

**RA MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SCIENCE  
YEREVAN STATE LINGUISTIC UNIVERSITY AFTER  
V. BRUSOV**

**LANGUAGE EDUCATION  
POLICY PROFILE**

**COUNTRY REPORT  
ARMENIA**

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# LANGUAGE EDUCATION POLICY PROFILE COUNTRY REPORT - ARMENIA

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# I. GENERAL INFORMATION

## 1. PROJECT GOALS

Since 2002, the Council of Europe Language Policy Division proposes to assist member states in reviewing their language education policy.

In October 2005, the Steering Committee for Education accepted Armenia's request to join the "Language Education Policy Profile" programme, which began in Armenia in Spring of 2007.

### **The project goals are:**

- To analyze and evaluate the situation of language education in all spheres, touching upon its strengths and weaknesses.
- To discuss the development and implementation of fundamental principles of Council of Europe language policy in Armenia.
- To work out the general concept of language policy in Armenia.
- To promote the development of multilingualism in the society, including regional or minority languages.
- To support plurilingualism and strive for lifelong language learning (from preschool age till adulthood and for the rest of life)
- To turn into reality the concept of joint Europe through promoting the development of multilingualism:
  - Facilitate the communication between people
  - Promote the implementation of people's right for free mobility

In April 2007 CE representative experts (Johanna Panthier and Elidir King) paid their first visit to Armenia to plan the process and to support Armenian specialists who will prepare the country report.

By the order of the RA Minister of Education and Science a group of representatives from Yerevan Brusov State Linguistic University was made up, the mission of which is to prepare the Country Report on language education policy.

The second visit of the CE experts (Johanna Panthier, Elidir King, Jean-Claude Beacco, Maria Stoicheva and Dolores Sole Vilanova) took place in April 12-18, 2008. They had many meetings with the working group that prepared the country report, with

the Minister of education and science and other officials, specialists in the field of language policy. They also visited schools and universities in Yerevan and the marzes, as well as national minority communities and their schools; they took part in teachers' training courses.

Together with the working group and the language policy specialists they discussed the draft version of the country report, made suggestions and clarifications.

Based on this report and on direct contacts with many stakeholders during a week-visit to Armenia, the Council of Europe team will prepare an expert report.

This document will then be discussed by correspondence with the Armenian authorities and with more stakeholders during a round table in Yerevan. The final document, entitled "Language Education Policy Profile of Armenia" will be prepared by the CoE team in co-operation with the Armenian team. It will be published after approval by the Armenian authorities.

## 2. GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND PRINCIPLES OF COUNCIL OF EUROPE LANGUAGE POLICY

Europe is multilingual and, it is also various in the cultural sense. Thus, to provide its economic competitiveness in the world market as well as to reach mutual understanding between the Europeans, it needs effective communication. The present language policy is very important for this purpose. Introduction of the language policy in the social policy is essential, especially the one that aims at sowing perception of European community, as well as civic society and democratic values.

The objectives of the Council of Europe in the field of modern languages are the following:

- To equip all the Europeans with means to withstand the challenges of more active movement in the international arena and closer cooperation not only in the field of education, culture and science, but trade and industry as well.
- To promote mutual understanding and tolerance, respect towards national identity and cultural diversity through effective international communication.
- To maintain and further develop the diversity and values of cultural life in Europe through mutual in-depth learning of regional or minority (including rarely learned) languages.
- To meet the needs of the multilingual and multicultural Europe through developing language skills, as well as skills to communicate with the Europeans by overcoming the linguistic and cultural barriers<sup>1</sup>.

From the viewpoint of the language education policy development it is necessary to consider both sides of multilingualism/plurilingualism (Armenian has one word for both).

- **Plurilingualism:** the person knows several foreign languages
- **Multilingualism:** coexistence of different languages in the given country, region.

To achieve its general goal of “reaching a closer unity of its members” the Council of Europe “has adopted a joint policy in the field of culture”. In the field of modern

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<sup>1</sup> CEFR, p.3



languages the Council of Europe acts based on mutual agreement and continuity, staying true to its main principles:

- **Linguistic and cultural diversity:** the rich heritage of various languages and cultures in Europe is a universal treasure, which should be preserved and developed, thus serious educational efforts are required to turn that diversity from a communication hinder into a source of mutual enrichment and respect,
- **Acceptance of equivalence of all languages:** respect towards all languages including the languages of national minorities and neighbouring peoples,
- **Effective interracial and intercultural communication:** which is provided on the joint methodological bases worked out by the Council of Europe (Common European Framework or References),
- **Free movement of population, mutual understanding and cooperation:** it is possible to facilitate the communication and interaction of Europeans with different mother tongues only through better competence of modern languages, thus contributing to free movement of population, mutual understanding and cooperation, as well as to overcoming preconceived opinions and discrimination
- **Lifelong education.** Today language learning is considered to be an ongoing problem for the whole life, so it is very important for the younger generation to develop their motivations, ability and confidence to get new linguistic experience outside school, which is the important precondition for lifelong learning.

Armenia's language education policy should also be aimed at integration, first in European and then in the world universal educational field, taking into consideration the national characteristics and traditions of education and culture.

The Republic of Armenia actively develops its international relations, which brings about the necessity in all layers of the society to raise the level of foreign language skills. The role of foreign languages is becoming bigger in raising the reputation of the country in the international arena introducing spiritual values of Armenian people to the world community. Irrespective of the growing demand, the foreign language competence of Armenian population is not on a satisfactory level.

However, the present teaching-learning system does not correspond to the modern requirements; consequently, it insufficiently and not completely provides the usage of foreign language potential as a factor that contributes to the formation of a plurilingual individual and his psychological development. Thus, it is required to radically

consider the language education issue in the field of general education, as well as professional education.

The knowledge of a language or languages is no longer a profession under the present conditions; it is a must for any specialist. Non-specialist language education should solve other problems; to communicate, that is to gain information, work it out, save and exchange, which supposes a deeper and direct inclusion of language education in the educational strategy of the given profession.

### 3. REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA (RA)

#### General Information



#### 3.1. Armenia's Geographical Position

The Republic of Armenia is situated in Southern Caucasus.

The area is 29,74 thousand sq.km, the average height is 1.800m above sea level.

The capital is Yerevan.

#### Armenia's neighbouring countries

Georgia in the north

Azerbaijan in the east

Iran in the south

Naghichevan (Azerbaijan) in the south-west

Turkey in the west

### **3.2. RA Administrative Division**

Armenia is a unitarian country. Armenia's administrative divisions are marzes (regions) and communities.

There are 10 marzes in Armenia:

Ararat Marz, Aragatsothn Marz, Armavir Marz, Gegharkunik Marz, Lori Marz, Kotayk Marz, Shirak Marz, Syunik Marz Vayots Dzor Marz, Tavush Marz

The capital Yerevan also has a status of a marz.

### **3.3 Demographic Data**

The population is 3,210,000 (according to census of 2001)

More than 5 million Armenians live outside Armenia who consider Armenian their mother tongue.

**Ethnic composition** (according to census of 2001)

Armenians 97.8%

National minorities: Russians (0.5%), Yezidis (1.3%), Kurds (0.05%), Assyrians (0.1%), Greeks (0.04%), Ukrainians (0.05%), Jews and other nationalities (0.1%).

## **4. LEGISLATIVE REGULATION OF RA LANGUAGE EDUCATION**

In the Republic of Armenia a number of laws and legislative acts regulate the sphere of education (including language education), which also includes the rights of the national minorities to get education in their mother tongue, as well as to freely develop their national language and culture.

### **4.1. RA Constitution (Adopted 05.07. 2005)**

RA Constitution considers one of the priorities of the country's foreign policy the conduct of that policy in accordance with the principles and norms of the international law, with the aim of establishing good neighborly and mutually beneficial relations with all states (Article 9), which supposes predominance of norms of international rights in all the spheres.

The RA Constitution declares Armenian (Article 12) as the official language, which though, does not restrict the rights of other languages, as the Constitution states that everybody shall be equal before the law and prohibits discrimination of sex, race, colour, ethnic or social origin, language, religion, worldview, political or any other opinion, membership of a national minority, etc (Article 14.1), as well as it prohibits to exercise rights and freedoms to incite national, racial, religious hatred or to propagate violence (Article 47).

The Constitution confirms every person's right to preserve his/her national and ethnic identity, as well as the right of people belonging to national minorities to preserve and develop their traditions, religion, language and culture (Article 41).

In line with the basic rights and freedoms of a person or a citizen, the Constitution also defines the right of a person deprived of freedom to be immediately informed of the reasons for imprisonment, and in case of indictment, of the accusation in the language comprehensible to him/her (Article 16, par. 7):

As the Armenian people has had a great number of Diaspora under the historical circumstances and the Armenian language and culture have been formed and developed in the Armenian Diaspora as well, the Constitution also states Armenia's obligation to contribute to fostering relations with the Armenian Diaspora, protecting Armenian historical and cultural values located in other countries, advancing Armenian

educational and cultural life within the framework of the norms and principles of international law (Article 11).

## **4.2. Laws**

### **4.2.1. RA Law on Language**

**(Adopted on 17.04.1993)**

Basic principles for languages, language education and language policy are defined by the RA Law on language adopted in 1993 (17.04). This law regulates the language situation, language relations of state authorities and government bodies, enterprises, institutions and organizations.

The law states, that the official language of the Republic of Armenia is Armenian, which is used in all spheres of life in the country and that the country supports the protection and dissemination of the Armenian language among Armenians living outside Armenia. At the same time, the Republic of Armenia guarantees the free usage of national minority languages on its territory (Article 1).

The same law also defines that, literary Armenian is the language used to educate and teach at the educational institutions on the territory of Armenia (Article 2), which, though, does not violate the rights of other languages, as the article defines, that in the national minority communities located in Armenia the general education can be organized in their mother tongue with state programme and patronage, with mandatory teaching of Armenian (Article 2).

The law restricts the right of establishing foreign language non-public educational institutions, granting that right only to the RA Government (Article 2).

Besides, the official language status brings about the provision of law, that both in RA primary and vocational, as well as higher educational institutions the entrance exam from Armenian and the study of Armenian language are mandatory (Article 2).

The law defines the **language duties** of RA citizens and **language rights and duties** of institutions.

The provision on citizens' language duties first of all refers to officials, as well as to certain RA citizens working in the sphere of service, who must get proficient in Armenian. Besides, the language of official talks of people introducing Armenia must be Armenian (if it does not contradict the law in the given international organization). (Article 3).

The language rights and obligations of the institutions applies to all the enterprises, offices and organizations located on the territory of Armenia, which communicate with state bodies, enterprises, offices, organizations and citizens of other countries in a

mutually comprehensible language, though on the territory of Armenia state bodies, enterprises, offices and organizations must do the correspondence in Armenian. They must provide simultaneous interpretation of non Armenian speeches during congresses, sessions, meetings, conferences, public dissertations and official and other mass gatherings, as well as design posters, forms, stamps, seals, international postal envelopes in Armenian and if necessary combine with other languages (Article 4).

As far as foreign state bodies, enterprises, offices and organizations located on the territory of Armenia are concerned, they must combine the Armenian translation of the documents subject to state control (Article 4):

Organizations of national minorities living on the territory of Armenia must also design their documents, forms, seals in Armenian, combined with the translation in their language (Article 4).

Though it was mentioned in the law that the official language policy would be held by the RA government, state authorities and local governing bodies (Article 5) the specific state programme on RA language policy was adopted only in 2002.

#### **4.2.2. RA Law on Advertisement**

**Adopted 30.04.1996**

The RA Law on Advertisement also has corresponding provisions about the language (Article 5. General requirements for advertisement). It is stated, that in the Republic of Armenia the language of advertisement is Armenian. The same article states, "if necessary, as an addition, upon the advertiser's discretion, the statement of the advertisement can also be combined with other languages, with comparatively small letters". The article also states that this provision does not extend to newspapers published in foreign languages, special publications, labels and brands, and that the information size of the Armenian statement in the advertisement must not be less than the foreign language statement.

#### **4.2.3. RA Law on TV and Radio**

**Adopted 09.10.2000**

The law on TV and Radio also regulates the languages broadcast. Article 5 on the language of TV and Radio programmes defines, that "The language of TV and Radio programs broadcasted in Republic of Armenia is Armenian, except the cases adopted by the same law. TV and Radio companies should provide their programs with language purity."

The same Article states that “TV and Radio programs, artistic, documentary films, cartoons in foreign languages and episodes from Armenian programs in foreign languages are broadcasted with simultaneous Armenian translation by sound or video means.”

The Article has a separate statement about TV and Radio language teaching programs, songs and other musical programs, which can be broadcasted without Armenian translation.

The law also defines that these provisions are not spread upon TV and Radio programs broadcasted for foreign countries and upon the programs broadcasted in the language of national minorities.

Article 28 defines the status and principles of the activity of the TV and Radio Company, according to which the public TV and Radio Company can give time to special programmes broadcast in minority languages. The time for such programmes on TV should not be more than an hour a week and on the Radio not more than an hour a day.

#### **4.2.4. RA Law as Foundation of Cultural Legislation Adopted 20.11.2002**

RA Law on Basis of Cultural Legislation (Article 6) defines that languages, dialects, national traditions and customs, historical geographical names, etc., are cultural values under the regulation and protection of the law.

Article 8 of the same law defines the attitude towards the national minority cultures, according to which, Republic of Armenia supports to preserve and develop the cultural independence of the national minorities living in Armenia, with the help of state programs promoting the creation of conditions to preserve, spread and develop the belief, traditions, language, cultural inheritance and culture.

#### **4.2.5. RA Law on Education Adopted 14.04.1999**

The RA Law on Education regulates the state policy on education, its principles, including issues concerning language policy and language education in the field of education.



According to this law, one of the priorities of state policy in the field of education is the progressive development of this sphere, as an important factor for strengthening the statehood.

