

FRIULIAN

The Friulian language in education in Italy

2nd Edition



Regional Dossier series

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in Italy

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Ada Bier

University of the Basque Country (UPV/EHU)

Gabriele Zanello

University of Udine

Antonella Ottogalli

Friulian Philological Society

Edited by

Charlie Robinson-Jones

Jan Ybema

Katharina Thomas

Mercator European Research Centre on Multilingualism and Language Learning

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Foreword

background

Regional and minority languages are languages that differ from the official state language. The Mercator European Research Centre on Multilingualism and Language Learning uses the following definition for these languages, as stated in the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (ECRML):

Regional and minority languages are languages traditionally used within a given territory of a state by nationals of that state who form a group numerically smaller than the rest of the state's population; they are different from the official language(s) of that state, and they include neither dialects of the official language(s) of the state nor the languages of migrants.

The Mercator European Research Centre aims to acquire, apply, and circulate knowledge about these regional and minority languages in education. An important means to achieve this goal is the Regional Dossier series: documents that provide the most essential features of the education system of regions with a regional or minority language.

aim

The aim of the Regional Dossier series is to provide concise descriptions of regional or minority languages in education, mainly in Europe but also in other parts of the world. Aspects that are addressed include features of the education system, recent educational policies, main actors, legal arrangements, and support structures, as well as quantitative aspects such as the number of schools, teachers, and pupils, and financial investments. This fixed structure allows easy comparison between the Regional Dossiers in the series.

target group

The Regional Dossiers serve several purposes and are relevant for policymakers, researchers, teachers, students, and journalists who wish to explore developments in regional or minority language schooling in Europe. They can also serve as a first orientation towards further research, or function as a source of ideas for improving educational provisions.

link with Eurydice

The Regional Dossiers follow the format of Eurydice – the information network on education in Europe – in order to link the regional descriptions with those of national education systems. Eurydice provides information on the administration and structure of national education systems in the member states of the European Union.

contents

Every Regional Dossier begins with an introduction about the region in question, followed by six chapters that each deal with a specific level of the education system (e.g. primary education). Chapters 8 and 9 cover the main lines of research on education of the minority language under discussion, and the prospects for the minority language in general and in education in particular, respectively. Chapter 10 provides a summary of statistics. Lists of (legal) references and useful addresses regarding the minority language are given at the end of the Regional Dossier.



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Summary

Friulian and its status in education in Italy

The Italian State approved Law 482/1999 to protect the many historical linguistic minorities that are present in its territory, including Friulian. Despite emphasising Italian as the official language of the Italian Republic, the law requires the teaching of minority languages in schools, among other provisions. Based on this State Law, the Autonomous Region of Friuli Venezia Giulia passed Regional Law 29/2007, which governs the presence of Friulian in education. Following a challenging law-making process, which saw the State Government firmly oppose the introduction of Friulian as a default educational offer, this Regional Law stipulates that the language should be offered as an optional subject for at least 30 hours per year in kindergartens, primary schools, and lower secondary schools in the Friulian-speaking territory (closely corresponding to the former provinces of Udine, Pordenone, and Gorizia). However, the extent of Friulian class attendance varies across educational levels and provinces. While over 80% of kindergarten pupils in the area of Udine attend Friulian classes, the percentage drops to below 20% in primary schools in the former province of Pordenone and falls to zero in lower secondary schools in the territory of Gorizia.

Friulian in educational research

Research on the use of Friulian in education began in the late 1970s. Since then, it has been continued by the University of Udine, which is the main and only university in the Friulian-speaking territory, as well as by other entities, such as the Friulian Philological Society. Although a noteworthy development occurred in 2016, when a specific curriculum for the initial training of teachers of Friulian was inaugurated in the MA programme in Primary Teacher Education at the University of Udine, Friulian has limited presence at university. Apart from that curriculum and a few other linguistics, philology, and literature courses, which generally have low enrolment numbers, there are no other programmes that teach Friulian or use it as a language of instruction.

Prospects for Friulian in Italy

Today's situation of Friulian in schools is far from ideal. There is a need for political will and more concrete commitments to ensure that schools in the Friulian-speaking territory utilise their autonomy and grant Friulian a worthier place in their educational offers. This change would reverse the current trend where many centres in the former provinces of Udine, Pordenone, and Gorizia do not offer Friulian to their pupils. It would be a welcome step for the Regional Government of the Autonomous Region of Friuli Venezia Giulia, as well as the Governments of other Italian Regions where minority languages are present, to demand that the central State complete the ratification process and adopt the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages. This would better protect Friulian and ensure its survival into the future.

La lenghe furlane tal sisteme educatîf talian

2^{de} edizion

Ada Bier

Universitât dal Paîs Basc (UPV/EHU)

Gabriele Zanello

Universitât dal Friûl

Antonella Ottogalli

Societât Filologjiche Furlane

Sunt

Il furlan e il so status tal sisteme educatîf talian

Il Stât talian al à fate buine e metude in vore une Leç (482/1999) pe protezion des variis minorancis linguistichis storichis che a son presintis tal so teritori, includude la minorance furlane. Ancje se e evidenzie in mût clâr che il talian al è la lenghe uficiâl de Republiche taliane, la Leç e previôt, jenfri altris disposizions, che lis lenghis minoritariis a vegnin insegnadis a scuele. A partî di cheste Leç dal Stât, la Region Autonome Friûl Vignesie Julie e à fate buine une Leç Regionâl (29/2007) che e regole la presince dal furlan te educazion. Daspò di un iter legjislatîf dificil, che al à viodût il Guvier statâl oponisi cun fuarce ae introduzion dal furlan come ufierte educative di default, cheste Leç Regionâl e previôt che la lenghe e sedi insegnade come materie opzionâl par no mancul di 30 oris ad an tes scuelis de infanzie, primariis e secundariis di prin grât tal teritori furlanofon (teritori che al corispuint in mût avonde fedêl aes ex-provinciis di Udin, Pordenon e Gurize). Sul cont de frecuece dal furlan a scuele, la situazion no je vualive, stant che a esistin diferencis impuartantis sedi jenfri i nivei educatîfs sedi jenfri lis provinciis. Là che tes scuelis de infanzie de aree di Udin la percentuâl di arlêfs e arlevis che a frequentin il furlan e je parsore dal 80%, il dât si sbasse sot dal 20% tes primariis de ex-province di Pordenon e e cole a zero tes secundariis di prin grât dal teritori di Gurize.

Il furlan te ricercje educative

La ricercje sul ûs dal furlan te educazion e tacà te seconde metât dai agns Setante dal Nûfcent. Di li indenant e je stade continuade de Universitât dal Friûl, che e je la principâl e la uniche universitât tal teritori furlanofon, ma ancje di bande di altris entitâts tant che, par esempi, la Societât Filologjiche Furlane. Ancje se tal 2016 si ve un disvilup rimarchevul, o sei, l'inviament di un curriculum di pueste pe formazion iniziâl dai docents di furlan tal ambit de Lauree Magjistrâl in Sciencis de Formazion Primarie li de Universitât dal Friûl, il furlan al à une presince scjarse te universitât. Fale chest curriculum e pôcs altris cors in linguistiche, filologjie e letierature – che par solit no àn tantis iscrizions, l'insegnament dal furlan o il so ûs tant che lenghe di istruzion nol è previodût in nissun altri program di studi universitari.

Prospetivis pal furlan in Italie

In di di vuê la situazion dal furlan tes scuelis no fâs pensâ a un biel avignî. Si à di esercitâ volontât politiche e impegnâsi in maniere plui concrete par fâ in mût che lis scuelis dal teritori furlanofon a metin in vore la lôr autonomie e i garantissin al furlan un puest plui stabil te ufierte educative. Chest cambiament al permetarès di invertî la tindince atuâl, che e viôt cetancj centris tes ex-provinciis di Udin, Pordenon e Gurize no ufrî il furlan ai lôr arlêfs e arlevis. L'impegn di bande dal Guvier Regionâl de Regjon Autonome Friûl Vignesie Julie – e dai Guviers di chês altris Regjons indulà che si cjatin lis minorancis linguistichis – a pretindi che il Stât centrâl al puarti insom il procès di ratifiche de Cjarte Europeane pes Lenghis Regionâls o Minoritariis al sarès un pas une vore impuartant viers di une miôr protezion dal furlan e de sô sorevivenca tal avignî.

Collana Dossier Regionali

La lingua friulana nel sistema educativo italiano

2^a edizione

Ada Bier

Università del Paese Basco (UPV/EHU)

Gabriele Zanello

Università degli Studi di Udine

Antonella Ottogalli

Società Filologica Friulana

Riassunto

Il friulano e il suo status nel sistema educativo italiano

Lo Stato italiano ha approvato e adottato una Legge (482/1999) per la protezione delle varie minoranze linguistiche storiche presenti nel suo territorio, minoranza friulana inclusa. Anche se evidenzia chiaramente che l'italiano è la lingua ufficiale della Repubblica italiana, la Legge prevede, oltre ad altre disposizioni, l'insegnamento delle lingue minoritarie a scuola. A partire da questa Legge dello Stato, la Regione Autonoma Friuli Venezia Giulia ha approvato una Legge Regionale (29/2007) che regola la presenza del friulano nell'educazione. A seguito di un difficile iter legislativo, che ha visto il Governo statale opporsi con forza all'introduzione del friulano come offerta formativa di default, la Legge Regionale prevede che la lingua venga insegnata come materia opzionale per non meno di 30 ore all'anno nelle scuole dell'infanzia, primarie e secondarie di I grado del territorio friulanofono (territorio che corrisponde in modo abbastanza fedele alle ex-province di Udine, Pordenone e Gorizia). Rispetto alla frequenza del friulano a scuola, la situazione non è uniforme, dato che esistono differenze importanti sia tra i livelli scolastici sia tra le province. Mentre nelle scuole dell'infanzia dell'area di Udine la percentuale di allievi e allieve che frequentano il friulano supera l'80%, il dato scende sotto il 20% nelle primarie della ex-provincia di Pordenone e tocca lo zero nelle secondarie di I grado del territorio di Gorizia.

Il friulano nella ricerca educativa

La ricerca sull'uso del friulano nell'educazione iniziò nella seconda metà degli anni Settanta del Novecento. Da allora è stata portata avanti dall'Università degli Studi di Udine, che è la principale e unica università nel territorio friulanofono, ma anche da parte di altri soggetti come, ad esempio, la Società Filologica Friulana. Benché nel 2016 ci sia stato uno sviluppo degno di nota, ossia l'avvio di un apposito curriculum per la formazione iniziale dei docenti di friulano nell'ambito della Laurea Magistrale in Scienze della Formazione Primaria all'Università degli Studi di Udine, il friulano ha una presenza scarsa all'università. Escludendo questo curriculum e

pochi altri corsi in linguistica, filologia e letteratura – che solitamente non hanno molte iscrizioni, l'insegnamento del friulano e il suo uso come lingua di insegnamento non è previsto in nessun altro programma di studio universitario.

Prospettive per il friulano in Italia

Ad oggi la situazione del friulano a scuola non fa pensare ad un futuro roseo. È necessario si eserciti volontà politica e ci si impegni in modo più concreto per far sì che le scuole del territorio friulanofono mettano in atto la propria autonomia e garantiscano al friulano un posto più stabile nell'offerta educativa. Questo cambiamento permetterebbe di invertire la tendenza attuale, che vede parecchi centri nelle ex-province di Udine, Pordenone e Gorizia non offrire il friulano ai loro allievi e allieve. L'impegno da parte del Governo regionale della Regione Autonoma Friuli Venezia Giulia – e dei Governi delle altre Regioni dove si trovano le minoranze linguistiche – a pretendere che lo Stato centrale porti a termine il processo di ratificazione della Carta Europea per le Lingue Regionali o Minoritarie sarebbe un passo molto importante verso una migliore protezione del friulano e la sua sopravvivenza nel futuro.



List of Abbreviations

ARLeF	Agjenzie Regionâl pe Lenghe Furlane (Regional Agency for the Friulian Language)
CEFR	Common European Framework of Reference for Languages
CeIP	Centro Internazionale sul Plurilinguismo (International Center on Plurilingualism)
CFU	Credito Formativo Universitario (University Training Credit)
CIRF	Centro Interdipartimentale per lo Sviluppo della Lingua e della Cultura del Friuli (Interdepartmental Centre for the Development of Friuli's Language and Culture)
CLIL	Content and Language Integrated Learning
CoE	Council of Europe
CPIA	Centri Provinciali per l'Istruzione degli Adulti (Provincial centres for adult education)
DILL	Dipartimento di Lingue e Letterature, Comunicazione, Formazione e Società (Department of Languages and Literature, Communication, Education and Society)
ECRML	European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages
ECTS	European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System
FCNM	Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities
IFP	Istruzione e Formazione Professionale (Vocational education)
INVALSI	Istituto Nazionale per la Valutazione del Sistema Educativo di Istruzione e di Formazione (National Institute for the Evaluation of the Education and Training System)
MIM	Ministero dell'Istruzione e del Merito (Ministry of Education and Merit)

MOOC	Massive Open Online Course
MUR	Ministero dell'Università e della Ricerca (Ministry of University and Research)
OLF	Osservatori pe lenghe e pe culture furlanis (Observatory for the Friulian language and culture)
PGPL	Piano Generale di Politica Linguistica (General Language Policy Plan)
RA FVG	Regione Autonoma Friuli Venezia Giulia (Autonomous Region of Friuli Venezia Giulia)
SFF	Societât Filologjiche Furlane (Friulian Philological Society)
USR FVG	Ufficio Scolastico Regionale per il Friuli Venezia Giulia (Regional School Office for Friuli Venezia Giulia)



Glossary

Friûl (in Friulian) / Friuli (in Italian) A territory located in north-eastern Italy where Friulian is the most widely spoken indigenous language. It roughly encompasses the three former provinces of Udine, Pordenone, and Gorizia in the Autonomous Region of Friuli Venezia Giulia, and the following seven municipalities in the neighbouring Italian Region of Veneto, all of which belong to the district of Portogruaro: Cinto Caomaggiore, Concordia Sagittaria, Fossalta di Portogruaro, Gruaro, Portogruaro, San Michele al Tagliamento, and Teglieto Veneto.

Municipium

In ancient Rome and especially in the republican age, a municipium was a city community linked to the Roman state. Its inhabitants were deprived of the political rights of Roman citizens; they were therefore distinguished from the federates and from the colonies.

Patriarch / Patriarchal state

The Patriarchate of Aquileia was an episcopal see in north-eastern Italy, governed by a bishop who held the title of patriarch. The term “patriarch” can, however, also refer to the following three distinct entities on the historical and juridical levels: the diocese subject to the jurisdiction of the bishop of Aquileia; the vast ecclesiastical province of Aquileia, that is, the dioceses over which the Church of Aquileia had jurisdiction as a metropolitan archdiocese; and the ecclesiastical principality over which the patriarch exercised temporal power from 1077 to 1420.

1 Introduction

language

Friulian is a Romance language, traditionally recognised as part of the Rhaeto-Romance sub-family. The fundamental *stratum* that supports the whole linguistic system is Latin, which penetrated the north-eastern part of the Italian peninsula when the Romans colonised it in 181 BCE. Christianity, reaching as far as the most remote mountain valleys, strengthened the Latinisation of the area and made Latin the only language of the population. During the 1st and 3rd centuries CE, not only did the importance of the city of Aquileia grow but also that of the other *municipia* (see *Glossary*), such as *Forum Iulii* (Cividale), *Iulium Carnicum* (Zuglio), and *Iulia Concordia* (Concordia). The distribution of the ecclesiastical districts followed the administrative division of the *municipia*, and from a linguistic point of view, this had consequences that are reflected in the current sub-division of Friulian into three or four main varieties and into various subgroups.

In Friulian, however, there are elements that reveal influences from other languages, but their presence does not alter the Romance physiognomy that is retained in its lexicon, morphology, and syntax. These are the *substratum* languages, spoken by the populations who inhabited the territory before the Latin colonisation, namely *Ancient Veneti* (or *Venetici*) and Gauls (*Carni*, in Latin). The language of the Gauls, a Celtic (or Celticised) population, has left traces especially in the toponymy and in the lexicon of Friulian. Later, in the migration period and beyond (2nd–8th century CE) and due to the fragmentation of the Roman Empire, the Germanic languages – Gothic, Lombard, and Frankish, above all – also took over as adstrate languages (i.e. in contact with the Romance-speaking population).

The Germanic influence persisted until the Late Middle Ages, when the ruling class had predominantly Germanic origins. Another important *adstratum* for Friulian is that introduced by the Slavic population who began to settle in the 7th century CE on the hills and in the eastern valleys close to the border with today's Slovenia (i.e. from Tarvisio in the north to the Karst region in the south). In this case too, the lexical exchanges were significant and reciprocal.

Despite the secular continuity of the Germanic presence, the population never abandoned the use of the Romance language, also due to the ever-greater distance from the written Latin of religion and administration. It can be hypothesised that, by the 10th and 11th centuries, Friulian had already acquired its own specific physiognomy and a certain solidity and resistance to external influences, similar to other Romance languages. Friulian was also acquired by Slavic peasants, who were called upon by the patriarchs of Aquileia to repopulate the uncultivated lands of the Friulian plain, which had been abandoned in the 10th century due to the incursions of the Hungarians.

Another fundamental phase for the stabilisation of the morphology and phonology of the Friulian language system was that of the patriarchal state (see *Glossary*), which was established in 1077. Until the mid-13th century, the politics of the patriarchs was linked to the Germanic empire, and cultural life also looked to the Germanic world. It was precisely during these centuries of peripherality, and even isolation, from the culture of the peninsula that the Friulian linguistic system reached maturity. Once again, the separation of the popular language from that of the German-speaking ruling class later allowed Friulian to resist even the Tuscan and Florentine models and stabilise, preserving it from the linguistic changes brought to the Po Valley by these models. The following two distinct features are proof of this: the palatalisation of the Latin groups CA- and GA- (CAPUT > *cjâf*, GAMBAM > *gjambe*) and the preservation of the clusters with consonant +L (as in CLAVEM > *clâf*). Other specific features include the presence of sigmatic plurals and the phonological value of the vowel length opposition/shortness.

