Israeli education system, from preprimary through higher education was almost 1,900,000 in the 2000-01 school year.[21] Of the total pupil population in 2000-01, approximately 78 percent was enrolled in Hebrew education and 22 percent in Arab education.[22]

The number of pupils by level of education (2000-01) was 297,000 (77% in the Hebrew sector) in the preprimary, 750,000 (75% in the Hebrew sector), in the primary, and 310,000 (84% in the Hebrew sector) in the upper-secondary. There were 235,000 students in universities, colleges and other post-secondary institutions, and 45,000 in other institutions.

Of the proportions of students finishing upper-secondary school that went to post-secondary education (universities, academic colleges, and teacher colleges) between 1991 and 1998, 44.8 percent were in the Hebrew sector, and 25.5 percent in the Arab education sector.[23]

Pupils in the Hebrew sector are split among three educational streams monitored by three different administrative bodies: the state general education stream, the state religious stream, and other ultra-orthodox (independent) streams. In 1999-2000 at the primary education level, the percentages of students in each stream were 60.8 percent, 19.2 percent, and 20 percent, respectively.[24] At the secondary level, the figures were 74.6 percent, 18.2 percent, and 7.2 percent, respectively.[25]

Structure of the Education System

The Israeli education system includes both formal and informal educational frameworks.

- The formal education system includes five levels: pre-primary, primary, secondary (lower and upper), post-secondary, and higher education (see Exhibits 1 and 2).

- The informal education system includes social and youth activities and adult education.

Pre-primary education in Israel consists of a network of preschools and kindergartens. In 1999, it involved 354,000 children ranging from the age of two to six attending municipal, public, and private kindergartens and day care institutes.[26] Of the total, 270,000 were enrolled in public kindergartens.[27] Compulsory education starts at the age of five, but the system is gradually moving toward the age of four. To facilitate this, in the year 2000 the government subsidized free education for 56,000 students from disadvantaged families. In 2001 the number exceeded 78,000.[28]

A massive school reform was initiated in 1968, restructuring the system from an eight-year primary school and a four-year secondary school to a new arrangement with six primary grades, three lower-secondary grades, and three higher-secondary grades. This reform has been implemented mainly in the formal education system. In the year 2000, about 75 percent of the students in grades 7 to 9 were studying in the lower-secondary school, while the remaining 25 percent were still following the old structure.[29] The reform also included the extension of the compulsory education law from grade 8 to grade 10, bringing the total period of free and compulsory education to 11 years (from kindergarten to the end of the 10th grade). This latter change took effect in 1978.

Academic institutions of higher education include: universities, academic colleges, and teacher education colleges, which offered academic programs to 250,000 students in 1999-2000.

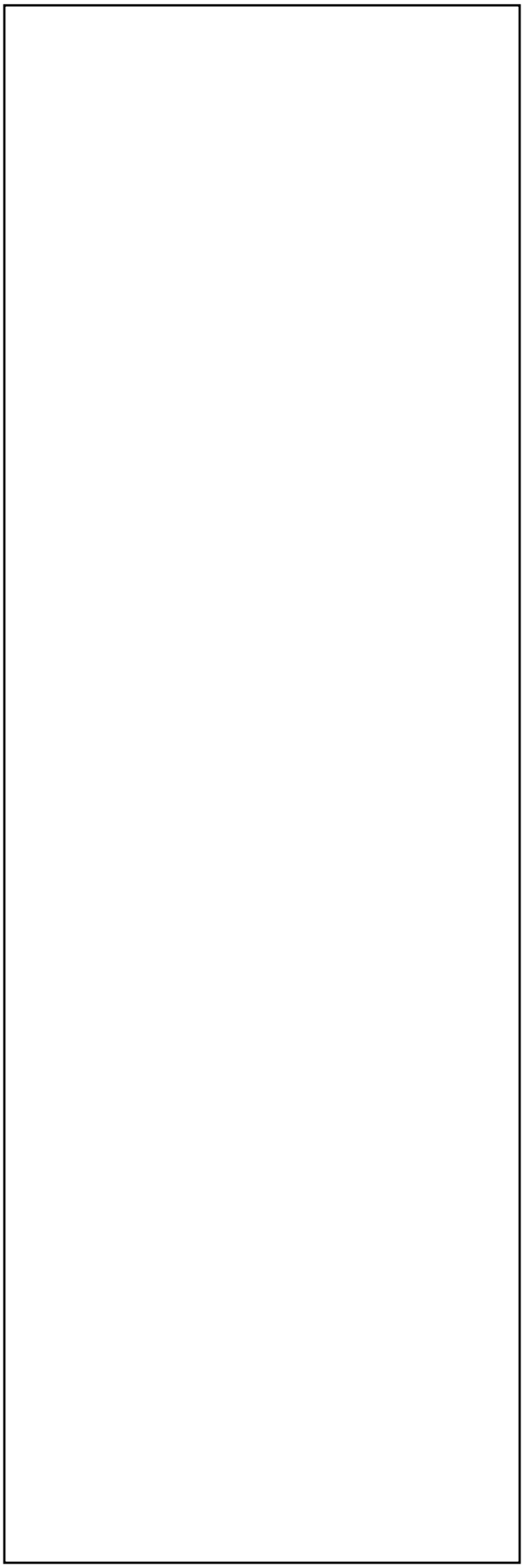
Teachers and Teacher Education

Teaching Force (1997-98)

In 1997-98, there were 102,468 teachers in primary and post-primary education: 53,936 in primary schools,

as a foreign language, and Hebrew or Arabic as the second language.

During the nineties, reading policy in Israel was focused on the teaching of *language as a whole* and much effort was invested in developing a variety of teaching methods compatible with this approach. *Literacy* was defined as "an individual's ability to use the written language of his or her culture, in a variety of functions." The development of competence in literacy was viewed as a result of the learner interacting with a variety of text types, while promoting the skills to read, understand, interpret, criticize, and eval-



The letter also specifies a time table for teaching reading. By the end of the kindergarten (the obligatory preschool year) students will exhibit phonological awareness, familiarity with the letters of the alphabet, and will be able to write phonetically new words. At the same time, they will familiarize themselves with books and basic story structure. By spring of the first grade and by the end of the grade at the very latest, all first graders will be able to decode effectively while using diacritics and will read with fluency. A special committee, including academic experts and ministry personnel, will be appointed to follow the implementation of the recommendations. Teachers will continue to be regarded as the key factors in the successful teaching of reading.

Revising the Reading Curriculum

A new language curriculum based on the recom-
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decreased in the higher grades. Non-religious schools devoted more time to "free reading" than religious schools.

The reading survey also investigated the time allotted to various reading activities across the curriculum. These activities included the following: reading comprehension, reading strategies, writing activities, and reflective writing and language skills. Most schools had reading comprehension activities 4 to 5 times a week and language skills about 3 times a week. The other activities were used fewer than 3 times a week. About 10 hours per week were devoted to reading and literature out of a total of about 26 hours.

Classroom Organization and Class Size

The average class size in the Israeli school system is 27 students, yet many classes are much larger, ranging between 33 to 36 students.[36] The student population is varied in background and scholastic ability and instruction is a combination of teacher-led, group, and individual activities.

Reading instruction in the first grade used to be the same for all students in the same class, but in the last decade there has been an increasing awareness of the fact that students require individual treatment in this area. Most classes now try to accommodate the pace and methods of work to individual needs.

Reading Specialists

At the primary level, classroom teachers generally teach all subject areas including reading. Teachers receive in-service training in reading methods, a

The objective specified by the ministry is for teachers to develop a variety of alternative methods of assessment to be used for diagnostic purposes and for the improvement of the teaching and learning process.

In addition to the internal evaluation process within the school, the testing and evaluation department of the Ministry of Education developed an evaluation process based on school achievements to provide schools with reliable information that can help them in their policy and school-based curriculum development. The evaluation process is known as “meitzav” – the meas-

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31 Central Bureau of Statistics. *Statistical abstract of Israel 2001: No. 52*. Table 8.27. Teachers in primary and post-primary education by level of education, sex, age, and employment characteristics.

32 Central Bureau of Statistics. *Statistical abstract of Israel 2001: No. 52*. Table 8.27. Teachers in primary and post-primary education by level of education, sex, age, and employment characteristics.

33 Central Bureau of Statistics. *Statistical abstract of Israel 2001: No. 52*. Table 8.27. Teachers in primary and post-primary education by level of education, sex, age, and employment characteristics.

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36 Sprinzak, D. et al. *Ministry of Education Facts and Figures*. Section D. Development of education: Facts and figures.

Education System

Governance and Organization

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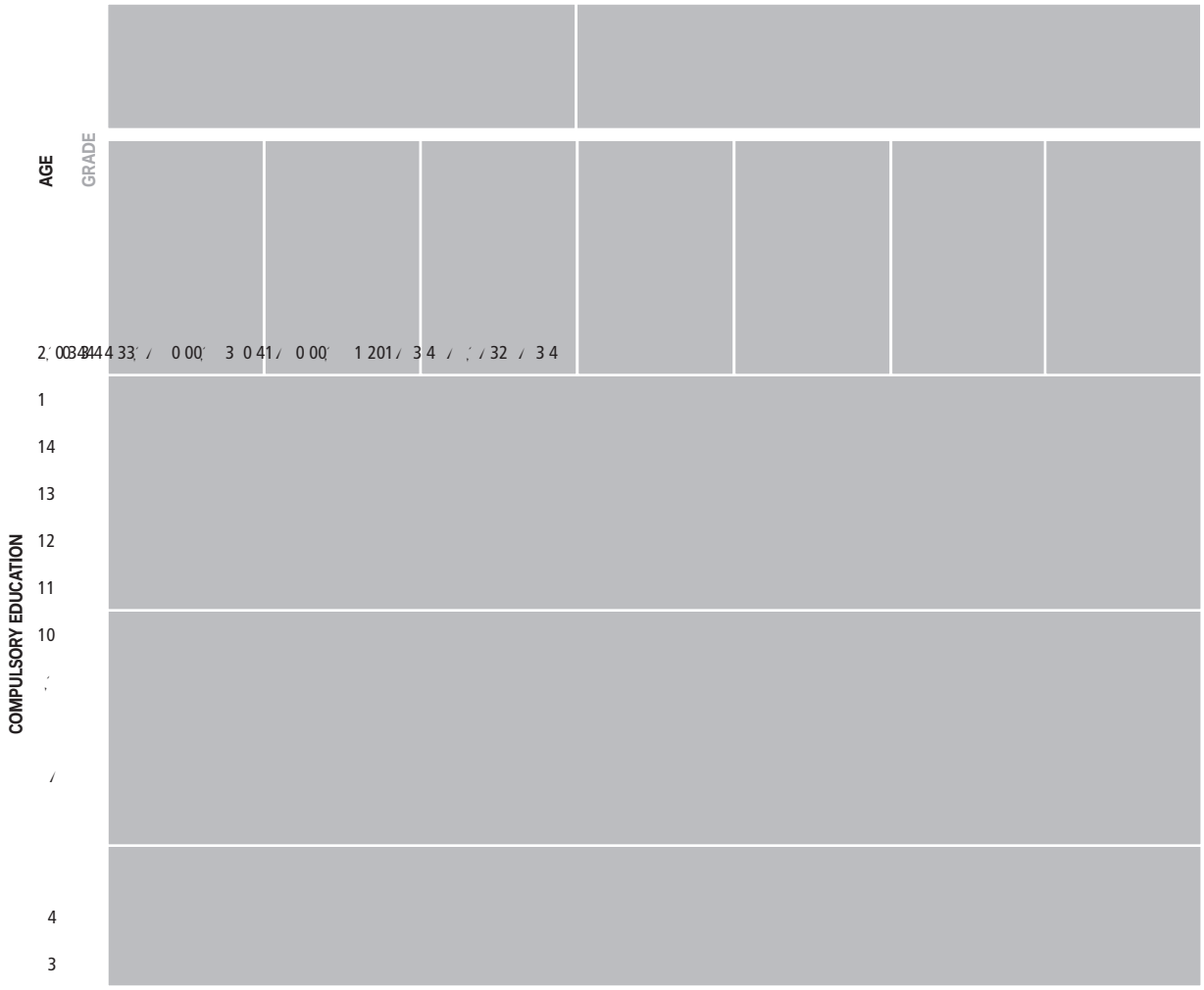
Country Profile: Italy

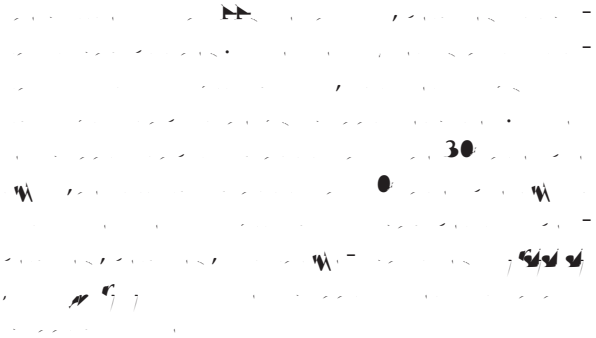
Geographical Location and Size

Structure of the Education System



Pre-primary Education

Primary Education



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Duration and Timing of the School Year

Teachers and Teacher Education

Teaching Force

Reading Curriculum and Standards

Materials for Reading Instruction

Instructional Time

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References

Suggested Reading

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Under-Secretaries, which reports to
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The government funds the costs of education at all

stages. In 1998, spending on education totaled US$ 1.14 billion, or 6 percent of total GNP.[2] Public expenditure per student in primary

Country Profile: Kuwait

Geographical Location and Size

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Population and Health Statistics

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- Reinforce the relationship between the society and its heritage
- Develop the ability to read correctly in order to accurately and fluently express ideas and comprehend them
- Develop silent reading ability of suitable speed
- Develop oral reading ability and correct pronunciation of words
- Motivate the learner to read freely, developing the mind and making the tongue and pen fluent.