The state policy in the field of education is based on the national school, the main goal of which is the formation of a person with proper professional training and comprehensive development, with good perception of statehood and love for mankind, ready to protect the country. The RA system of education aims at strengthening the spiritual and mental potential of the Armenian people, at preservation and development of national and universal values (Article 4).

Some of the important principles of state policy in the field of education are

- Humane nature of education, priority of universal values, free and comprehensive development of an individual, civic perception, national dignity, patriotism, etc.
- Accessibility, continuity, succession and conformity of education with the level of learners' development
- Integration in the international educational system
- Supporting the educational process of preserving Armenians in Diaspora
- Secular education in educational institutions, etc. (Article 5).

At the same time the law defines the state guarantees for rights to education (Article 6), that is the state provide the right to education irrespective of the nationality, race, sex, religion, political or other beliefs, social origin, property status or other circumstance.

### **Language of Schooling (Article 7)**

In the republic of Armenia education is implemented in accord with the RA Law on Language, which defines that, literary Armenian is the language used to educate and teach at the educational institutions on the territory of Armenia (Article 2). As to the other language rights, the same Article defines that in the national minority communities located in Armenia the general education can be organized in their mother tongue with state programme and patronage, with mandatory teaching of Armenian (Article 2).

In the general requirements for educational context (Article 11) the law defines that it should provide not only the formation of the learners' world outlook in conformity with the modern level of knowledge and educational programmes, but also the formation of the modern individual and citizen, perception of national and universal

cultural values by the learners, which is impossible without providing high level of foreign language teaching.

In line with the main objectives of the preschool education the law states the necessity to communicate in mother language and based on that provide preconditions to study foreign languages (Article17). In line with the main objectives of the general education the law states the importance of the formation of “an individual and citizen with active civic disposition, concerned in universal and national values, carrier of the national cultural and ethical-psychological heritage.”

#### **4.2.6. RA Code on Administrative Offences (Adopted 06.12.1985)**

In Chapter 14 of the law “Administrative offences against the established order of governing”, administrative punishment is imposed, if educational institutions in Armenia do not ensure teaching of the subjects in Armenian, or if vocational, upper vocational and higher educational institutions do not ensure entrance exam in Armenian language and teaching of Armenian language (Article 189.2).

### **4.3. Legislative Acts**

#### **4.3.1. State Order on General Education Confirmed 27.05.2004, by RA Government Decision N 20**

The State Order on General Education (adopted by the RA Government Resolution N20, of May 27, 2004), includes the main provisions of the education policy, the common principles of teaching, learning and assessment. Adoption of this document is conditioned by the necessity to provide legal mechanisms and guarantees for educational system function and development, implementation and protection of educational rights stated in RA Constitution.

The document declares that education is the guarantee and important factor for the country’s development and strengthening, for providing national security.

In the main functions of the education order, it is important to provide unification of the policy in the field of education, to improve the quality of education in accord with the internationally accepted requirements and standards.

Analyzing the factors that bring about the necessity to reform the general education system, the Order states all the system changes that take place in all spheres

of life, which are conditioned by not only national characteristics, but also geopolitical, demographic, cultural and social factors peculiar to world developments.

Defining the basic principles for organizing the general education, the Order particularly states the harmonious combination of universal values based on the national one, implementation of education in RA official language, being task-oriented towards preservation and development of Armenian language and cultural heritage, providing national identity and unity. At the same time it states, the secular nature of education, being devoid of discrimination and limitations, availability to everybody irrespective of the nationality, race, sex, language, religion, political or other beliefs, social origin, property status or other circumstance.

It is said in the Order, that based on the Law on Education, the development of national minority language and cultural rights is implemented through general education.

The formation of an individual with state mentality and ready to withstand the future challenges is one of the priorities in the Order for the strengthening of the statehood and providing national security. From this viewpoint, there are a number of requirements to the graduate of the public school, in particular

- to know his/her country, to be a patriot, to be proficient in the official language, perceive the role of the Armenian people and Armenian statehood within the world civilization, state mentality and consciousness of the self
- at the same time he/she should be aware of the achievements of the world civilizations, respect the universal values, as well as to be able to communicate in at least two foreign languages and to apply modern means of communication.

#### **4.3.2. State Standards for Secondary Education Confirmed 17.06.2004, by RA Government Resolution N 900**

The state standard on secondary education defines the structure of the education content, the learners' maximum educational load, the general qualitative requirements to the learners, forms of assessment and scales.

The state standard for secondary education is being developed in accord with the principles established in the state curriculum.

According to state standard on secondary education

- subject standards and programmes, exemplary curriculums and other normative documents regulating the educational process are being created,
- preparation, professional training and testing of teachers and senior pedagogical personnel is being organized,

- the results of the general education are being assessed,
- programmes, textbooks and other educational materials are being revised,
- the state standard on secondary education is being localized by a school component in accord with the characteristics of the school.

At the same time, it is defined that the subject standard is developed in accord with the basic principles stated in the state curriculum of general education, and state programmes of subjects are developed based on the subject standard, which serve as ground to create textbooks, handbooks and other educational materials.

In accord with the state standard on secondary education the content of the secondary education is also defined which is introduced by the fields of education and contextual components.

In the standard, languages are introduced in two separate educational fields:

- Armenian language and literature
- Foreign languages

Though, on the assumption of the national characteristics, Armenian language is introduced as a separate field of study, content components of education are general for all nine fields of education.

They are:

- System of knowledge
- Skills and abilities
- System of values.

By the RA Government Resolution (10.01.2008 N 111 – N dated) amendments have been made in the state standard on secondary education, according to which in the public school the subject “Foreign language” is introduced in three foreign languages, one of which is Russian. The order of choosing foreign languages and the sequence of grades for teaching is defined by the exemplary curriculum.

Thus, through the state funding the secondary school has the opportunity to teach the third foreign language. This change will contribute to the preservation of French and German languages traditionally taught at many schools.

This decision of teaching three foreign languages at public schools is very important and it creates favorable grounds for

- the development of plurilingualism/multilingualism, one of the most important provisions of the Council of Europe language education policy,

- restoring proportionality of foreign languages in the field of language education in Armenia (which was distorted through the predominance of English over German and French).

In accord with the RA Government decision dated May 8, 2008, another amendment has been made in the clarifications of the basic educational plan for the public school, according to which upon the agreement by the Ministry amendment can be made in the basic educational plans “with the programmes, textbooks and other literature recommended by the Ministry for advanced teaching of certain subjects.”

#### **4.3.3. RA State Programme on Language Policy**

**Confirmed 18.02.2002, by RA Government Resolution N138**

Republic of Armenia State Programme on Language Policy is an important document ratified by RA Government resolution N138 on February 18, 2002.

The is for regulation of literary Armenian, for the national minority language problems, educational system, Armenia-Diaspora relations, foreign language teaching system, official speech, mass media language, public writings and cultural spheres.

#### **Programme objectives**

- **Regulation of literary Armenian**
- **Ensuring full-scale presence of Armenian in the computer network**
- **Ensuring education in official language**
- **Providing teaching of Armenian to non-Armenian speakers**
- **Supporting mass media to ensure language purity**
- **Ensuring the implementation of legislative requirements in language design/formation of correspondence and public writings**
- **Ensuring the rights of national minorities in Armenia in the field of language**

It is stressed in the programme that the languages of national minorities are an integral part of RA language culture, its richness, and that the state attention towards these languages is of great importance for further democratization of our country and development of civil society.

The language rights of national minority representatives, who are RA citizens, have double nature: national and public. On the national level the right of the mother tongue competence, receiving education and language use is ensured. On the public

level the competence and usage of the official language – Armenian – is the right and duty of all RA citizens.

To ensure these rights the programme envisaged

- Comprehensive support to national minority languages preservation and development,
- Support to effective language communication and mutual understanding between the national minorities in accordance with the norms of Council of Europe language policy,
- Involvement of scientific-pedagogical potential from intelligentsia in the national minorities to ensure the rights of the given nation to get education in their mother tongue,
- Support in activities of training and retraining national minority language teachers,
- **Support to preservation of Armenians in Diaspora**

There are two variants of modern literary Armenian language: Eastern Armenian and Western Armenian. As the latter has undertaken the mission of preserving national identity of widespread Armenian people after the 1915 Genocide, the main goal of the language policy in Diaspora, as the introducer of the national interests, is to play a decisive role in preserving Armenians in Diaspora.

- **Improving foreign language teaching in RA**

At present, the problem of foreign language proficiency of RA citizens is of special importance. At the same time it is important that the processes of unification serve not the merging of peoples, but the goal of impartial and respectful assessment of own values, perception of world spiritual values, harmonious combination of the national and the universal.

In relation to the official language, the foreign languages have equal legislative role, but at the same time, it is obvious, that the public attitude to them is different. Under the historical circumstances, importance is given to the Russian language in Armenia.

Traditionally being the second language of teaching and communication in the territory of Armenia, and contributing to the familiarization with the world scientific and cultural achievements, the Russian language has a special role in Armenia's public life.

During the recent years, in the result of Armenia's liberalization and increasing international contacts, the English language, obviously expanding its functional geography, has had great public demand, very often at the expense of other foreign languages in the system of education. Thus it is necessary to provide equal distribution of all foreign languages in the system of education.

#### **4.3.4. RA State Programme on Education Development 2008-2015**

This draft of the state programme is still under discussion. The programme emphasizes the development prospects of Armenia's education system, which suppose improvement of language teaching quality and development of multilingualism.

From the viewpoint of education development challenges, the programme gives importance to the fact that Armenia is situated on the crossroad of cultures and civilizations, in the result of which Armenia and Armenians have acquired important qualities and functions like the role of a "bridge" between the civilizations. And realizing the innovations that come out of both eastern and western systems of value, for centuries the Armenian people has been able to restructure them within himself and make available and eligible for different geopolitical areas.

At the same time, being situated in an area, where interests of different geopolitical powers overlap, Armenia has adopted the strategy of active international integration. On the one hand this supposes active participation of the education sphere in the global and regional scientific-educational processes, on the other hand it brings about the problem of develop the potential for such participation, to provide with opportunities to overcome difficulties of language and intercultural communication.

Defining the priorities of the education development the programme emphasizes the necessity to improve the education content and standards. In the contextual reforms, in particular

- Priority will be given to abilities and skills to communicate in mother and foreign languages, to apply modern informational communication technologies and other skills.
- Profiles for comprehensive improvement will be drafted for teaching and using IT technologies when teaching mother or foreign languages, Armenology or other subjects.
- Opportunities for teaching some professional subjects in foreign languages and using foreign-language literature will be expanded in higher education.

**In the programme special importance is given to expanding participation in international networks.**

The policy of Armenia's educational system for European integration and participation in the Bologna process of reforms in the higher educational system remain the factors stipulating international cooperation and the potential for active participation in international networks. Taking further efforts in this direction, the state will support the strengthening of skills for cooperation and competitiveness between citizens, groups and institutions, both in regional and in global levels. Students will have greater opportunities for scholarships, grants and trainings, which will be aimed at developing cooperation with the best foreign universities and exchange programmes. Exchange programmes between Armenian and foreign schools will get support and be encouraged.

#### **4.4. Armenia's International Obligations**

The bases for Armenia's implementation of international obligations, is the regulation of the interrelation between the international right and RA interstate right by RA Legislation. According to RA Constitution "international treaties shall come into force only after being ratified or approved. The international treaties are a constituent part of the legal system of the Republic of Armenia. If a ratified international treaty stipulates norms other than those stipulated in the laws, the norms of the treaty shall prevail. The international treaties not complying with the Constitution cannot be ratified."(Article 6)

Consequently, international agreements signed by Armenia, are also constituent part of Armenia's state legislation.

After declaring independence (1991) the Republic of Armenia became a UNO member-state in March 1992. RA is also an active member of a number of international organizations (OSCE, UNESCO, etc.). Since January 25, 2001, Armenia has been a full member of the Council of Europe.

The RA has signed a number of international treaties and declarations on human rights protection, where, along with others, the state obligations and necessity for protecting language and cultural rights of a human are stated.

At the ceremony of becoming a member of the Council of Europe, the Republic of Armenia signed the 1950 European Convention of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms and its Protocols 1, 4, 6, 7.



Armenia has also signed the Council of Europe Cultural Agreement, the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minority Rights (July 25, 1997, then Armenia was not a member of the Council of Europe), the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (December 28, 2001), Enlarged Partial Agreement of the ECML (2001).

Being a member of Enlarged Partial Agreement of the CE, Armenia actively participates in the activities of the European Centre for Modern Languages in Graz.

## **5. LANGUAGE SITUATION**

### **5.1. General description**

The Republic of Armenia is an ethnically homogenous state (97.8% Armenians), but it does not strive for monolingualism.

The language policy in Armenia is under legal regulations of the Constitution and the Law on language. According to the Article 12 of the RA Constitution, the official language of the Republic of Armenia is Armenian; its functions are defined by the Law on Language, as well as by a range of other laws and sub-legislative acts (for details see “RA language education and legislative regulations” section). At the same time, the Constitution confirms the right of the national minorities: to preserve and develop their language and culture.

The part of the national legislation is the international agreements of RA, the Cultural Convention of the Council of Europe and the Charter for regional and minority languages. On the grounds of this two legal bases, in February of 2002 the RA Government adopted the “State Program on Language Policy of the Republic of Armenia”, where the most important fields and functions of the state or national The “Law on the Language” defines that Armenian language is the only state and official language in Armenia and it is the native language of more than 97% of the overwhelming majority of the population in Armenia.

Modern literary Armenian has two branches: Eastern Armenian and Western Armenian, which were formed in the result of political splitting of Armenia and Armenian people. The first was formed in the present Armenia, and the second – in former Western Armenia and in Diaspora.

### **5.2. Historical background**

The Republic of Armenia is situated on the Armenian Highlands. Since ancient times this area has been settled by Armenians, whose language was Armenian, one of the separate branches of the Indo-European language family. The Armenian language has an old history and traditions in far important fields of language usage: official, science, belles-lettres, religion, culture, etc. Being devoid of state independence and sometimes - even of territory, Armenians always attempted to preserve and develop their language as the highest remarkable factor and value of their national identity.