The Venetian conquest of a large part of Friuli (see *Glossary*) in 1420 also had consequences for the written language; many types of administrative documents were drawn up more and more often in Latin or Tuscan-Venetian instead of Friulian, which had previously been customary. However, starting in the 16th century, Friulian continued to be used – consciously and often in an anti-Tuscan polemical key – above all in literary works. This led to the fame of authors such as Ermes di Colloredo (1622–1692) and Gian Giuseppe Bosizio (1660–1743) in the following centuries. The extension of the use of Friulian also to some discursive traditions of communicative distance was guaranteed, especially from the 18th century, by the preaching practice by the Catholic clergy, and by the custom of bishops to have catechisms and prayer booklets printed and distributed in this language. The literary contributions of 19th century authors such as Pietro Zorutti (1792–1867) and Caterina Percoto (1812–1887) and the publication of Jacopo Pirona’s Friulian vocabulary (1871) were also decisive in the process of formation and codification of a “common” Friulian, and therefore suitable, for example, for the pastoral purposes of the clergy. Meanwhile, the studies carried out by Graziadio Isaia Ascoli (1829–1907) encouraged metalinguistic reflection and framed the problem of the relationship between Friulian, Dolomite Ladin, and Romansh in scientific terms. In the 20th century, literary production experienced a significant increase in quantity, while on the qualitative level the turning point came with Pier Paolo Pasolini (1922–1975) and his effort to incorporate Friulian into the recent European poetic climate, paying special attention to the literatures of the other small Romance languages (Frau, 2015).

Today, Friulian occupies a unique position in the Romance landscape, between western and central-eastern Latin Europe (Benincà & Vanelli, 2016). Alongside Dolomite Ladin and Romansh, it has preserved and continued some original Gallo-Romance characteristics that most dialects of northern Italy lost in the second millennium due to strong Tuscanisation. Furthermore, from a sociolinguistic perspective, Friulian, similar to Ladin, receives significant sensitivity and attention, resulting in specific linguistic policy choices (Bauer, 2008) in the regions where it is spoken (see *population*).

population

As of 31 December 2021, the Autonomous Region of Friuli Venezia Giulia (Italian: *Regione Autonoma Friuli Venezia Giulia* – RA FVG) had a total population of 1,197,295 inhabitants (RA FVG, 2022, p. 277). In the RA FVG, there are 215 municipalities (Italian: *comuni*) overall, of which 173 (80.5%) are those where Friulian is spoken. The Friulian-speaking territory roughly corresponds to the three former provinces of Udine, Pordenone, and Gorizia, which are part of *Friûl* (Italian: *Friuli*; see *Glossary*). More specifically, there are 122 Friulian-speaking municipalities in the former province of Udine (91% of total in province), 36 in the former province of Pordenone (72%), and 15 in the former province of Gorizia (60%). These data indicate that Friulian is widely spoken in the region, with Udine having the highest number of speakers (RA FVG, 2022, pp. 309–312).

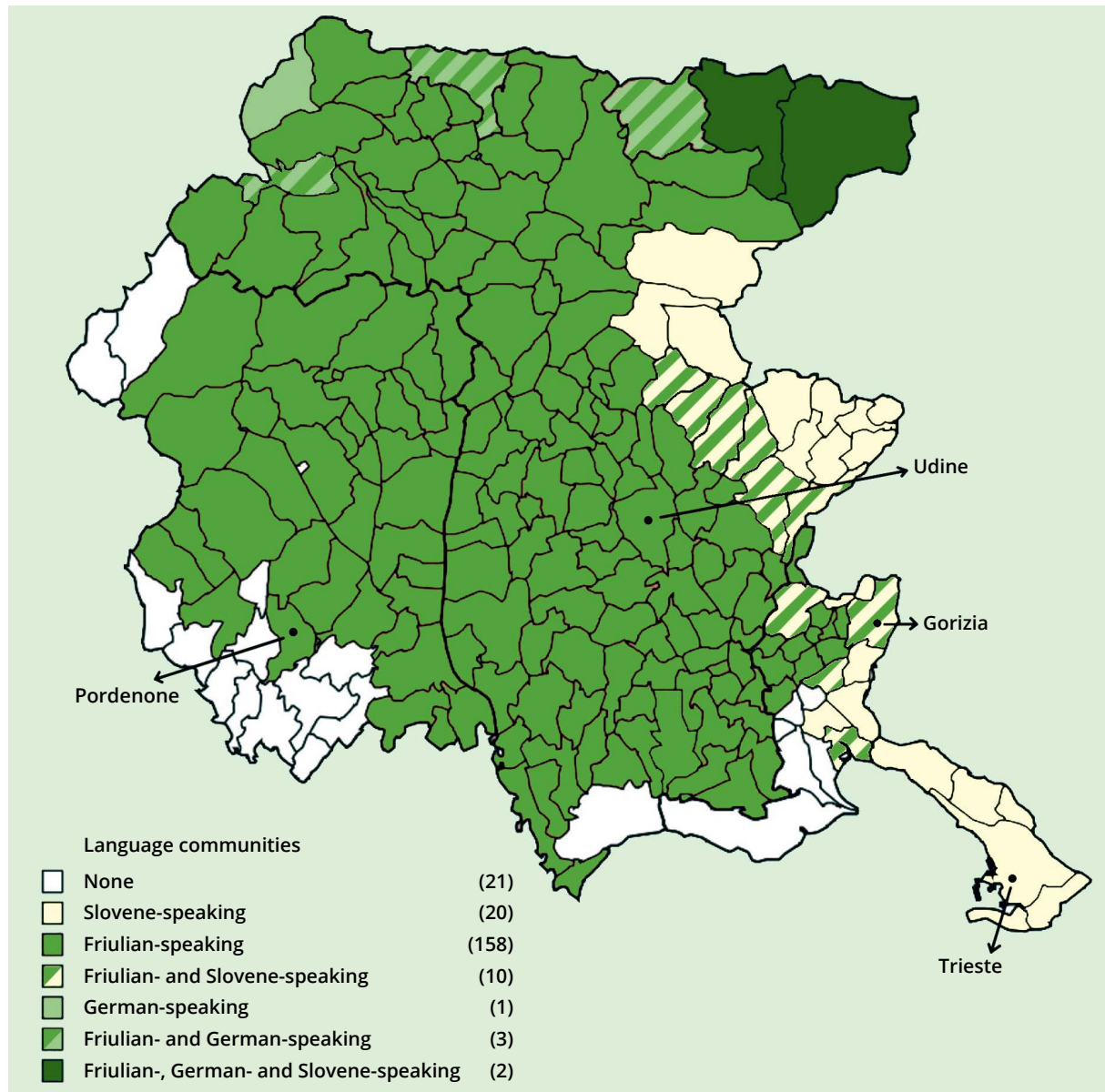
Figure 1 Map showing the Autonomous Region of Friuli Venezia Giulia in Italy.



Note. Adapted from Tubs (2011).

Due to its geographical position, bordering Austria to the north and Slovenia to the east (see Figure 1), the RA FVG is also home to two other minority language communities, namely German and Slovene (see Bogatec, 2020, for more information on the Slovene language in education in Italy). This circumstance ensures that the region constitutes a sound example of a multilingual community (Fusco, 2019), where multiple languages have historically co-existed and continue to exist in the same area. There are six German-speaking municipalities, all located in the former province of Udine. The 32 Slovene-speaking municipalities are found in the former provinces of Udine (18; 13.4% of total in province), Gorizia (8; 32%), and Trieste (6; 100%; see Figure 2).

Figure 2 Distribution of language communities in the Autonomous Region of Friuli Venezia Giulia.



Note. Adapted from RA FVG (2022).

Each municipality declares whether the town is to be considered Friulian-speaking, which should happen if at least 15% of its inhabitants speak the language (Legge Regionale n. 15. Norme per la tutela e la promozione della lingua e della cultura friulane e istituzione del servizio per le lingue regionali e minoritarie, 1996). This zoning procedure is an important step that allows the allocation of national (e.g. Legge n. 482. Norme in materia di tutela delle minoranze linguistiche storiche, 1999) and regional (e.g. Legge Regionale n. 29. Norme per la tutela, valorizzazione e promozione della lingua friulana, 2007) funding to those areas in the RA FVG where Friulian is spoken, with the aim of supporting and encouraging activities that promote the use of the language.

Friulian is also spoken in the following seven municipalities in the neighbouring Italian Region of Veneto, all belonging to the district of Portogruaro: Cinto Caomaggiore, Concordia Sagittaria, Fossalta di Portogruaro, Gruaro, Portogruaro, San Michele al Tagliamento, and Tegliolo Veneto. Regional Law 30/2021, recently promulgated by the Region of Veneto, recognises and officially protects the Friulian language spoken in these municipalities (Legge Regionale n. 30. Promozione delle minoranze linguistiche presenti nella Regione del Veneto, 2021). However, the Friulian minority in Veneto does not benefit from the same degree of protection and support as in the RA FVG (see *language status*), and thus will not be discussed further in this Regional Dossier.

According to the most recent sociolinguistic survey conducted by the Regional Agency for the Friulian Language (Friulian: *Agjenzie Regjonâl pe Lenghe Furlane* – ARLeF) in 2014, there were 420,000 regular speakers of Friulian in the former provinces of Udine, Pordenone, and Gorizia (ARLeF, 2015). The total number of active speakers would increase to 600,000 if occasional speakers were included, accounting for 180,000. The average age of a Friulian speaker was 53. The majority of Friulian speakers were found in the former province of Udine, where 77.2% of people actively used the language. The percentage dropped to 40.9% and 40.0% in the former provinces of Pordenone and Gorizia, respectively. Across all three Friulian-speaking provinces, over 83% of people were able to understand Friulian, with the percentage increasing to over 96% in the former province of Udine (ARLeF, 2015, p. 3).

An interesting finding that emerged from the survey is the “bounce effect” between generations: young adults, aged 18 to 29, reported speaking Friulian more regularly than previous generations in their 30s and 40s. This change in trend was hypothesised as being linked to several factors, such as the role of digital technologies, which helped eliminate some of the stigmas related to Friulian and other minority languages, and that Friulian started to be taught in schools, which may have contributed to the elevation of its status (ARLeF, 2015).

Friulian is mostly a spoken language, with writing being distinctly uncommon, even among regular speakers. Young adults seem to write in Friulian more often than older speakers. However, the vast majority of young adults declare they write it “as they speak it”, that is, not using the standard spelling, of which only a small minority seem to be aware (ARLeF, 2015, pp. 21–22; on the issue of writing in the standard language, see also Zanello, 2021, who, albeit on a smaller scale, reports similar findings). At the time of writing this Regional Dossier (2023), to the best of the authors’ knowledge, no specific data were available on the language proficiency – either tested or self-perceived – of the Friulian-speaking population.

language status

The Constitution of the Italian Republic (Costituzione della Repubblica Italiana, 1947) explicitly states that “the Republic protects linguistic minorities with specific norms” (art. 6). The Italian State signed the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (FCNM; Council of Europe, CoE, 1995) in the same year of its promulgation and ratified it in 1997. The FCNM came into force in 1998. Italy also signed the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (ECRML; CoE, 1992) in 2000, but has not yet ratified it.

Article 3 of the Special Statute of the RA FVG (Statuto Speciale della Regione Autonoma Friuli-Venezia Giulia, 1963) recognises equal rights and treatment for citizens belonging to the various language communities living in the region and safeguards their ethnic and cultural specificities. This provision lies at the core of the RA FVG’s Special Statute and autonomy.

More specifically, there are three main laws that form the basis for the official recognition of Friulian and its community: [Regional Law 15/1996](#), [Law 482/1999](#), and [Regional Law 29/2007](#) (Cisilino, 2014). [Regional Law 15/1996](#) was the first legislative attempt to give Friulian official recognition as a language. This law explicitly provided for the possibility to use Friulian by local authorities in meetings, in communication with citizens, and in toponymy. Moreover, [Regional Law 15/1996](#) established the Observatory for the Friulian language and culture (Friulian: *Osservatori pe lenghe e pe culture furlanis* – OLF), a specific body for language policies. Since the mid-1980s, a specific committee supervised by Prof. Xavier Lamuela had been working on the definition of the official spelling and the standard Friulian language; the OLF helped complete the process and finally adopted the standard language in 1996 (art. 13).

[Law 482](#) was approved at State level at the end of 1999 and implemented in 2001 (Decreto del Presidente della Repubblica 2 maggio 2001, n. 345). It aims to protect and promote the many historical linguistic minorities present in Italy, including the Friulian community. Even though it emphasises that Italian is the official language of the Italian Republic (art. 1), [Law 482/1999](#) provides for the use of minority languages in public offices within the territories where they are spoken, the teaching of such languages in schools, and the broadcasting in minority languages on State-owned radio and television channels.

[Regional Law 29/2007](#), which recognises and implements [Law 482/1999](#) at the regional level, specifically aims to protect, valorise, and promote the Friulian language. It is the first piece of legislation in which Friulian is defined as Friuli’s “own language” (art. 1).

The body responsible for the application of the aforementioned laws is the ARLeF, an agency of the RA FVG that was established in 2005 and replaced the OLF. Through the *Piano Generale di Politica Linguistica* (PGPL – General Language Policy Plan), the ARLeF defines and implements the strategies for the development of the Friulian language, with specific reference to the areas of corpus planning, public administration, education, new technologies, mass media, and social promotion (ARLeF, 2021; Decreto del Presidente della Regione 26 ottobre 2021, n. 0179/Pres). However, since education is primarily managed at State level (see [education system](#)), the sphere of action by the ARLeF in this field is limited.

status of language education

At the State level, Article 4 of [Law 482/1999](#) focuses on the introduction of minority languages in pre-school (ages 3–6), primary (ages 6–11), and lower secondary education (ages 11–14). There is, however, no mention of upper secondary education (ages 14–19) in the text of [Law 482/1999](#). This is quite an interesting, yet inexplicable, feature of the law, considering that compulsory education in Italy ends at 16 years of age, thus, during upper secondary school. In pre-school, language education can include activities in the minority language, which can be used in addition to Italian. In primary and lower secondary schools, the minority language can be used as an additional medium of instruction (Legge 15 dicembre 1999, n. 482, art. 4, par. 1).

With a view to ensuring the learning of the minority language (Cisilino, 2019, p. 46), and upon hearing the requests of pupils' parents, schools decide modalities, timing, and teaching methods, as well as evaluation criteria and the employment of qualified teachers (Legge 15 dicembre 1999, n. 482, art. 4, par. 2). Article 5 of [Law 482/1999](#) states that the Italian Ministry of Education and Merit (Italian: *Ministero dell'Istruzione e del Merito* – MIM) shall annually publish the general criteria for the implementation of school measures outlined in Article 4. The MIM also publishes yearly the guidelines for the allocation of [Law 482/1999](#)-related funding, which, however, has steadily decreased in recent years. Consequently, although [Law 482/1999](#) stipulates that minority language education must be guaranteed in all the territories of the Italian State where minority languages are spoken, the development of educational projects involving the teaching of minority languages is inextricably constrained by the availability of State funding.

[Law 482/1999](#) operates at State level; thus, specific regional laws must be enacted by Regional Governments for its implementation at the local level. In the case of the RA FVG, this law is [Regional Law 29/2007](#) (Chapter III, arts. 12–18). It governs the presence of Friulian in education, both in State-owned public education centres (Italian: *istituzioni scolastiche statali*) and in semi-private schools (Italian: *scuole paritarie*), which still receive a certain amount of State funding. In [Regional Law 29/2007](#), the teaching and learning of Friulian is considered part of a multilingual education programme in pre-schools, primary schools, and lower secondary schools located in the Friulian-speaking territory (art. 12). According to Article 13, the Region collaborates with the *Ufficio Scolastico Regionale per il Friuli Venezia Giulia* (USR FVG – Regional School Office; i.e. the regional branch of the MIM) to ensure a balanced integration of the Friulian language in the education system (par. 1), and a Permanent Commission for the teaching of the Friulian language (Italian: *Commissione permanente per l'insegnamento della lingua friulana*) was established to coordinate the activities carried out by the various institutions in the implementation of the law (par. 4).

In an earlier draft of [Regional Law 29/2007](#), the principle of “informed dissent” was included. This principle would have required pupils' parents to be provided with written information and a disagreement form to be signed and returned to the school in case they did *not* wish for their child to attend Friulian classes. Such an opt-out system would have likely increased consent rates compared to the system currently in force, in which parents have to explicitly

opt in for Friulian classes. The State Government challenged the earlier draft of [Regional Law 29/2007](#), which included the principle of informed dissent, and presented an appeal to the Constitutional Court on the grounds that such a law violated the principle of equality among all citizens and was therefore unconstitutional (for a detailed account of the issue, see [Cisilino, 2014](#), pp. 22–25; [Piergigli, 2021](#), pp. 28–31). More specifically, as far as the provisions on education were concerned, the State Government claimed that the principle of informed dissent would substantially impose the teaching of Friulian on schools, and it might lead to serious risks of discrimination against teachers and pupils in public schools. Through Ruling n. 159/2009, the Constitutional Court sided with the State Government and almost all disputed articles were declared as unconstitutional (see [Cisilino, 2014](#), p. 23).

The principle of informed dissent was consequently substituted with the principle of explicit choice expressed by families (i.e. the need to opt in) and quite rigid boundaries were imposed on the definition of teaching modalities and of the maximum number of hours of Friulian per week. Despite these setbacks, Friulian maintained its presence in schools (albeit in the form of small projects), where it officially entered as from 2001 through [Law 482/1999](#). The draft of [Regional Law 29/2007](#) that was finally passed (Decreto del Presidente della Regione 23 agosto 2011, [n. 204](#)) provides rather loose rules for the introduction of Friulian in education. The implementation of these rules became systematic in 2012, when the *Systemic implementation plan for the teaching of the Friulian language* was put into practice (Decreto di Giunta 8 giugno 2012, [n. 1034](#), allegato a). Today, Friulian should be compulsorily offered as an optional subject in schools in the Friulian-speaking area, subject to the choice of pupils' families, who can decide whether or not they wish to make use of the opportunity to have Friulian taught to their children, for at least 30 hours a year.