Reading Curriculum and Standards

The ability to read means being able to transform with suitable speed written symbols into correctly-voiced sounds in the form of correct words and intelligible sentences.

Some reading activity is taught in the kinderg

Reading Disabilities

The impeded learner is one who is hindered in performing the reading activities that he was trained to perform correctly. Impediment problems can be addressed by:[17]

- Diagnosing the learner's impediment in oral reading skills
- Providing suitable opportunities for intensive training to help the learner acquire skills in a meaningful way
- Training the learner to master silent reading, which precedes oral reading
- Choosing suitable reading passages (in count and length) for the learner
- Encouraging the learners, preparing them psychologically to avoid shyness and reinforcing their ability to face any difficulties
- Modeling reading for the learner, always presenting a correct reading model for the learner to imitate
- Refraining from interrupting the readers to correct their pronunciation or vowel mistakes
- Transferring the impeded learners to specialists in casodeli4es

Language and Literacy

Latvian is the country's official language. At the start of 1999, the ethnic distribution of Latvia's population was 55.7 percent Latvians, 32.3 percent Russians, 3.9 percent Belarussians, 2.9 percent Ukrainians, 2.2 percent Poles, 1.3 percent Lithuanians, and 1.7 percent other ethnic groups.[1] The Russian population is mostly concentrated in Riga and other major urban areas, as well as in southeastern Latvia. This ethnic distribution does not correspond exactly with linguistic groupings. There is a significant proportion of Latvians whose first language is Russian, for example, and vice versa. About 120,000 people use both languages at home.[2]

The daily newspaper circulation in Latvia is 247 per 1,000 people. The public library system has 998 main points of service, with about 508,000 registered users.[3]

Education

Governance and Administration

Within the overall policy structure of Parliament and the Cabinet of Ministers, the Ministry of Education and Science is the central executive for education in the Republic of Latvia. Parliament enacts all laws and amendments on education, and all laws that affect education. The Cabinet of Ministers issues all important normative education acts or regulations. The Ministry of Education and Science has authority to draft normative acts and their amendments. Latvia first adopted a Law on Education in 1991. A 1995 Latvian Concept of Education provided the foundation for subsequent changes in the major laws related to education.[4] A new Law of Education, enacted in November 1998, serves as the framework for laws related to each of the major education sectors, regulating the education system as a whole, the types and levels of education, and the educational institutions. In June 1999, Parliament passed a new Law on General Education, and a new Law on Vocational and Professional Education. There is also a strategic program for education development – 'Education 1998-2003' – developed by the Ministry of Education and Science.

The municipalities, both cities and districts, are responsible for most of the public schools that provide general education through the primary and secondary education levels. The state government pays for teacher salaries and social insurance while the municipalities are responsible for maintenance, capital, and other supporting costs. Local governments within districts cover the salaries of pedagogical staff of pre-primary schools.

The state government is directly responsible for most public special schools and most public vocational and secondary professional schools. The state provides most of the funding and the schools are under the authority of the Ministry of Education and Science, or other ministries, such as Agriculture, Culture, and Welfare. Higher education institutions have substantial autonomy in governance and financing, with public funding coming from the state budget.

In 1998, expenditures from the general government budget for education totaled 246.5 million lats, or 15.6 percent of the total budget.[5] Education expenditures were 6.5 percent of the GDP in 1998.[6]

Structure and Schools

Latvia's education system consists of four major levels: pre-primary education, primary education

S n E n

Latvia has three different types of secondary education – general secondary education, vocational education, and secondary professional education. General secondary education typically lasts three years, from grades 10 to 12 (16- to 19-year-olds). Individuals who have passed the age of compulsory education and who wish to work while continuing their education may attend evening schools and correspondence school. The main subjects in all types of secondary education are native language, literature, first and second foreign languages, mathematics, computer sciences (informatics), basic business, history, and sports. Other subjects are chose depending on the type of secondary education.

T Sh

Almost all schools in Latvia are state the 552 pre-primary schools in 200 private schools. There are very ondary schools.[16] Only one p enrolled in private primar proportion is enrolle schools.[17] There are 175 Russian scho Russian school school, 1 Be school.[18] S special

D n

The school year in Latvia begins Sep er 1st and ends at the beginning of June. es 9 and 12 are allocated extra time in Jun inal examinations, corresponding to the their respective education levels. Holida iods include two weeks at Christmas, on k in October, and another week in Marc e school week is from Monday to Friday.

T h n h E n

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The state finances the salaries and social insurance costs of teachers, according to policies and norms set by the Cabinet of Ministers. Provision also is made within the salary fund for accredited private schools. In 2001, there were 1,739 schools, 462,065 students, and 42,417 teachers. There were 8,157 pre-primary

schoolteachers, 28,819 basic secondary and general secondary schoolteachers, and 5,439 vocational and secondary professional schoolteachers.[19] Approximately 95 percent of primary school teachers are female.[20]

The Plan

According to the standards set by the Ministry of Education and Science, beginning September 1, 2002,[21] pre-primary education teachers in Latvia must have a professional degree in education, with an emphasis in pre-primary education. Primary and basic secondary education teachers also must have a professional degree in education, with specific training at the appropriate educational level and in the subjects they teach. Secondary education teachers must have either a professional degree in education, with specific training at the appropriate educational level and in their subjects, or a bachelor's degree in the appropriate field of science and teacher certification.

Several independent teacher-training institutes in Latvia offer a variety of pre-service and in-service programs. The University of Latvia has two parallel departments – the Faculty of Education and Psychology and the Institute for Pedagogy and Psychology, providing similar training programs for teacher candidates. Many teachers are upgrading their initial degrees to master's degrees.[22] There also are other comparable higher education pedagogical institutes in Latvia – like

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There are various native language texts, reading books, and other instructional materials available for teaching reading skills. The Ministry of Educa-

and language. At grades 5 to 9, the 10-point system is used for all the subjects except social studies.[28] All teachers are responsible for determining the type of classroom assessment and its duration.

N n E n n D n T n

At the end of grade 3, there is a state examination in general learning and native language. Children in non-Latvian schools also must undergo a state examination in Latvian language. At the end of grade 6, there is a second set of state examinations in mathematics and native language. Again, students in non-Latvian schools must undergo a state examination in Latvian language. At the end of grade 9, there are formal state examinations in mathematics, native language, and Latvian (for students in non-Latvian schools). There are also compulsory tests in four subjects; two of which are announced to the schools at the start of the academic year and the other two no later than

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students in non-Latvian schools). There are also compulsory tests in four subjects; two of which

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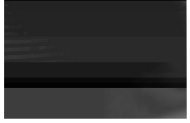

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Country Profile: Lithuania

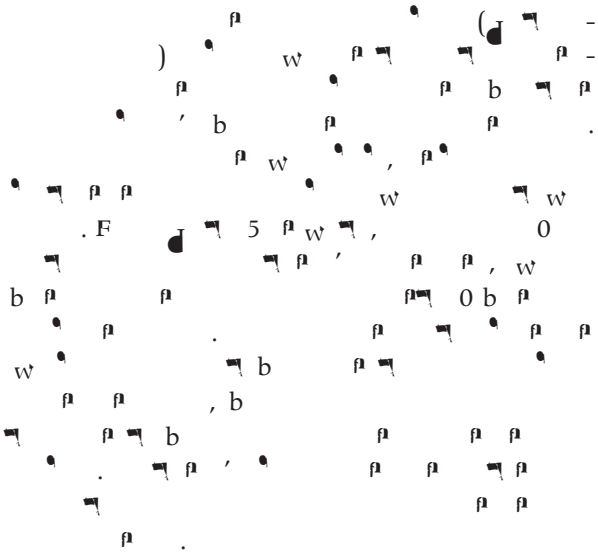
Reading Curriculum and Instruction

Reading Policy

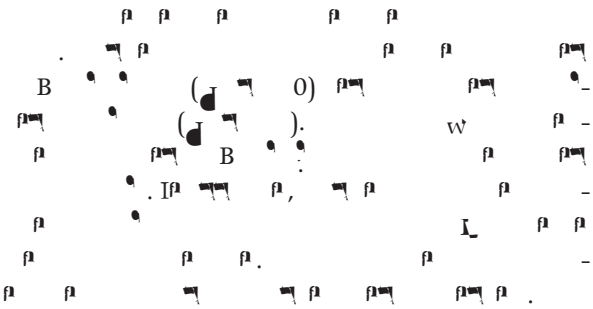
General Curriculum for Lithuanian Secondary School

Assessment

Classroom Assessment



National Examinations



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Bojana Naceva
B D

Language and Literacy

Macedonian is the country's official language, and in some local communities the language of the national [illegible]orities as well. All minorities of the Re[illegible]nia have the right to be educa[illegible]gue in elementary and s[illegible]e can ask for this [illegible]ions, such as [illegible]d

regulatory matters at all levels of education. The Pedagogical Service inspects and approves the curricula, schoolbooks, and projects implemented in elementary and secondary education.

In the Republic of Macedonia, education is equally accessible to everyone. The new Constitution gives citizens rights to establish private educational institutions at all levels of education, except in elementary education.

In the past decade, Macedonia established a new way of organizing, financing, and administ[illegible]rating the educational system. As a result, [illegible]ding on their role and type, some educa[illegible]utions became more like public insti[illegible] expenditure on education was [illegible]3

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tuition, but parents provide them with schoolbooks at the beginning of the school year. The Constitution does not permit private elementary schools, because education at this level is compulsory. Private kindergartens have increased in number in recent years, but there are still only 3 private secondary schools in Macedonia. There also are two religious secondary schools that are preparing Orthodox and Muslim priests.

Duration and Timing of the School Year

The school year in the Republic of Macedonia starts on September 1 and lasts until June 10. Students have three holidays during the school year: winter, spring, and summer holidays. The school year lasts 180 working days except the final years of elementary and secondary education where it lasts 165 days.

Teachers and Teacher Education

Teaching Force

School principals are in charge of hiring teachers upon the recommendation of school committee members. In elementary schools, 54 percent of teachers are women, and 46 percent men.[13] There has been a trend towards an increasing number of women teachers in elementary and secondary education in the last 20 years.

Teacher Education

According to the Law for Elementary Education, teachers who have completed the Pedagogical Academy, a Pedagogical Faculty, or Institute of Pedagogy at the Philosophical Faculty may become classroom teachers. However, the Pedagogical Academy, a two-year program, was set aside five years ago and the Pedagogical Faculties were established to pryooyear prog. Theasch

teaching methodology. Practical teaching of lessons in the school also is compulsory.

Teacher In-service Education

Professional development of teachers is extremely important to improve the quality of teaching, and teachers are encouraged to participate in organized seminars. Training in curriculum development and lesson planning are compulsory. Other training is not compulsory, such as that related to implementing innovations in teaching, integrating evaluation with instruction, or developing some specific teaching skills.