The modern Armenian language has covered a long way of development. The Armenian is one of the oldest languages and it has undergone many changes. The oldest variant of Armenian that has reached us is the Grabar (Old Armenian language), which became bases for the new literary language.

Today the new literary language is shown in two variants (Eastern Armenian and Western Armenian), there are also many dialects the carriers of which sometimes do not even understand each other.

This kind of hard language situation is conditioned by the land's regional-economic partition. This is why interregional subdialects were gradually formed, as well as a general "city" spoken language based on the Ararat region and Western Armenian dialect. Later, based on these interdialectal ways of speaking the two types of literary Armenian languages were formed: Western Armenian and Eastern Armenian, which were at the same time active in different areas of historic Armenia.

The social differentiation of the language in Armenia gets more complex with the existence of two types of modern literary Armenian language, with great disconnection of literary and spoken languages, with many dialects and their affection on the literary language.

In the cities, the language situation is marked by the fact, that each of the social groups talks and communicates in its way of Armenian.

However, during the last several centuries the Armenian language, especially the eastern one, has had no opportunity to develop normally in all fields of language activity and has lost its most important activities in the spheres of official language, science and higher education.

### **5.3. Language situation during the Soviets (before 1990)**

Under the Soviets in Armenia, like in any other soviet republic, Russian language, along with the mother tongue, was considered an official language, very often even "the second mother tongue". Along with the Armenian language, sometimes even more than

Armenian, the Russian language was common in state and party structures, spheres of business, education and service, in mass media, often even in family relations.

Though the Russian community in Armenia is quite small, the Russian language still remains a mother tongue for a great number of Armenians, especially for 300 thousand refugees, and for foreigners. Besides, Russian remains the main means of communication (*lingua franca*) on the territory of CIS countries, including Southern Caucasia. Russian language provides the basic information inflow in the fields of mass media, culture, science, education etc. The historical and contemporary relations of Armenia and Russia, their strategic activity and cooperation in various fields, also promotes the being of Russian the most important of foreign languages in the functional meaning.

Taking into account the importance of Russian, in 1999 the government of Armenia adopted the state conception about the development of Russian language in Armenia “Russian language in the system of education, cultural and social life of Armenia”.

Though the Soviet Armenia had declared Armenian as the official language, in far more important fields (official language, education) the situation was bilingual, and the Russian language was equally used with the Armenian language. The usage improportionality of these two languages could finally result in forcing out Armenian, and that tendency was already obvious.

#### **5.4. Language situation after 1990s**

Since 1990, after Armenia declared its independence, not only legislative but also practical steps were taken in respect to the policy of developing the Armenian language and enhancing its fields of usage. Taking into consideration the above-mentioned risks it was necessary to ensure the dominance of Armenian language in the fields of official language, information, education and higher education, which first happened through administrative, and in 1993, through legislative means as well. As is defined by the “Law on Language” the official language of teaching and upbringing in the educational structures on the territory of the Republic of Armenia is Armenian, and it is the only official language of the state bodies, offices, and organizations, as well as of the officials of the Republic of Armenia. One of the Law’s requirements is that the officials and the citizens of the Republic of Armenia working in the fields of service are obliged to know Armenian well.

#### **5.5. Bilingualism**

In different times, besides Armenians various foreign language communities as invaders (Arabs, Turks, Persians, Mongolians, etc.) had temporarily inhabited on the Armenian highlands. There were also peaceful immigrants (Georgians, Assyrians, Greeks, Russians, Germans, Gypsies, Yezidis, Kurds, etc.), or deported and exiled (Russian language Molokans, Jews, Utis, etc.)<sup>2</sup>

The direct contact between Armenian and Russian languages has started since the 19<sup>th</sup> century and during this time, it was not once that the social status of the languages and the functional role have changed. During the last two centuries the Russian language has actively used in Armenia (in the beginning Armenia was a part of Russian Empire, and then one of the USSR republics).

Under the created historical-political conditions Armenian has actively interacted with the Russian language, in the result of which today most of the (adult) population in Armenia is bilingual, or has some proficiency of Russian (in the broad sense of bilingualism).

It is natural for Armenia to have a subordinative type of bilingualism to which legal disparity of language status is peculiar: one language - Armenian, let us say, dominates over the other. This is the far widespread type of bilingualism, which is peculiar to most of the urban schools in the republic, and to most of the schools.

Bilingualism in Armenia (Armenian/Russian) was widespread mainly in cities, and in rural areas, mostly monolingualism was widespread: the population mostly communicated in mother tongue and in local dialect (diglossia). The fact, that nearly 70% of the population in Armenia was urban, also affected the spreading of Armenian-Russian bilingualism.

It is peculiar to the language situation in Armenia that parallel to the literary language there is also the colloquial type of the language, as well as many dialects. Besides natives from Yerevan, who are the main carriers of the literary language, there also live many immigrants in Yerevan, which are divided into three groups by their language activity:

- 1 Immigrants from other cities and villages in Armenia
- 2 Immigrants from other republics and countries
- 3 Repatriates (Armenians from Diaspora<sup>3</sup>)

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<sup>2</sup> RA First Report on Regional or Minority Languages according to Par. 1 of Article 15 of the European Charter

<sup>3</sup> Grigoryan E.A. Danielyan M.G. 2006, p.16.

After Armenia became independent, there came a period when poor proficiency of Armenian language became a serious social problem for many people. Publication of books, especially belles-lettres and children's literature had reduced. Decrease in the level of general education had its negative impact on the language culture: the language of press and officials' speeches, as well as poor language proficiency of school graduates are striking illustrations of that. The State programme on language policy aimed at eliminating the present negative phenomena.

## 5.6. RA Demographic Situation<sup>4</sup>

During centuries many national minorities have settled and still live on the territory of Armenia, and now they make nearly 2.2% of the population in the Republic of Armenia.

**Table 1**

### RA ethnic composition according to 2001 census

	2001 census	
	Absolute number	Per cent
Armenians	3.145.354	97,8
Yezidis	40.620	1,3
Kurds	1.519	0,05
Russians	14.660	0,5
Ukrainians	1.633	0,05
Assyrians	3.409	0,1
Greeks	1.176	0,04
Other nationalities	4.640	0,1
<b>Total</b>	<b>3.213.011</b>	<b>100</b>

Out of 20 nationalities living in Armenia together with Armenians, the following are quantitatively noteworthy: Assyrians, Greeks, Yezidis, Kurds, Russians, as well as Byelorussians, Ukrainians, Georgians, Germans, Polish and Jews.

From the chronological viewpoint we should mention, that the present communities of the national minorities settled in Armenia mainly starting from the second quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century<sup>5</sup>.

<sup>4</sup> When writing this section, we were based on the data and materials from Armenia's first report in accord with Paragraph 1 of Article 15 of European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages. Yerevan, 2007

<sup>5</sup> The first groups of **Russians** that settled in Armenia in 1830-1850, were exiled from Russia groups of Christian sectarians (molokan, prigun and others) who still live in villages Lermonotovo, Fioletovo, Ptivolnoye, Medovka, Kruglaya Shishka, Novoseltsovo, Saratovka, Mikhailovka, Petrovka, Blagodarnoye, Pushkino, Semionovka, Chkalovka, Bovadzor, Urasar, and in towns Dilijan, Tchambarak, Stepanavan.

During the Soviets, some groups from Russia were resettled in urban areas in Armenia (Gyumri, Yerevan, etc.). They speak Russian.

In 1830, there were 324 **Yezidis** in Armenia. At present 40500 Yezidis live in Armenia. Their ancestors emigrated from Iran, Mesopotamia and they mainly live in villages Shamiram, Tlik, Sorik, Hakko, Gyalto, Barozh,

The Republic of Armenia signed the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages on December 28, 2001. For the RA the Charter came into power since May 1, 2002.

The Republic of Armenia is the first among the former USSR countries that has ratified the Charter.

According to Par. 1 of Article 3 of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, the Republic of Armenia has undertaken special obligations towards 5 minority languages, which are Assyrian, Yezidi, Greek, Russian and Kurdish, of which 3 (Assyrian, Yezidi and Kurdish) are not an official language in any country<sup>6</sup>. However Armenia protects the language and cultural rights of other minorities, too (for details about minority languages and education see “Minority languages in the system of education” section).

In the initial phase of the observations, after studying the implementation of the Charter principles in Armenia, the Committee of Experts of the Charter appreciated the efforts of the Armenian authorities in carrying out their obligations, irrespective of hard economic conditions, encouraging the Armenian authorities for creating positive and constructive relations with the minority language carriers.<sup>7</sup>

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Baisez, Avtona, Dian, Ghabaghtapa, Rya-Taza, Amre-Taza, Mirak, Sangyar, Shenkani, Alagyaz, Jamshlu, Ortachai, Derek, Avshen, Sipan, Zovouni. They are Zoroastrians, they speak Yezidi and Armenian languages.

**The Kurds** settled in Armenia during the Turkish and Persian power, emigrating from Iran, Mesopotamia. They are Moslems or Zoroastrians. At present the 1600 Kurds on the territory of Armenia mainly live in Rya-Taza, Amre-Taza, Mirak, Sangyar, Shenkani, Alagyaz, Jamshlu, Ortachai, Derek, Avshen and other villages. They speak Kurdish, Armenian.

The first groups of **Assyrians**, (descendants of old Assyrians) settled on the territory of Armenia in 1830s. Some groups immigrated during the World War I. They are Christians.

At present, there are 3500 Assyrians and they mainly live in Dimitrov, Verin Dvin, Nor Artagers, Arzni villages, in cities Yerevan, Artashat, Abovyan. They speak Assyrian, Russian and Armenian.

The present group of Greeks living in Armenia emigrated from Turkey in 1763. Some groups immigrated during the World War I. They are Christians. At present, there are 1300 Greeks in Armenia and they mainly live in villages Yaghdan, Koghes, Madan, Hankavan, as well as in Stepanavan, Alaverdi, Akhtala, Shamlough and other towns. They speak Greek, Russian and Armenian. (For details see RA First Reports on Regional or Minority Languages according to Par. 1 of Article 15 of the European Charter, Yerevan 2003, Section “Demographic situation in RA”)

<sup>6</sup> RA First and Second Reports on Regional or Minority Languages according to Par. 1 of Article 15 of the European Charter, Yerevan 2003, 2007

<sup>7</sup> European Charter on Regional or Minority Languages: Charter Application in Armenia, Charter Committee of Experts' Report, 14 June, 2006

## 6. ARMENIAN LANGUAGE AS A SUBJECT AND AS A LANGUAGE OF SCHOOLING

### 6.1. Armenian as an Official Language

The RA Constitution declares Armenian (Article 12) as the official language. The Constitution also confirms every person's right to preserve his/her national and ethnic identity, as well as the right of people belonging to national minorities to preserve and develop their traditions, religion, language and culture (Article 41).

The Constitution also states Armenia's obligation to contribute to fostering relations with the Armenian Diaspora, protecting Armenian historical and cultural values located in other countries, advancing Armenian educational and cultural life within the framework of the norms and principles of international law (Article 11).

Armenian is spoken not only by the population in Armenia, but part of the 7-8 million Armenians spread all over the world.

A number of RA laws and legislative acts serve as basis for the protection and development of the Armenian language.

According to RA Law on Language the RA official language, Armenian, is used in all spheres of life in the Republic and the state fosters the preservation and dissemination of the Armenian language among Armenians living outside the country.

The law defines the **language duties** of RA citizens, officials in particular, as well as employees of certain spheres of service, according to which they must be proficient in Armenian, and in their official speeches they must provide purity of the language (Article 3).

As it was mentioned, in the official, educational and public fields the status of Armenian as obligatory and not alternative is confirmed by some other laws (Law on Advertising, Law on Press and Mass Media other means) and by the decisions of Government, the most important of which is the "State Program on Language Policy".

In order to regulate the language policy and to control the implementation of laws and decisions of the government, in 1993 State Committee on Language was established at the Government, which now operates in the system of the Ministry of Education and Science.

After restoring state independence the spheres of Armenian language usage were enhanced and alongside with it a number of problems came up requiring urgent solution.

For instance, as it is marked in the Order of application of "The Law on Language", it is necessary to provide "the production or import of typewriters with Arme-

nian keyboard, telegraph facilities, computers with Armenian keyboard, to equip computers with software packages in Armenian". Another important problem is the regulation of Armenian, the necessity of which is conditioned by the new status of Armenian language and the diversity of new fields of its application, as well as the implementation of the program of teaching Armenian language to non-Armenian speakers both in Armenia, Diaspora and in other countries.

The transition period that Armenia is in now, has its influence on the language policy. Because of the lack of resources, some problems are not solved. So, the smooth transition from the peculiar to the Soviet period bilingual situation to monolingual (only one official language) situation is not provided as needed. Although some work has been carried out in this direction, some problems such as organizing effective courses of Armenian for non-Armenian speakers, provision of higher educational system with textbooks in Armenian, teachers' retraining, unified coding of computers, etc., are not solved.

The RA **State Programme on Language Policy** (2003) refers to a number of important issues connected with the Armenian language.

- **Regulation of the literary Armenian language**

The programme gives importance to the creation of academic normative grammar of the modern literary Eastern Armenian for the present phase of language development, drafting standards for language purity, regulation of different functional styles of the literary language, drafting principles of joint terminology making for Western and literary Armenian languages, etc.

- **Providing full-scale representation of the Armenian language in the Internet**

It is a priority to introduce the Armenian language in the full scale in the international information networks, which supposes creation of Armenian-language information banks, translation and introduction of international computer programmes into Armenian, creation of Armenian-language computer educational programmes, translator programmes from and into Armenian, computer encyclopedias, games, cartoons, etc.