Regarding teacher training, the RA FVG adopts financial measures to support CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning) training in Friulian, identifying appropriate courses with universities, the USR FVG, and educational institutions (Legge Regionale 18 dicembre 2007, [n. 29](#), art. 17, par. 3). Moreover, the RA FVG maintains a list of teachers with recognised competences for teaching Friulian (RA FVG, [n.d.-a](#)), and procedures for the inclusion of teachers in this list are defined in agreement with the USR FVG (Legge Regionale 18 dicembre 2007, [n. 29](#), art. 17, par. 4–5).

education system

The Constitution of the Italian Republic affirms that the State has exclusive legislative authority over general education provisions (Costituzione della Repubblica Italiana, [1947](#), art. 117). The State and Regions share duties regarding education. The State establishes general guidelines, such as duration and typology of courses, exams and certification, the legal value of qualifications, learning objectives, and credits, and Regions ensure their implementation within their territory. Moreover, Article 117 of the Constitution (Costituzione della Repubblica Italiana, [1947](#)) recognises the autonomy of individual schools, which can make autonomous decisions regarding teaching methods, experimentation, research, and development, as long as these decisions align with national guidelines.

Compulsory education in Italy, as well as in the RA FVG, begins at the age of 6 and ends at the age of 16. The Italian education system consists of the following two cycles: the first cycle (ages 6–14) and the second cycle (ages 14–19). The first cycle of education (Italian: *primo ciclo di istruzione*) is further subdivided into primary (ages 6–11, 5 years) and lower secondary school (ages 11–14, 3 years). The second cycle of education (Italian: *secondo ciclo di istruzione*) comprises upper secondary school (ages 14–19, 5 years). State examinations are carried out at the end of lower secondary school (at 14 years of age) and upper secondary school (at 19 years of age). The official language that is used in State examinations is Italian. Exceptions are made in the case of foreign language examinations (e.g. English), when the target language may be used instead.

The whole first cycle of education is the same for all pupils. In contrast, the second cycle is subdivided into *Licei* (Grammar schools), *Istituti tecnici* (Technical schools), and *Istituti professionali* (Professional schools). At the end of the 5 years in any type of upper secondary school, pupils must take a State examination (Italian: *Esame di Stato di secondo ciclo*) that grants them access to any university or higher education institution.

As an alternative to upper secondary school, pupils may opt for *Istruzione e Formazione Professionale* (vocational education) instead. It is intended for pupils aged 14 to 18 years and is run at regional level. Its primary aim is to equip pupils with the practical skills required to pursue careers as qualified workers.

Formal adult education in Italy is overseen by the *Centri Provinciali per l'Istruzione degli Adulti* (CPIA – Provincial centres for adult education), which organise a variety of courses, including Italian as a second language.

private and public

The vast majority of semi-private schools (Italian: *scuole paritarie*) that are found in the RA FVG are pre-schools. Although to a lesser extent than State-owned public education centres (Italian: *istituzioni scolastiche statali*), *scuole paritarie* also receive a certain amount of State funding and must follow the guidelines issued by the State. If they are located in the Friulian-speaking area, they are also subjected to the laws previously described (see [status of language education](#)) and can receive funding to teach the local minority language.

In the school year 2022/23, there were 132 *istituzioni scolastiche statali* in the former provinces of Udine (67), Pordenone (40), and Gorizia (25; USR FVG, [n.d.-a](#)). In the same school year, there were 169 *scuole paritarie* (Udine: 98, Pordenone: 62, Gorizia: 9; USR FVG, [n.d.-b](#)). It should be noted that while *scuole paritarie* generally consist of a single school (typically a pre-school), *istituzioni scolastiche statali* are centres where more than a single school can be found. For example, within public education centres, there are the *Istituti comprensivi*, which include the whole first cycle of education, from pre-school to lower secondary school. Public education centres therefore have much larger pupil populations than semi-private schools.

bilingual education forms

Bilingual Friulian-Italian schools do not currently exist. Nevertheless, it is worth mentioning that, at the time of writing this Regional Dossier (2023), an experimental project of multilingual education in Italian-Friulian-German-Slovene was being carried out at the “I. Bachmann” Institute in Val Canale, which involved the schools located in the municipalities of Tarvisio, Malborghetto-Valbruna, Pontebba, and Chiusaforte (all in the former province of Udine). The experimentation included all education levels, from pre-school to upper secondary school. At the time of writing, however, it had only been carried out at the pre-school and primary school levels. Except for the report compiled by Mezgec (2021) on Slovene, there were, to the best of the authors’ knowledge, no reports on the Friulian provision within this multilingual experimentation available at the time of writing.

administration

Regarding the administration of pre-university education in Italy, the main actor is the Italian Ministry of Education and Merit (Italian: *Ministero dell’Istruzione e del Merito* – MIM). The MIM is responsible for determining the curricula for all school levels and types and issuing general guidelines. The various Regions – RA FVG among them – are responsible for the implementation of ministerial decisions.

The MIM interacts with the Regions through its regional branches, the Regional School Offices (Italian: *Uffici Scolastici Regionali* – USR), that function as a sort of “bridge” between the central State and the regional administration. The USR are centres with administrative responsibility that implement the instructions given by the MIM and directly support individual schools located in the regional territory.

In the case of the USR FVG, there is an officer specifically appointed for dealing with matters regarding Friulian and its teaching in schools. This officer acts as a liaison between ministerial decisions and local needs and, as such, should give advice to schools and teachers engaged in Friulian language teaching. However, unlike the situation for the Slovene minority, who have a dedicated Office for Slovene Schools within the USR FVG (Bogatec, 2020, p. 20), there is no such equivalent office representing the Friulian linguistic minority, who, in fact, do not have Friulian schools or bilingual Friulian-Italian schools.

inspection

According to Article 397 of Decree 297/1994 (Decreto legislativo 16 aprile 1994, n. 297), school inspection is conducted by *dirigenti tecnici con funzioni ispettive* (technical managers with inspection functions), who take part in the actions of the MIM and verify their correct implementation in educational institutions at all levels. They operate at both the national and regional levels. At the regional level, inspection is carried out by the Regional School Office (USR).

Since the teaching and learning of Friulian is strongly related to the local context, it is the responsibility of officers from the USR FVG to carry out inspections on this issue. According to [Regional Law 29/2007](#), the ARLeF, in cooperation with the USR FVG, should conduct an annual verification and evaluation of how Friulian is taught in schools, the effects that such teaching has on pupils' competences, and the feedback expressed by families (art. 15, par. 4). There are, however, several critical issues regarding the evaluation of teaching and learning activities delivered in and through Friulian. The main reason is that the regulations implementing [Regional Law 29/2007](#) currently in force (Decreto del Presidente della Regione 23 agosto 2011, n. 204) do not require schools to provide detailed reports on the activities carried out, and the teaching methods and materials used. The current General Language Policy Plan (Italian: *Piano Generale di Politica Linguistica* – PGPL; ARLeF, 2021, pp. 166–167) includes amendments to the implementing regulations to allow a more systematic inspection activity of the education provision for Friulian, which, as of today, is virtually absent.

The RA FVG, for its part, may conduct inspections on funding allocation for minority language projects. However, these inspections are limited to administrative issues (e.g. proper allocation of funds) and cannot interfere with the content taught or the teaching methods used.

support structure

The RA FVG guarantees and supports the organisation of training initiatives for the teaching of and through Friulian by means of agreements with the universities that are located in the region (Legge Regionale 18 dicembre 2007, n. 29, art. 17). The ARLeF, which is responsible for defining language policy guidelines for the development of Friulian (see ARLeF, 2021), does not directly organise training activities but supports third parties in organising the initiatives outlined in the *Systemic implementation plan for the teaching of the Friulian language* (Decreto di Giunta 8 giugno 2012, n. 1034, allegato a). Moreover, the ARLeF, as well as supporting and carrying out the production of teaching materials to teach Friulian or through Friulian, is also responsible for the definition of guidelines for the production of such materials and for the implementation of activities of documentation, research, and teaching experimentation (Legge Regionale 18 dicembre 2007, n. 29, art. 16). All materials produced by the ARLeF are distributed free of charge in schools in the Friulian-speaking territory.

In terms of assessing teachers' language skills, the Friulian language certification project was being carried out at the time of writing this Regional Dossier (2023). Starting from the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR; CoE, 2001) and with regional funding, the ARLeF, in close collaboration with the University of Udine and its *Centro Interdipartimentale per lo Sviluppo della Lingua e della Cultura del Friuli* (CIRF – Interdepartmental Centre for the Development of Friuli's Language and Culture), has developed the language certification for Friulian. The first phase, which included the training and certification of evaluators, ended in January 2023, and the next phase will focus on the language certification of schoolteachers (see [Higher education](#)).

Another relevant body supporting Friulian language teaching is the *Societât Filologjiche Furlane* (SFF – Friulian Philological Society). Founded in 1919, it is the primary cultural institute for the Friulian linguistic community, as well as an important point of reference for the protection, enhancement, and dissemination of the Friulian culture and identity. The SFF has not only been involved in the organisation of literacy courses for adults throughout the Friulian-speaking territory for years (see [Adult education](#)) but it also boasts a long tradition in the training of Friulian teachers, given that the first courses date back to the school year 1949/50 (Burelli, 2015, p. 591). In 2016, as part of a 3-year agreement with the ARLeF and with the support of regional funding, the *Docuscuele*-Regional Centre of Documentation, Research and Educational Experimentation for Friulian Schools was established within the SFF. Today, the Docuscuele is an important reference point with regard to in-service teacher training and professional development (see [in-service training](#) in [Higher education](#)), the collection and sharing of teaching materials, as well as support for the creation of new, original materials for the teaching of and through Friulian. Since January 2019, the Docuscuele has become a Regional Centre (Legge Regionale 30 marzo 2018, n. 13. Interventi in materia di diritto allo studio e potenziamento dell’offerta formativa del sistema scolastico regionale, 2018, art. 37bis), directly depending on the Educational Service of the RA FVG, and all its training initiatives are officially accredited by the USR FVG and the MIM.

2 Pre-school education

target group

In Italy, pre-school education (Italian: *scuola dell'infanzia*) is intended for children aged 3–6 years and is not compulsory.

structure

The Italian State, through the MIM and in close collaboration with the USR, is primarily responsible for the provision of pre-school education (see *administration*).

The standard workweek for pre-schools is 40 hours, with the potential for up to 50 hours. Families may request a shorter school day, in the mornings only, for a total of 25 hours per week. Class sizes in pre-schools generally range from a minimum of 18 to a maximum of 26 pupils (MIM, *n.d.-a*). Attending State-owned public pre-schools is free, while semi-private pre-schools charge fees, albeit it at relatively low rates due to state and regional funding.

General curriculum guidelines are issued by law and implemented at the local level by school directors and teachers. The aim of pre-school education is to develop the following five fields of experience: (1) the self and others, (2) body and movement, (3) images, sounds, and colours; (4) speech and words; and (5) knowledge of the world. In 2018, curriculum guidelines were updated with the introduction of the so-called *Nuovi scenari* (New scenarios; Comitato Scientifico Nazionale per le Indicazioni Nazionali per il curricolo della scuola dell'infanzia e del primo ciclo di istruzione, 2018), which introduce citizenship and sustainability education (MIM, *n.d.-a*).

In the Friulian-speaking territory, Friulian is not compulsory in pre-schools but can be chosen by children's families as an additional optional learning opportunity.

legislation

Pre-school education, along with primary and lower secondary education, is governed by the Decree of the President of the Republic n. 89 of 20 March 2009 (Decreto del Presidente della Repubblica 20 marzo 2009, n. 89). The National guidelines for the curriculum 2012 (Decreto Ministeriale 16 novembre 2012, n. 254. Indicazioni nazionali curricolo scuola infanzia e primo ciclo, 2012) apply to this level of education. As for the teaching through Friulian, *Law 482/1999* and *Regional Law 29/2007* apply to this level of education (see *status of language education*).

language use

In all pre-schools in the Friulian-speaking territory, the official language of instruction is Italian. The only exception is made in the case of bilingual Italian-Slovene schools in the Slovene-speaking municipalities close to the border with Slovenia, in the former provinces of Udine and Gorizia, where Slovene is also used as a co-official language of instruction (see Bogatec, 2020).

Friulian can be used as a medium of instruction in language awareness modules in classes where pupils' families have chosen to have Friulian taught to their children, for at least 30 hours a year. Legislative provisions stipulate that if a pupil's family does not wish for their child to attend Friulian classes, they participate in alternative activities. In practice, however, due to the lack of both explicit recommendations on this topic and systematic inspection activities (see *inspection*), the nature of these alternative activities is unclear.

teaching materials

In pre-school, children are not required to buy textbooks. In general, textbooks and teaching materials are produced by private publishers. Teachers can buy their own books and teaching materials, for which they can use the Teacher's Card (Italian: *Carta del docente*). The value of the card is 500 euros per school year and can be used for professional development activities, including the purchase of books.

Regarding Friulian, the ARLeF is primarily responsible for defining guidelines for the production of teaching material (see *support structure*). It also supports and carries out the production of teaching materials for teaching Friulian or through Friulian. Among the most recent teaching aids that have been published for pre-school education are *99 peraulis. Fevelâ cul mont. 99 parole. Parlare con il mondo. 99 words. Talking to the world* (Schiavi Fachin, 2015) and *Uns cuatri poesiis e un pâr di detulis* (A few poems and some idiomatic expressions; Zof, 2019). The first is a collection of words, short poems, and songs in Friulian as well as in 14 other languages, which aims to raise young learners' awareness about linguistic diversity. The second is a collection of poems and idiomatic expressions in Friulian, with translations in Italian.

It is also worth mentioning the teaching materials recently produced and made available by the Docuscuele of the SFF. The Docuscuele's main aim is to provide teachers with ready-made teaching resources that can be adapted and implemented in their classes. *Marilenghe te scuele... pe scuelute* (Mother tongue at school... for pre-school; Di Gleria & Favaro, 2018) is a collection of 10 learning units in which the *éveil aux langues*/language awareness approach is adopted to help children experience the world through Friulian. Another recent material is *Lis mêis primis peraulis* (My first words; Moling et al., 2022), which was published by the SFF in collaboration with the Ladin Union "Uniun Ladins Val Badia" and the "Micurá de Rû" Ladin Institute, with the support of the ARLeF. It is a picture dictionary with over 1,000 words in four languages (Friulian, Italian, German, and English).

statistics

Table 1 provides an overview of (a) the number of pre-school pupils whose families had chosen Friulian as an optional subject, (b) the total number of pupils attending pre-schools that offered Friulian as an optional subject, and (c) the total number of pupils attending pre-school in the former provinces of Udine, Gorizia, and Pordenone in the school year 2022/23.

The highest number of pupils who attended Friulian classes was seen in the former province of Udine, where Friulian is spoken the most (see [population](#)), whereas the territories of Pordenone and Gorizia tended to lag behind.

Possible explanations for this – *not* supported by empirical evidence, however, but based instead on the authors' knowledge of the Friulian territory – include the fact that many people living in the areas of Pordenone and Gorizia, who are speakers of local varieties of Friulian that are different from the central standard Friulian spoken in the area of Udine, are not aware that they speak Friulian, but believe they speak a language that is not “the true Friulian” (whereby “true Friulian” they mean the central standard language). Consequently, feeling distant from the standard Friulian model, which is the one that is generally adopted in education, especially in written materials, they do not show particular sensitivity for the issue and do not choose it for their children. This is also due to the perceived lower prestige of Friulian compared to the Veneto dialect, which is rather widespread in the marginal areas of Pordenone and Gorizia. These factors are relevant across all educational levels where Friulian is offered, not only at the pre-school level.

It is also interesting to compare the ratio of pupils who attended Friulian classes to the total number of pupils in schools where Friulian was offered (column a/b in Table 1) and the ratio of pupils who attended Friulian classes to the total number of pupils in all schools in the territory of the three Friulian-speaking provinces (column a/c). While the percentages remain high for Udine, at 88.2% and 81.9%, respectively, there is significant discrepancy for Pordenone and Gorizia.

This discrepancy can be explained by two possible factors. The first is that schools that are located outside the Friulian-speaking area are not required to offer Friulian to their pupils. In the three former provinces of Udine, Pordenone, and Gorizia, 9%, 28%, and 40% of municipalities, respectively, do not belong to the Friulian-speaking area (see [population](#)). However, this alone cannot explain such a notable difference in percentages, especially for Pordenone and Gorizia (60.3% and 13.5%, and 59.7% and 12%, respectively). The second reason is that a number of schools that are located in the Friulian-speaking territory do not offer Friulian to their pupils, despite being required to do so by law. Possible reasons for this include a lack of qualified teachers, organisational and logistical problems (ARLeF, 2021, p. 163), and inadequate sensitivity to the issue that is found in some schools, especially, once again, in the former provinces of Pordenone and Gorizia. Additionally, the absence of systematic inspection activities (see [inspection](#)) makes monitoring the provision of Friulian education challenging.

Table 1 Pre-school pupils attending Friulian classes in the school year 2022/23.

	(a) No. of pupils attending Friulian classes	(b) Total no. of pupils in centres offering Friulian	(c) Total no. of pupils in former province	% (a/b)	% (a/c)
Udine (public and semi-private)	8,025	9,100	9,803	88.2%	81.9%
Gorizia (public and semi-private)	321	538	2,671	59.7%	12.0%
Pordenone (public and semi-private)	933	1,548	6,912	60.3%	13.5%
Total	9,279	11,186	19,386	83.0%	47.9%

Note. Data for (a) and (b) are from the USR FVG (n.d.-c), and for (c) from the USR FVG (personal communication, April 21, 2023).

This pattern aligns with the enrolment trend observed in Friulian classes over the past 10 years. [Table 2](#) displays enrolment data in aggregated form, that is, pre-school and primary education levels together, and shows the trend as from the school year 2013/14.

In the former province of Udine, the percentages are consistently high (over 75%, reaching a peak of almost 79% in the school year 2019/20), while in Pordenone and Gorizia the average is approximately 16%. Pordenone experienced its peak in enrolments (17.09%) in 2022/23. In the same year, in contrast, Gorizia had its lowest rate, with 8.77% of enrolments.

Table 2 Friulian attendance in pre-school and primary education (public and semi-private) over the last 10 school years (2013/14–2022/23).