The Bureau for Development of Education is primarily responsible for in-service training, but according to the law, all faculties that educate teachers have the right to offer such training. To encourage teachers to participate in workshops, teachers are awarded a certificate of attendance after completing a series of seminars. Successful teachers are encouraged to attend mentor-training seminars. Upon completion of these seminars, they are promoted to mentor teachers who assist the leaders of the seminars.

Reading Curriculum and Instruction

Reading Policy

Within the mother-tongue curriculum (Macedonian, Albanian, Turkish, and Serbian) for elementary education, the area of 'reading and literature' is key. In the mother-tongue curriculum from Grades 1 to 4 it is stated that the area of 'reading and literature' has a central place in mother-tongue instruction, and is realized through reading and analyzing both popular and informative texts. Reading literacy is considered a crucial skill for successful achievement in other subjects, as well as a precondition for lifelong learning. According to the mother-tongue curriculum for Grade 1, it is expected that pupils will be able to read independently and accurately (see below).

Reading Curriculum and Standards

Formal reading instruction begins in Grade 1, when the pupils are between the ages of 6 and 7 years old, although often parents enroll their children earlier in the school.

High standard:

- See features in common across different textual elements
- Interpret parts of the text
- Draw conclusions on the basis of explicit messages in the text
- Explain the title of the text.

The objectives of mother tongue curriculum in elementary education are achieved through reading, grammar, expression and creation, and cultural media. The need to integrate all these areas of mother-tongue learning has been emphasized in the past decade. More often, however, the text becomes the basis for instruction in oral and written expression.The media are used to encourage pupils to develop good reading habits and obtain information from various sources.

Materials for Reading Education

For each grade in elementary education, there are two or three reading books from which teachers can choose the texts that will be read and interpreted. The books are collections of prose and poetry by national and world authors. Worksheets are available for the teachers and pupils that follow the contents of the reading books and provide practice in text analysis. For each elementary grade, there is a list of 8 to 10 literature works that each pupil must read and analyze throughout the school year. In addition, pupils are encouraged to read children's magazines and books from the school library.

Instructional Time

According to the curriculum, pupils in Grades 1 to 4 receive 18 to 22 hours of instruction per week. A single lesson lasts 45 minutes. For instruction in mother tongue, pupils have 5 lessons per week. From the total of 180 teaching lessons for mother tongue, 100 teaching lessons are dedicated to teaching reading, making it the most emphasized in the curriculum.

Classroom Organization and Class Size

Teachers are obliged to implement the state curriculum, but they are free to choose teaching methods and various activities for students. In the past decade, individual approaches to teaching have been emphasized, encouraging group work and the use of interactive approaches. Teachers either work directly with individual pupils, or they group pupils according to their interests or skills, depending on the objectives that teacher wants to achieve.

According to the Law for Elementary Education, classes can have no more than 35 pupils and no fewer than 24. The largest classes are typically around 30 pupils, mostly in urban areas; the smallest are less than 20, and are found in some rural areas.

Second Language Reading Instructions

Students from other nationalities living in the Republic of Macedonia receive instruction in their mother tongue. However, they also are required to learn the Macedonian language.

program in which pupils analyze works that are not included in regular lessons, recite poetry, or create their own works independently.

In the Republic of Macedonia, there are literacy programs for adults, especially for mothers that have not completed their education. UNICEF and the Institute for an Open Society, supported financially by the country, send trained educators to educate mothers in their own homes.

Assessment

Classroom Assessment

Assessing pupils' achievement is the teacher's responsibility. There are no standardized tests used to measure pupils' progress in any area that is part of mother-tongue instruction. During the school year, teachers collect information about pupils' performance through observations, interviews, completed student work, and school-wide tests. Using information from the pupil's portfolio, teachers inform parents of their child's achievement at least four times per year. Numbers from 1 to 5 (1 = basic; 5 = excellent) are the most commonly used summative marks, but there are teachers who choose to communicate their evaluations through written comments. Every year for the past five years, the Bureau for Development of Education has organized seminars for teachers to learn about both more qualitative and more objective assessment.

National Examinations

National examinations or assessments did not exist until two years ago, when for the first time national assessments of Macedonian language, Albanian language, and mathematics were established at the end of Grade 4.[16] The aim of the national assessments is to provide the educational administration and professional institutions with valid data about pupil attainments that can be used to inform educational policy and give the schools and teachers information to improve teaching and learning.

Assessment is on a four-year cycle, with one subject assessed each year, and repeated every four years. The assessment is conducted on representative samples of schools and pupils. In mother tongue, pupil's achievements are measured in the following areas: grammar, vocabulary,

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The State University "Al. Russo," Balti

Language and Literacy

Moldova's state language is Moldavan, which is equivalent with the Romanian language. Russian also is spoken, as are English, French, and German.

Moldova has 3,200 public libraries that lent readers 21,080,000 books and journals in 1999.[1] Mass media is represented by 13 private radio sta-

decreased by 53 percent, and the teaching force was reduced by 57 percent.[23]

In accordance with newly adopted legislation, a mother has the right to a 3-year maternity leave, during which she benefits by an indemnity for the child until he or she reaches the age of

Every year school teachers improve their pedago

- Present detailed information after reading, using language appropriate to the text
- Stimulate the curiosity, imagination, and habit of life-long reading
- Form the habit of systematic library use, and work with books, newspapers, and magazines.
- Develop a point of view and attitude toward what was read.

As a rule, teachers in primary classes teach all the subjects in grades 1 to 4. The main subject in the syllabus is Romanian language, which forms the foundation of the primary school curriculum. It is the base of all knowledge and is necessary for clear communication and organized thinking.

The Romanian language curriculum stipulates oral studies with elements of reading and writing in grade 1; reading and writing (the alphabet and post-alphabet period) in grade 2; development of speech as the basis for integrating skills in grades 3 to 4.

The aim is to learn Romanian orally, and develop the ability to identify sounds, words, and sentences by ear and reproduce them; to assimilate a basic set of lexical units and phraseological expressions; to learn sounds and letters in order to master correct, conscious, and expressive reading and legible writing; to develop competencies in oral speech and in writing a brief summary of what was read or heard; and to describe the main characters, theme, and main ideas in a literary text.

Materials for Reading Instruction

On the basis of the curriculum, instructional materials for grades 1 to 4 were developed that include:

- The pupil's manual
- Literary reading
- Exercise book and problems for formative evaluation
- Demonstrative tables for self-evaluation
- Teacher's guide.

These sets were tested in experimental schools from 1992 through 1996. Once completed, they were approved by the council of the Ministry of Education, and recommended for use in schools (since 1996).

The components of the sets of instructional materials are interdependent, complementing each other within one lesson. The teacher's guide recommends various activities for working in groups or with the whole class. The children's manuals

Role of Reading Specialists in Reading Instruction

As mentioned above, the teacher in primary classes teaches almost all the disciplines encompassed by the curriculum. Thus, in nearly all primary schools the class teacher is responsible for the pupils' success in reading, and receives the necessary training during university studies. In some schools with alternative or private education, specialists

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Education System

Governance and Organization

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Structure of the Education System

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Geographical Location and Size

Morocco is located in northern Africa, occupying a strategic location along the strait of Gibraltar. It borders the North Atlantic Ocean and the

Materials for Reading Instruction

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Classroom Organization and Class Size

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References

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Geographical Location and Si e

A member of the European Union, the Netherlands is bordered by the North Sea to the North and West, the Federal Republic of Germany to the East, and Belgium to the South. The country is mainly flat, and a significant part of it consists of a river delta and polders. About 27 percent of the land is below sea level, and about 60 percent of the population live on this portion of land. The total land area is approximately 41,000 square kilometers, divided into 12 provinces.[8]

Population and Health Statistics

With a population of 16 million in 2001 and 466 persons per square kilometer, the Netherlands is one of the most densely populated countries in the world.[9] Each day the Dutch population grows by an average of 329 inhabitants; 550 children are born, 385 people die, 326 immigrants come to live in the Netherlands and 162 people leave the country.[10] In 2000, the infant mortality rate was 5 per 1,000 live births. Life expectancy for females was 81 years of age compared to 75 years for males.[11]

In the Netherlands, there is separation of church and state. Dutch society is becoming increasingly multi-ethnic due to the influx of people from Mediterranean countries and immigrants from former Dutch overseas territories. Since many of the migrants have settled in the large cities in the western part of the country, 89 percent of the Dutch population lives in urban areas.[12]

Political S stem

The Netherlands is a constitutional monarchy, governed by a democratically elected parliament. There is a multi-party system. The Constitution provides for members of the Dutch Lower Chamber, the provincial councils, and the municipal councils to be elected directly. Members of the Dutch Upper Chamber are elected by the provincial councils.

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Literac Programs

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Lang ge and Literacy

English and Māori are the two official languages in New Zealand, English being the most commonly used. Māori, an official language since 1987, is a nesian language closely related to the Tahitian Hawaiian languages. Presently about one-third āori understand the Māori language (but not f these are able to speak it). However, revital- on of the language is underway. Other lan- ges spoken in urban areas include various uages of the Pacific and Asia.

Publications have been in circulation in New and since the mid-1800s. The printing press brought to the islands from Europe, and by the first Māori language newspaper had been ished. In 1996, there were 23 different daily spaper titles with a circulation of 216 newspa- per 1,000 inhabitants.[1]

New Zealand's public library system is admin- ed and funded through local government es. Most of the public libraries provide com- ity services to assist, for example, new adult ers, hospitals and prisons, and literacy pro- s during the school holidays.

E cation System

Governance and Organization

Compulsory education in New Zealand is decentralized under the Ministry of Education, which is responsible for providing policy advice to the Minister of Education, overseeing the implementation of policy, developing guidelines for the national curriculum,

Country Profile: New Zealand

Geographical Location and Size

New Zealand is an island nation comprising two main islands, North Island and South Island, as well as several smaller islands. Situated in the southwest region of the Pacific Ocean, the islands span an area of approximately 300,000 square kilometers, with over 15,000 kilometers of coastline. The country's capital, Wellington, is on the southern coast of the North Island. The geographical features of the country are diverse. Several of the mountains on the North Island are volcanoes. As a result of the seismic activity on the North Island, the landscape includes boiling mud pools and geysers. In contrast, the South Island has over 360 glaciers, which over time have created many lakes and rivers. The flow of these rivers is a major source of hydroelectricity. The Southern Alps extend the length of the South Island. Because of New Zealand's terrain, there are many small isolated schools throughout the country.

Population and Health Statistics

There are currently about 4 million people living in

Teachers and Teacher Education

Teaching Force

Over 80 percent of primary school teachers are female, a figure that has changed little over the last five years.[10] Just over one-third of New Zealand's primary teachers were aged between 40 and 49, another quarter were aged 50 and over with the rest aged from under 25 to 39. The average age of New Zealand primary teachers is 44 and has been increasing steadily over a number of years.[11]

In contrast, only 55 percent of secondary school teachers are female.[12] But like the primary

- A sound understanding of the learning process that underpins all teaching
- The expectation that all children will become successful readers and writers
- Language programs that acknowledge the interrelationship and reciprocity of oral, written, and visual language
- Planning for teaching that will build on the child's existing skills, knowledge, interests, and individual needs and that will acknowledge the role of the child as an active learner
- Teaching that takes account of children's linguistic and cultural backgrounds
- Teaching that uses a range of explicit and implicit instructional strategies appropriate to the learner, including small-group or individual instruction where appropriate
- Regular and purposeful monitoring of children's progress in reading and writing (using running records, teacher conferencing, observation, and other methods)
- The development of positive attitudes to reading and writing, including the willingness to take risks
- The use of a wide range of interesting material, fiction and non-fiction, in a range of media and appropriate to the instructional levels, including repetitive texts, rhymes, poems, and songs, to enhance children's print and phonological awareness
- Access to a wide range of interesting and stim-

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support cassettes, School Journals to supplement class libraries, and other titles. As with the curriculum documents, there are Māori equivalents of Ready to Read (ā , ī ,) and many of the other resources as well (e.g., , ī , and).

There are some interesting technology-based reading programs being produced commercially. One example is the Sunshine Collection Videos (formerly called the) developed in New Zealand by Wendy Pye Ltd. The series consists of eight videos of increasing difficulty, based on the Wendy Pye Sunshine Extension books usually read by five-year-olds. Each video presentation begins by looking at the colorful illustrations, then as each word is read aloud the corresponding word in the text is highlighted on the screen, before finishing off with letter and word study. To reinforce the learning of the video presentation, the children then read the books and complete worksheets either in class or for homework.