- **Supporting the Mass media in providing language purity**

The programme envisages state level professional support to mass media through finding in them the mistakes made and introducing the correct variants, encouraging journalists with lettered speech and means of information providing high quality language, through publishing special language reference books for publishing houses,



providing professional support to TV companies that translate foreign language films and TV programmes, etc.

- **Support in preservation of Armenian in Diaspora**

Demographic changes during the last decade have influenced the Diaspora to become a various and complex mosaic. The sphere of literary Eastern Armenian usage in the public life of the Diaspora has also grown. It is necessary to preserve the language unity of Armenian colonies, as the number of Armenian-speakers among the new generation is reducing, there are few unified Armenian language teaching programmes and methodological materials, the system of training Armenian teachers is imperfect, only part of the Armenian school-age children attends full-day schools in Diaspora, Armenian is a second language for part of the pupils attending an Armenian school.

In this field the programme has envisaged

- Comprehensive analyses language situation in Diaspora
- Improving methodological bases for teaching Armenian in Diaspora
- Scientific regulation of terminology and orthography issues of two branches of literary Armenian language
- Increasing the number of Diaspora teacher training programmes, admission of Diaspora students, exchange programmes for scientists and specialists, deepening the cooperation
- Organizing activities to compile and publish education programmes and textbooks of teaching Western Armenian at schools in Armenia and teaching Western and Eastern Armenian at schools in Diaspora

Dissemination of Armenian self-study manuals, organizing pan-Armenian competitions encouraging the knowledge of Armenian, etc.

## **6.2. Armenian as a Subject**

In the state standard on secondary education, Armenian language and literature is introduced with the following content:

“Language is the basic means of mentality. The mother language gives an exceptional opportunity to express one’s own thoughts and excitement, to communicate with and understand the surrounding world and people, to get knowledge of the nature,

the society and the man, to be in close contact with literary values, to show and develop one's own creative skills. The main aim of teaching literature and grammar is to provide excellent knowledge of the mother language. Mother language is the language of schooling.

After learning the mother language and literature, a person obtains in-depth perception of national dignity and ability to master his/her ancestors' cultural values and to hand down to the next generation.

The RA official language – Armenian – is a national symbol, the guarantee of state and national security”.

### **6.2.1. Armenian as a Mother Language**

Teaching Armenian language as a subject is mandatory at all educational institutions on the territory of Armenia.

The RA Law on Language states that at all vocational, as well as higher educational institutions both entrance examination in Armenian and studying Armenian language is mandatory for everyone (Article 2).

As it was already mentioned the “State Curriculum on General Education”, defining the basic principles of organizing the general education, emphasizes the harmonious association of universal values on the national bases and implementation of education in RA official language.

The content of Armenian language as a subject in public schools is defined in the following documents:

- State Standard on Secondary Education
- Armenian language and Literature: Syllabus and standard for public schools.

In the primary and secondary low (middle) (5<sup>th</sup> - 6<sup>th</sup> grades) schools, Armenian language and literature are taught integrated, as one subject, and in secondary high schools, they are taught separately.

The specific weight of the Armenian language in primary school is nearly twice as much as the foreign languages. In the middle school, they gradually go down and in high school they become equal (see the table and the diagram). However, we should note that the hours for the foreign language are distributed between two foreign languages (Russian and another foreign language, mainly English, French or German).

At present the RA Ministry of Education and Science is discussing the issues connected with the introduction of the third foreign language at secondary schools

according to RA Government Resolution N 111-N, dated January 10, 2008, and the issues of the language entry grade, the hours and the sequence of teaching foreign languages.

We have to take into consideration that so far the hours for foreign languages have been distributed between two foreign languages (Russian and another foreign language, mainly English, French and German), by the way the hours for the Russian language are more than for the second foreign language.

However, together with this innovation the hours for the foreign languages should also be reviewed, as we shall have shortage of hours when distributing them between three foreign languages.

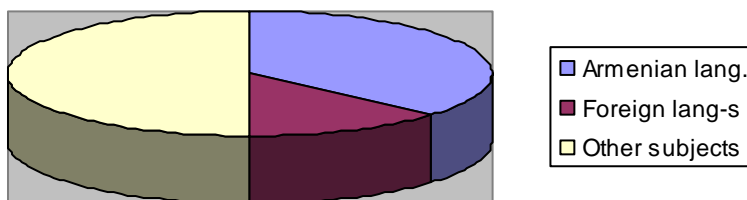
In case of an advanced stream in high school (in this case it may be a humanities stream), the hours allocated for the stream classes can generally be distributed between the Armenian and foreign languages.

### The place of language subjects in the subject list of the 12-year public school

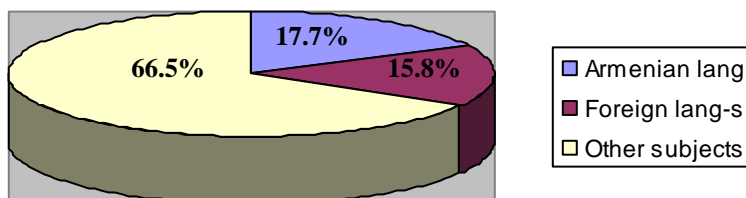
(According to the basic curriculum of State Standard on Secondary Education)

	Total hours	Armenian lang., literature		Foreign languages		Stream subjects	
		Hours	%	Hours	%	Hours	%
Primary school	3004	1010	33,5%	370	12,3%		
Middle schools	5372	952	17,7%	850	15,8%		
Basic school (primary+ middle schools)	8376	1962	23,4%	1220	15,8 %		
High school	3468	510	14,7%	510	14,7%		
High school (advanced stream)	3468	408	11,8%	408	11,8%	1122	32,3%

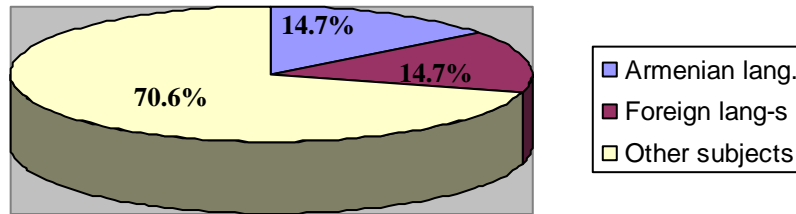
#### Primary School



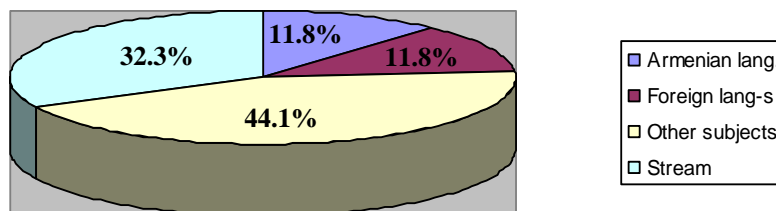
#### Middle School



### High School



### High School (advanced stream)



#### 6.2.2. Armenian as a foreign or a second language

Based on the state policy on language policy necessary programme and methodological bases have been created for language teaching to non-Armenian speakers, corresponding self-study manuals have been published, extra free of charge courses are being organized for pupils having problems with the Armenian language in schools that have Russian language classes.

Since 1997 the State Language Inspectorate at RA Government has been implementing the project “Armenian for non-Armenian speakers” within the RA socio-economic development programme, the goal of which is teaching Armenian to those who come back from foreign countries, to refugees, to national minorities and to those, who want to learn Armenian.

In these activities, great priority is given to teaching the school-age children who return from foreign countries.

There are a number of organizational and methodological problems in the field of teaching Armenian as a foreign or a second language. As it is mentioned in the state programme on language policy

- There is a need for advanced programmes and self-study manuals meeting the present requirements of those with no or insufficient knowledge of Armenian
- Alongside with improving Armenia's socio-economic situation, in the near future we may have problems with organization of large-scale activities of Armenian language education of Armenians and their school-age children
- Armenians from Diaspora and foreigners working in Armenia also need courses of Armenian.

To solve these problems we need to take a number of steps, including

- Drafting programmes and standards for teaching Armenian as a foreign language, based on the principles of the Council of Europe language education policy, as well as "Standards and Approaches of Common European Framework of References"
- Creation of necessary programme and methodological bases and publication of corresponding self-study manuals for language education of non-Armenian speakers
- Continuation and extension of extra free of charge courses for pupils having problems with the Armenian language in schools that have Russian language classes.

### **6.2.3. Assessment and examinations**

Since 2007, the system of state school-leaving and unified exams is being introduced, the main goal of which is to unite the above-mentioned exams. The first state school-leaving and unified exams were in Armenian language.

In 2008, this new system will also be used for mathematics and four foreign language (Russian, English, French and German), and in 2009 for the rest of the subjects.

The unified exam test in Armenian language has two options - for different levels.

**Option A** tests are designed for public school graduates (50 tasks of multiple choice). These tasks check the basic knowledge, some are of mid-level difficulty. The tasks include all sections of Armenian language (35 questions), all periods of the history of Armenian literature (15 questions) and are made based on the school programme, considering the material in the textbooks.

**Option B** tests (25 tasks) are also of multiple choices, but they suppose more in-depth knowledge and skills, and all tasks are about the Armenian language. They are mainly of mid-level difficulty, some are difficult, and all are from the school programme.

A and B options of the unified test are designed for the school graduates who intend to continue their education at higher educational institutions.

Introduction of the unified exams and tests is a positive step in improving the Armenian language teaching, though, the language tasks mostly check the knowledge of grammar, there are almost no tasks checking communicative skills.

## **7. LANGUAGES OF SCHOOLING IN ARMENIA**

### **7.1. Armenian as a language of schooling**

When speaking about teaching of the mother language, we must put distinction between the two parts of the issue: mother language as a subject and mother language as a language of schooling.

At present, in the Council of Europe language policy context great attention is being paid to the status of language of education or schooling issue. (Language of Education, Language of Schooling, Language Across Curricula)£

The language of schooling is the basis for cognition, consequently all the subjects are perceived through the language of schooling. On the other hand, all the subjects contribute to the development of the learners' language awareness, as everybody uses the language of schooling to perceive and introduce the knowledge.

In the process of schooling, communication with the teacher and books the learner learns all the other subjects.

Mother language, together with the foreign languages contributes to the development of the learners' plurilingualism, in particular, to the formation of communication culture through speech development.

The goal of the language of schooling or education must be the formation and development of language awareness in the broad sense, practical usage of the language, as well as creation of bases for full activity in the society, which can be viewed as a goal for both an individual and the whole society.

As it was already mentioned, the RA Law on Language defines Armenian language as "the language of schooling and teaching at all educational institutions on the territory of the Republic of Armenia" (Article 2).

Proficiency and education in the mother language is one of the important preconditions for the preservation of the nation and the national culture. Before the

restoration of independence (1991) the Russian language was predominant in the state institutions, in the army, in the fields of health and culture. In the one fifth of the educational institutions (preschool educational institutions, schools, universities) the language of schooling was Russian.

At present Russian language is a language of schooling only for Russians and for those foreigners who choose Russian language education.

In Armenia, the system of school education is three-language, but the language of schooling is mostly Armenian. Based on that, starting from the second grade teaching of Russian as the first foreign language is mandatory, then starting from the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade teaching the second foreign language – English, French or German – is mandatory. According to the new foreign language teaching profile, according to the RA Government Resolution N 111-N, dated January 10, 2008 and introduced for discussion by the RA Ministry of Education and Science, a third foreign language will be taught starting from the 5<sup>th</sup> or 7<sup>th</sup> grade. This will contribute to the development of the learners' plurilingualism, i.e. this will overcome the predominance of the English language and will restore the distorted proportion of foreign languages studied at educational institutions (for details see Par. 8.4. of General education).

The RA Law on Language and the State Programme on Language Policy especially stress the issue of providing education in the official language, which supposes

- providing language richness in educational programmes and transferring cultural heritage through the language,
- language expertise of new Armenian-language textbooks,
- translation of university fundamental textbooks and handbooks,
- adaptation of Armenian language programmes to the professional needs at vocational and higher educational institutions, etc.

## **7.2. Other languages as a language of schooling**


Other languages can also be languages of schooling in Armenia. The Law on Language states that in the national minority communities located in Armenia the general education can be organized in their mother tongue with state programme and patronage, with mandatory teaching of Armenian (Article 2).

Besides, at some educational institutions (schools with advanced language studies, some universities/faculties) certain subjects and special professional courses are taught in foreign languages.

Based on intergovernmental agreements a number of higher educational institutions (Slavonic University, American University of Armenia, European Regional Academy, French University, local branches of a number of foreign universities) function in Armenia, where the schooling is in foreign languages.

The present situation, of course, has certain incompatibilities with the existing legal requirements (the provision on the language of schooling of RA Law on Language (Article 2); thus, we think, this contradiction must be settled.

The role and peculiarities of the language of schooling must be clearly considered at schools and in the subject standards and programmes; every subject course should pay special attention to the vocabulary, terminology, language functional styles, structural characteristics and language mentality peculiar to the given profession (e.g. language of economy, language of mathematics, language of history, language of arts, etc.).





## II. EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM OF ARMENIA

Armenia's educational system is a sequential, interconnected, harmonious and integral structure, which is regulated by the Constitution that states the right on education, and by a number of other laws and legislative acts, the basic of which is the RA Law on Education. It defines that "Armenia's educational system is an interconnected integrity of state educational and accreditation standards, educational programmes of different levels and direction providing continuity of education, educational institutions and education management bodies." (Article 8)

On different levels of educational system, the process of education is organized based on different educational programmes. "The educational programme defines the content of education having certain level and direction, and the volume of necessary knowledge and skills". (Article 10)

The educational programmes implemented in the Republic of Armenia are:

- 1) general educational programmes (basic and additional)
- 2) professional educational programmes (basic and additional)

### 8. PUBLIC EDUCATION

The general educational programmes implemented in the Republic of Armenia are aimed at the comprehensive development of an individual, formation of his/her worldview, creation of grounds to choose and master professional programmes according to his/her interests and abilities. (RA "Law on Education", Article 10)

Basic general educational programmes include

- 1) preschool education
- 2) primary (elementary) general education
- 3) basic general education
- 4) secondary (full) general education
- 5) special general education

## 8.1. Preschool Education

### 8.1.1. The situation of preschool education

The first level of general education in Armenia is the preschool education, on which the other levels of the continuous education system are based.