School year	Former province of UDINE		Former province of GORIZIA		Former province of PORDENONE		Total
	(a) No. of pupils attending Friulian classes	(c) Total no. of pupils in former province % (a/c)	(a) No. of pupils attending Friulian classes	(c) Total no. of pupils in former province % (a/c)	(a) No. of pupils attending Friulian classes	(c) Total no. of pupils in former province % (a/c)	
2013/14 ⁽¹⁾	26,993	35,869 75.25%	1,323	9,033 14.65%	3,814	23,847 15.99%	68,749 46.74%
2014/15 ⁽²⁾	26,972	35,372 76.25%	1,496	8,956 16.70%	3,833	23,836 16.08%	68,164 47.39%
2015/16 ⁽³⁾	26,979	35,043 76.99%	1,589	8,876 17.90%	3,749	23,468 15.97%	67,387 47.96%
2016/17 ⁽⁴⁾	26,304	34,491 76.26%	1,484	8,740 16.98%	3,675	23,361 15.73%	66,592 47.25%
2017/18 ⁽⁵⁾	26,251	33,697 77.90%	1,408	8,656 16.27%	3,677	22,908 16.05%	65,261 48.02%
2018/19 ⁽⁶⁾	25,757	32,989 78.08%	1,415	8,530 16.59%	3,741	22,429 16.68%	63,948 48.34%
2019/20 ⁽⁷⁾	25,084	31,848 78.76%	1,232	8,343 14.77%	3,676	21,881 16.80%	62,072 48.32%
2020/21 ⁽⁸⁾	23,538	30,132 78.12%	1,475	8,169 18.06%	3,029	20,834 14.54%	59,135 47.42%
2021/22 ⁽⁹⁾	22,867	29,630 77.18%	1,132	7,992 14.16%	3,242	20,322 15.95%	57,944 47.01%
2022/23 ⁽¹⁰⁾	22,185	29,073 76.31%	693	7,901 8.77%	3,407	19,934 17.09%	56,908 46.19%

Note. Data from:

⁽¹⁾ RA FVG (2015, p. 318, pp. 248–249)

⁽²⁾ RA FVG (2015, p. 31; 2016, pp. 248–249)

⁽³⁾ RA FVG (2016, p. 318; 2017, pp. 248–249)

⁽⁴⁾ RA FVG (2017, p. 318, pp. 248–249)

⁽⁵⁾ RA FVG (2018, p. 316, pp. 246–247)

⁽⁶⁾ RA FVG (2019, p. 313, pp. 244–245)

⁽⁷⁾ RA FVG (2020, p. 313; 2022, pp. 244–245)

⁽⁸⁾ RA FVG (2021, p. 313; 2022, pp. 244–245)

⁽⁹⁾ RA FVG (2022, p. 313; personal communication, September 4, 2023)

⁽¹⁰⁾ USR FVG (n.d.-c; personal communication, April 21, 2023)

3 Primary education

target group

Primary education in Italy (Italian: *scuola primaria*) is intended for pupils aged 6 to 11 years and is compulsory.

structure

The Italian State, through the MIM and in close collaboration with the USR, is responsible for the provision of primary education (see [administration](#)).

The weekly class schedule for primary schools can range from 24 to 30 hours, depending on teacher availability. Families also have the option to request a full-time schedule of 40 hours per week. The number of days per week that make up the educational schedule, either five or six, varies among individual schools. Class sizes typically range from a minimum of 15 pupils to a maximum of 26. In certain locations, such as mountain municipalities, small islands, and areas with linguistic minorities, classes with a minimum of 10 pupils may be formed (MIM, [n.d.-b](#)).

General curriculum guidelines are issued by law and then implemented at the local level by school directors and teachers. Subjects taught in primary schools include Italian, English, history, geography, mathematics, sciences, music, arts, physical education, and technology. In 2018, curriculum guidelines were updated with the introduction of the so-called *Nuovi scenari* (New scenarios; Comitato Scientifico Nazionale per le Indicazioni Nazionali per il curricolo della scuola dell'infanzia e del primo ciclo di istruzione, 2018), which introduce citizenship and sustainability education. Catholic religion is also offered as a default subject in the curriculum, but it is an optional subject, meaning that if the pupil's family does not wish for their child to attend these classes, they can opt out and choose an alternative activity (e.g. assisted study; MIM, [n.d.-b](#)).

In primary schools in the Friulian-speaking territory, Friulian is also offered as an optional subject. It is not present by default in the curriculum but can be chosen by pupils' families.

The national INVALSI (Italian: *Istituto Nazionale per la Valutazione del Sistema Educativo di Istruzione e di Formazione* – National Institute for the Evaluation of the Education and Training System) assessments are carried out for Italian and mathematics in second and fifth grade, and for English in fifth grade. Except for the tests of English, where English is also used, the official language in examinations is Italian.

legislation

Primary education is governed by the Decree of the President of the Republic n. 89 of 20 March 2009 (Decreto del Presidente della Repubblica 20 marzo 2009, n. 89). The National guidelines for the curriculum 2012 (Decreto Ministeriale 16 novembre 2012, n. 254. Indicazioni nazionali curricolo scuola infanzia e primo ciclo, 2012) also apply to this level of education. The teaching of/through Friulian is regulated by Law 482/1999 and Regional Law 29/2007 (see *status of language education*).

language use

In all primary schools in the Friulian-speaking territory, the official language of instruction is Italian. The only exception is made in the case of bilingual Italian-Slovene schools in the Slovene-speaking municipalities close to the border with Slovenia, in the former provinces of Udine and Gorizia, where Slovene is also used as a co-official language of instruction (see Bogatec, 2020).

Friulian can be taught as a subject or used as a medium of instruction in CLIL modules in classes for pupils whose families have chosen Friulian as an optional subject for their children, for at least 30 hours a year. The legislative provisions allow pupils who do not attend Friulian classes to participate in alternative activities, such as assisted study. In practice, however, due to the lack of both explicit recommendations on this topic and systematic inspection activities (see *inspection*), the nature of these alternative activities is unclear.

teaching materials

Municipalities are responsible for covering the cost of textbooks for primary school-aged children residing within their jurisdiction. There are two possible scenarios for obtaining these textbooks. The first is that textbooks are supplied to pupils for free and under no conditions. Alternatively, pupils may borrow the books and are required to return them after they have finished using them. Typically, private publishers are responsible for producing the textbooks and teaching materials. Teachers can purchase their own books and teaching materials, for which they can use the Teacher's Card (Italian: *Carta del docente*). The value of the card is 500 euros per school year and can be used for professional development activities, including the purchase of books.

Focusing on Friulian, the main responsibility for defining guidelines for the production of teaching materials lies with the ARLeF. The ARLeF also supports and carries out the production of teaching materials for teaching Friulian or through Friulian. Some recent resources that have been made available for primary school pupils include *Il Libri di Maman! 1-2* (Maman's Book! 1-2; ARLeF, 2020a, 2020b) and *Anìn! 1-2* (Let's go! 1-2; ARLeF, 2022a, 2022b). In both cases, volume 1 is dedicated to the first two grades of primary school, and volume 2 to the third, fourth, and fifth grades. These books have been distributed free of charge

to pupils in the Friulian-speaking territory. *Il Libri di Maman!* originated from a television programme for children with the same name (ARLeF, n.d.-a); it is a recreational-educational collection of games, fun facts, reading recommendations, and activities that aim to foster creativity while promoting knowledge of Friulian. In contrast, *Anin!* is a proper textbook that covers a wide range of subjects – from history to geography, from the sciences to the arts – all of which are presented through Friulian.

In 2019, the ARLeF collaborated with the *Centri di Linguistiche Aplicade "Agnul Pitane"* (CLAAP – Centre of Applied Linguistics "Agnul Pitane") to release *Lenghis.me*, an online platform that provides teaching resources in three languages (Friulian, Italian, and English). These resources can be adapted by teachers and used in their classes. The platform can be accessed free of charge and is particularly suited for primary school pupils, although it also offers resources for pre-school education (ARLeF, n.d.-b).

Among the teaching materials specifically dedicated to teachers, it is worth mentioning those recently produced and made available by the Docuscuele. Similar to pre-school education, these materials aim to provide teachers with a wide range of ready-made resources that can be adapted and implemented in their classes. Two noteworthy series include *Marilenghe te scuele* (Mother tongue at school; Menegale, 2015; Perini, 2014) and *I Cuaders dal Docuscuele* (The Docuscuele's Notebooks). Both series were developed through scientific collaboration with the Ca' Foscari University of Venice. Each volume of *Marilenghe te scuele* contains units on various subjects, with a total of 27 units covering topics such as local history, science, geography, and mathematics. In contrast, each *Cuader dal Docuscuele* is dedicated to a specific theme and subject, such as music and songs (Plazzotta, 2020), language and history (Bello & Purino, 2021; Bello et al., 2021), and contemporary history (Bello et al., 2022). All of these materials utilise the CLIL approach to teach content through Friulian.

Finally, it is worth mentioning the school diary *Ólmis* (Footprints), which has been published every year since the school year 1995/96. Being a unique experience in the world of Italian linguistic minorities and thanks to its content – ranging from local history to geography, from anthropology to traditions and culture – it is considered an example of best practice of regional language teaching at the national level. *Ólmis* is an educational project of the SFF made possible by the financial support of the RA FVG and the *Fondazione Friuli* (Friuli Foundation). It is distributed free of charge to primary and lower secondary pupils attending schools in the Friulian-speaking area. Since its first edition, over 400,000 copies have been printed each year, with approximately 15,000 printed annually (Società Filologica Friulana, n.d.-b).

statistics

Table 3 provides an overview of (a) the number of primary school pupils whose families had chosen Friulian as an optional subject, (b) the total number of pupils attending primary schools that offered Friulian as an optional subject, and (c) the total number of pupils

attending primary school in the former provinces of Udine, Gorizia, and Pordenone in the school year 2022/23.

Similar to pre-school education (see *statistics* in *Pre-school education*), the highest number of primary school pupils who attended Friulian classes was also found in the former province of Udine, whereas much lower figures were registered in Pordenone and Gorizia.

The pattern is the same as in pre-school when comparing the ratio of pupils attending Friulian classes to the total number of pupils in schools where Friulian is offered (column a/b in *Table 3*) and the ratio of pupils attending Friulian classes to the total number of pupils in all schools in the three Friulian-speaking provinces (column a/c). The percentages for Udine remain relatively high at 79.1% and 73.5%, respectively, while Pordenone and Gorizia have much larger discrepancies of 56.7% and 19%, and 40.2% and 7.1%, respectively. Similar to pre-school education, this difference can be attributed to the fact that Friulian is not offered in some schools (see *statistics* in *Pre-school education*).

Table 3 Primary school pupils attending Friulian classes in the school year 2022/23.

	(a) No. of pupils attending Friulian classes	(b) Total no. of pupils in centres offering Friulian	(c) Total no. of pupils in former province	% (a/b)	% (a/c)
Udine (public and semi-private)	14,160	17,912	19,270	79.1%	73.5%
Gorizia (public and semi-private)	372	925	5,230	40.2%	7.1%
Pordenone (public and semi-private)	2,474	4,366	13,022	56.7%	19.0%
Total	17,006	23,203	37,522	73.3%	45.3%

Note. Data for (a) and (b) are from the USR FVG (n.d.-c), and for (c) from the USR FVG (personal communication, April 21, 2023).

This pattern aligns with the enrolment trend observed in Friulian classes over the last 10 years. *Table 2* (see *statistics* in *Pre-school education*) displays enrolment data in aggregated form, that is, pre-school and primary education levels together, and shows the trend as from the school year 2013/14.

4 Secondary education

target group

Secondary education in Italy is organised into the following two levels: lower and upper secondary school. Lower secondary school (Italian: *scuola secondaria di primo grado*) is intended for pupils aged 11 to 14 years. This level, along with primary school, completes the first cycle of education (Italian: *primo ciclo di istruzione*). Upper secondary school (Italian: *scuola secondaria di secondo grado*) is for pupils aged 14 to 19 years and serves as the second cycle of education (Italian: *secondo ciclo di istruzione*). Secondary education is compulsory until the age of 16.

structure

The Italian State, through the MIM and in close collaboration with the USR, is the main body responsible for the provision of both lower and upper secondary education. General curriculum guidelines are issued by law and then implemented at the local level by school directors and teachers.

In lower secondary education, the compulsory annual lesson schedule is 990 hours in total, or 29 hours each week, plus 33 hours of in-depth instruction on literary topics. A timetable with 36 hours of instructional time per week may be used for scheduling extended-time classes. First-year groups in secondary schools typically have 18 to 27 pupils, but this number may reach 30 if the school only forms one first-year group. Groups with a minimum of 10 pupils may be formed in schools on small islands, in mountain municipalities, and in locations with linguistic minorities (MIM, [n.d.-c](#)).

The subjects taught in lower secondary schools include Italian, English, a second EU language (e.g. French, German, or Spanish), history, geography, mathematics, sciences, music, arts, physical education, and technology. Starting from 2019, citizenship education has been included in the curriculum as a compulsory, transversal subject. Catholic religion is offered by default, but it is an optional subject, meaning that if a pupil's family does not wish for their child to attend these classes, they can opt out and choose an alternative activity (e.g. assisted study; MIM, [n.d.-c](#)). Similar to pre-school and primary education, Friulian is not included by default in the lower secondary education curriculum, but it can be chosen by pupils' families.

The national INVALSI assessments are carried out for Italian, mathematics, and English in the third year of lower secondary school. In addition to passing the INVALSI assessments, pupils must also pass a State examination at the end of lower secondary school (Italian:

Esame di Stato primo ciclo). The State examination comprises written exams in Italian, mathematics, English, and a second EU language, and an oral exam. With a few exceptions (e.g. in bilingual Italian-Slovene schools, where Slovene is also a co-official language in examinations), Italian is the main official language used in State examinations.

Upper secondary education in Italy is organised into the following three alternative paths: *Licei* (grammar schools), *Istituti tecnici* (technical schools), and *Istituti professionali* (professional schools). *Licei* are typically chosen by pupils who wish to continue their education and attend university afterwards. There are the following nine curricula to choose from, each of which offers a solid academic preparation: *Liceo artistico* (centred on arts), *Liceo classico* (centred on classical studies), *Liceo linguistico* (centred on languages), *Liceo musicale e coreutico* (centred on music and dance), *Liceo scientifico* (centred on science), *Liceo scientifico opzione scienze applicate* (centred on applied sciences), *Liceo scientifico a indirizzo sportivo* (centred on science and sport), *Liceo delle scienze umane* (centred on social sciences), and *Liceo delle scienze umane opzione economico-sociale* (centred on socio-economic sciences; MIM, n.d.-d).

Istituti tecnici (MIM, n.d.-e) and *Istituti professionali* (MIM, n.d.-f), in contrast, aim to help pupils acquire the knowledge and skills that are needed to enter the job market. Both types of schools offer a variety of curricula to choose from. Despite being primarily focused on the job market, pupils from these schools can also access university. Catholic religion is offered by default in all three paths, but it is an optional subject, as in the previous education levels.

Friulian is not included in upper secondary education. The national INVALSI assessments are carried out in Italian, mathematics, and English in the second and fifth year of upper secondary school. Similar to lower secondary school, pupils must pass a State examination (Italian: *Esame di Stato secondo ciclo*) at the end of their 5 years of upper secondary education in addition to the INVALSI assessments. The State examination comprises two written exams (Italian and the main subject of the curriculum attended) and an oral exam. With a few exceptions (e.g. in bilingual Italian-Slovene schools, where Slovene is also a co-official language in examinations), Italian is the main official language used in State examinations.

legislation

Lower secondary education is governed by the Decree of the President of the Republic n. 89 of 20 March 2009 (Decreto del Presidente della Repubblica 20 marzo 2009, n. 89) and the National guidelines for the curriculum 2012 (Decreto Ministeriale 16 novembre 2012, n. 254. Indicazioni nazionali curricolo scuola infanzia e primo ciclo, 2012). As for the teaching of/through Friulian, [Law 482/1999](#) and [Regional Law 29/2007](#) apply to this level of education (see [status of language education](#)).

Upper secondary education is governed by Decrees n. 87 (*Istituti professionali*), n. 88 (*Istituti tecnici*), and n. 89 (*Licei*) of 15 March 2010. In contrast to the previous levels of education, the current legislation does not explicitly include the teaching of and through Friulian in

upper secondary school. The only reference to this education level is found in [Regional Law 29/2007](#), which promotes “the teaching of the Friulian language in the context of projects to enrich the educational offer of schools” (art. 14). Friulian is not compulsory and projects aiming at its promotion depend on the will of individual teachers.

language use

In all secondary schools in the Friulian-speaking territory, the official language of instruction is Italian. The only exception is made in the case of bilingual Italian-Slovene schools in the Slovene-speaking municipalities close to the border with Slovenia, in the former provinces of Udine and Gorizia, where Slovene is also used as a co-official language of instruction (see Bogatec, 2020).

The teaching of Friulian as a subject, that is, in the form of language lessons, in lower secondary school is not included in the legislation currently in force. Friulian can be used by teachers as a language of instruction in dedicated projects in this level of education, provided that pupils’ families have opted in for Friulian. In case a family does not wish for their child to participate in activities involving Friulian, alternative activities, such as assisted study, can be provided.

Regarding upper secondary education, there are no specific laws regulating the presence of Friulian, resulting in it being virtually absent. In the Friulian-speaking area, schools can organise projects or initiatives that aim to foster minority language awareness and learning. These activities, however, depend largely on the motivation and initiative of individual teachers. From the efforts of a group of such teachers, the *Lavagne Plurilengâl* (Multilingual Blackboard) was created in 2015. This project, supported financially by the ARLeF, coordinated by the Friulian Philological Society, and with scientific collaboration from the Interdepartmental Centre for the Development of Friuli’s Language and Culture (CIRF) of the University of Udine, the Ca’ Foscari University of Venice, and the Carinthian University College of Teacher Education, aims to promote Friulian in upper secondary education. The *Lavagne Plurilengâl* is a network of nine schools located in the former province of Udine, and they offer laboratories and seminars to both pupils and teachers.

teaching materials

In lower secondary education, it is possible for textbooks to be on loan due to agreements between schools and local bookshops. In such a case, families have the choice of either making use of this option or purchasing the books themselves. In contrast, in upper secondary education, families are expected to purchase textbooks. At this education level, private publishers are responsible for producing textbooks and teaching materials. Teachers have the option to purchase their own books and teaching materials using the Teacher’s Card (Italian: *Carta del docente*), which has a value of 500 euros per school year. The card can be used for professional development activities, including book purchases.