Instructional Time

The total instructional time available in primary schools is usually 4 hours and 40 minutes per day. A normal school day runs from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Instruction time is one hour less per day for the first few months in the New Entrant class.

The exact amount of time designated for reading and language activities varies according to the practices of teachers and schools. The 1991 IEA Reading Literacy Study found that the total number of hours for language (including writing, spelling, literature, and grammar) instruction per week in Year 5 averaged 6.8 and the total hours allocated for reading instruction per week averaged 5.1 in New Zealand.[15]

Classroom Organization and Class Size

The deployment of teachers and class size is a school-level decision. Teachers are advised to work with their students as a whole class, in small groups, or individually, whichever is most appropriate for teaching a particular skill or strategy. The critical factors are deciding which strategies particular children need to work on next and how these can be taught effectively and meaningfully. Many New Zealand primary schools contain composite classes with two or more grades.

At the primary school level, classroom teachers generally teach all subjects areas to their stu-
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Literacy Programs

The Ministry of Education is currently funding a nationwide campaign to raise the profile of literacy and numeracy among primary aged children and their parents. There are two main programs within the nationwide campaign: and .

is carried out through a series of television advertisements that began in May 1999. The advertisements draw a direct link between oral language, reading, and writing. The aim was to emphasize that parents have an equally important role to play at home in encouraging their children to read and write. Pamphlets were also being developed to provide parents with practical suggestions on how to improve their children's literacy skills, for example, what to do if a child becomes stuck on a word while reading. Other features include a new handbook and video for teachers, a revision of the National Administration Guidelines (guidelines issued to schools which emphasize good management practices, strategic planning, and implementation of the curriculum) to place more importance on literacy and numeracy, and professional development workshops for principals on literacy leadership and resources. Schools also can apply for funding to development their own literacy/numeracy projects.

was initiated by Alan Duff in 1992 to provide quality books for children from bookless homes. The books are provided by Ashton Scholastic and presented at schools with the help of teachers, parents, and well-known role models. The aim is to provide literacy resources to the homes of students from schools in low socio-economic communities, typically with larger numbers of Polynesians on the roll. The program has presently covered about 65, 000 students from 200 schools.

New Zealand also has literacy programs targeted to adults. Literacy Aotearoa is a nationwide organization that provides courses in literacy and numeracy, and develops training resources as well. Literacy Aotearoa also delivers training for tutors, develops new literacy services, promotes literacy, and provides networking opportunities at conferences. The National Center for Workplace Literacy and Language (Workbase) is a national organization that develops programs to improve workforce literacy, English language and numeracy skills.

and concepts about print, and completing running records. The survey provides diagnostic data to be used in conjunction with other information collected by the teacher, to highlight strengths and weaknesses for future literacy programs.

A recent development is the Assessment Resource Banks. This is a collection of on-line assessment materials, which assess achievement of learning programs that reflect levels 2 to 5 of the national curriculum.

National Examinations

There are no examinations at the primary school level (ages 5 to 12 years). In 2002 the new National Certificate of Education Achievement, comprising a mix of internal and external assessment, will describe student achievement over the final three years of secondary school, and meet the requirements of some post-secondary trade training courses. This replaces the five separate qualifications previously used.

Standardized Tests

In New Zealand, teachers make use of a series of standardized tests developed by the New Zealand Council for Educational Research (NZCER). To assess a range of literacy skills there are tests in reading comprehension and vocabulary, word recognition, listening comprehension, and information skills.[19,20,21,22] All the tests are nationally normed on samples of 8- to 14-year-old students, with a cycle of regular checks in place.

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Suggested Reading

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Language and Literac

Including a variety of different dialects, Norwegian is Norway's main language. There are two forms of written Norwegian, and , both of which have been official languages for about 100 years. About 80 percent of the population write and 20 percent write . The two are quite similar, and if you write one of them there is no problem understanding the other. Both languages are taught in school and instructional materials such as textbooks must be available in both languages. In addition, the Sami population has its own language that encompasses three distinctive dialects. Sami students in compulsory schools are entitled to education in their own language. Most Norwegians have a reasonably good understanding of English, as it is taught in school starting in grade one. Since

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Country Profile: Norway

Geographical Location and Si e

Norway is located on the western part of the Scandi-

in preschool education increases as children get older. Only 37 percent of 1- and 2-year-olds compared to 80 percent of 5-year-olds participate in preschool education. In 1999, there were 5,942 childcare institutions in Norway, somewhat more than half of which were public (2,992). Of the private preschool institutions, 1,537 were partly financed by municipal grants.[16]

Primar and Lower-secondar Education

Primary and lower-secondary schools in Norway are compulsory, comprehensive, and coeducational. Their aim is to offer all children an education that is adapted to their individual abilities within the framework of the ordinary school system. The curriculum for the 10-year compulsory school contains guidelines for 10 subjects to be taught in grades 1 through 10. The subjects are Norwegian, mathematics, Christian knowledge (religion and ethics), social studies, art and crafts, science and the environment, English (which is compulsory from the primary level), music, home economics, and physical education. In addition to English, pupils in grade 8 are required to choose a second foreign language, such as German or French, or another language on the basis of local or regional needs. Reading and writing are taught as part of the Norwegian language curriculum.

Upper-secondar Education

In Norway, everyone between the ages of 16 and 19 has a right to three years of upper-secondary education leading either to higher education or to vocational or partial qualifications. Physically disabled pupils are entitled to as many as five years of upper-secondary education. During the first year, students take one of 15 foundation courses. Specialized courses and apprenticeships are offered in the second and third year. Almost all young people between 16 and 19 attend upper-secondary school, but a follow-up service is available for young people between 16 and 19 who do not attend upper-secondary education or who are unemployed.

T pes of Schools

The compulsory school system is organized in three stages: grades 1 to 4 are the primary stage,

education may also teach in lower-secondary school. Teachers trained in universities may teach only subjects they studied at university, so they are mainly employed in lower-secondary schools as subject teachers. In upper-secondary schools all teachers are subject specialists. The academic or vocational subjects a teacher is qualified to teach will determine his or her assignment to a particular type of school and class.

Teacher In-service Education

In-service training is encouraged; part of the extra week in the school year (the 39th week) is intended for professional development for teachers. In addition, universities, state colleges, and a number of public and private institutions offer a wide range of courses and seminars.

Reading Curriculum and Instruction

Reading Polic

For all compulsory grades, guidelines for teaching reading and writing are included in the Norwegian language curriculum. The extent to which reading and writing are emphasized is up to the individual teacher. However, most teachers in the first grades of primary school find it practical to allocate special time for reading instruction.

The general aims for the Norwegian language curriculum are:[19]

- To increase pupils' abilities in their mother tongue, and teach them to avail of the opportunities for interaction that their first language provides in both speech and writing, so that they acquire the knowledge and skills that serve as a platform for further learning in and outside school, and also
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- Become acquainted with a broad selection of literary and informational prose that can provide experience of the joy of reading, and pupils satisfy the hunger for knowledge and excitement; they also should learn how to use ideas taken from texts by various authors in their own writing

- Read and discuss a broad selection of texts, some written by pupils, and learn to use the modes of expression inherent in different genres

- Express thoughts and opinions and describe experiences, and accept criticism of their own writing

- Experience writing as a means of clarifying thought, and experience the process that leads from unclear ideas to a published text

- Become acquainted with the printed mass media and develop skills in the use of electronic media.

The goals for pupils at the lower-secondary stage are:[22]

- Learn to read critically and independently, further developing their appreciation of the aesthetic aspects of literature, and experience how literature can convey experience and knowledge, visions of the future and concepts that can shed light on their own and others' lives

- Read and write both forms of Norwegian in order to be able to participate in their national written culture, and learn how reading and writing complement each other in working with other disciplines and in all writing activities

- Express themselves in different genres and develop various ways of thinking and communicating [illegible]

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Classroom Organi ation and Class Si e

Education in Norway is coeducational, and classes are organized as mixed-ability classes. Pupils with special educational needs are normally integrated into ordinary schools and classes, with extra help provided when needed. About 6 percent of the pupils are recognized as having special educational needs. The teacher is responsible for the choice of educational methods, textbooks, and educational materials in general. However, a minimum of time must be devoted to theme and project work (60% in Grades 1 to 4, 30% in Grades 5 to 7, and 20% in Grades 8 and 9). Permanent grouping within a class is not allowed, but the schools may use flexible groupings according to subject, theme, or project. In Grades 1 through 7, a class teacher is usually responsible for teaching most subjects. In Grades 8 to 10 (lower-secondary education), a teacher who teaches at least one subject in the class will also be responsible for the administration of the class.

The average number of pupils per school is 177 and the average number of pupils per class is 20.3 (19.3 in primary and 23.3 in lower-secondary).[24] The maximum number of pupils permitted per class is 28 in primary school and 30 in lower-secondary. The number of pupils per class in first grade is limited to 18. If the number of pupils exceeds 18, the class will be provided with a second teacher. Many schools are small as a result of Norway's scattered population; the maximum number of pupils in a class is usually only found in densely populated urban areas.

Role of Reading Specialist in Reading Instruction

Most schools have special teachers engaged in teaching pupils with special educational needs, but they do not act as reading specialists. Class teachers are responsible for teaching reading and writing in primary school, and as such are required to have received instruction and practice in teaching reading as part of their general teacher education. Additionally, teachers can expand their knowledge and expertise in teaching reading in numerous in-service courses.

Second Language Reading Instruction

Proficiency in the mother tongue is considered essential for the acquisition of a second language. Pupils with foreign language backgrounds therefore may chose Norwegian as a second language and receive instruction in their mother tongue. In special instances, pupils with foreign language background can receive extra training in Norwegian. The goal is for these pupils to eventually have a mastery of Norwegian sufficient to receive instruction in Norwegian.

Sami-speaking pupils have the right to receive all primary and lower-secondary education in Sami. Accordingly, a parallel Sami version of the curriculum for the 10-year compulsory school has been developed.

Reading Disabilities

In 2000, Norwegian schools started using screening tests in reading for a four-year trial period. The tests are administered in Grades 2 and 7 and the focus is on identifying readers performing below the 20th percentile. The grades were selected because formal reading instruction starts in Grade 2, and Grade 7 is the last grade before entering lower-secondary school. As a first step, a pupil who lags behind in reading development will receive special attention from the class teacher. Many schools have a teacher, or a team of teachers, engaged in special education, and the class teacher may recruit help from that quarter. If the reading difficulty is more severe, the problem will be diagnosed by the educational-psychological service available in every municipality. Pupils who are diagnosed as dyslexic, or who for other reasons have a need for special help, are entitled to special education. Special education can be organized in the ordinary class by having an extra teacher take part in the reading and writing instruction. Special education also may be organized as individual tutoring or tutoring in small groups.

Literac Programs

In 1997, the organization *!* (Read!) was established to encourage reading and to co-ordinate and initiate country-wide literacy programs. Supported by the Ministry of Culture and Church Affairs, *!* can be compared wi2847si1ational Literacy Trust in England and Stiftung Lesen in Germany. While *!* supplies 7si1plans and programs, organization and implementation is controlled locally. As a result of *!* , a number of literacy programs wi284widespread local participation have been organized.

Frequently, schools or classes will organize a reading week or reading month where pupils are encouraged to visit the library, select books, read, summarize, and discuss with other pupils books they have read. The local library is often actively engaged in these reading enterprises.

Assessment

Classroom Assessment

Assessment in Grades 1 through 7 does

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Norwegian languages were developed for Grades 2, 3, 5, 7, and 9. The tests have been adapted for

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Gabriela Nausica Noveanu
Dragos Noveanu

La a a L a

Romania's official language is Romanian, although English (most frequently), French, German, Italian, and Turkish often are used for business. Languages spoken at home correspond to the various ethnic groups. The country boasts an adult literacy rate of 97.9 percent – 96.9 percent for females and 98.9 percent for males.

In the past several years, local newspapers have increased both their quality and readership. Newspapers published in the major cities have a local or regional circulation varying between 2,000 and 40,000 copies. There are over 20 dailies published in Bucharest alone, most of them

Country Profile: Romania

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[illegible] 2001, [illegible] 22,430,000 [illegible].[6] [illegible] 94 [illegible].[7] A [illegible]

education (nine years beginning in 2003-2004). The obligation to attend school terminates when pupils are 16 years old or when they have completed lower-secondary school, whichever occurs first.