According to RA Law on Preschool education (adopted in 15.11.2005), a number of goals and objectives in the educational system of preschool age children are significant, in particular

- Harmonious development and education of preschool age children,
- Preparation for education at school,
- Development of elementary skills to communicate in mother tongue,
- Seeding love for the motherland, formation and rooting of respect towards the family, national traditions, mother tongue, national values, his/her own personality, as well as the surrounding and the environment,
- Formation of the child's individuality, development of creative skills, etc. (Article 6)

The social-political changes during the last decades, the country's political independence considerably affected the educational system, especially preschool education.

In 1996 preschool institutions were put within the jurisdiction of the communities, in the result of which during 1996-2000 nearly 25,8% of the preschool institutions were closed down, and the number of attending children decreased by nearly 36,4% (as compared with the 1988, when 1255 preschool educational institutions were functioning with 165,4 thousand children, which made 44,2% of children of that age).

Most of the operating institutions stop work in winter months, because they cannot heat the buildings.

	1995	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
<b>Number of children in state pre-school institutions, (1000 children)</b>	<b>71.3</b>	<b>44.6</b>	<b>45.4</b>	<b>46.1</b>	<b>45.5</b>	<b>47.8</b>

As it is obvious, if in 1995-2001 the number of children attending preschool institutions sharply decreased, then beginning with 2002 we see slow increase.

Today 612 community and 11 departmental preschool institutions with 47791 children operate in the Republic of Armenia. Children in preschool institutions make 21,6%, in urban communities 28,5%, and in rural communities 10,5%.

## Number of teachers and children in community and administrative institutions

Year	Number of kindergartens	Number of children attending	Number of teachers
2000	764	46379	6411
2001	712	44409	5597
2002	681	44849	5397
2003	682	46141	5333
2004	637	45470	4920
2005	623	47791	5060
2006	623	47308	4862

During the educational reforms priorities in the field of preschool education were improvement of legislative field and management system, development of professional skills of human resources, improvement of material and technical base, availability of services and enhancement of inclusion.

The Draft Program of Armenia's Education Development 2008-2015 gives importance to the problem of preparing and training staff for preschool institutions, while the volume of training programmes are limited and include mainly Yerevan and the neighboring marzes. We think those training programmes should also include language teachers, as well as language education issues from the viewpoint of modern trends.

### 8.1.2. Language Teaching at Preschool Institutions

In conformity to RA Law on Preschool Education, the local governing bodies implement the state policy in that field of education.

In accord with the requirements of RA Law on Preschool Education and peculiarities of development of children of that age, first of all great attention is being paid to the development of elementary skills to communicate in the native language, formation and rooting of respect towards the native language and national values.

If during the Soviets there were also foreign language (Russian) kindergartens in Armenia for non-Russian population, then today there are not any such kindergartens.

In the Law on Preschool Education and in state educational programmes, when speaking about speech development and early literacy, the stress is mainly put on teaching the mother language, coherent speech, development of communicative skills, but there is not a single word about preschool teaching of foreign languages. Recently,

meeting the parents' requirements, part of the preschool educational institutions<sup>8</sup> also teach foreign languages (mainly Russian and English) to children.

The Greek community has initiated a Greek-language group at Yerevan kindergarten 52, where upon the parents' request non-Greek children also learn the language.

The teaching of foreign languages is done orally and through plays, though there are no unified programmes, methodological or new educational handbooks and materials are very few.

Giving importance to the role of pre-school education in the implementation of general and then professional education, the RA Government has approved the "Republic of Armenia pre-school education reforms strategic and piloting programmes for 2008-2015" in accord with Par. 13 of Decision N10, from March 13, 2008.

### **8.1.3. "Case Study"**

Trying to find out how widespread the phenomenon of teaching foreign languages in preschool institutions in Armenia is, we did a "Case Study" in a group of kindergartens speaking about foreign language teaching. In all the 13 kindergartens (12 in the marzes, 1 in Yerevan) questioned the requested to have oral foreign language classes 2-3 times a week (2-4 groups in every kindergarten, on average 10-15 children in a group). They teach mostly Russian and English, in one kindergarten they also teach French (see the table in the Appendix).

#### **Methodological and educational materials**

In the result of the case study, it turned out that for the Russian language they mainly use Russian language manuals and materials for national kindergartens published in the Soviet years or in the Russian Federation. For the English language they mainly use the recently published "Teaching English in Kindergartens" manual, in some places they adapt and localize the Russian manual.

It is necessary that teachers, psychologists and language specialists develop educational and methodological materials especially for children of this age, as well as training of corresponding teachers should be organized with the purpose of creating efficient ground for teaching foreign languages at an early age.

However, taking into consideration the fact that preschool institutions are spread and the rate of children in them is low, even in case of raising the level of language

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<sup>8</sup> Neither the Ministry, nor any other institutions has statistical data on this, thus we do not introduce any exact figures.

teaching, that system cannot solve the problem of providing satisfactory ground to all the children going to new schools, for further language education.

The Republic of Armenia also supports the minority communities to organize the basic part of preschool education in corresponding languages (for detailed information see section “Minority languages in the educational system”).

## **8.2. School Education**

Education in Armenia dates back many centuries and has rich traditions. During the Soviet times, Armenia’s educational system had great achievements. It was conditioned not only by the privileges of the system itself, but also by the country’s 1500-year-old educational traditions. In pagan temples hieroglyphic literature in mother Armenia was centralized. Since Mesrop Mashtots created Armenian Alphabet in 405 A.D., the schooling has started to develop in great pace. Schools of different types and levels were established on the whole territory of Armenia. In 966, during the Armenian Renaissance, the first university was established in Armenia.

The centuries-old great spiritual culture was one of the main factors, which contributed to Armenia’s harmonious and comprehensive development during the Soviet times. After Armenia got independent, in the result of political and social reformations the system of education also suffered. The financial, legislative and other factors, as well as the results of the blockade and the earthquake negatively affected the system.

The 15-year-old history of independent Armenia’s educational system can be divided into two phases: before 1998 and after it, when the RA Law on Education was adopted (1999). In the first phase, the new educational system had certain achievements: formation of alternative educational system, liberalization of education, expansion of international communication, three-level school with distinct sections, etc. Unfortunately, contextually the first phase was also baneful. Even the textbooks for sciences from Soviet time were refused, and without creating the new ones, an attempt was made to turn the textbooks into work-books. The works of some great Armenian writers were removed from the Armenian Literature courses, etc. In the result the pupils had to carry two textbooks to school: the old one which was used in class, and the work-books, for the inspectors.

### **8.2.1. Reforms in General Education**

The process of reforms carried out in the field of general education can also be conditionally divided into two phases:

- Phase 1 – 1998-2002
- Phase 2 – 2002 to present.

In Phase 1, the reforms were basically aimed at decentralization of general education management, increase of self-government of institutions, introduction of new mechanisms in management and financing of general education, reconsidering the structural and legal status of general educational institutions, retraining the senior managing personnel. Today the schools have adopted the new way of school management – the school councils – and the mechanism of financing by a total sum according to the number of pupils.

In this phase the basis for changing the general education contents have been set up, in particular the curricula have been reconsidered and brought to conformity with the present social and public requirements.

Basic goals of the present reforms in the field of general education are:

- Improving the general education quality,
- Ensuring the conformity of Armenia's education system with the present requirements of the society and economy and internationally accepted educational standards,
- Guiding Armenia's education system development towards bringing to conformity with the "knowledge economy" requirements.

Hence, within the frames of the second credit project "Education quality and conformity" financed by the World Bank, the following activities have been carried out:

1. Creation of a new system for general education curriculum, syllabuses and assessment.

- In 2004 the Government ratified the "State Curriculum on General Education" and the "State Standard on Secondary Education".
- Since October 2004 syllabus development activities have started. During 2005-2007 standards and syllabuses for Mathematics, Armenian Language and Literature, foreign languages, Sciences, Humanities and the rest of the general educational subjects have been worked out.

- On April 14, 2004 by the RA Government Resolution, the Centre for Assessment and Testing was established. In 2005-2007, the draft of current and formative assessment methodology for Armenian Language and Literature, Mathematics, Informatics and foreign language tests was made. They declare that the current foreign language assessment tests check all the types of spoken production, the level of logical development, creative skills. School-leaving tests check the abilities to apply the knowledge (reading a text, understand, comprehend and sum up), communicative skills, as well as skills to use prior requirements (application, letter, finding the way in different situations, etc.). However, it is not clear to what extent the skills of written and oral speech (skills to narrate the thoughts), communicative and cooperative abilities are checked.
- In 2005-2006, the new system of school leaving and university entrance unified exams in Armenian Language, Mathematics, History and English language were piloted.
- In 2007, the new system of exams was used for the Armenian language.
- In 2007-2008, samples of new tests and assessment for four foreign languages, as well as their characteristics and methodology have been elaborated. They will be published in 4 separate collections.

## 2. Introduction of IT technologies in the system of general education

- On March 11, 2004 by the RA Government Resolution, a “National Centre for Educational Technologies” (NCET) was founded. The NCET basic task is to introduce ITTs in secondary (comprehensive) schools and ensure its continuity.

## 3. Teachers’ professional retraining

- 52 school-centres have been chosen, and nearly 300 teachers from those centers have been trained. The new syllabuses, textbooks and tests are being piloted in the school-centres, as well as innovation, open classes and seminars are being organized.
- 35 trainers were trained in the field of cooperative methods

- Almost 4000 teachers from all the regions in Armenia have been trained in computer literacy.
- Almost 14000 teachers and primary school teachers have been trained in the new system of assessment.
- In 2008 all the foreign language teachers will be trained in the field of new standards, new programmes and new tests.

#### 4. Improving efficiency and management of general education system

- In 2003-2005, nearly 800 school headmasters and 2700 school board members were trained to gain skills to meet the new requirements of providing independent financial-economic activity, management and economic management in schools.
- To have efficient education management, true and comprehensive information about the system “Education Management Information System” (EMIS) has been introduced.

#### **8.2.2. Facts and figures**

Today 1468 general educational institutions function in the republic of which 1427 are state schools and 41 are private schools. 12 of the 1427 are primary, 154 are basic and 1197 are secondary schools, 42 are colleges, 47 are special schools and 16 are upper secondary vocational schools (see Table 1).

477857 pupils got to general educational institutions in Armenia, of which 471316 to state institutions, and 6541 to the private sector. Very little, but every year the number of pupils at private schools is increasing (see Table 2). The number of pupils according to the types of general educational institutions is the following (see Table 3).



Table 1

## Number of general education institutions in Armenia by types

Marz	Types of schools														
	Primary schools		Basic schools		General secondary schools		Colleges		Special schools		Upper second. vocational schools		Total		
	state	private	state	private	state	private	state	private	state	private	state	private	state	private	Total
Yerevan	1	0	1	1	193	18	11	7	22	1	5	0	233	27	260
Aragatsotn	0	0	30	0	92	0	1	0	2	0	2	0	127	0	127
Ararat	0	0	4	0	109	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	114	0	114
Armavir	0	0	6	0	110	1	2	0	4	0	1	0	123	1	124
Gegarkunik	1	0	4	0	123	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	129	1	130
Lori	1	0	37	0	124	0	4	0	3	0	0	0	169	0	169
Kotayk	0	0	6	0	95	2	0	0	3	0	3	0	107	2	109
Shirak	4	0	16	0	135	3	8	1	6	0	3	0	172	4	176
Syunik	2	0	29	0	86	0	2	0	4	1	0	0	123	1	124
Vayots Dzor	2	0	9	0	38	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	51	0	51
Tavush	1	0	9	2	64	3	2	0	1	0	2	0	79	5	84
Total	12	0	151	3	1,169	28	34	8	45	2	16	0	1,427	41	1,468

Table 2

## Number of pupils in state and private schools from 2003 to 2006

Marz	2003		2004		2005		2006	
	state	private	state	private	state	private	state	private
Yerevan	146,076	2,079	143,546	2,765	139,539	2,780	135,283	3,527
Aragatsotn	27,470	0	26,905	0	25,585	0	25,356	0
Ararat	47,951	0	46,604	0	44,651	0	43,831	0
Armavir	49,495	62	47,944	93	46,537	93	45,025	131
Gegarkunik	46,006	0	43,961	0	42,265	117	41,539	130

Lori	46,045	22	43,183	43	44,054	0	42,614	0
Kotayk	47,271	115	42,155	179	42,874	636	41,398	570
Shirak	53,093	222	49,138	356	48,598	270	46,909	677
Syunik	24,145	0	22,907	0	21,831	0	20,896	230
Vayots Dzor	11,131	0	10,754	0	10,208	0	9,781	0
Tavush	21,896	0	21,353	0	19,205	1,306	18,684	1,276
Total	520,579	2,500	498,450	3,436	485,347	5,202	471,316	6,541