For Friulian, there are very few teaching materials available for secondary education, with the majority being dedicated to lower secondary schools. Notably, the Docuscuele has recently produced and made available some teaching materials specifically for this level. As in the case of pre-school and primary education, these materials aim to provide teachers with ready-made resources that can be adapted and implemented in their classes. One entire collection of *Marilenghe te scuele* (Mother tongue at school; Di Gleria & Menegale, 2017) is dedicated to this level of education and contains eight CLIL units on history, mathematics, and citizenship that use Friulian as a medium of instruction. *I Cuaders dal Docuscuele* (The Docuscuele's Notebooks), as mentioned in the previous chapter (see *Primary education*), also include units designed for lower secondary school pupils, in addition to those for primary school pupils (Bello & Purino, 2021; Bello et al., 2021; Bello et al., 2022; Collinrete, 2020, 2021; Plazzotta, 2020). Therefore, the main theme to which each volume is dedicated can be developed in both education levels or started in primary school and continued in secondary school.

It is also worth mentioning the school diary *Ólmis* (Footprints) by the SFF (see *Primary education*), which is distributed free of charge every year to primary and lower secondary pupils attending schools in the Friulian-speaking area.

The vast majority of teaching materials are aimed at lower secondary schools. Apart from the CLIL materials produced by the teachers who are part of the *Lavagne Plurilengâl* network and made available on its website, there were, to the best of the authors' knowledge, no published teaching materials in Friulian aimed at upper secondary pupils available at the time of writing this Regional Dossier (2023). It is, however, worth noting the recent video-documentaries in Friulian that have been produced for the *Lavagne Plurilengâl*, as part of a collaboration between the SFF and the ARLeF. The three documentaries are dedicated to historical (De Clara, 2022; Floramo, 2020) and artistic themes (Venuto, 2021).

statistics

Table 4 provides an overview of (a) the number of lower secondary school pupils whose families had chosen Friulian as an optional offer, (b) the total number of pupils attending lower secondary schools that offer the possibility of participating in projects involving Friulian, and (c) the total number of pupils attending lower secondary school in the former provinces of Udine, Gorizia, and Pordenone in the school year 2022/23.

At this education level, the differences between the three former provinces are most pronounced. Similar to pre-school and primary education (see *statistics* in *Pre-school education* and *Primary education*), the highest number of pupils attending Friulian classes in lower secondary education is found in the former province of Udine, whereas much lower figures are registered in the territories of Pordenone and Gorizia.

There is a consistent pattern across pre-school, primary, and lower secondary education when comparing the ratio of pupils attending Friulian to the total number of pupils in schools where Friulian is offered (column a/b in Table 4) and the ratio of pupils attending

Friulian to the total number of pupils in all schools in the territory of the three Friulian-speaking provinces (column a/c). Although the figures are lower than in pre-school and primary education, the two percentages remain quite high in the area of Udine, at 59.4% and 54.3%, respectively. In contrast, Pordenone has substantially lower percentages of 12% and 4%. This difference can be explained by the fact that Friulian is not offered in some schools in the former province of Pordenone (see *statistics in Pre-school education*).

It is striking that in the school year 2022/23, there were no lower secondary school pupils attending Friulian classes in the former province of Gorizia. Out of the 583 lower secondary school pupils attending schools – most likely *Istituti comprensivi*, including both primary and lower secondary levels – where Friulian is offered, nobody opted in. The situation in Pordenone is not much different; in those *Istituti comprensivi* offering Friulian, the majority of options are expressed by the families of pupils attending primary schools (see *Table 3 in Primary education*), whereas figures drop dramatically at lower secondary school level.

This situation can be attributed, on the one hand, to the low status accorded to the language by current legislation, which does not include its teaching as a subject at this school level but simply its presence in dedicated projects. This also explains the low number of teachers who are available to set up projects in Friulian, which is commonly cited as the primary reason for the limited presence of Friulian in lower secondary schools. On the other hand, the bleak situation that characterises the areas of Pordenone and Gorizia may be attributed to a general lack of sensitivity to the language issue expressed by families living there. As previously mentioned (see *statistics in Pre-school education*), families living in these areas tend to be speakers of local varieties of Friulian that differ from the central standard Friulian spoken in the area of Udine. As a consequence, feeling distant from the standard Friulian model generally adopted in education, they do not show particular sensitivity to the issue and do not choose it for their children.

Table 4 Lower secondary school pupils attending Friulian classes in the school year 2022/23.

	(a) No. of pupils attending Friulian classes	(b) Total no. of pupils in centres offering Friulian	(c) Total no. of pupils in former province	% (a/b)	% (a/c)
Udine (public and semi-private)	7,180	12,094	13,211	59.4%	54.3%
Gorizia (public and semi-private)	0	583	3,608	0.0%	0.0%
Pordenone (public and semi-private)	356	2,958	8,889	12.0%	4.0%
Total	7,536	15,635	25,708	48.2%	29.3%

Note. Data for (a) and (b) are from the USR FVG (n.d.-c), and for (c) from the USR FVG (personal communication, April 21, 2023).

As Friulian is not present in upper secondary school, no official statistics are available for this education level.

5 Vocational education

target group

Vocational education (Italian: *Istruzione e Formazione Professionale* – IFP) is intended for students aged 14 to 18 years and can be chosen as an alternative to upper secondary school.

structure

In Italy, IFP is financed and run at the regional level (e.g. by the RA FVG), and consists of 3- or 4-year training programmes that aim to equip young individuals with the practical skills needed to become qualified workers. The programmes are generally designed to meet the needs of both the local and national job markets. In agreement with the European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning (European Parliament & Council of the European Union, 2008), IFP programmes award a professional qualification certificate at the end of year 3 and a professional diploma at the end of year 4 (RA FVG, n.d.-b).

The *Effe.Pi* Association, selected by the RA FVG through a public notice, is currently (2023) the main provider of IFP training in the regional territory. Additionally, IFP courses can be implemented on a subsidiary basis by the *Istituti professionali* (professional schools; see *Secondary education*) that have agreed to participate in this training offer. These courses cover a wide range of subjects, from bakery to plumbing and hairdressing to carpentry (Effe.Pi, n.d.).

Similar to upper secondary school, Friulian is not included in vocational education.

legislation

Vocational education is governed by Law n. 53 of 28 March 2003 (Legge 28 marzo 2003, n. 53) and Decree n. 226 of 17 October 2005 (Decreto legislativo 17 ottobre 2005, n. 226). As in upper secondary education, the current legislation does not provide for the teaching of/through Friulian in vocational schools, neither at the State nor regional level.

language use

In all vocational schools in the Friulian-speaking territory, the official language of instruction is Italian. The only exception is made in the case of schools in the Slovene-speaking municipalities close to the border with Slovenia, where vocational education can also be offered in Slovene (see Bogatec, 2020).

As no specific laws regulate the presence of Friulian in vocational education, Friulian is virtually absent. Nonetheless, it may be used informally by teachers and trainers to carry out their activities in classes where there are Friulian-speaking students.

teaching materials

To the best of the authors' knowledge, there were no published teaching materials in Friulian specifically designed for vocational education students at the time of writing this Regional Dossier (2023).

statistics

As Friulian is not present in vocational education, no official statistics are available for this education level.

6 Higher education

structure

Italy was one of the first countries to become a full member of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) and adapt its university system in accordance with the Bologna Process (EHEA, n.d.). The Italian university system consists of 67 State universities, 29 legally recognised non-State universities, 9 higher education institutions with special regulations, and 11 online universities. It is divided into three cycles, each corresponding to specific academic qualifications that allow students to continue their studies, participate in public competitions and enter the world of work and professions.

University study programmes are structured in credits. The university training credit (Italian: *Credito Formativo Universitario* – CFU) normally corresponds to 25 hours of student work, including individual study. A full-time student typically completes an average of 60 CFU in 1 year. The credit system used in Italy is equivalent to the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS).

The courses and qualifications required by current legislation are divided into specific categories. The first level of university education is the 3-year bachelor's degree, which students can pursue after obtaining a 5-year upper secondary school diploma. After completing a bachelor's degree, students can gain access to a 2-year master's degree programme, which constitutes the second level of university education. To obtain a master's degree, students must earn 120 CFU credits and pass a final exam. Single-cycle master's degree programmes typically last 5 or 6 years and require a 5-year upper secondary school diploma as an admission qualification. These programmes award students with a master's degree upon completion. University master's programmes are divided into the following two levels: first-level programmes, which last 1 year and require a 3-year bachelor's degree for admission; and second-level programmes, which require a master's degree for entry. Specialisation programmes have varying durations depending on the field or European directives and typically require at least a degree for admission. These programmes are commonly used for secondary school teacher training. Lastly, the research doctorate programme, which lasts 3 or 4 years, can be pursued after obtaining a master's degree. Upon completion, students are awarded the title of *Dottore di ricerca* (Research doctor – PhD).

legislation

The Italian university system is regulated by a Royal Decree dating back to 1933 (Regio Decreto 31 agosto 1933, n. 1592) and by State laws and decrees (Legge 9 maggio 1989, n. 168; Legge 6 agosto 2008, n. 133, art. 16; Legge 30 dicembre 2010, n. 240; Decreto Ministeriale 22 settembre 2010, n. 17).

Regarding the protection of minority languages, [Law 482/1999](#) establishes the following: “Pursuant to articles 6 and 8 of the Law of 19 November 1990, n. 341, the universities of the regions concerned, within the scope of their autonomy and ordinary budget allocations, take every initiative, including the establishment of language and culture courses in the languages referred to in article 2, aimed at facilitating research science and cultural and training activities in support of the purposes of this law” (art. 6; second author’s translation).

Within the RA FVG, there are two State universities, namely the University of Trieste and the University of Udine. In recent years, it has primarily been the University of Udine that has taken on the greatest commitment for the protection of the Friulian language, as required by Law 546/1977: “Starting from the academic year 1977/1978 it is established the State University of Udine, whose degree courses will be activated as from the academic year 1978/1979. The University of Udine aims to contribute to the civil and social progress and to the economic rebirth of Friuli, and to become an organic tool for the development and renewal of the original strands of culture, language, traditions, and history of Friuli” (Legge 8 agosto 1977, n. 546, art. 26; second author’s translation).

language use

In both State universities in the RA FVG, the official language of instruction is Italian.

As part of the academic training offered by the University of Udine, students are guaranteed the opportunity to acquire knowledge of the Friulian language and culture through the courses delivered by the *Dipartimento di Lingue e Letterature, Comunicazione, Formazione e Società* (DILL – Department of Languages and Literature, Communication, Education and Society). The study plans of the degrees in Foreign Languages and Literatures and in Cultural Mediation offer courses in Friulian language and literature, as well as Friulian linguistics. There is, however, no full study programme available in the Friulian language at the bachelor’s or master’s level.

Of particular significance is the specific *Curriculum for the teaching of Friulian language and culture*, which is designed to train pre-school and primary school teachers who will be competent in Friulian and knowledgeable about its history and culture. It is part of the single-cycle master’s degree in primary education (see [teacher training](#)) and some of its courses are taught in Friulian.

teacher training

To teach in pre-school and primary schools in Italy, a single-cycle master’s degree in primary education, including the final apprenticeship, is a qualifying title (Decreto 10 settembre 2010, n. 249).

To teach in secondary schools, it is necessary to have a master's degree that allows admission to a competition class (Italian: *classe di concorso*) for a specific discipline. This means that it is important to verify, through curriculum evaluation, that the candidate has earned all the ECTS credits to actually be able to teach the subject of the chosen competition class. Additionally, prospective secondary school teachers should have a certain number of credits in anthropo-psycho-pedagogical subjects and in teaching methodologies and technologies. The regulations for these requirements have recently changed from 24 ECTS credits to now 60 ECTS credits (Legge 13 luglio 2015, n. 107; Decreto legislativo 13 aprile 2017, n. 59; Decreto del Presidente del Consiglio dei Ministri, 2023).

Regarding teacher training for Friulian, Law 482/1999 states that “qualified teachers” organise the teaching of minority languages (art. 4). According to the Decree of the President of the Republic n. 345 of 2 May 2001 (Decreto del Presidente della Repubblica 2 maggio 2001, n. 345), the MIM and the Ministry of University and Research (Italian: *Ministero dell'Università e della Ricerca* – MUR) “facilitate research, training, professional updating and lifelong learning activities in support of the aims of the law” and coordinate each year to define “a reference training framework in compliance with the educational autonomy of the university and school institutions of the regions concerned; within this reference framework, university and school institutions provide specific training courses for teachers, interpreters, and translators and university institutions activate university courses in the language and culture of linguistic minorities” (art. 3; second author's translation). However, this framework, which should be applied at State level, has not yet been defined at the ministerial level.

Regional Law 29/2007 partially fills this gap, stating that “the Region, in agreement with school authorities, after having consulted trade union organisations, establishes a list of teachers with recognised skills for teaching the Friulian language” (art. 17; second author's translation). Regional regulations, issued in agreement with the USR FVG, define the procedures for teachers to be included in this list and for their employment in schools.

The regional list is divided into the following four sectors: pre-school, primary school, lower secondary school, and upper secondary school. It includes teachers who are already employed in educational institutions in the region and also teachers who are listed in the rankings for substitute teachers. The main requirement for inclusion in the list is possessing the “competences in the Friulian language, acquired in accordance with the provisions of the Regional School Office, which identifies the necessary qualifications” (Decreto del Presidente della Regione 23 agosto 2011, n. 204, art. 10; second author's translation). Currently, these qualifications can be of a cultural, professional, or scientific nature. For example, the list can be accessed by those who have taken an exam in the field of Friulian studies during their academic studies. For the future, it would be desirable to have less generic access requirements and a defined profile that is (at least roughly) the same for every candidate. Moreover, the assessment and adequate valorisation of candidates' teaching competences should also be considered for future improvements. The establishment of a specific competition class (Italian: *classe di concorso*) for teaching the Friulian language, which does not yet exist, would be a particularly welcome future development in this respect.

The specific *Curriculum for the teaching of Friulian language and culture* in pre-school and primary education (see *language use*) was established in the academic year 2016/17 within the DILL of the University of Udine. A number of specific courses are offered, such as Friulian literature, Didactics of the Friulian language, Plurilingualism and plurilingual education, and Friulian language and linguistics. In the laboratory linked to the Friulian language and linguistics course, language exercises are conducted to initiate students' preparation for the language certification examination. These courses are accompanied by workshops aimed at providing good practices for managing multilingual classes, with special attention given to the Friulian language and culture, including early multilingualism and integrated language teaching, reading and approaches to children's literature texts, writing, and the development of reading and writing in plurilingual environments. All of these courses and workshops are mainly delivered using Friulian as the main language of instruction.

■ *pre-school training*

According to State legislation, the single-cycle master's degree course in Primary Education is a 5-year programme that prepares and qualifies individuals for the profession of pre-school teacher. In addition to curricular teaching, the programme also includes laboratories and internship activities carried out both at school institutions and indirectly.

The University of Udine offers a specific Curriculum for the teaching of Friulian language and culture, which provides future teachers with comprehensive preparation for their inclusion in the regional list.

■ *primary training*

As for the pre-school level, the single-cycle master's degree course in Primary Education prepares and qualifies individuals for the profession of primary school teacher. In addition to curricular teaching, the programme also includes laboratories and internship activities carried out both at school institutions and indirectly.

The specific Curriculum for the teaching of Friulian language and culture offered at the University of Udine provides future teachers with comprehensive preparation for their inclusion in the regional list.

■ *secondary training*

To teach in secondary schools, a master's degree is required, which grants entrance to a competition class (Italian: *classe di concorso*) for a certain discipline (see *teacher training*). In addition, prospective secondary school teachers must have a specified number of credits in anthropo-psycho-pedagogical subjects, as well as teaching methodologies and technologies.

Secondary school teachers of Friulian can be identified among those registered in the regional list. In this case, however, their initial preparation does not follow a specific

curriculum, as is the case for pre-school and primary school teachers. There are no specific courses or study programmes designed for preparing students to teach Friulian in secondary education. Students with interest in this area can include one of the Friulian courses provided by the University of Udine in their study plan, which is currently sufficient for inclusion in the regional list.

■ *in-service training*

Since the promulgation of [Law 482/1999](#), the University of Udine has made efforts to address the need to train teachers by organising both literacy courses to improve written Friulian language skills and specific training and refresher courses in the fields of linguistics, culture, and teaching methodology. These courses mainly targeted in-service teachers, many of whom had already been involved in teaching the Friulian language and culture for some time.

In the academic year 2004/05, in collaboration with the *Consorzio Universitario del Friuli* (CUF – Friuli’s University Consortium), the RA FVG and the USR FVG, the University of Udine organised a refresher course for minority language teachers. The course covered Friulian, Slovene, and German, with 400 hours for each language. The programme included lectures, laboratories, and internships, for a total of 35 ECTS credits.

In the academic year 2007/08, the University of Udine offered a second-level master’s course called *Teaching in the Friulian Language*. This was a comprehensive and in-depth course designed for pre-school, primary, and lower secondary school teachers.

Currently, the DILL at the University of Udine pursues its commitment to continuing education, recognising its decisive role in the consolidation of the professional profile of Friulian language teachers. The main purpose of its training offer is to update in-service teachers’ professional skills through in-depth study in various fields, such as pedagogy, language and communication, psychology and neurology, and culture and society. The training initiatives mainly include short and dynamic courses, structured in such a way that they offer effective content from different and complementary perspectives. These courses also aim to provide practical input that can be useful for teachers in their daily teaching practice. Two recent training initiatives include a course on how to support pupils in the development of reading and writing skills in multilingual environments (November–December 2022; UniUd, [n.d.-a](#)), and a course on the assessment of language learning and on the longitudinal coherence of the curricular scenario (February–March 2023; UniUd, [n.d.-b](#)). Both courses included 18 hours of face-to-face meetings and 12 hours of individual study, totalling 30 hours.