Primary education includes grades 1 to 4, usually for 7- to 11-year-olds. Parents or legal guardians may request that their 6-year-old be enrolled, provided the child has reached an appropriate stage of physical and mental development. Lower secondary education includes grades 1 to 9 for 11- to 16-year-olds.

- a

Upper-secondary education for 16- to 19-year-olds is optional, and covers grades 10 to 12, or 13 for some types of schools. Vocational education lasts 1 to 3 years for the upper-secondary age group.

E

Enrollment for the different types of schools – public, private, and religious – is summarized in Exhibit 1.[18] In the 1998-99 school year, 68.5 percent of 3- to 6-year-olds were enrolled in pre-primary schools, and 96.8 percent of 7- to 15-year-olds were enrolled in primary schools.[19] Very few students were attending private schools at the pre-primary, primary, and lower-secondary levels.

Since 1998-99, the school year has a new structure for the pre-university level, being divided into semesters. The first semester starts around the 15th of September and lasts until shortly before the end of January. It has a total of 14 weeks of study and four weeks of holidays. The second semester starts shortly after the 1st of February and lasts until the end of June. It has a total of 15 weeks of study and 3 weeks of holidays.

25.8 1990, 13.3 1950, 13.2 19 3.1 9.6 .[15]

9.9 1999, : 40 25 35 . 2001 10.5 .

2000 $ 36.7 , $ 1,670.[16,17]

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A total of 64,472 full-time and 2,664 part-time teaching staff were employed in primary education during the 1997-98 school year in Romania. In 1998-99, 99.9 percent of all preschool teachers were female. Of all primary and lower-secondary teachers, 25.3 percent were male and 74.7 percent female.

a E a

Primary school teachers ( ) are trained in upper-secondary teacher-training schools or colleges. College training (special short-term education) lasts for two years for students from an upper-secondary teacher-training school, or three years for those from other types of upper-secondary schools. The new regulation stipulates that, as of 1999, the initial training of teachers for primary education will be provided by university colleges. Generally, a single teacher for each class manages the learning process. Specialized teachers may teach foreign languages, religion, physical education, and music. Such teachers have a special diploma and have completed a short- or long-term form of higher education, depending on the subject they are teaching.

a I- E a

The Ministry of National Education, which coordinates and finances in-service education, grants the teacher's right to in-service training. In-service training of the teaching staff is provided by higher education institutions through courses

Lower-secondary school is concluded by an examination called , which includes the following subjects: Romanian language and literature, mathematics, Romanian history, and Romanian geography. Pupils belonging to national minorities studying in mother tongue languages are administered a supplementary examination in the language and literature of their mother tongue. In order to receive a leaving certificate – – pupils have to pass this examination. This certificate entitles the pupil to apply for entrance examination for upper-secondary school.

Na a aEa a

There are no regional or national examinations comprising reading literacy in Romania. Furthermore, no use of commercial tests for reading achievement has been reported in published documents.

Da

Diagnostic testing is undertaken by specialized institutions on request of the parents or legal guardians. General screening tests have not been undertaken for age cohorts enrolled in compulsory education.

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Country Profile: Russian Federation

Geographical Location and Size

by the institution. State power, management bodies, and local government bodies do not have the right to change the curriculum and study schedule of an educational institution once they have been approved, except for cases stipulated by the Russian legislature.

The tendency towards increasing variability of education could be illustrated by the growing number of textbooks for school subjects by different authors, from 139 textbooks in 1992, to 191 in 1995, and in 2000, to 1,192.[11]

In 2000, the Russian government began to develop a new educational reform program, declaring that the education system should shift from a regime of survival to a regime of development. The main directions of reform were articulated as follows: modernizing the structure and content of general education, raising the quality of education, providing equal access to education, developing effective mechanisms for transmitting social requests to the educational system, and broadening public participation in managing education.

Structure of the Education System

The state system of education includes preschool education, general secondary education, secondary vocational training, higher education, post-graduate education and improvement of professional skills, and in-service training and re-training.

Preschool Education

Preschool, or pre-primary, education is not compulsory and, as of 2001, included 53,990 pre-primary educational institutions with 4.26 million children. Between 1990 and 1995, the percentage of children in the pre-primary institutions decreased from 67 to 55 percent. Annually, the number of institutions of this kind decreased by 4 to 5 percent for a variety of reasons, including demographics. New types of institutions have appeared with focused goals on special care, child development, and compensatory (remedial) care. In 2000 these new institutions accounted for 35 percent of all pre-primary institutions.[12]

General Secondary Education

General secondary education, the core of the Russian education system, includes three stages: primary education – grades 1 to 4, basic or lower secondary – grades 5 to 9, and secondary (the general education is compulsory according to the Constitution. The structure of the general education system is provided in Exhibit 1.

From ages 6 to 7, primary education may be provided in primary schools, in basic schools that include the primary stage, and in secondary education institutions that include all three stages.

Types of Schools

Exhibit 2 provides the number of schools and enrollment figures for the general education system in 2001.[13] Enrollment in the 65,665 general education institutions, which can comprise one, two, or all three of the stages, was 19.2 million students. These general education institutions included general schools, schools specializing in teaching specific subjects, gymnasiums, and lyceums.[14] Approximately 85 percent of students enrolled in general secondary education institutions attend general schools.[15]

Exhibit 2:

	Urban	Rural	Total
Number of schools			
Primary (offering only 4 years of education	1,717	12,520	14,237
Lower secondary (primary included; offering 9 years of education)	1,328	11,073	12,401
Secondary (primary and low secondary included; 11 years of education)	16,355	20,648	37,003
Upper secondary (only), included in secondary	66	28	94
Special education	1,543	481	2,024
Total	20,943	44,722	65,665
Number of students			
Primary	207,974	189,751	397,725
Lower secondary (primary included)	270,096	688,946	959,042
Secondary (primary and low secondary included)	12,430,724	4,901,386	17,332,110
Upper secondary (only), included in secondary	16,424	7,868	24,294
Total	13,316,054	5,874,225	19,190,279
Number of teachers			
Total	961,726	685,734	1,647,460

Of these institutions, 22 percent are primary schools and 56 percent are secondary schools including all three stages. The rural schools make up 68 percent of all general schools. Over two-thirds of all rural schools can be considered small schools, since more than 40 percent of them have fewer than 100 students.[16]

The system of schools with native language tuition (so-called national schools) provides citizens the right to obtain an education in their native language. This system has remained stable during recent years. In 2000, 3,469 general education institutions conducted lessons in 33 languages for 239,554 students. Since 1992, the number of these institutions has increased by 1.2 percent, and the number of native languages (mother tongues for different ethnic groups) taught in Russian schools has grown to 78.[17]

A parallel non-state educational system is being created with the support of the Ministry of Education. In 1993, it had only 8,500 educational institutions, and today the system still consists primarily of preschools and general secondary institutions of different types. In 2000, non-state general education institutions comprised only 0.9 percent of schools and catered to a mere 0.3 percent of students.[18]

The general secondary education curriculum includes three components: federal, ethnic-regional, and institutional. The federal component ensures unity of general education in the country and contains the part of educational content that provides for the introduction of global and national values to school programs of study. These are the Russian language (as a state language), mathematics, informatics, physics, astronomy, and chemistry.

The ethnic-regional component provides for meeting the specific interests and needs of peoples from different parts of the country. It contains educational content with ethnic and regional distinguishing features, such as the native language and literature, history, and regional geography. Some subject matter domains or subjects are presented both in federal and ethnic-regional components, such as history, social studies, arts, biology, physical education, and technology.

The institutional or school-based component, both compulsory and students' optional studies, emphasizes the specific features of the educational institution and promotes the school activity development.

The curriculum for general education (1998) includes the following educational areas:

- Philology (Russian language as the state language, Russian language as the mother tongue, literature, foreign languages)
- Mathematics
- Social studies (social studies, history, and geography)
- Science (biology, physics, astronomy, and chemistry)
- Arts (fine arts, music)
- Technology
- Physical education.

For the primary school, the curriculum includes the same study areas with minor changes in the area of philology (Russian language as the state language, Russian language as the mother tongue, and literary reading) and science is combined with social studies into the "surrounding world."

Duration and Timing of the School Year

The school year lasts 9 to 10 months starting from the first of September. It has 170 or 240 instructional days, depending on whether the school has a 5- or 6-day week. During the school year, students have three holidays, including one week in the beginning of November, two weeks at the end of December through the beginning of January, and one week at the end of March.

Reforming Primary Education

According to the reform goals declared by the Government in 2000, the structure and content of general education was modernized through an experimental curriculum. This took the form of introducing foreign languages and ICT in primary schools, adopting a general competency approach, encouraging more active forms of learning, and emphasizing the social studies curriculum.

The priorities for primary education reform were maintaining and strengthening the health of children (both physical and mental), supporting each child's individuality, developing interest in learning and the skills to learn, using a more integrative approach in teaching, introducing new qualitative classroom assessments based on measuring the dynamics of child achievement, and increasing attention to gifted and advanced students.

In 2001, an experiment was started in about 2,000 schools located around the country. These schools are intended to become the centers for disseminating the new school models and new educational technologies to the other schools.

The experiment involves five different primary education models with sets of textbooks and all supplementary materials having been developed. Although all five models are oriented in the education standards, each model has its own psychological-pedagogical conceptual framework – three based on the traditional system of primary education and two others on the psychology of child development and learning theory.

Teachers and Teacher Education

Teaching Force

In 2000, 77 percent of general secondary teachers had a diploma in higher education, and 22 percent had a diploma in secondary pedagogical education. In primary schools, 69 percent of teachers had a higher education diploma, and 28 percent had a diploma from a secondary pedagogical college.[19]

Approximately 85 percent of Russian secondary school teachers, and about 98 percent of primary school teachers, are female.[20]

About 45 percent of primary school teachers are aged between 30 and 40; 20 percent are under 30; and the rest are 40 or over. The proportion of teachers on pension but working at school has been increasing. In the 1999–2000 school year they made up about 3.5 percent of the primary school teaching force. In secondary schools, 12.7 percent of the teachers in urban schools and 7.8 percent of the teachers in rural schools were in this category.[21]

About one third of teachers (including primary school teachers) have more than 20 years teaching experience, and just under one third have between 10 and 20 years. About 44 percent of primary school teachers have between 10 and 20

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Teacher Education

There are several different ways to become trained as a primary school teacher:

- Five years of formal education at a higher education institution with the specialization “Pedagogy, Methodology and Instructions of Primary Education,” or

- Four years of the Bachelor program at a higher education institution with the specialization “Pedagogy,” or

- Two years at a pedagogical college , having entered the college following graduation from secondary school or

- Four years at a pedagogical college, having entered the college following graduation from basic school.

In recent years, earning a diploma from a higher education institution has become became more popular among primary school teacher candidates. Even those who received their primary teacher qualification from a pedagogical college will continue their training in a higher education institution.

The training program for the five-year higher education program covers about 9,000 hours, including theoretical, practical, and research work,

According to the reform strategies, teachers' work will be evaluated not by knowledge level but by the main developmental indicators of their students. Accordingly, during in-service training teachers are taught new ways of assessing student achievement and development.

Reading Curriculum and Instruction

Reading Policy

The history of teaching practice in Russian schools reflects the great changes that have taken place in the teaching of reading. Always a part of "mother tongue" introduction, the main approaches to reading in different periods included "explaining words reading," "conscious reading," "progressive reading," "artistic reading," "creative reading," "upbringing reading," and "explanatory reading."

"Explanatory reading" was the most heavily emphasized approach. Texts were selected on the basis of their cognitive and moral-ethical characteristics. When reading, attention was paid mostly to the logic, style, and artistic value of the text. Development of reading techniques predominated.

The contemporary approach to reading instruction may be characterized as "literary reading." This new emphasis may be attributed to the new goal for school – to increase the spiritual, developmental, and ethical role of education. The new course in "Literary Reading" also became possible because the main subjects taught in the

ties are also used. Sometimes students who can read sentences when they begin the first grade are grouped for advanced learning.

By order of the Ministry, the maximum class size is 25 students. The average class size for the primary school is 24, but some schools, particularly the rural schools, have very small classes.