Table 3

## Number of pupils in Armenia by general education types

Marz	Types of schools														
	Primary schools		Basic schools		General secondary schools		Colleges		Special schools		Upper secondary vocational schools		Total		
	state	private	state	private	state	private	state	private	state	private	state	private	state	private	Total
Yerevan	1,278	0	1,174	0	123,115	2,426	4,824	955	3,862	146	1,030	0	135,283	3,527	138,810
Aragatsotn	0	0	1,588	0	23,357	0	112	0	196	0	103	0	25,356	0	25,356
Ararat	0	0	219	0	43,265	0	347	0	0	0	0	0	43,831	0	43,831
Armavir	0	0	587	0	42,850	131	727	0	797	0	64	0	45,025	131	45,156
Gegarkunik	496	0	682	0	39,950	130	411	0	0	0	0	0	41,539	130	41,669
Lori	814	0	2,212	0	38,722	0	427	0	439	0	0	0	42,614	0	42,614
Kotayk	0	0	418	0	40,391	570	0	0	274	0	315	0	41,398	570	41,968
Shirak	30	0	772	0	42,105	632	2,205	45	1,315	0	482	0	46,909	677	47,586
Syunik	27	0	1,211	0	17,401	0	671	0	1,586	230	0	0	20,896	230	21,126
Vayots Dzor	28	0	373	0	9,098	0	282	0	0	0	0	0	9,781	0	9,781
Tavush	51	0	663	579	17,536	697	177	0	157	0	100	0	18,684	1,276	19,960
Total	2,724	0	9,899	579	437,790	4,586	10,183	1,000	8,626	376	2,094	0	471,316	6,541	477,857

### **8.2.3. Language Policy in the Republic**

Foreign language is a mandatory component of the secondary and higher education in the Republic of Armenia. The language policy conception, which suggests teaching 3 foreign languages at schools, has been worked out and submitted to the government. Russian, the 1<sup>st</sup> foreign language, to be taught from the 1<sup>st</sup> semester of the 1<sup>st</sup> grade; the 2<sup>nd</sup> foreign language (English, French, German) to be taught from the 2<sup>nd</sup> semester of the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade 2 hours a week, and to start the teaching of the 3<sup>rd</sup> foreign language from the 1<sup>st</sup> semester of the 5<sup>th</sup> grade. It is suggested to have 6-7 hours of foreign language in the middle school. This part of the profile is still a topic of hot discussions, because part of the specialists thinks that starting a foreign language in the 1<sup>st</sup> semester of the 1<sup>st</sup> grade, when the learner just starts learning the letters of the mother tongue, is not so appropriate. The profile has also taken into consideration the testing and control mechanisms. The profile has not yet been accepted by the Government as a separate document. But, as it was mentioned, the RA Government has made the decision N111-N dated January 10, 2008, based on which the state standard on secondary education has been reviewed and changes have been made in the basic educational plan of the public school. Henceforth, the RA Ministry of Education and Science will make the annual exemplary educational plan for the secondary school and confirm it, according to the suggestions made in the above-mentioned profile.

### **8.2.4. Foreign language teaching at schools**

- Curricula in RA schools are basically the same. They have 3 components: mandatory, schooling and optional. Some schools (2-4 hours weekly in every class) allocate mandatory and optional components to foreign languages. They are mainly the schools with advanced studies, bilingual and three-language education. Before the above-mentioned resolution by the RA Government, the third foreign language was taught as an optional component and as a paid service and was not available to all the children. However, so far 25% of children have devoted optional classes to foreign languages.
- Standards: In 2004, the RA Government worked out and ratified the “State standard on secondary education” which defines the following components of the educational content:

1. system of knowledge,
2. abilities and skills
  - cognitive, logical,
  - communicative,
  - interactive,
  - creative,
  - individual activity,
3. system of values.

In the state standard on secondary education, the languages are introduced in two separate subjects: Armenian language and literature and Foreign languages. Here the subject foreign language is described as follows:

“The foreign language is the basic means to contact with non-Armenian speakers, and it is an additional means to communicate with the civilization of other countries and peoples, to perceive their best values and to express them in Armenian, as well as to make Armenian-language culture available to other peoples.”

Knowledge of foreign languages contributes to the development of a person’s communicative skills, intercultural mutual understanding, perception and evaluation of values of other cultures.

The goal of teaching a foreign language is to enhance the learner’s communicative and cooperative skills. This field of education also contributes to obtaining more comprehensive knowledge of the nature and the modern world, to perception, preservation and handing down the aesthetic, moral, social, universal and national values.

In 2007, based on the State Standard on Secondary Education, subject standards and programmes were created for foreign languages in secondary schools. The standards for foreign languages correspond to CEFR and are introduced according to the types of spoken production. The main course, though not in full volume, gives an opportunity for comparatively independent communication. The school programme envisages B1 level of language skills after finishing the 12-year school. The course planned for stream (language) classes provides higher level of language proficiency and opportunity for more independent interaction. This course, in the active or productive language activities (speaking and writing), envisages B1 level of skills and abilities, and in receptive language activities (listening and reading) – B2 level.

- According to these standards, foreign language syllabuses and textbooks have been reviewed and developed. Unified school-leaving and entrance exam tasks in foreign languages, that come out of state standards of general education, have been worked out. Steps are being undertaken to train teachers having two and more professions. The problem of textbooks is almost solved. The textbook renting system, which has been functioning since 1997, solved the problem of textbooks. Textbooks are given to learners for reasonable payment, which provides money for further textbook publication. Textbooks for elementary (primary) school are given free by the government, with the exception of textbooks for foreign languages and singing/music. Taking into consideration the growing interest and demand for foreign languages, the government should reconsider its decision and find resources to provide elementary (primary) schools with free textbooks of foreign languages. On the whole, the textbooks correspond to the syllabuses. However, not all the teachers are happy with the textbooks. Inquiries among teachers showed, that the main reason is that the textbooks include more grammatical and theoretical material than exercises that develop communicative, cooperative, creative, logical and other skills and abilities. Not all the texts contribute to the formation of a multicultural person. Besides, the announcement for the competition of textbooks is being made only three months before the deadline. It is obvious that compiling a high-quality textbook within that period is impossible. At the same time, it is worth mentioning that the process of reviewing the textbooks gave an opportunity to have our own textbooks and book-creating groups consisting of the best language specialists.
- In Armenia it is allowed to use alternative textbooks, though foreign language teaching has been implemented with 1 textbook so far (except the Russian language).

Foreign language teaching in public school is implemented in three phases

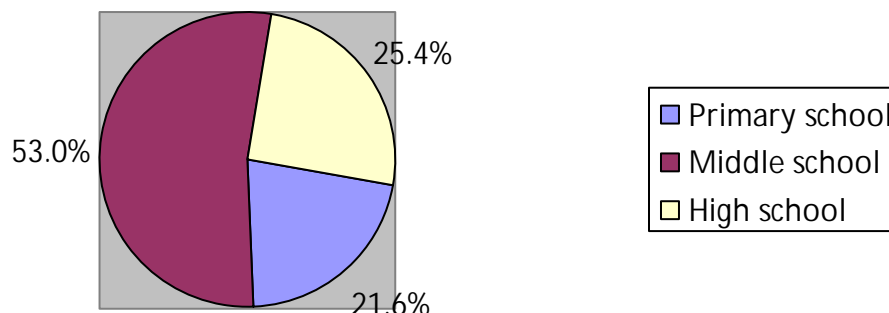
1<sup>st</sup> phase – primary school (1<sup>st</sup>–4<sup>th</sup> grades)

2<sup>nd</sup> phase – middle school (5<sup>th</sup>–9<sup>th</sup> grades)

3<sup>rd</sup> phase – high school (10<sup>th</sup>–12<sup>th</sup> grades)

(See Table 4 for the rate of pupils in RA according to the level of education.)

Table 4 Percentage of Pupils in Armenia by Levels of Education



At primary school the foreign language is taught from the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade with 2 hours a week (Russian), in the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade 4 hours a week (2 hours Russian and 2 hours English or French or German) and in the 4<sup>th</sup> grade 5 hours a week (3 hours Russian and 2 hours English or French or German). It is envisaged to provide A1 level.

At middle school, foreign languages are taught in the 5<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> grades.

In the 5<sup>th</sup> grade 5 hours a week (3 hours Russian and 2 hours English or French or German), in the 6<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> grades foreign languages are taught 5 hours a week (3 hours Russian and 2 hours English or French or German). It is envisaged that it should provide A2-B1 level and it depends on the preference and preparedness of the school and schoolchildren.

At high school 10<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> grades, foreign languages are taught 5 hours a week (3 hours Russian and 2 hours English or French or German). It is to provide B1 level. In high schools, the course of stream classes in foreign languages should provide B1-B2 level.

In all three phases of learning, three-level requirements (minimum, average, high) have been defined for foreign language proficiency, learners' abilities and skills.

A profile for creating a separate network of high schools has been developed, according to which the high school must carry out not only general, but also advanced and additional stream programmes. The language stream is among the recommended. Every school, according to its capabilities and conditions, can choose one or more of the recommended streams. In all streams, the foreign language is a constituent part of the curriculum. Programmes and textbooks for stream classes in high school are not ready yet,

so it is difficult to assess, how realistic the mentioned levels are. Textbooks compiled for the 12-year school will be used in general stream classes of high school.

Considering the imperative of improving the quality of education in Armenia, by Par. 15, of Decision N12 dated March 27, 2008, the RA Government has approved the “Strategic and Piloting Programmes for the Creation of High School System”, based on which in the coming years a net of qualitatively and completely different independently functioning high school specialized streams will be created.

Providing a high-quality education is an urgent issue today. 11.9% of the questioned gave a positive answer to the question “Is your knowledge gained at school enough to go to institute?” /OXFAM/. Surveys show that 47% of the secondary school graduates make use of the ‘shade school’, tutor service. That is, the level of teaching certain subjects, including foreign languages at school does not allow the pupil to go to higher educational institution. This phenomenon is especially vivid in high school, where there is discrepancy between the supply and demand. The presence of tutors creates unequal conditions between the graduates having or not having financial resources in rural and urban schools. According to UNDP data of 2004, schoolchildren in rural areas are 2.5 times less involved in tutorial school than schoolchildren in urban areas.

Graduates from middle and high schools take an exam in foreign language and as the schools holds the exams, the results are not objective enough to find out how well the middle and high schools carry out the task assigned to them. However, in the school-year 2003-2004, out of 54.422 8<sup>th</sup>-grade pupils examined 53.485 got positive marks in foreign language, and out of 43.994 10<sup>th</sup>-grade pupils 43.255 got positive marks. The fact, that in the high school (8<sup>th</sup> - 10<sup>th</sup> grades) the classes are not divided, also affects the quality of foreign language teaching; consequently leading a class with 25-30 pupils directly affects the quality. Besides, most of the teachers think that the exam in a foreign language should be oral, as the written exam hinders the implementation of the subject goal.

At present, besides the Armenian language 2 and even 3 foreign languages are taught at all school in the Republic. Irrespective of the fact that the demand for the Russian language has partially gone down, it still has the status of the first foreign language and is taught in all schools starting from the second until the last grade, with textbooks created in Armenia. Alternative textbooks are also being used.

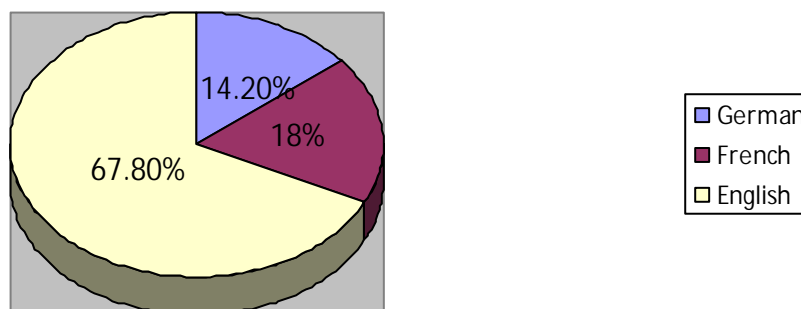
In 1993, according to RA Law on Language, all the Russian schools in the republic were closed down. Later, taking into consideration the requirements of national minorities

and immigrants, in 45 schools (15 in Yerevan, 30 in the marzes) classes with Russian education were established. According to RA Order on admission of learners to state general educational and special general educational institutions (August 25, 2003), Russians by nationality, national minority children upon request, and immigrated Armenian children (only for one year, on condition to move to an Armenian class the next year) have the right to study. This limitation brought about discontent, as not all the immigrated children were able to master Armenian in one year. The MES had to do make concessions to such children, and allowed all the children starting from grade 8, to finish school in Russian class. In 1999, according to the conception “Russian language in the system of education and in RA social-cultural life” adopted by the RA Government, advanced studies of Russian is being implemented in 62 schools. In 2000, by the Minister’s order a special committee was set up which developed and published special textbooks for all the classes in these schools, as the teaching of Russian in them starts from the first grade with 4 hours a week, and from the second grade 6 hours a week.

On the whole, from the 1468 public schools in the republic, English is taught in 1078 schools, French in 254 and German in 244 schools. It is noteworthy that every year the demand for the English language is growing at the expense of French and German. English-German is taught in 71 schools (30651 pupils), English-French is taught in 139 schools (67672 pupils), English-French-German is taught in 19 schools (8010 pupils). Thus 371.333 pupils (67.8% of the pupils) learn English, 97979 pupils (18% of the pupils) learn French and 77999 pupils (14.20% of the pupils) learn German.

Below is the number of pupils (in percentage) by languages studied.

- 1<sup>st</sup> foreign language (Russian – 100%)
- 2<sup>nd</sup> foreign language (English or French or German)





In the republic, 1767 teachers teach English, 293 teach German, 424 teach French. Irrespective of the fact, that every year dozens of graduates from the universities get the profession of a foreign language teacher, in some regions there are still vacancies for foreign language teachers. For example, in 2003, because of the absence of teachers foreign languages were not taught in 107 schools, in 2004 – 14 schools, and in 2005 – 67 schools. According to data of August 2006 in 6 regions of the Republic, there were vacancies for 5 teachers of French, 19 teachers of English and 1 teacher of German. Despite the fact that the state has established certain privileges (money for transportation of goods, travel expenses reimbursement, for rent and other expenses) for teachers on mission in far away, bordering, mountainous and high mountainous schools of the Republic, the issue has not been completely solved. We think one of the solutions to this problem is to have contracted learners from marzes according to the demand, and this process started in 2004.

#### **8.2.5. Russian language teaching in bilingual schools**

In 13 schools in the Republic together with Russian, English, French and German, Persian is taught in 9 schools, polish in 1 school and Spanish in 9 schools.