Within the University of Udine, two research centres are particularly interested in the multilingual reality of Friuli and also organise training initiatives aimed at in-service teachers. The first is the *Centro Internazionale sul Plurilinguismo* (CeIP – International Center on Plurilingualism). Active since 1993, the CeIP promotes research in the wide and multifaceted field of multilingualism from an international point of view. It organ-

ises scientific conferences and events that are open not only to academics but also to teachers, as occasions for in-service training. One of these initiatives is the *Colloquio Internazionale sul Plurilinguismo* (International Colloquium on Plurilingualism), which the CeLP hosts biennially. The third and latest edition of the Colloquium took place in November 2021 (UniUd, n.d.-c) and resulted in a scientific publication (Fusco et al., 2023). The second centre is the *Centro Interdipartimentale per lo Sviluppo della Lingua e della Cultura del Friuli* (CIRF – Interdepartmental Centre for the Development of Friuli's Language and Culture). Founded in 1995, the CIRF collaborates with the other structures of the University of Udine for the linguistic training of staff; it organises Friulian language courses for both civil servants and the general public (see *Adult education*) and provides language consultancy for local institutions (Vicario, 2013, pp. 25–34).

Furthermore, the commitment of the University of Udine within the scientific-didactic project of linguistic certification is worth noting, as stipulated by *Regional Law 29/2007* (art. 7) and governed by specific regulations (Decreto del Presidente della Regione 2 maggio 2014, n. 079/Pres), for which specific teaching materials were prepared for the various language levels (Fusco, 2021a, 2021b, 2021c). It is up to the ARLeF to promote the organisation of training courses to achieve the language certification and to compile a list of public and private entities authorised to issue it. However, on the basis of an agreement signed with the ARLeF in 2020, the University of Udine has been involved in the planning and management of a course for the certification of the competences in Friulian of future evaluators, addressed to a selected group of advanced users of the language, to which access was granted through public competition. This first step, which took place between 2022 and 2023, involved a training course first, and then the assessment of participants' competences at level C2 of the CEFR. Since the language certification represents a guarantee of the professionalism of those who work using Friulian, it would be advisable to take it into consideration in the future as a necessary requisite for inclusion in the regional list of Friulian teachers, pending other forms of recognition.

In addition to the in-service training by the University of Udine, the activities organised by the Docuscuele of the SFF should also be mentioned. The most long-lasting and successful in-presence initiatives that the Docuscuele organises are *Marilenghe & Mariscuele* (Mother tongue & Mother school) and *Scuele di Avost* (August School), which were first organised in 2014 and 2017, respectively. *Marilenghe & Mariscuele* is a 1-day training event that takes place on the first week of April each year, and *Scuele di Avost* is a 3-day residential summer school at the end of August. Both occasions are dedicated to teachers of all education levels, from pre-school to upper secondary education, and usually include conferences, presentations of new teaching materials, and laboratories on teaching techniques. Since they were started, they have always been organised in person; the only exception was made during the COVID-19 pandemic (from the spring of 2020 to the spring of 2022), when both were temporarily held online.

The Docuscuele also offers specific courses, with the four most recent ones being *Scrivi* (Writing), *Cjantâ* (Singing), *Leterature furlane* (Friulian literature), and *CLIL par Furlan 2*

(CLIL in Friulian 2). *Scrivi* was started in the summer of 2018 as a one-week intensive in-person course that aims to improve teachers' competence in the written standard language. After two editions in person, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the course was transformed into an entirely online, asynchronous course on the Docuscuele's Moodle platform. The first online edition was offered in December 2020 and, since then, the *Scrivi* course has been offered online every year. The course is self-paced, and participants can do a variety of activities on Moodle, from completing grammar exercises to watching mini videos with the explanations of the grammar rules, to interacting with fellow participants in the online forum. The main aims of the *Scrivi* course are as follows: (1) to help participants improve their competence in the written standard language, like it used to be in the in-person version of the course; (2) to foster the development of autonomy in their learning process, as the course adopts an inductive teaching approach and participants are constantly encouraged to reflect on their own learning and to self-assess their work; and (3) to allow participants to experiment, reflect on, and assess a new approach to teaching/learning in a safe environment.

The second course, *Cjantâ*, was first offered face-to-face in December 2018, and is currently (2023) held online. It is a course on music teaching in Friulian addressed to pre-school and primary school teachers. *Cjantâ* aims to support participants in experimenting with the basics of music writing with pupils while stimulating their listening skills, intonation, memory, and rhythmic and motor coordination. It does so by means of both traditional Friulian songs but also new, unpublished ones, and around these songs specific learning units are developed. Three editions of this course have been organised so far, one face-to-face and two online.

The third course, *Leterature furlane*, was launched as a face-to-face course in March 2019. Nowadays, it is primarily delivered online, with both asynchronous and synchronous activities on Moodle and Zoom, but it also includes a final in-person meeting. The course focuses on texts, authors, and specific periods in Friulian literature, which helps to shed light on language-, culture-, and identity-related issues. Special attention is paid to the education field, with the aim of helping participants notice how, during the 20th century, the teaching of Friulian at school prioritised the cultural dimension more than the linguistic one. Two editions of this course have been organised so far.

Finally, the most recent course, *CLIL par Furlan 2*, was launched at the end of 2022 in response to numerous requests from teachers who wished to further their training in CLIL (hence, 2) after having participated in the activities organised by the Docuscuele in collaboration with the Ca' Foscari University of Venice during the *Eduka2* Interreg project (see [Educational research](#)). *CLIL par Furlan 2* is a blended course designed for primary and lower secondary school teachers, whose ultimate aim is to enable participants create CLIL learning units that can be validated in their own classes. The course includes synchronous activities on Zoom, such as seminars with language teaching experts, as well as asynchronous activities on Moodle, such as step-by-step preparation of teaching materials and interaction with tutors and fellow participants in the forum. There are also in-person meetings to discuss the main challenges encountered and to share the

prepared materials. The main themes of the units, which are citizenship education and civil defence, are linked to the project *Vê cure* (Taking care), for which the SFF and the Docuscuele have received funding from the RA FVG. At the time of writing (2023), the first edition of *CLIL par Furlan 2* was nearing its conclusion, and the most effective units resulting from the course will be published and made available on the Docuscuele website (see [Useful addresses](#)).

statistics

Table 5 provides an overview of the number of students enrolled in the Curriculum for the teaching of Friulian language and culture at the University of Udine (Department of Languages and Literature, Communication, Education and Society, single-cycle master's degree in Primary Education) in the academic year 2022/23.

It is important to note that these data refer to cohorts mainly made up of students from other regions of Italy and only to a small extent from Friulian-speaking areas, who choose to enrol in Primary Education (in the standard curriculum, not in the Friulian one) at the University of Udine. This is one of the reasons for the low enrolment numbers in the Friulian curriculum.

The authors of this Regional Dossier, although their interpretation is not supported by empirical data, suggest that within the former province of Udine, compared to the neighbouring territories of Pordenone and Gorizia, educational initiatives outside of school, such as in religious contexts (e.g. scouting), are not prevalent. Consequently, young people do not have the opportunity to engage in activities that may lead to a career choice in education. Given that Udine has the largest presence of Friulian speakers, the lack of interest in teaching in general is also reflected in the low number of applications to the Friulian Curriculum.

Table 5 Students enrolled in the Curriculum for the teaching of Friulian language and culture in the academic year 2022/23.

Year	Number of students
First year (enrolled in 2022/23)	19
Second year (enrolled in 2021/22)	10
Third year (enrolled in 2020/21)	9
Fourth year (enrolled in 2019/20)	9
Fifth year (enrolled in 2018/19)	9
Out-of-course (enrolled before 2018)	6
Total	62

Note. Data from the University of Udine (personal communication, April 21, 2023).

Table 6 provides an overview of the number of students enrolled in Friulian studies at the University of Udine (Department of Languages and Literature, Communication, Education and Society) in the academic years 2018/19 to 2022/23. Students who do not speak Friulian or who are from other parts of Italy often decide to enrol in these courses out of personal curiosity.

Table 6 Students enrolled in Friulian studies in the last 5 academic years (2018/19–2022/23).

Courses	Academic year				
	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Friulian linguistics	6	3	1	3	0
Friulian language and literature	31	19	8	4	13
Friulian language and culture	19	24	22	18	5
Total	56	46	31	25	18

Note. Data from the University of Udine (personal communication, April 21, August 30, 2023).

7 Adult education

structure and language courses

Formal adult education in Italy is primarily the responsibility of the *Centri provinciali per l'Istruzione degli Adulti* (CPIA – Provincial centres for adult education). There are three main types of adult education programmes. First-level education programmes, implemented by the CPIA, aim to assist adult learners in obtaining the qualification of the first cycle of education (comprising primary and lower secondary education; see *target group* in *Secondary education*). Second-level education programmes, implemented by upper secondary school institutions, aim to help adult learners obtain a technical, vocational, or artistic education diploma. Finally, Italian language learning programmes, implemented by the CPIA, are designed to help foreign adults obtain a qualification attesting to their mastery of the Italian language at least at level A2 of the CEFR (MIM, *n.d.-g*, *n.d.-h*). To the best of the authors' knowledge, there are no Friulian language courses offered in these adult education programmes.

All other adult education initiatives can be found in the offer of local societies and institutions. One such institution is the *Societât Filologjiche Furlane* (SFF – Friulian Philological Society), which is the most important point of reference for the protection, enhancement, and dissemination of the Friulian culture and identity (see *support structure*). The SFF has been involved in the provision of literacy courses for adults for many years (*Società Filologica Friulana*, *n.d.-a*). Traditionally, these courses have always been delivered in person throughout the Friulian-speaking territory. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the SFF began offering online courses in February 2021 when face-to-face courses became impossible. Today, SFF courses are delivered both face-to-face and online.

Face-to-face courses have a total duration of 26 hours and typically consist of one class per week. These courses are primarily attended by Friulian speakers who live in the region and wish to acquire literacy skills in Friulian. The aim is to help participants learn how to read and write in the standard language. Historical, literary, and traditional elements of the Friulian culture are also explored in these courses.

Online courses are based on the content of three dedicated textbooks published by the SFF with the financial support of the ARLeF, namely *Lenghe e Culture 1-2-3* (Language and Culture 1-2-3; see *teaching materials*). There are three different online courses offered throughout the year, each linked to one of the textbooks. The first course, linked to *Lenghe e Culture 1*, usually starts in February and ends in April. The second course, linked to *Lenghe e Culture 2*, begins in May and ends in July. The third course, linked to *Lenghe e Culture 3*, starts in October and ends in December. There is a progression in difficulty level, with regard to both language and content, so participants must complete the first course before attending

the second course. In 2023, the fourth edition of the first online course, the third edition of the second course, and the second edition of the third course were delivered. While the majority of participants in online courses live in the region, the courses are also attended by people of Friulian origin who wish to learn the language despite living in other regions of Italy or abroad (e.g. Argentina, France, and Australia).

Online courses have a duration of 10 weeks and include a blend of asynchronous and synchronous activities. Asynchronous activities take place on the SFF Moodle platform and allow participants to listen to and read texts on specific topics (i.e. history, literature, culture, and traditions), watch mini video-lessons on Friulian grammar, complete grammar exercises, and interact with the tutors and fellow participants through a dedicated forum. The synchronous activities are carried out on the SFF Zoom platform and mainly include the following: (1) doing dictations in Friulian, where the tutor slowly reads a short text and participants listen and write, with a final moment of group correction; (2) reading together, where the tutor proposes graded texts to be read together, one paragraph by each participant; and (3) conversation classes, where participants meet online with the tutor and discuss a topic of their interest.

Both face-to-face and online Friulian courses, organised by the SFF and financed by the ARLeF, are free of charge.

The Interdepartmental Centre for the Development of Friuli's Language and Culture (CIRF) at the University of Udine also organises Friulian language courses. These courses are primarily intended for civil servants who work in local public administrations, and young adults, including university students, who wish to acquire literacy skills in Friulian. The CIRF courses for civil servants are organised into three levels (i.e. basic, intermediate, and advanced), whereas those for young adults are basic introductory courses. The courses were previously held in person until 2019 but have since been moved online due to the COVID-19 pandemic and are still available online as of 2023 to accommodate participants from abroad (e.g. from Argentina, Australia, and Canada). Course attendance is free.

legislation

Formal adult education (CPIA) is governed by Law n. 133 of August 2008 (Legge 6 agosto 2008, n. 133) and by the Decree of the President of the Republic n. 263 of 29 October 2012 (Decreto del Presidente della Repubblica 29 ottobre 2012, n. 263). The current legislation does not include the teaching of/through Friulian in formal adult education, neither at the State nor regional level.

language use

In adult education centres in the Friulian-speaking territory, the official language of instruction is Italian. In the Friulian courses organised by the SFF and by the CIRF, the main language of instruction is Friulian.

teaching materials

To the best of the authors' knowledge, there are no published teaching materials in Friulian for adult students attending formal education.

It is, however, worth mentioning two recently published teaching materials for the SFF Friulian courses. The first resource is *Scrivi par furlan* (Writing in Friulian; Roseano & Madriz, 2017), which is a handbook that provides clear and reader-friendly descriptions of Friulian grammar, with a focus on proper writing in the standard language. The second resource is the *Lenghe e Culture 1-2-3* series (Language and Culture 1-2-3; Visintin & Zanello, 2019, 2020, 2021), which consists of three volumes. This series was also financially supported by the ARLeF and explores the Friulian language, along with the history, literature, culture, and traditions of the Friulian-speaking territory, across 36 units.

statistics

Table 7 provides an overview of the number of participants in the Friulian language courses organised by the SFF in person and online between 2018 and 2022. The data show that, with the exception of the years affected by the COVID-19 pandemic (2020 and, partially, 2021), course attendance has remained consistently high throughout the years.

Table 7 Participants in the Friulian courses offered by the SFF in the last five years (2018–2022).

	Year						
	2018	2019	2020	2021		2022	
Mode	Face-to-face	Face-to-face	Face-to-face	Face-to-face	Online	Face-to-face	Online
No. of courses	22	24	13	13	3 ^a	19	3 ^c
No. of participants	488	483	139	171	267 ^b	379	185 ^d
	488	483	139	438		564	

Note. Data from the SFF (personal communication, April 20, August 28, 2023).

^a The three online courses correspond to *Lenghe e Culture 1* (1st edition), *Lenghe e Culture 1* (2nd edition), and *Lenghe e Culture 2* (1st edition).

^b The total of 267 participants should be subdivided as follows: 90 (*Lenghe e Culture 1*, 1st edition), 116 (*Lenghe e Culture 1*, 2nd edition), and 61 (*Lenghe e Culture 2*, 1st edition).

^c The three online courses correspond to *Lenghe e Culture 1* (3rd edition), *Lenghe e Culture 2* (2nd edition), and *Lenghe e Culture 3* (1st edition).

^d The total of 185 participants should be subdivided as follows: 89 (*Lenghe e Culture 1*), 40 (*Lenghe e Culture 2*), and 56 (*Lenghe e Culture 3*).

Table 8 gives an overview of the number of participants in Friulian language courses organised by the CIRF for civil servants (basic, intermediate, and advanced level courses) between 2018 and 2022.

Table 8 Participants (civil servants) in the Friulian courses offered by the CIRF in the last five years (2018–2022).

	Year				
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Mode	Face-to-face	Face-to-face	Online	Online	Online
No. of participants	54	22	16	60	14

Note. Data from the CIRF (personal communication, April 21, 2023).

Table 9 provides an overview of the number of participants in Friulian language and culture courses organised by the CIRF for university students and young people (basic course) between 2018 and 2022.

Table 9 Participants (university students and young people) in the Friulian courses offered by the CIRF in the last 5 years (2018–2022).

	Year				
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Mode	Face-to-face	Face-to-face	Online	Online	Online
No. of participants	31	37	82	47	30

Note. Data from the CIRF (personal communication, April 21, 2023).

8 Educational research

Research on the use of the Friulian language in schools was pioneered in the late 1970s by Nereo Perini, who recognised the importance of also focusing on language, rather than just culture, a forward-thinking approach for that time (Martini & Zanello, 2021). Silvana Schiavi Fachin continued Perini's research in the 1980s by conducting large-scale studies on the use of Friulian in kindergartens in the province of Udine (for a complete review of these early studies, see Burelli, 2015; Martini & Zanello, 2021). Since then, research has been continued by the University of Udine, the main and only university in the Friulian-speaking territory, as well as by other entities mentioned in this Regional Dossier, such as the SFF (Friulian Philological Society) and its Docuscuele, and the Ca' Foscari University of Venice.

As from the early 2000s, there has been a surge in experimental initiatives adopting the CLIL methodology, with Friulian as the target language. One notable project was a vast action research study on CLIL at the kindergarten level (Perini & Senesi, 2012), funded by the MIM, as well as various school projects aimed at promoting Friulian together with Italian as the main medium of instruction and English as the compulsory foreign language taught in schools (Burelli, 2012; Cantarutti, 2011; Fusco, 2012), funded by the Regional Government and the ARLeF (for more details on these studies; see Burelli, 2015; Martini & Zanello, 2021). The key characteristics of more than 20 years of classroom research are, first and foremost, the emphasis on language rather than culture, in the wake of Perini's suggestions, and teaching in an environment deeply defined by linguistic and cultural pluralism. It is worth noting, however, that there is a lack of standardised models, shared at a collective level of didactics and research, that can then be adapted to the unique circumstances of a highly diverse territory in terms of the presence of Friulian and sensitivity towards the language.

Eduka2 (2017–2019)

Among the most recent research outputs regarding the teaching of and through Friulian at school, the outcomes of the *Eduka2* project are worth mentioning. *Eduka2 – For a cross-border Governance of Education* was a project funded by the European Regional Development Fund under the Interreg Cooperation Programme V-A Italy-Slovenia 2014–2020. Its main aim was to strengthen cross-border cooperation and improve the existing situation by devising common governance tools and shared educational and teaching models (Eduka2, n.d.-a). As project partners, the Docuscuele of the SFF and the Department of Linguistics and Comparative Cultural Studies of the Ca' Foscari University of Venice collaborated on two main goals. The first goal was to design and pilot a professional development course for CLIL teachers (Menegale & Bier, 2020). This course aimed to train teachers in CLIL and support them in creating teaching materials in Friulian, which were then published online on the *Eduka2* website (Eduka2, n.d.-b).