Literacy Programs

Recently, the Ministry of Education has not organized any special literacy programs. Nevertheless, there are programs to help parents or specialists in the pre-primary education institutions prepare children for school and reading. Among them are "Succession," a program with a set of materials developed by N.Fedosova, and "ABC," a book for parents edited by M. Bezroukih, and T. Fillinova.

Assessment

Classroom Assessment

Formative and summative assessments are conducted to assure compliance of student's achievements with the curriculum requirements and to diagnose student's progress. The timing and form of assessment, as a rule, are chosen by the school. Sometimes the assessment results are used for teacher or school accreditation. Generally, The summative assessment takes place at the end of each school year in each school subject. Assessment formats include oral examinations, short-answer, extended-response or essay questions, and multiple-choice tests. Schools usually use individual teacher-made tests, locally developed tests, or tests developed centrally and published as special supplementary materials.

Innovations in assessment arising from general education reform include the introduction of a qualitative system of assessment without grades or marks at the end of primary school and a shift in pulsory examinations in mathematics and Russian and a compulsory, r the subject of is selected at the local level T . earery y ev ondary school completion, students fin e

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Countr Profile: Scotland

Geographical Location and Size

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Population and Health Statistics

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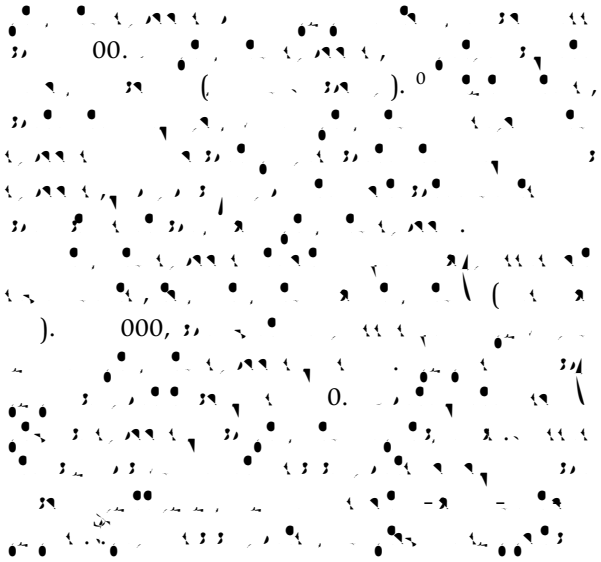


Further and Higher Education

Teachers and Teacher Education

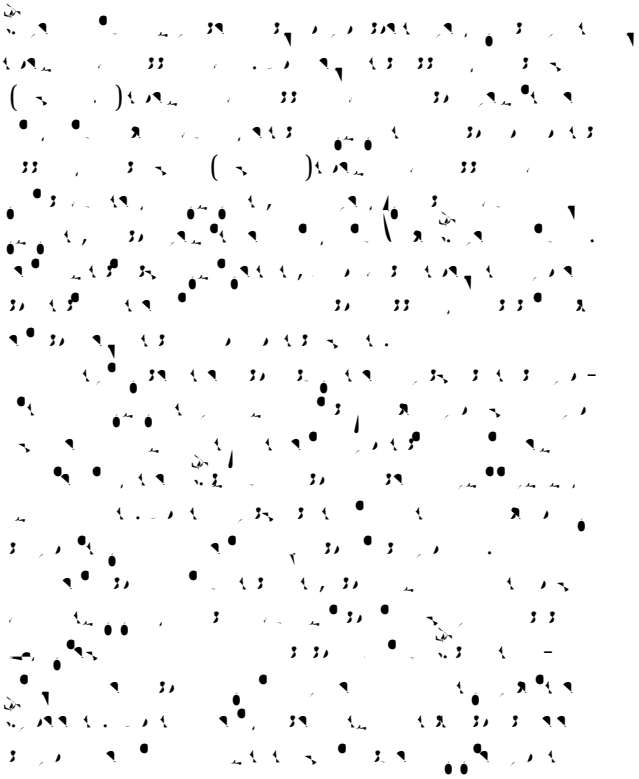
Teaching Force

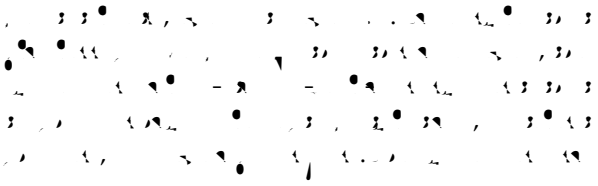
Teacher Education

Teacher In-service Education

A Teaching Profession for the 21st Century (000)

Reading Curriculum and Instruction





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Country Profile: Singapore

Geographical Location and Size

Singapore is situated in Southeast Asia between Malaysia and Indonesia, approximately 137 kilometers north of the equator.[6] It is about 42 kilometers in length, 23 kilometers in breadth, and 683 square kilometers in area.

Population and Health Statistics

The resident population, including citizens and permanent residents, was nearly 4 million in 2000.[7] About 77 percent of the population are Chinese residents, 14 percent Malays, 8 percent Indians, and 1 percent other ethnic groups. The median age rose from 29 years in 1990 to 34 in 2000. The proportion of persons aged 65 years and over increased from 6 to 7.3 percent during the decade.[8]

The population density is about 6,384 persons per square kilometer.[9] Living conditions improved in 2000 with more living space per person compared to 1990. About 86 percent of Singapore's population lives in apartments built by the Housing and Development Board.[10] The average household size decreased from 4.2 to 3.7 people between 1990 and 2000.[11]

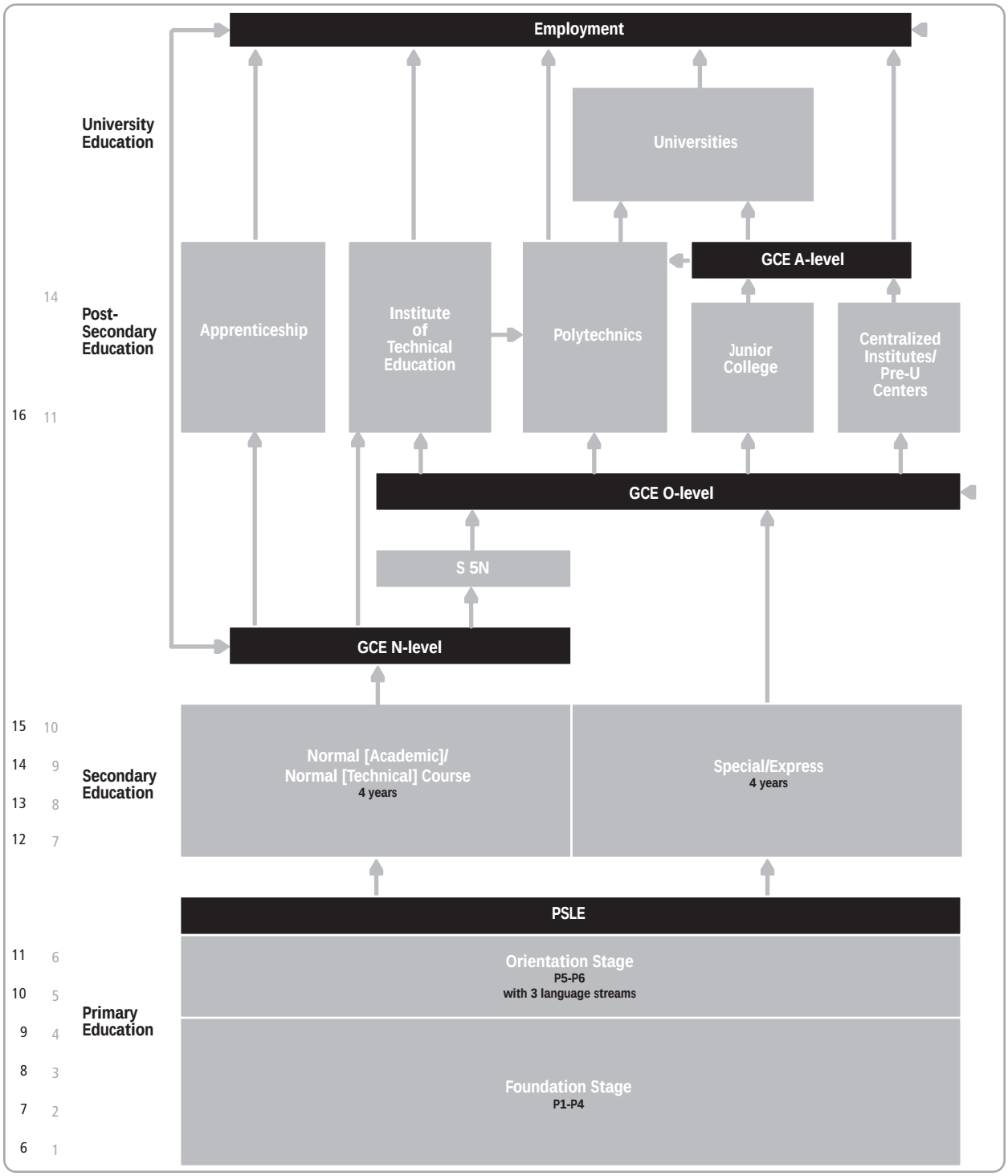
The country's infant mortality rate decreased from 6.6 per thousand live births in 1990 to 2.5 per thousand live births in 2000.[12] Rising standards of living and health also increased the average life expectancy from 73 to 76 years for males and from 78 to 80 years for females between 1990 and 2000.[13]

Political System

Singapore is a republic with a parliamentary system of government with a resident as Head of State, who appoints the rime Minister and the other Cabinet Members from among the Members of arliament. Authority to govern is vested in the Cabinet, which is headed by the rime Minister.

Economy and Employment

Singaporeans enjoy a high standard of living. In 2000, the labor force comprised 69 percent of the population aged 15 years and over.[14] The GN per capita in 1999 was US$ 22,310.[15]



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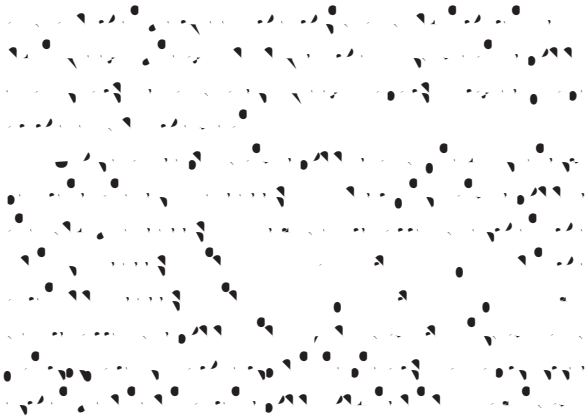
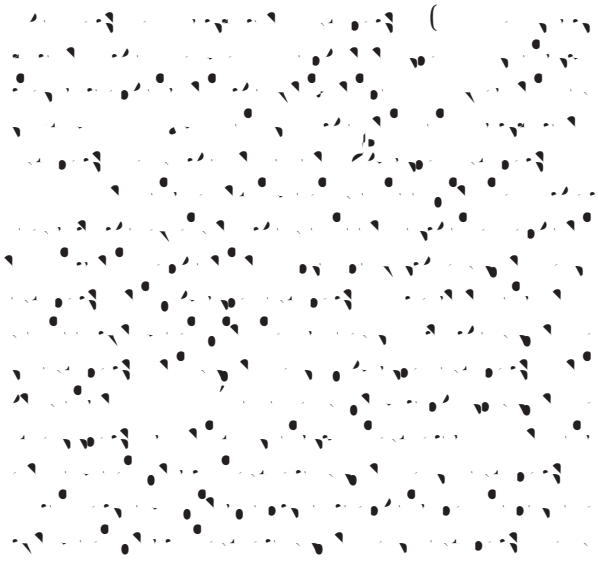


Teachers and Teacher Education

Teaching Force

Teacher Education



Classroom Organization and Class Size

Second Language Reading Instruction

Hanyu Pinyin

Role of Reading Specialists

Reading Disabilities

Literacy Programs

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Block Reading

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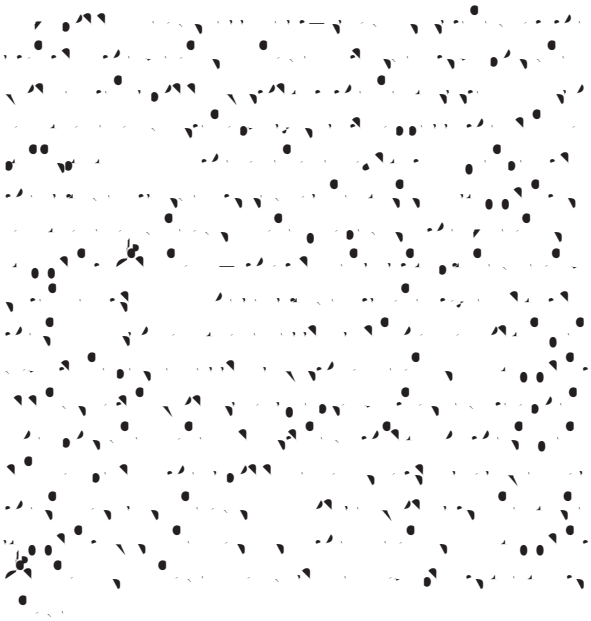

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Marjeta Doupona-Horvat
Educational Research Institute

La a ea dL ea c

Slovenia's official language is Slovene, a Southern-Slavonic language with as many as 36 separate dialects, some of which are quite dissimilar. Italian and Hungarian are also spoken in some areas.