In the primary classes of four schools in Yerevan, bilingual teaching has been organized, the initiator of which is “Harmony” Russian cultural international centre. In those classes teaching is organized in Armenian and Russian at the same time.

Thus, the types of schools in Armenia studying foreign languages are the following:

- Schools having Russian language classes
- Schools with advanced studies of Russian, English, German, French. The competition of books for these schools will be announced in 2008
- Schools having bilingual classes
- Schools having classes with three foreign languages
- Armenian schools, where Russian is taught from the second grade and English or French or German is taught from the 4<sup>th</sup> grade
- Russian schools (for ethnic Russians)

### **8.2.6. Assessment process**

- Today the school continues to assess the learners' work by marks. Though the secondary (comprehensive) schools use a 5-mark system, in fact it is four (with the exception of the school-leaving exam).
- In April 2005, the Government has ratified the "Learners' assessment profile"; the methodology of current assessment for all subjects, as well as for foreign languages is being worked out. According to the new profile, since September 1 of 2008-2009 school year, the schools in Armenia have started using 10-point system of current progress assessment. That system consists of two mutually connected forms: teaching assessment and the learners' progressive point or summing up assessment. The following forms of checking and application are recommended: oral questioning, topical written work, independent work at home and in class, practical work, self-assessment, peer assessment, discussions and final term work. The current assessment checks the learner's knowledge, ability to apply it, skills and abilities to make logical conclusions, analyze, compare and combine, to do cognitive, independent and creative work.
- The European Language Portfolio for primary school is ready and is piloted in 10 schools. We think it is time to introduce it not only in the primary school, but in the middle and high schools as well.

### **8.3. Private schools**

Today there are 41 private general educational institutions, which include 1% (6541 pupils) of the total number of pupils in the Republic, and more than 998 teachers work there. Private schools still develop very slowly, as part of the society does not accept and trust the paid education, the other part cannot afford it. There is no legislation regulating the activities of the private schools, there is no state policy on their development. The private schools do not get state allocations; even more, as they are commercial companies, they pay profit tax. In the result it turns out that together with the state schools, they fulfill the same order, but they are on different legal grounds and are more vulnerable. The solutions to these problems are in the draft law on general education, which is under discussion.

## **8.4. Special Education**

The system of special education in Armenia functions based on the Law on Education, Law on Children's Rights, Law on "Education of people in need of special educational conditions". According to RA Law on education, implementation of education of children with special needs can be realized upon the parents' choice in comprehensive, as well as at special schools with special programmes. However, this provision of the law cannot be implemented in all public schools because of the absence of necessary conditions.

Recently reforms have been developed and they are in process now, which are aimed at structural changes, improvement of admission system, decentralization of the services provided, introduction of new systems of management and financing, improvement of the child's care and education and availability of education.

The mentioned reforms resulted in 28 functioning special schools for children with mental and physical development problems instead of 52 public schools before 2007. One school has been reconstructed into a medical-psychological-pedagogical assessment centre, the goal of which is to assess the educational needs of children in need of special conditions for education, to assess the choice of the type of education in accord with their skills and abilities. 8 schools for gifted and having exceptional skills children are still in the system of special education. All 37 schools have extended-day and boarding groups.

In accord with the memorandum of understanding signed (10.06.2003) between the MES and "Mission East" International Organization and by the order of RA Minister of Education and Science from 2006, subject standards for education of children with moderate and serious mental deficiency has been confirmed, which enables the implementation of the education for the above-mentioned children both in special and public schools. Today they are being piloted in 6 special and 7 public schools.

### **8.4.1. Foreign Language in Special Schools**

In schools for children with moderate and serious mental deficiency Russian is taught. In schools for children with hearing and sight problems some other foreign language is taught (Russian, English, French, German). In schools for gifted children and those having exceptional skills Russian and a European language are taught.

#### **8.4.2. Inclusive education**

Inclusive education in Armenia was implemented by the support from the local NGOs and international organizations. At present, owing to cooperation between MES, UNICEF and “Huysi Kamurj” NGO, 13 schools are implementing inclusive education, where foreign language is taught according to the basic educational plan. Despite the above-mentioned steps, there is still a lot to be done in the field of special education to make general and professional education accessible to children with special needs, to redecorate the school-buildings to meet the needs of these children, to establish centers for medical-psychological-pedagogical assessment in the marzes too (there is only one in Yerevan), to organize trainings for specialists and provide them with up-to-date methodological and pedagogical materials. It is necessary to pay special attention to the training of professional staff. It is true that the Chair of Defectology functions at the Faculty of primary and special education of Yerevan State Pedagogical University, but the textbooks and programmes do not meet the requirements of the time, neither do they meet the “education for everyone” conception, nor the provisions of the children’s rights convention. We think a special course of inclusive education should also be developed and introduced in all universities that train pedagogical personnel. As well as a special center should be established that will develop the course programme, the textbook, the standards, methodological manuals, will study the progressive experience and its possible introduction in Armenia.

#### **8.5. Extra-curricular education (additional education)**

Today there are 163 running state and community out-of-school institutions, with 63700 children. As compared with 1991, the number of those institutions has decreased by 27% and the number of children by 60%. There is no legislative field regulating the activity of out-of-school institutions, there is no guided unified policy, even more: some high rank officials think that this field is luxury for countries like ours. Whereas our long experience shows, that out-of-school institutions do a great job in preventing children from wandering in the streets, in organizing their spare time and meeting their interests and demands. However, certain activities are being carried out in the field of extracurricular education.

- There are language study-groups both in schools, within extracurricular activities and in out-of-school institutions.

- A great number of schools in the Republic have been named after famous Russian, English, French, German and other writers and people of art. Those schools always hold literary-musical parties, quizzes, literary readings dedicated to the given writers life and literary activity, as well as Russian, English, German, French, Persian and other cultural weeks and festivals.
- Olympiads in foreign languages have become a tradition and they are held at universities. The pupils communicate with the best foreign language specialists in the Republic, receive dictionaries, books with their signatures.
- In 2001 Armenian Centre for development of Russian language was set up in Yerevan, which greatly contributed to the activities of 2 international Olympiads titled “Russia and Russian language in my life” held in Armenia. High school winners of International Olympiads got the right for free education in higher educational institutions in Russia specializing in “Humanities”, “Journalism”, “Public Relations”.
- Foreign language summer camps are being periodically organized.
- There are TV programmes teaching foreign language courses.
- A number of NGOs organize free or paid foreign language courses within the frames of different grants.
- The Embassies of Russia, France, the United Kingdom, the USA, Germany and Iran in Armenia greatly contribute to the process of teacher training and encouraging schoolchildren.

## **9. PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION**

Professional education is the core component part of Armenia's educational system.

Professional educational programmes are aimed at training corresponding quality specialists through the succession of secondary comprehensive and professional levels of education. The main professional educational programmes in Armenia are:

1. Upper secondary vocational
2. Vocational
3. Higher professional
4. Post-graduate (Article 10 of RA Law on Education)

Upper secondary vocational and vocational education in Armenia is the first level of professional education.

As it is stated in RA Law on "Upper secondary vocational and vocational education", the objectives of the state policy in these fields are:

- Ensuring the quality of education in these fields and introduction of relevant system of improvement,
- Ensuring the continuity of the educational process, educating the learner in the spirit of national, moral and universal values, etc. (Article 5)

As it is stated in Article 22 of the RA Law on Education, the goal of the upper secondary vocational education is the training of specialists with the aforementioned qualities. This education is implemented in vocational schools and in other educational centers. If a corresponding license is available, then vocational education can also be implemented individually (teaching by a master).

### **9.1. Vocational Education**

In 2006-2007 school year, 83 vocational educational institutions (VEI) were active in Armenia, of which 27 are in the capital, and the rest in the regions. The number of students is 28305, 64.8% of which are women. 74.7% of the students paid for their education, and 25.3% got free education. In the same school year, 25 private VEIs were active in Armenia. The number of students is 2546, 70.8% of which are women.

#### **9.1.1. Language Teaching at VEIs**

There are language professions in nearly 15 VEIs. They are mainly language professions like the Yerevan State Pedagogical College after A.Bakunts, Yerevan State Pedagogical College “Mkhitar Sebastatsi”, State Pedagogical Colleges in Gyumri and Goris and others, where they train language specialists for only primary school.

Yerevan State College of Humanities has a wide choice of language professions: “Preschool education and foreign language”, “Translation and business correspondence”, “Translation and archiving”, “Translation and customs service”, “Translation and service management”, “Armenian and foreign language teaching”.

Some of the above-mentioned professions are also taught at some colleges in Yerevan and in marzes. Greek as a mandatory foreign language is taught at Yerevan State Armenian-Greek College of tourism, service and food production. Foreign language teaching starts from the first year are studied minimum one and maximum four years. In faculties not specializing in languages, they study a foreign language 2 hours a week, and in specializing faculties, they study a language 12 hours a week.

Nearly 250 teachers of Armenian, 350 teachers of foreign languages teach at VEIs. According to NSS (National Statistical Service) data, in 2006 1325 students specialized in languages at state and private VEIs. In the same year, 481 people were admitted and 608 graduated. In fact, great decrease in the number of learners is obvious.

The quality of teaching foreign languages in VEIs is mainly not satisfactory. There is no methodology and programmes, technical means are insufficient, no corresponding textbooks. The knowledge of a foreign language (if the student is not in a specializing faculty) from the professional viewpoint, is not important for the student, which weakens the learner’s motivation to learn.

Standards for language disciplines have been worked out yet.

## **9.2. Higher Professional Education**

During the recent years the following higher educational system has been formed in Armenia: traditional state universities, interstate universities founded based on interstate agreements and private universities.

In Armenia, the university and post-graduate professional education is implemented by the following basic and additional educational programmes:

- 1) By the basic higher professional educational programme

- Bachelor
- Master
- Specialist with a diploma
- 2) By the basic post-graduate professional educational programme
  - Researcher
- 3) By additional educational programme
  - In-service training
  - In-service retraining

(Article 8 of RA Law on higher and post-graduate professional education).

In 2006-2007 school year, 23 higher educational institutions (HEI) and 10 branches, which include 81383 students, of which 52.4% are girls. 61419 or 75.5% of them paid for their education, and 19964 or 24.5% got free education. 64023 students get full-time education and 17360 students get extra-mural education. 19 out of 23 state HEIs are in Yerevan, and four are in regions. The 10 branches are also in the regions.

In the same school year, 64 private HEIs ran in Armenia. The number of students is 24447, 63.4% of which are women. 49 of private HEIs are in the capital and 15 are in the regions.

The number of state universities and students in them by different years is introduced in the table below. (Table 8.1)

**Table 8.1**

**Number of HEIs and students in them by different years<sup>9</sup>**

	1990/91	1999/ 00	2000/ 01	2001/ 02	2002/ 03	2003/ 04	2004/05
<b>State HEIs</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>20</b>
Students, total in thousands	48.9	39.8	43.6	47.4	54.1	55.9	62.5
Number of students getting free education (thousands)	47.1	15.8	16.1	16.6	16.0	19.2	19.7
	96.3%	42.9%	36.9%	35.0%	29.6%	34.3%	31.5%
Number of students paying for education (thousands)	1.8	24.0	27.5	30.8	38.1	36.7	42.8
	3.7%	57,1%	63,1%	65,0%	70,4%	65,7%	68,5%

<sup>9</sup> Source – RA NSS



In 1988, for the first time in the field of professional education of Armenia private professional institutions came to being. As it is seen in the table below, in 1988-1998 this net had a great progress (1 university in 1988, and 87 universities in 1998). Recently (1998-2006) we have noticed decrease in their number (67 universities in 2006), and it was the result of strengthening the quality control and free economic competition. However, that factor has not affected the number of students attending those universities; the number has even grown in the result of expanding the university areas and developing technically and qualitatively.

Table 8.2

Number of Private HEIs and Change of Students (1988-2006<sup>2</sup>)

	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Private HEIs	1	2	10	24	33	35	40	40	75	87	84	82	71	71	72	73	68	67
Students in private HEIs (thousand)	0,3	0,9	3,2	7,3	12,0	13,3	14,5	14,5	18,3	20,2	21,2	22,0	17,1	18,2	18,2	22,0	22,6	24,05

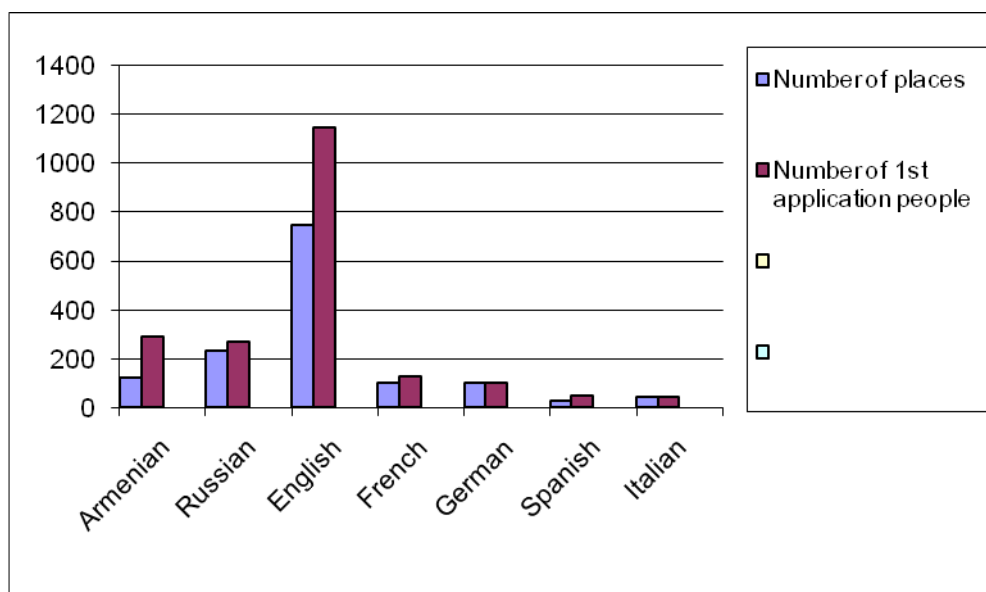
<sup>2</sup>Source – RA NSS, Collected statistical articles “Social Situation of the Republic of Armenia”

### 9.2.1. Entrance Exams in Languages

#### Number of candidates and allocated places

Usually the competition at language faculties is high, which is a sign of their high demand. Especially at foreign language faculties the tuition fee is also high. Armenian language and literature and Russian language and literature faculties are exceptions and the tuition fee is comparatively low at these faculties. The number of candidates to specialize in English is especially high. Below is introduced the diagram showing the number of places and people with first application for language specialty\* in 2007. It is noteworthy that only data from YSLU and YSU are included.