Building on the results achieved through the professional development course, the second goal consisted of designing and delivering a Massive Open Online Course (MOOC), *Fare CLIL... par Furlan!* (Doing CLIL... in Friulian!). This MOOC was designed to introduce novice teachers to CLIL in Friulian and share the teaching materials created and made available in the previous phase of the project (Bier & Menegale, 2020). Four editions of the MOOC were carried out, the first started in December 2018 and the last ended in the spring of 2020. Overall, 596 teachers participated in the four editions and 56.4% (336) of them completed the whole course.

The *Eduka2* project not only had positive outcomes within its own framework but also had significant implications for teaching practice. Due to the successful results of the MOOC, the SFF decided to invest in distance training and two important developments took place. The first development involved the creation of online Friulian language courses for the general public (see *Adult education*), with financial support from the ARLeF. The second development took place in response to the many requests from teachers who wished to further their training in CLIL after having completed the introductory MOOC. These requests led the SFF's Docuscuele to design and deliver the blended *CLIL par Furlan 2* course (see *in-service training* in *Higher education*). It is worth noting that four of the teachers who participated in the *Eduka2* professional development course (Menegale & Bier, 2020) are now teacher trainers in the *CLIL par Furlan 2* course. This is seen as a positive indication that the *Eduka2* research project has had lasting implications for teaching practice.

FURLEUS (2021–2023)

The most recent research outputs on Friulian in education are those produced within the *FURLEUS* project (Bier & Lasagabaster, 2023a), which ended on 1 November 2023. *Promoting Friulian within Multilingual Education: A cross-country, cross-stage, cross-level comparison of Friulian and Basque teachers' language attitudes and motivation in search of best practices* (acronym: *FURLEUS*; CORDIS, n.d.) was a 2-year project funded by a Marie-Skłodowska Curie European Individual Fellowship within Horizon 2020 and hosted by the University of the Basque Country (UPV/EHU). It was a comparative research project between the RA FVG and the Basque Autonomous Community (Spain), two multilingual contexts where a unique minority language is present (Friulian/*Furlan* and Basque/*Euskara*, respectively). Its main aims were to (1) investigate pre-service and in-service teachers' attitudes and habits of use of the languages they are in contact with, and (2) collect best motivational teaching practices to promote language learning within a multilingual education system.

In the spring of 2022, as a replication of the transnational study coordinated by Lasagabaster and Huguet (2007) almost two decades earlier, a study on future teachers' attitudes and habits of language use was carried for the first time in the RA FVG (Bier & Lasagabaster, 2022, *forthcoming*). In the spring and summer of 2023, the same investigation was repeated with in-service teachers (Bier & Lasagabaster, 2023c).

The results regarding pre-service teachers revealed that Friulian is almost absent from the educational domain and tends to be used in exchanges with older people (Bier & Lasagabaster, 2022). More specifically, the inquiry unearthed that attitudes towards Italian and English – which, undoubtedly, appear to have much higher status than Friulian in the RA FVG – are strongly positive and unquestioned, while attitudes towards Friulian and multilingualism including Friulian were found to be more prone to fluctuation. Interestingly, despite the weaknesses of the current provisions for the teaching of Friulian at school, significant and large differences in language attitudes towards Friulian were found between those who had attended lessons of/in the language, who expressed a more positive stance, and those who had not (Bier & Lasagabaster, forthcoming).

These findings highlight both the pivotal role of education in fostering positive attitudes towards languages and the deficiencies of the current measures regulating the presence of Friulian in education. Such measures not only do not produce generalised effects for the whole student population – with Friulian being an optional subject – but also are not enough to promote a sufficient degree of literacy in the language, as it clearly appears from the data collected among pre-service teachers. Future teachers indicated possessing a low general competence in Friulian, and an even lower written competence in the language, where nearly 85% of participants in the inquiry declared *none* or *a little* competence in writing in Friulian (Bier & Lasagabaster, 2022). Such findings are in line with those obtained from the general population in the latest sociolinguistic survey (ARLeF, 2015), where it appeared that Friulian is more a spoken language than a written one.

Moreover, the sociolinguistic survey revealed that those who do write in the language just reproduce it “as they speak it”, that is, without adopting the official standard spelling, of whose existence only a few seemed to be aware (ARLeF, 2015, pp. 21–22). The results obtained appear to clearly reflect the lack of language policies that aim to prioritise the development of literacy in Friulian and, in general, secure the language a more stable place in the education system (Bier & Lasagabaster, 2022).

As part of the FURLEUS project, in the autumn of 2022, a series of semi-structured interviews were carried out with teachers to gather best practices for motivating language learning (Bier & Lasagabaster, 2023b). The findings showed that activities with authentic and teacher-created materials are prevalent, while textbooks appeared to be virtually never used. To be able to design effective activities based on authentic materials, it is important that teachers possess strong pedagogical and linguistic skills. Therefore, developing language awareness and literacy skills should be prioritised in teacher education and professional development courses (Bier & Lasagabaster, 2023b), further emphasising the crucial role of education in promoting the minority language.

future research

Friulian in education represents a largely unexplored field of research. There are therefore numerous possible directions for future investigation. Based on the findings discussed in this chapter, three research endeavours seem particularly promising.

Firstly, pursuing the line of research traced by the FURLEUS project, it would be beneficial to further examine the relationship between teachers and local languages and cultures from a sociolinguistic perspective, with a view to unearthing their perceptions and attitudes towards the various languages with which they are in contact, both in and out of school.

Secondly, a similar sociolinguistic investigation could be conducted with parents and families to understand their motivations for choosing or refusing Friulian in education (e.g. expectations for the professional future of their children, and possibilities of integration/inclusion for families with a migrant background).

Finally, it would be useful to begin collecting data on the teaching and learning of reading and writing in Friulian at the primary school level. This research should start by focusing on schools where Friulian is consistently offered throughout the years, providing concrete empirical data on how the language is taught and the outcomes of language learning. As of the end of 2023, there were no such data available.

9 Prospects

The teaching of the Friulian language in schools is regulated by State and regional laws (see *status of language education*). More specifically, the *Systemic implementation plan for the teaching of the Friulian language* (Decreto di Giunta 8 giugno 2012, n. 1034, allegato a), which has been in force since 2012 and was recently amended with minor changes (Delibera 28 ottobre 2022, n. 1611 (allegato a). Piano applicativo di sistema per l'insegnamento della lingua friulana, 2022), contains, in principle, all the guidelines schools need to promote the learning of Friulian through a vertical curriculum that goes from kindergarten to lower secondary school, spanning a total of 11 years. However, based on the information presented in previous chapters (see *Pre-school education*, *Primary education*, and *Secondary education*), and in the light of the experience of over a decade of the application of this plan – which was preceded by a pioneering season of teaching experimentation in schools (see *Educational research*) – a few suggestions can be made to ensure a more promising future for the teaching of Friulian. With a view to doing so, reference will be made to the weaknesses identified in the last General Language Policy Plan (PGPL) with regard to Friulian in education (ARLeF, 2021). The main issues that need to be addressed include the shortage of qualified Friulian language teachers (ARLeF, 2021, p. 163), the inadequate communication with families about the educational offer in/through Friulian (p. 180), and the difficulties in monitoring and assessing Friulian language activities carried out in schools (p. 166). The authors of this Regional Dossier believe that, unfortunately, such weaknesses are not sufficiently tackled in the updated version of the *Systemic implementation plan for the teaching of the Friulian language* (Delibera 28 ottobre 2022, n. 1611, allegato a).

Under the current State and regional legislation, when enrolling their child in school, families are required to inform the school if they wish for their child to have the opportunity to learn Friulian as an optional subject for a minimum of 30 hours per year. However, the recent *Fifth opinion on Italy* from the Advisory Committee on the FCNM (CoE, 2022, p. 28, paras. 163–165) has stated that this “opt-in” system and the 30-hour requirement are insufficient to effectively promote the learning of the minority language. Additionally, the results achieved through these provisions so far have been modest.

The first step to secure the future of the Friulian language would therefore be to remove the optionality and the 30-hour clause, and instead offer Friulian as a default subject in all schools within the Friulian-speaking territory. Prior to implementing this change, a pilot study should be conducted across the entire school cycle, from pre-school to secondary school, in at least one centre in each of the three former provinces of Udine, Pordenone, and Gorizia (closely corresponding to the Friulian-speaking territory). Schools should be selected based on their current level of engagement and sensitivity to the issue. This study would be the first step towards a Friulian school model that could be recognised at the national level, with its own curriculum, specificities, timetable, and, most importantly, a staff body that is more connected to the local school and context and less influenced by the infra-territorial mobility dynamics that are typical of Italian schools.

This bold decision to offer Friulian as a default subject would help to reverse the current trend, which has seen many schools in the three former provinces not offering Friulian to their pupils. Today's situation of Friulian in schools, as clearly shown in the statistics presented in previous chapters, is far from optimistic. There is a significant discrepancy between the overall positive percentages of pupils attending Friulian in schools that offer it (a/b column: see *statistics* in *Pre-school education*, *Primary education*, and *Secondary education* – Tables 1, 2, 3, and 4) and the percentages of pupils attending Friulian in relation to the entire population of reference (a/c column). This indicates that many pupils in the Friulian-speaking territory are not given the opportunity to learn the language. This situation is particularly concerning in the former provinces of Pordenone and Gorizia, which are also part of the Friulian-speaking territory but where Friulian in education is undeniably in a critical condition.

Furthermore, while Friulian is quite present in pre-school and primary education, its presence significantly declines in secondary school, reaching near-zero percentages in the former provinces of Pordenone and Gorizia (see *statistics* in *Pre-school education*, *Primary education*, and *Secondary education*). The lack of teachers should not, however, be invoked as a reason to justify the current situation. In a system where (too) little value is placed on the learning of the local language, it is hardly surprising that qualified professionals who could effectively teach the language are scarce. Including Friulian by default in schools in the Friulian-speaking territory could increase the prestige and status of the language, make the teaching profession a necessity and, therefore, boost its appeal in the job market.

The default inclusion of Friulian in the school offer would also allow it to become an integral part of the educational path for all pupils, without any distinction. This approach would be more inclusive compared to the current set-up, in which classes are divided between those who study Friulian and those who do not. The integration of Friulian in the curriculum together with all other languages (i.e. Italian as the official State language, English as the first foreign language taught in schools, and any other additional languages) could also allow the adoption of a truly multilingual approach, where the fractional and hierarchical view of multilingualism is abandoned in favour of a holistic one, where languages are presented as complementary and as a whole (Bier & Lasagabaster, *forthcoming*). As previously mentioned, the systematic, default inclusion of Friulian in education would increase its prestige and emphasise the importance of studying the local language to families and society, which will contribute to increasing its status. To achieve this, it is paramount that families are made aware that the teaching of Friulian is effective, up-to-date, engaging, and well-integrated with all other subjects in the curriculum. Schools play a pivotal role in effectively communicating with pupils' families. If Friulian were offered by default, its future in education would not rely on the choices made by pupils' families, which are often based on poor or misleading information (ARLeF, 2021, p. 180). Instead, it could potentially reach the same status as other subjects and languages taught in school.

With a view to achieving this goal, every school institution should strive for full autonomy in its educational offerings (Costituzione della Repubblica Italiana, 1947, art. 117; see *education system*). The responsibility of teaching (through) Friulian should be assigned to current

in-service teachers who are already part of the school teaching staff, eliminating the need to rely on external language experts. While external experts may appear to be a convenient solution to the shortage of Friulian teachers, their lessons tend to be stand-alone and lack integration with the rest of the curriculum, including other languages and subjects.

Starting, therefore, from the assumption that minority language teachers must possess exceptionally strong professional competences to effectively "compete" with teachers of other languages and subjects, it is essential that Friulian teachers have access to high quality education and training programmes that enable them to teach (through) the language competently. The University of Udine took an important step in this regard a few years ago by establishing the Curriculum for the teaching of Friulian language and culture within the master's degree in Primary Teacher Education (see *Higher education*). If Friulian were a default offer in all schools in the Friulian-speaking area, this curriculum would no longer be considered an unusual option, with limited enrolments due to its poor marketability (ARLeF, 2021, p. 172). On the contrary, it could become the default educational path for all those who wish to pursue a career in pre-school and primary teaching in the region. It would also be appropriate to establish a separate competition class (Italian: *classe di concorso*) for teaching the Friulian language in secondary schools, which does not yet exist. This would provide proper recognition and dignity to the profile of those teachers who specialise in teaching the language.

To achieve the ambitious goal of having Friulian stably present in the curriculum as an attractive and effective offer, school directors should also invest in the training of their teachers. Fortunately, several local institutions can provide support for in-service training, including the University of Udine, the RA FVG with the ARLeF as its operating arm, and the SFF and its Docuscuele. Through the courses offered by these institutions, teachers can develop stronger language and methodological competences, which will enable them to effectively address the need to teach Friulian in a cross-disciplinary way, focusing on both the teaching of the language and of content through language (i.e. CLIL). Consequently, if competent and highly qualified teachers were responsible for the provision of/through Friulian, the issue of monitoring and assessing the work carried out by schools (ARLeF, 2021, p. 166) would no longer be as urgent as it is today, when Friulian is still too often left to the good will of inadequately skilled practitioners.

Better-prepared teachers in kindergartens, primary schools, and lower secondary schools would lead to more competent pupils entering upper secondary school. This would ideally be the catalyst for overcoming the remaining obstacle to a truly vertical curriculum, where Friulian is taught throughout pre-university education. Unlike what happens today, if Friulian were also systematically taught in upper secondary schools, pupils would have the opportunity to improve their proficiency in the Friulian language by engaging with various historical, literary, cultural, and disciplinary content that define the true identity of a local community. This heightened sense of identity would then foster collaboration and the sharing of ideas with other linguistic minorities, both within and beyond regional and State borders. Such an endeavour could begin in upper secondary education and be expanded at the university level, with the ultimate goal of sharing cross-border experiences and enabling projects that aim to enhance a truly multilingual European education.

Many important developments have taken place in the last decade since the first edition of this Regional Dossier was published (Petris, 2014). The most significant ones occurred in 2016: the establishment of the *Curriculum for the teaching of Friulian language and culture* at the University of Udine, the joint efforts by the ARLeF and the University of Udine in the language certification, and the opening of the Docuscuele of the SFF. As a result, now that the necessary support infrastructure is in place and operational, the authors believe that the pioneering experimental phase of teaching Friulian in schools should progress. There is still much to be done to improve the fragile situation of Friulian in education, as has been seen in this Regional Dossier.

Although these suggestions may not currently be technically viable, it is evident that political will is required and more concrete commitments must be made to ensure that schools in the Friulian-speaking territory effectively utilise their autonomy and include Friulian by default in their educational offer. Given that one of the most important reasons for which the RA FVG has a Special Statute (Statuto Speciale della Regione Autonoma Friuli-Venezia Giulia, 1963) is its linguistic diversity, and since Friulian is legally recognised as Friuli's "own language" (Regional Law 29/2007, art. 1), having it stably present in the local education system would be an appropriate means of securing its future. Otherwise, if Friulian is not taken care of in Friulian schools, beyond just at a familial level, it is difficult to envision where else this responsibility might fall.

The Italian State signed the ECRML in 2000 but has not yet ratified it. The authors of this Regional Dossier believe that this circumstance contributes greatly to the current situation, where the sustainability of all minority languages in the State territory, including Friulian, is under threat and their promotion and development are severely hindered. It would be a welcome step for the Regional Government of the RA FVG – as well as the Governments of other Italian Regions where minority languages are present – to demand that the central State complete the ratification process and adopt the ECRML. This would better protect Friulian and ensure its survival into the future. Additionally, a possible further development would be to initiate a process of regionalising the education system in Italy to better meet the local needs of its diverse territories.

Table 10 Friulian attendance in pre-school and primary education (public and semi-private) over the last 10 school years (2013/14–2022/23).

School year	Former province of UDINE		Former province of GORIZIA		Former province of PORDENONE		Total
	(a) No. of pupils attending Friulian classes	(c) Total no. of pupils in former province % (a/c)	(a) No. of pupils attending Friulian classes	(c) Total no. of pupils in former province % (a/c)	(a) No. of pupils attending Friulian classes	(c) Total no. of pupils in former provinces % (a/c)	
2013/14 ⁽¹⁾	26,993	35,869 75.25%	1,323	9,033 14.65%	3,814	23,847 15.99%	68,749 46.74%
2014/15 ⁽²⁾	26,972	35,372 76.25%	1,496	8,956 16.70%	3,833	23,836 16.08%	68,164 47.39%
2015/16 ⁽³⁾	26,979	35,043 76.99%	1,589	8,876 17.90%	3,749	23,468 15.97%	67,387 47.96%
2016/17 ⁽⁴⁾	26,304	34,491 76.26%	1,484	8,740 16.98%	3,675	23,361 15.73%	66,592 47.25%
2017/18 ⁽⁵⁾	26,251	33,697 77.90%	1,408	8,656 16.27%	3,677	22,908 16.05%	65,261 48.02%
2018/19 ⁽⁶⁾	25,757	32,989 78.08%	1,415	8,530 16.59%	3,741	22,429 16.68%	63,948 48.34%
2019/20 ⁽⁷⁾	25,084	31,848 78.76%	1,232	8,343 14.77%	3,676	21,881 16.80%	62,072 48.32%
2020/21 ⁽⁸⁾	23,538	30,132 78.12%	1,475	8,169 18.06%	3,029	20,834 14.54%	59,135 47.42%
2021/22 ⁽⁹⁾	22,867	29,630 77.18%	1,132	7,992 14.16%	3,242	20,322 15.95%	57,944 47.01%
2022/23 ⁽¹⁰⁾	22,185	29,073 76.31%	693	7,901 8.77%	3,407	19,934 17.09%	56,908 46.19%

Note. Data from:

⁽¹⁾ RA FVG (2015, p. 318, pp. 248–249)

⁽²⁾ RA FVG (2015, p. 318; 2016, pp. 248–249)

⁽³⁾ RA FVG (2016, p. 318; 2017, pp. 248–249)

⁽⁴⁾ RA FVG (2017, p. 318, pp. 248–249)

⁽⁵⁾ RA FVG (2018, p. 316, pp. 246–247)

⁽⁶⁾ RA FVG (2019, p. 313, pp. 244–245)

⁽⁷⁾ RA FVG (2020, p. 313; 2022, pp. 244–245)

⁽⁸⁾ RA FVG (2021, p. 313; 2022, pp. 244–245)

⁽⁹⁾ RA FVG (2022, p. 313; personal communication, September 4, 2023)

⁽¹⁰⁾ USR FVG (n.d.-c; personal communication, April 21, 2023)

Table 11 Pre-school, primary, and lower secondary school pupils attending Friulian classes in the school year 2022/23.