The oldest known written record in the Slovene language dates from the beginning of the 10th century; the first book in Slovene was printed in 1550; and primary education in Slovene began in 1774, when the Slovene territory was part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

The adult population of Slovenia is almost 100 percent literate. Six daily newspapers are published with a daily total circulation of 356,000 copies.[1] There are 60 main public libraries with 214 units, and 136 special libraries.[2] Together they have 491,000 registered readers (one quarter of the total population), one-third of whom are children under 15 years.[3] The individuals using the libraries borrow 17 million books a year,[4] and their numbers have been constantly growing in the past few years.

Ed ca S e

G e a ce a dO a a

The state is responsible for virtually all aspects of education (except the universities, which are autonomous according to the Constitution). Education is financed primarily from the state budget, with a small share from municipal budgets. Curricula are determined nationally. The Council of Experts determines the curriculum and the content of individual school subjects.[5] The Council is appointed for six years and therefore does not

Country Profile: Slovenia

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Pre-primary Education

Pre-primary school in Slovenia is not obligatory. It is organized for children from 1 to 6 years of age and has both day care and educational roles. The curriculum for preschool children consists of five main areas – physical activity, language, art, society, natural world, and mathematics. The individuality of each child and the need to recognize the hidden curriculum (e.g. caring and daily routine) are emphasized in the new curriculum. Children do not learn to read and write. Kindergartens are open from Monday to Friday, 9-hours a day. About 56 percent of the children aged 1 to 6 are in kindergartens.

Primary Education

Primary education is compulsory and enrollment is virtually 100 percent. According to the *Primary Education Act*, schooling is obligatory for all children from 6 to 15 years of age. This corresponds to the nine grades of elementary school. Of the three elementary school cycles, the first and second cycles are comprehensive while the third cycle has external differentiation in some subjects (e.g., mathematics) according to the student's performance. At the end of each cycle there are national examinations, which are not compulsory. Reading and writing literacy are emphasized in the first cycle as part of the Slovene language. Foreign language instruction (predominantly English, sometimes Italian and German) begins in the fourth grade. The Italian and Hungarian ethnic minorities are given special rights according to the Constitution, and can receive education in their own language. There are some Italian schools with all lessons taught in Italian, but in the Hungarian regions pupils are taught in both languages equally (i.e., Slovene and Hungarian).

Higher Secondary Education

Higher secondary education consists of gymnasiums (general higher secondary schools), higher secondary technical and professional schools, vocational schools, and lower vocational schools. Gymnasiums and the technical and professional schools take 4 years and vocational schools (including lower vocational) take 2 to 3 years. Students who want to study at a university must pass the *matura* exam, which certifies that they have completed the four-year higher secondary education program.

The Sc

Almost all pre-primary, elementary, and higher secondary schools are public. There are some private schools (1 private elementary school and 3 gymnasia) with a concession agreement and some vocational secondary schools. All of those schools, both public and private, are free of charge, although students pay for school accessories.

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year.[13] The school week lasts from Monday to Friday. The school year begins on September 1st and ends on June 25th (or June 15th in the last grade of elementary school). Pupils also have three one-week holidays perof eleme scTc039 T6Tve thr,tional sc61oriesear beg

teaching certificate. By passing this examination, teachers prove that they have proficient teaching knowledge and are familiar with the Slovene legislation on education.

Teac e l - e ,ce Ed ca,

All teachers in the first grade of the new 9-year elementary school have special courses to qualify for their teaching; otherwise in-service education is not obligatory for primary-school teachers. However, teachers do have the right to in-service education and the school principal must enable them to obtain it. In fact, the great majority of the teachers exercise this right, gaining extra credits for promotion.

Read . C ,c _a dI c,

Read . P ,c

The reading policy in general is defined by the *Primary Education Act* which states the aims of primary education. These are (among others):

- Develop literacy and the ability to communicate in the Slovene (Italian or Hungarian) language
- Achieve at internationally comparable standards of knowledge
- Achieve a general working knowledge that enables independent, effective, and creative interaction with society and nature
- Develop critical thinking.

Read . C ,c _a d S a da d

The curriculum for the Slovene language explicitly defines the basic standard in reading and writing for each of the three cycles (end of 3rd, 6th, and 9th grades) and for each grade within the cycles.[15]

One of the purposes for introducing the 9-year elementary school was to improve reading and writing abilities. The first year of schooling aims to prepare children for these processes, so they:

- Read informative texts and analyze them according to different tasks
- Write drafts and develop texts from drafts
- Enrich their vocabulary
- Recognize the logic of an action and use conjunctions to describe the actions
- Read fiction and analyze it in different ways
- Recognize and write different types of fiction
- Express their own opinions about a task.

Even though reading and writing instruction begins at age six, the first year is introductory. The first cycle of the elementary school aims to teach basic reading and writing skills. The more elaborate literacy program begins in the second cycle, at fourth grade, after basic skills have been acquired.

Literature

Reading is not taught separately but as part of the Slovene language. Slovene language courses consist of reading, writing, listening, talking, literature and grammar, and is emphasized during the first cycle. In the first grade, the total amount

who read all the books each year. The organizers even publish a newsletter that is made available

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1 Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia. (2001).

Language and Literacy

Among the most avid newspaper-reading countries in the world, Sweden's daily newspaper circulation is 430 per 1,000 citizens.[1] There is a nationwide system of libraries open to the public, and almost all school children have access to a school library. There also are other, specialist libraries.

Among Nordic immigrants, the approximately 200,000 Finnish-speakers constitute the largest group. Other Nordic languages are spoken by fewer than 100,000 persons.[2] Since Sweden is a small country in terms of population and heavily dependent on international trade, the use of English is widespread in business life. Other languages of significance are Arabic, Persian, Spanish, and various languages spoken in former Yugoslavia.[3]

Education System

Governance and Organization

Curricula, national objectives, and guidelines for state schooling in Sweden are defined by parliament and the government. The national budget includes grants to the municipalities for their various functions. Within the goals and frameworks, each individual municipality is free to decide how its schools should be run. An education plan must be produced describing how schooling is to be funded, organized, developed, and evaluated. The head of each school is obliged to draw up a local working plan based on the curriculum, national objectives, and the municipal

Country Profile: Sweden

Geographical Location and Size

Sweden is located in northern Europe with land frontiers with Finland (586 kilometers) to the East and Norway (1,619 kilometers) to the West[5] and is linked to Denmark in the southwest via the Öresund bridge. The Baltic Sea separates the country from

The average municipal school has 200 pupils, although schools in large cities often have up to 2,000 pupils. Most smaller schools are in country areas. Preschool classes are tending more and more to be organized conjointly with a compulsory school. A compulsory school can decide its own organization, including how teaching is to be structured and the size of classes. Many pupils receive their entire compulsory schooling in the same school, but it is also common for children to change schools when entering the sixth or seventh grade. Most often the pupils change class teachers in grade 4. In grades 1 through 6, the class teacher teaches nearly all subjects, though they have special teachers for craft subjects, physical education, art, and music. The pupils in the senior grades are taught by a number of teachers, many of them specializing in two or three subjects.

Upper-Secondary School

Almost all pupils attending compulsory school continue directly to upper-secondary school, and complete their studies within three years, although some may need an additional year. Upper-secondary school is divided into 17 three-year national programs, all of which are intended to provide a broad-based education and result in general eligibility for further studies in higher education. In addition to the national programs, there are also specially designed and individual programs. Upper-secondary school for mentally handicapped children provides vocational education in specially designed national or individual programs in a similar way to the regular upper-secondary school. However, there are fewer national programs available, and these concentrate on vocational training. The programs in the upper-secondary school for mentally handicapped take four years.

Educational Choice and Independent Schools

Most children attend a municipal school near their homes, but pupils and their parents have the right to select either another municipal school or an independent school. Approximately 3 to 4 percent of pupils in compulsory schooling attend one of the approved independent schools. Independent schools are open to all and must be approved by [illegible], the National Agency for Education. They receive municipal grants based on the number of pupils per academic year. Teaching in the independent schools shares the same goals as the municipal schools, but may have a distinct profile. They may, for example, have a special religious profile, or be based on special educational methods, such as Montessori or Waldorf.

Teachers and Teacher Education

Teaching Force

Teacher training in Sweden has undergone a number of reforms. After 1988 (and until 2001), there was no specialized training for the lowest grades. Instead, teach-

Reading Curriculum and Standards

Goals to aim for in the teaching of Swedish – with regard to reading, in particular – in compulsory school state that the pupils should:

- Develop their imagination and desire to learn through reading literature, as well as reading on their own for personal enjoyment

- Develop correctness in their spoken and written language, and have the courage, desire, and ability to express themselves in many different contexts, and by means of writing acquire an instrument for thinking, learning, communicating, and exercising influence

- Develop their ability to improve texts they have written based on their own critical reflection and advice from others

- Develop their ability to read, understand, interpret, and experience texts of different kinds and adapt their reading to the purpose and character of the text

- Have an opportunity to understand cultural diversity through exposure to literature and authors from different times and in different forms from Sweden, the Nordic area and other parts of the world

- Acquire a knowledge of the Swedish language, its ongoing development, structure, origins, and history, as well as develop their understanding of why people write and speak differently

- By means of their own writing, deepen their insight into basic patterns and grammatical structures in the language, as well as develop their ability to apply the standards of written language in different contexts

- Be encouraged to be personally creative and search on their own for meaningful reading, as well as take part in cultural activities.

Goals that pupils should have attained by the end of the fifth year in school include:

- Read with fluency, both aloud and to themselves, understand events and meaning in books and non-fiction written for children and young persons, and be able to discuss their experiences from reading, as well as reflect on texts

- Produce texts for different purposes as a tool for learning and communication

- Orally relate and present something so that the contents are understandable and brought to life

- Apply the most common rules of the written language and the most common rules of spelling, as well as be able to use dictionaries.

Goals that pupils should have attained by the end of the ninth year in school include:

- Actively take part in conversations and discussions, as well as share the thoughts of others, and present work orally so that the contents are clear and understandable

- Read literature appropriate to their age from Sweden, the Nordic area, and other countries, read non-fiction and newspaper articles on general subjects, be able to reproduce the contents coherently, and reflect on what they have read

- Reflect on and put into a context some literary works and authors that have been influential in affecting how people live and think

- Appreciate, reflect on, and evaluate the contents and means of expression used in pictures, films, and the theater

- Write different kinds of texts, by hand and using computers, so that the contents are clear, applying the standards of written language.

- Have a knowledge of the language that makes it possible to carry out observations of both one's o

with the "adult literacy" definition used in the IALS study: "Using printed and written information to function in society, to achieve one's goals and to develop one's knowledge and potential."[19]

Reading instruction normally begins in first grade at age 7. Today, however, almost all 6-year-olds attend preschool, where some preparatory reading instruction takes place. At this age, most children have spent time in nursery school and day-care centers where they have received some training in language awareness.

Reading is not taught as a separate subject, although it makes up – combined with writing – a major part of the teaching of Swedish in the early grades. In teaching Swedish, language and literature are treated as a whole. For this reason, Swedish cannot be divided into pre-determined parts building upon each other in a given sequence. On the other hand, both reading and writing are seen as essential in all subjects. All teachers thus have a common responsibility for their pupils' development of literacy skills and must be aware of the importance of language for learning.