	(a) No. of pupils attending Friulian classes	(b) Total no. of pupils in centres offering Friulian	(c) Total no. of pupils in former province	% (a/b)	% (a/c)
Pre-school education					
Udine (public and semi-private)	8,025	9,100	9,803	88.2%	81.9%
Gorizia (public and semi-private)	321	538	2,671	59.7%	12.0%
Pordenone (public and semi-private)	933	1,548	6,912	60.3%	13.5%
Total (pre-school)	9,279	11,186	19,386	83.0%	47.9%
Primary education					
Udine (public and semi-private)	14,160	17,912	19,270	79.1%	73.5%
Gorizia (public and semi-private)	372	925	5,230	40.2%	7.1%
Pordenone (public and semi-private)	2,474	4,366	13,022	56.7%	19.0%
Total (primary)	17,006	23,203	37,522	73.3%	45.3%
Lower secondary education					
Udine (public and semi-private)	7,180	12,094	13,211	59.4%	54.3%
Gorizia (public and semi-private)	0	583	3,608	0.0%	0.0%
Pordenone (public and semi-private)	356	2,958	8,889	12.0%	4.0%
Total (lower secondary)	7,536	15,635	25,708	48.2%	29.3%
All three levels (pre-school, primary, and lower secondary)					
Udine (public and semi-private)	29,365	39,106	42,284	75.1%	69.4%
Gorizia (public and semi-private)	693	2,046	11,509	33.9%	6.0%
Pordenone (public and semi-private)	3,763	8,872	28,823	42.4%	13.1%
Total	33,821	50,024	82,616	67.6%	40.9%

Note. Data for (a) and (b) are from the USR FVG (n.d.-c), and for (c) from the USR FVG (personal communication, April 21, 2023)

Table 12 University students enrolled in programmes and courses in/on Friulian at the University of Udine in the last five academic years (2018/19–2022/23).

	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Curriculum for the teaching of Friulian language and culture (within the MA programme in Primary Education)	9	9	9	10	19
Friulian linguistics (individual course)	6	3	1	3	0
Friulian language and literature (individual course)	31	19	8	4	13
Friulian language and culture (individual course)	19	24	22	18	5
Total	65	55	40	35	37

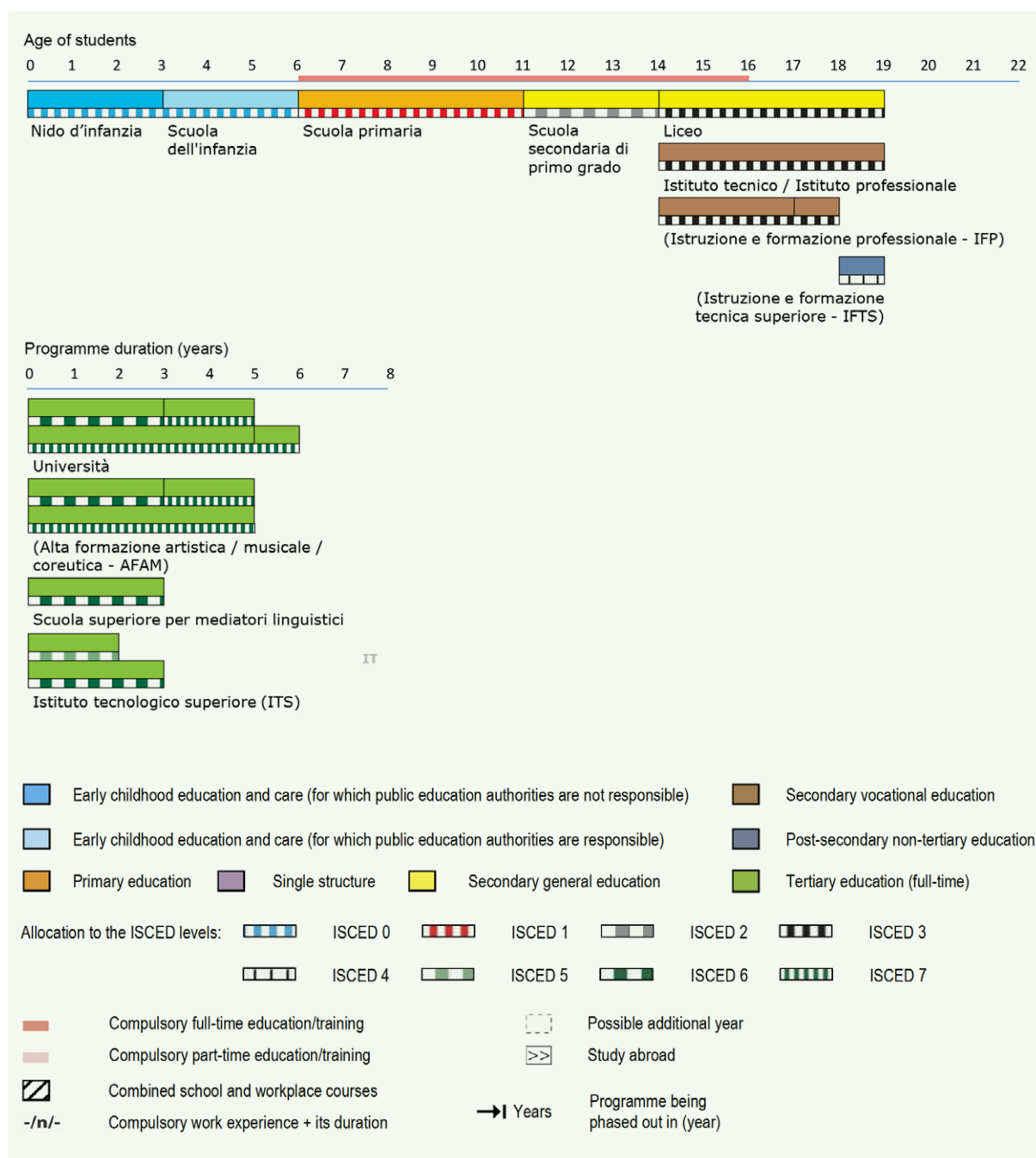
Note. Data from the University of Udine (personal communication, April 21, August 30, 2023).

Table 13 Participants in the Friulian courses offered by the SFF and the CIRF in the last five years (2018–2022).

Courses offered by the SFF	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022		
Mode	Face-to-face	Face-to-face	Face-to-face	Face-to-face	Online	Face-to-face	Online
No. of participants	488	483	139	171	267	379	185
				438		564	
Courses offered by the CIRF (for civil servants)	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022		
Mode	Face-to-face	Face-to-face	Online	Online	Online		
No. of participants	54	22	16	60	14		
Courses offered by the CIRF (for university students and young people)	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022		
Mode	Face-to-face	Face-to-face	Online	Online	Online		
No. of participants	31	37	82	47	30		

Note. Data from the SFF (personal communication, April 20, August 28, 2023) and the CIRF (personal communication, April 21, 2023).

Education system in Italy



Note. Law 99/2022 (Legge 15 luglio 2022, n. 99. Istituzione del Sistema terziario di istruzione tecnologica superiore) has reformed the *Istituto tecnico superiore* (ITS). The name was changed to *Istituto tecnologico superiore* (ITS Academy). In addition to 2-year ISCED 5 (International Standard Classification of Education) courses, it now offers 3-year ISCED 6 programmes. Implementation decrees are still under development. Reprinted from European Commission, European Education and Culture Executive Agency, and Eurydice (2023, p. 21).

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Useful addresses

Agenzie Regionâl pe Lenghe Furlane (ARLeF)

Regional Agency for the Friulian Language

Via della Prefettura 13, 33100 Udine

T: +39 0432 555812

E: arlef@regione.fvg.it

W: www.arlef.it

Centri di Linguistiche Aplicade "Agnul Pitane" (CLAAP)

Centre of Applied Linguistics "Agnul Pitane"

Via Ziracco 32, 33047 Remanzacco

T: +39 02 6947 70302

E: info@claa.org

W: www.claap.org

Centro Interdipartimentale per lo Sviluppo della Lingua e della Cultura del Friuli (CIRF)

Interdepartmental Centre for the Development of Friuli's Language and Culture

Via Petracco 6, 33100 Udine

T: +39 0432 556480

E: cirf@uniud.it

W: www.cirf.uniud.it

Centro Internazionale sul Plurilinguismo (CeIP)

International Center on Plurilingualism

Via Mazzini 3, 33100 Udine

T: +39 0432 556460

E: ceip1@uniud.it

W: www.uniud.it/it/ateneo-uniud/ateneo-uniud-organizzazione/altre-strutture/centro-internazionale-plurilinguismo

Dipartimento di Lingue e Letterature, Comunicazione, Formazione e Società (DILL)

Department of Languages and Literature, Communication, Education and Society

Palazzo Antonini-Cernazai, via Petracco 8, 33100 Udine

T: + 39 0432 556900

E: amministrazione.dill@uniud.it

W: www.dill.uniud.it/it

Direzione Centrale Lavoro, Formazione, Istruzione e Famiglia della RA FVG

Central Directorate for Labour, Training, Education and Family of the RA FVG

Via San Francesco 37, 34133 Trieste

T: +39 040 3775287

E: lavoro@regione.fvg.it

W: www.regione.fvg.it/rafvrg/organigramma/organigramma.act?cerca=65000000000&ref=/organigramma/homeOrganigramma.act&dir=/rafvrg/cms/RAFVG/organigramma/&orig=1

Docuscuele–Centri Regionali di Documentazione, Ricerche e Sperimentazione Didattiche per Scuole Furlane

Docuscuele–Regional Centre of Documentation, Research and Educational

Experimentation for Friulian Schools

Palazzo Mantica, via Manin 18, 33100 Udine

T: +39 0432 501598 (int. 5)

E: info@scuelefurlane.it

W: www.scuelefurlane.it

Ministero dell’Istruzione e del Merito (MIM)

Ministry of Education and Merit

Viale Trastevere 76/a, 00153 Roma

T: +39 06 58491

W: www.miur.gov.it

Ministero dell’Università e della Ricerca (MUR)

Ministry of University and Research

Largo Antonio Ruberti 1, 00153 Roma

T: +39 06 97721

W: www.mur.gov.it

Regione Autonoma Friuli Venezia Giulia (RA FVG)

Autonomous Region of Friuli Venezia Giulia

Piazza Unità d’Italia 1, 34121 Trieste

T: +39 040 3771111

E: regione.friuliveneziagiulia@certregione.fvg.it

W: www.regione.fvg.it/rafvrg/cms/RAFVG/

Servizio Lingue Minoritarie e Corregionali all’estero della RA FVG

Service for Minority Languages and Corregionals Abroad of the RA FVG

Via Milano 19, 34132 Trieste

T: +39 040 3775729

E: corregionalifvg@regione.fvg.it

W: www.regione.fvg.it/rafvrg/organigramma/organigramma.act?cerca=35000400000&ref=/organigramma/homeOrganigramma.act&dir=/rafvrg/cms/RAFVG/organigramma/&orig=1

Societât Filologjiche Furlane / Società Filologica Friulana

Friulian Philological Society

Palazzo Mantica, via Manin 18, 33100 Udine

T: +39 0432 501598

E: info@filologicafriulana.it

W: www.filologicafriulana.it

Ufficio Scolastico Regionale per il Friuli Venezia Giulia (USR FVG)

Regional School Office for Friuli Venezia Giulia

Via Santi Martiri 3, 34123 Trieste

T: +39 040 4194111

E: direzione-friuliveneziagiulia@istruzione.it

W: www.usrfvg.gov.it/it/home/index.html

Università degli Studi di Udine / Universitât dal Friûl

University of Udine

via Palladio 8, 33100 Udine

T: +39 0432 556111

E: urp@uniud.it

W: www.uniud.it/it



About this Regional Dossier

author biographies

Ada Bier, PhD, is currently a postdoc researcher at the University of the Basque Country (UPV/EHU). Under the supervision of Prof. David Lasagabaster, she carried out the Marie Skłodowska-Curie project titled “Promoting Friulian within Multilingual Education: A cross-country, cross-stage, cross-level comparison of Friulian and Basque teachers’ language attitudes and motivation in search of best practices (FURLEUS)”. Bier has been collaborating with the *Societât Filologjiche Furlane* (SFF – Friulian Philological Society) since 2017 and serves as the scientific coordinator of the online training courses (Friulian language courses and CLIL teacher training courses) organised by the SFF. She has worked as postdoc researcher at both the Ca’ Foscari University of Venice and the University of Udine.

Gabriele Zanella, PhD, is currently a researcher in Romance philology and linguistics at the University of Udine, after having been a researcher in didactics of modern languages at the same university. In addition to dealing with plurilingual education in the minority context of Friuli Venezia Giulia, he is interested in the experiences of translation into Friulian that have been elaborated over the centuries, in the production of homiletics and catechesis in Friulian, and in general in Friulian literature, language, and linguistics. He is author of over 100 scientific contributions, including volumes, essays, articles, and biographical entries, and has held conferences and seminars in Italy and abroad.

Antonella Ottogalli, MA, is the referent person of the *Docuscuele*–Regional Centre of Documentation, Research and Educational Experimentation for Friulian Schools of the *Societât Filologjiche Furlane* (Friulian Philological Society). Since the establishment of the *Docuscuele* in 2016, she has been responsible for the organisation of in-service training activities for Friulian language teachers, for the collection, improvement, and dissemination of teaching materials produced in schools in the context of Friulian teaching, for the publication of materials for teachers and pupils of all school levels, and for the promotion of the Friulian language and culture at school through specific projects and events.

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Other websites on minority languages

Mercator European Research Centre

www.mercator-research.eu

Homepage of the Mercator European Research Centre on Multilingualism and Language Learning. The website contains the Regional Dossier series, publications, information on current activities and projects, and many links to relevant websites.

Mercator Network

www.mercator-research.eu/en/about/partnerships/

General information about the Mercator European Network of Language Diversity Centres.

European Commission

www.education.ec.europa.eu/focus-topics/improving-quality/multilingualism/linguistic-diversity

The website of the European Commission gives information about the EU's support for language diversity.

Council of Europe

www.conventions.coe.int

European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (1992) and *Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities* (1995). European Treaty Series 148 and 157, Strasbourg.

Eurydice

www.eurydice.eacea.ec.europa.eu

Eurydice is the information network on education in Europe. The site provides information on all European education systems and education policies.

European Parliament Committee – supporting analyses database

www.europarl.europa.eu/committees/en/home

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

NPLD

www.npld.eu

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

FUEN

www.fuen.org

The Federal Union of European Nationalities (FUEN) is the umbrella organisation of the autochthonous, national minorities/ethnic groups in Europe and represents the interests of European minorities at the regional, national, and European levels.

ELEN

www.elen.ngo

The European Language Equality Network (ELEN) is a non-governmental organisation that has as its goal the promotion and protection of European lesser-used (i.e. regional, minority, endangered, indigenous, co-official, and smaller national) languages, to work towards linguistic equality for these languages, and multilingualism, under the broader framework of human rights, and to be a voice for the speakers of these languages at all levels.

YEN

www.yeni.org

Youth of European Nationalities (YEN) is the largest network of youth organisations of autochthonous, national, and linguistic minorities in Europe.



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contact

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- Maltese:** The Maltese language in education in Malta (2013)
- Manx Gaelic:** The Manx Gaelic language in education in the Isle of Man (2016)
- Meänkieli and Sweden Finnish:** The Finnic languages in education in Sweden (2001)
- Mongolian:** The Mongolian language in education in the People's Republic of China (2019)
- Nenets, Khanty and Selkup:** The Nenets, Khanty and Selkup languages in education in the Yamal Region in Russia (2016; [Russian translation available](#))

North Frisian: The North Frisian language in education in Germany (2015, 3rd ed.)

Occitan: The Occitan language in education in France (2019, 2nd ed.)

Polish: The Polish language in education in Lithuania (2006)

Romani and Beash: The Romani and Beash languages in education in Hungary (2020, 2nd ed.)

Romansh: The Romansh language in education in Switzerland (2017)

Sami: The Sami language in education in Sweden (2020, 2nd ed.)

Scots: The Scots language in education in Scotland (2017, 2nd ed.)

Serbian: The Serbian language in education in Hungary (2014)

Slovak: The Slovak language in education in Hungary (2005)

Slovene: The Slovene language in education in Austria (2023, 3rd ed.)
The Slovene language in education in Italy (2020, 3rd ed.)

Sorbian: The Sorbian language in education in Germany (2016, 2nd ed.)

Swedish: The Swedish language in education in Finland (2013, 2nd ed.)

Turkish: The Turkish language in education in Greece (2019, 2nd ed.)

Udmurt: The Udmurt language in education in the Udmurt Republic in Russia (2019; Russian translation available)

Ukrainian and Ruthenian: The Ukrainian and Ruthenian languages in education in Poland (2006)

Ulster-Scots: The Ulster-Scots language in education in Northern Ireland (2020)

Võro: The Võro language in education in Estonia (2019, 2nd ed.)

Welsh: The Welsh language in education in the UK (2014, 2nd ed.)

THE FRIULIAN LANGUAGE IN EDUCATION IN ITALY



c/o Fryske Akademy
Doelestrjitte 8
PO Box 54
NL-8900 AB Ljouwert/Leeuwarden
The Netherlands

T: 0031 (0) 58 - 234 3027
W: www.mercator-research.eu
E: mercator@fryske-akademy.nl