Materials for Reading Instruction

In general, there is a rich variety of materials to use in reading instruction, limited only by the availability of financial resources. There are no standard rules or recommendations for educational materials at any level. Teachers are free to choose any reading series or graded readers available on the market, according to policies set up by the local school authorities and existing financial and other circumstances. The same is true for other textbooks and instructional materials.

By tradition, Sweden has a wide variety of high-quality children's books for all grade levels. Many teachers choose a model of working with beginning reading where they combine children's books together with graded readers, and also use the texts children have produced themselves either independently or in conjunction with books.

Two of the "goals to aim for" in the syllabus for the teaching of Swedish are to:

- develop the pupil's ability to use computers as an aid, and
- develop the ability to use different opportunities to obtain information, and acquire knowledge of the language and functions of the media, as well as develop their ability to interpret, critically examine, and evaluate different sources and their contents.

The use of ICT in beginning reading varies widely depending on the interest of teachers and the availability of financial resources at each individual school. However, various types of computer programs are available for all grade levels. At the lower grades, there are computer programs for training in language awareness, reading, and writing, and the computer is frequently used as a writing tool. Pupils are also encouraged from an early age to seek information on the Internet when working on various assignments. The computer is considered to be a particularly valuable tool in special education for pupils with reading and writing disabilities.

Instructional Time

Swedish pupils are entitled to 1,490 hours (60 minutes) of instruction in the Swedish language throughout the nine grades of compulsory school. Schools themselves decide how these hours should be distributed across the grades. Such wide limits of discretion apply to all subjects. Pilot projects are now going on in a number of schools across the country with the aim of determining the effects of having no time limit set for instruction in different subjects. Besides Swedish and Swedish as a Second Language, English is compulsory from grade 4, adding 480 hours to the total number of hours spent on language activities. The foreign language options in grades 6 or 7 comprise 320 hours, the most common being German, French, and Spanish.

Classroom Organization and Class Size

In line with the decentralization of the school system, there are no overall rules regarding grouping for instruction. Some schools work in mixed-age groups particularly with the 6 to 10-year-olds (i.e., grades 0-1 to 3). Others have homogeneous groups with regard to age. Flexible grouping also exists, that is, groups vary in different subjects. As

Classes tend to be larger in large cities. Furthermore, as a result of a shortage of trained teachers, class size has increased more than is desirable in the last few years.

Role of Reading Specialists in Reading Instruction

There are very few trained reading specialists in the country today, partly due to lack of training opportunities in this area. This is now being remedied in the new teacher training, and a number of courses are being offered at universities. Specialist reading instruction can be organized as one-to-one sessions for a number of hours per week, as small group instruction, or as individual assistance within the classroom, depending on resources, and on the preferences of the reading specialist.

Second Language Reading Instruction

Pupils with a mother tongue other than Swedish are – regardless of age – taught Swedish as a second language. The aim is that pupils should acquire a functional mastery of the Swedish language comparable to that of pupils who have Swedish as a mother tongue. Ultimately, pupils should attain a first-language level in Swedish, since the ability to use Swedish in speech and writing iadiyprerequisite for pupils in their future lives and activities. Through the subject of Swedish as a second language, the school should provide pupils with opportunities to develop their ability to speak and listen, and also read and write in different situations.

Reading Disabilities

Normally the classroom teacher in first grade is able to identify children with reading difficulties. Special education should be provided, but a shortage of reading specialists makes it difficult to provide assistance for all children who need it. In recent years, many municipalities have set up special education teams that offer advice to both teachers and parents, in-service training for teachers, and short-term assistance at local schools. In addition, there are regional centers with specialists who can diagnose dyslexia and other reading disabilities and give advice on instructional materials and aids. When dyslexia iaddiagnosed, the child has the right to get special assistance, in terms of materials, computer programs, and instruction.

Literacy Programs

For a number of years, many Swedish municipalities have given a book to every newborn child in the municipality. Thiadiadfollowed up by information ("ABC drops") to the parents during their visits to the local childcare unit when the childdiad3 months, 9 months, and 3 years old. On the World Book and Copyright Day (23 April) the National Agency for Education usually gives a book to each child in a specific grade, which changes each year. The book iadwritten by a well-known author, and iadsuitable for the age group. International Literacy Day (8 Sept) iadcelebrated in libraries and schools in various ways all over the country, for example by arranging reading and writing competitions, exhibitions, and lectures. The latest in a line of nationwide literacy campaignadiad"The Reading Movement," which arranges different activities to raise people's awareness of the importance of adequate literacy skills. The movement collaborates with organizations, companies, schools, and libraries, as well as with authors, journalists, politicians, and researchers. "Room for Language" iada project initiated and sponsored by the National Agency for Education, with the aim of strengthening the active role of the school library in pupils' language and literacy development.

Apart from involvement in international surveys such as PIRLS and PISA, many Swedish schools are involved in various exchange programs within the EU, several of which focus on literacy.

Assessment

In accordance with the National Curt9(s)0(and PISA3ll0 Tw(Assess9iona)1w[(in60nsystemT*0

ers are also free to use other tests if they choose a diagnostic teaching model. In some municipalities, language awareness is tested among 6-year-olds before they enter grade 1.

At least once a term, the teacher, the pupil, and his or her parent(s)/guardian(s) have a meeting to discuss how the pupil is progressing and how learning can be stimulated and supported. The pupil is the focus of this meeting, but it also gives the adults involved with the child an opportunity to get to know each other. Everyone taking part in the meeting should be familiar with the contents of the curriculum and syllabi, as well as the objectives and the working plan of the local school. These meetings take the place of annual reports or marks until grade 8, but they continue throughout compulsory school.

Support Measures

Pupils who experience difficulties in their school work are entitled to support. In such cases, a special program is drawn up, normally designed by school staff in collaboration with the pupil and

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Country Profile: Turkey

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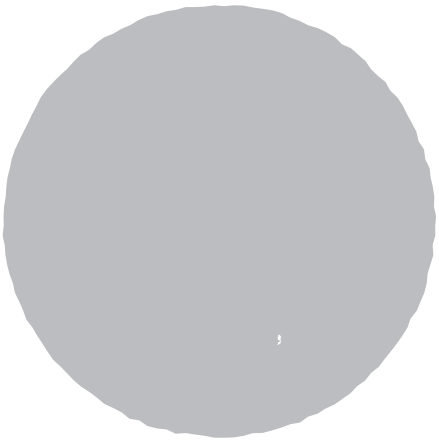
Turkey is located at the intersection of three continents making up the old world – Asia, Africa, and Europe. Straddling the point where Europe and Asia meet, it has a total area of 780,576 square kilometers, with 8,441 kilometers of coastline.[4] The country's capital, Ankara, is set in the strategic heartland of Central Anatolia, a site chosen by the founder of the modern Republic, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk.



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Turkey has 67,864,903 inhabitants,[5] 73 percent of whom live in the countryside. Population density is 85 persons per square kilometer. Istanbul is Turkey's largest city, with approximately 9.1 million inhabitants. The next largest cities are İzmir, Konya, and Adana. The country's infant mortality in 2000 was 34 deaths per 1,000 live births.[6] In 1997, the average life expectancy was 68 years.[7] The government provides basic health care to the public and engages in a program to increase health-care provision. The government is determined to improve the country's record on child immunizations, prenatal care, and general health education.

P

The Turkish republic is based on a Democratic, pluralist and parliamentary system where human rights are protected by laws and social justice. The National Assembly is elected by popular vote, and the nation is governed by the Council of Ministers directed by the Prime Minister. Turkey is a member of NATO, OECD, CE, CERN (observer), FAO, IAEA, IBRD, ICAO, ICC, ICFTU, IEA, IFRCS, ILO, IMF, IMO, INTELSAT, INTERPOL, ISO, ITU, NEA, OAS (observer), UN, UNCTAD, UNHCR, UNIDO, UNRWA, UPU, WHO, WIPO, WMO, and WTO.

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Consistent with the general aims and basic principles of national education,

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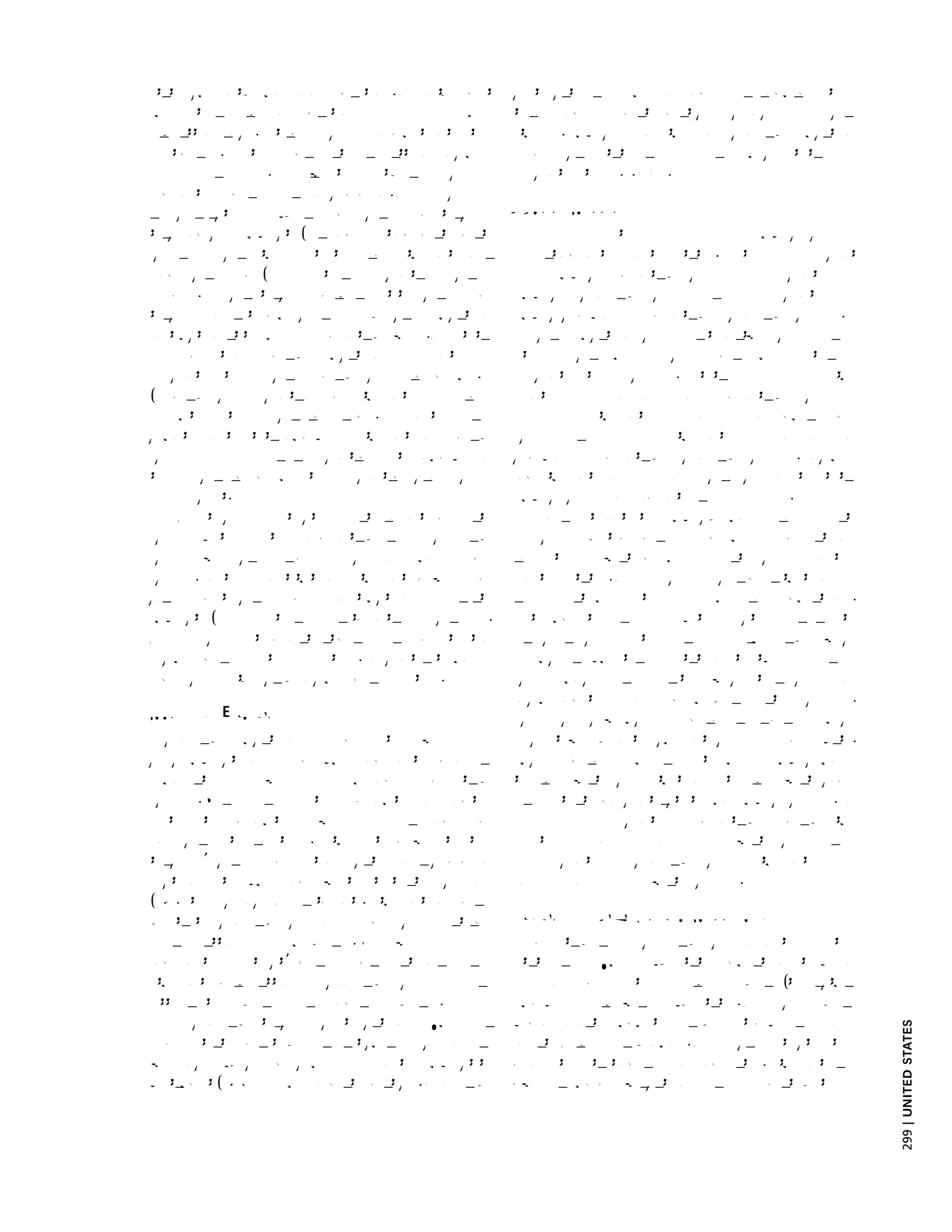
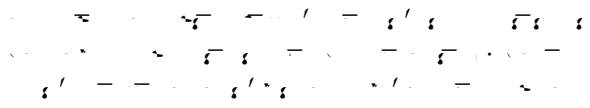
Country Profile: United States

The United States is a federal republic whose 48 contiguous states are located in North America bordering both the North Atlantic Ocean and the North Pacific Ocean, between Canada and Mexico. The United States also includes the state of Alaska (located north of Canada), the state of Hawaii (located in the tropic region of the South Pacific Ocean), and extra-state jurisdictions (or territories) in the South Pacific and the Caribbean. The District of Columbia, located on the East Coast, is the national capital and operates as a separate jurisdictionb4Nict of





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