**Number of places and people with first application for language specialty at YSLU and YSU (2007)**



The Diagram shows that English greatly prevails over other languages. According to MES data<sup>10</sup>, 745 places were allocated to English language specialty in 2007, and 1143 people applied with the first application. 120 places were allocated to Armenian Philology faculty and 290 people applied with the first application. The situation with the German and French languages is of great concern. 98 people applied for 99 allocated places to German language. In case of other languages, the number of people with the first application is a bit more than the number of allocated places.

The diagram below shows the relation between the numbers of places for different specialties at YSU, and people with the first application for the given specialty (the competition rate is according to the first application).

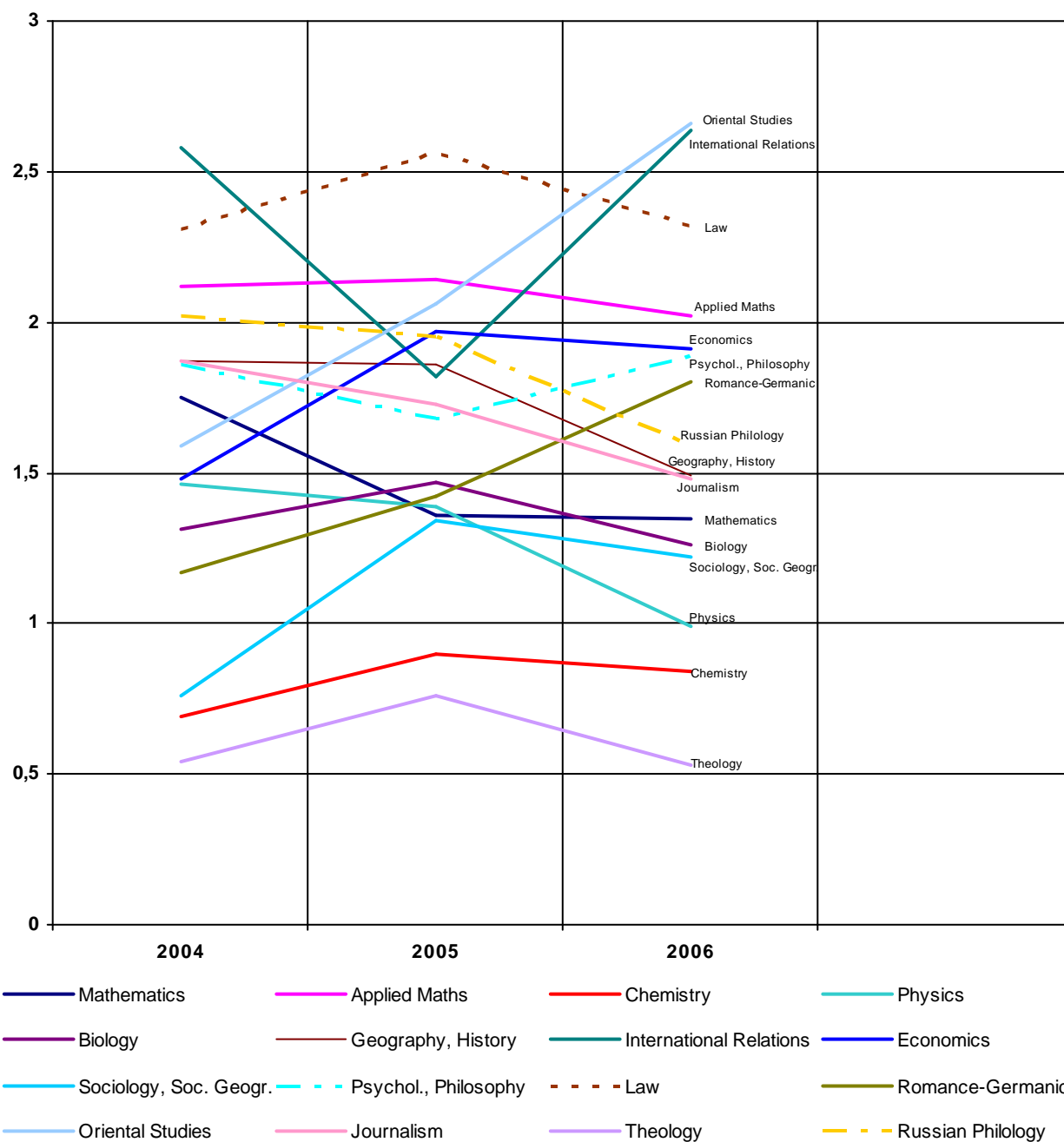
<sup>3</sup> The candidate can apply for up to eight places. As a rule, the first application shows the candidate's professional orientation, his/her preference.

<sup>4</sup> The data are taken from [www.edu.am](http://www.edu.am) site, December 10, 2007.

It clearly shows that recently the number of people applying to Romance-Germanic faculty has sharply increased (mainly because of English) and the number of candidates to Russian Philology faculty has decreased.

**Diagram 8.1.**

**First application entrance competition data for different specialties at YSU.**

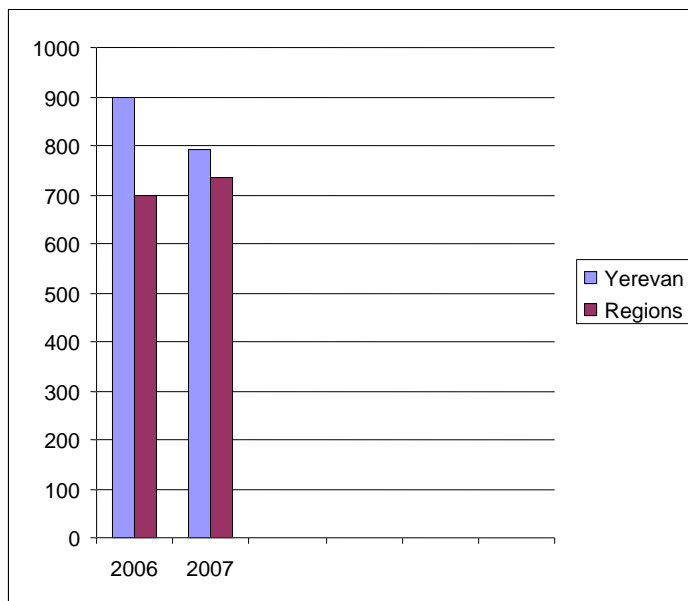


## 9.2.2. Distribution of Candidates According to Place of Living

Language education is centralized in corresponding faculties of two state universities: Yerevan State Linguistic University after Brusov (YSLU) and Yerevan State University (YSU). There are professions of language teachers at every state pedagogical university. In particular, 345 students train for “English language” profession at the Vanadzor State Pedagogical University. At the same university 132 students study French as a second language, 114 students study German as a second language. The Russian-Armenian (Slavonic) University, as well as a number of private HEIs have language professions. However, recently the number of candidates from the regions has increased, though at language faculties the number of candidates from Yerevan prevails.

*Diagram 8.2.*

**Number of candidates to Romance-Germanic faculties of Yerevan State Linguistic University after Brusov (YSLU) and Yerevan State University (YSU) (distribution according to the place of living)**

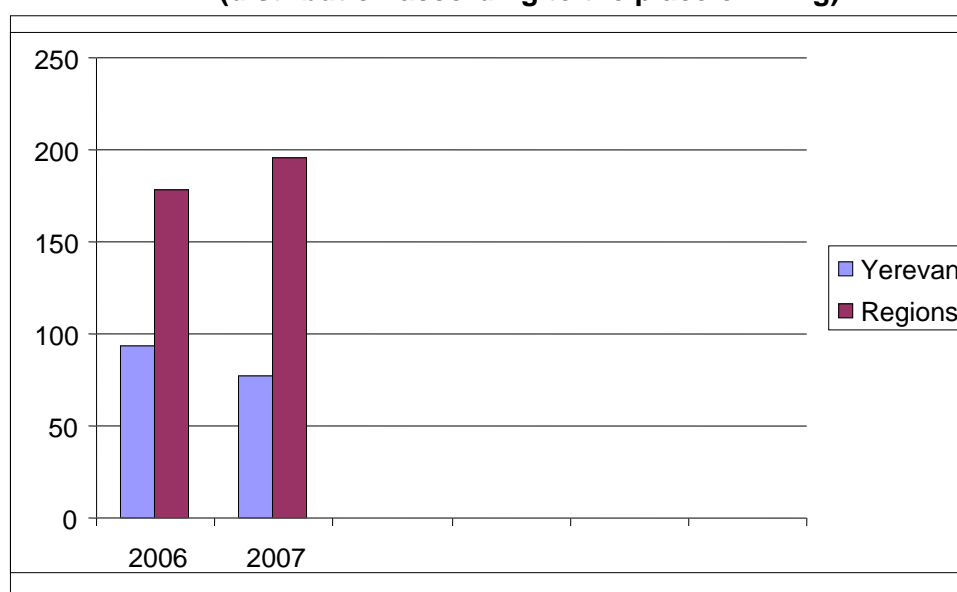


These data show that the number of candidates from Yerevan is greater than that of the regions taken together.

The situation is different with Armenian language and literature specialty. YSU is the main institution where specialists of Armenian language are trained, and during the last two years, the situation is as follows.

*Diagram 8.3*

**Number of candidates to the Faculty of Armenian Philology at YSU  
(distribution according to the place of living)**

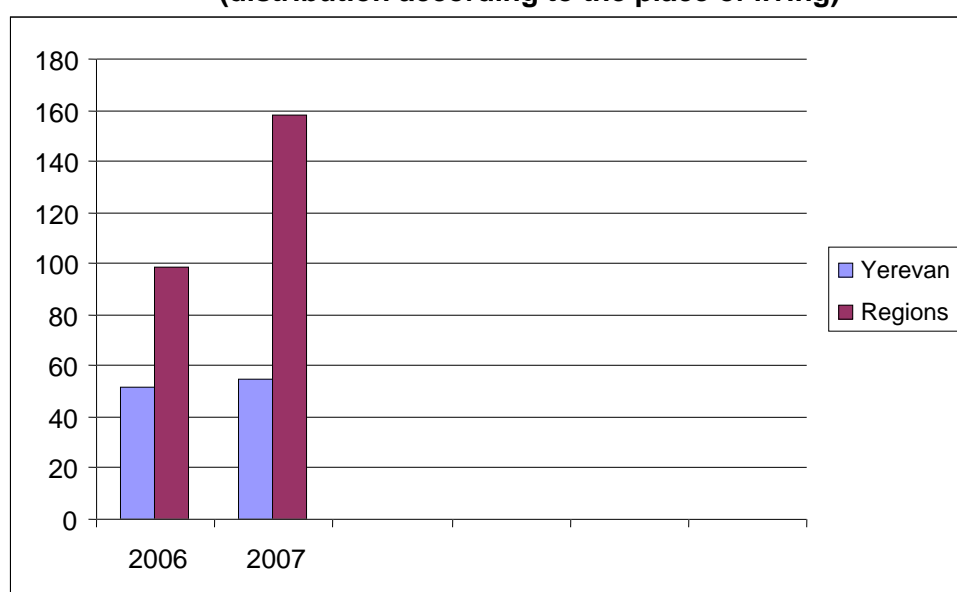


The data show that the number of candidates from the regions is greater than those from Yerevan. By the way, the difference has substantially grown in 2007.

The number of candidates from regions has also increased in language faculties at pedagogical universities. In particular, during the last two years at (English language and literature faculty) Yerevan State Pedagogical University after Kh. Abovyan the situation is as follows.

*Diagram 8.4*

**Number of candidates to the English language and literature faculty of Yerevan  
State Pedagogical University after Kh. Abovyan  
(distribution according to the place of living)**



In fact, in 2007 the number of candidates from the regions is nearly 3 times more than from Yerevan.

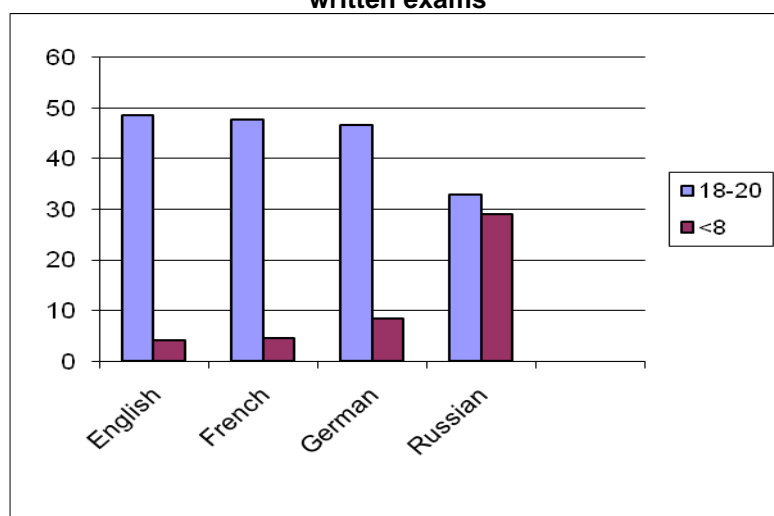
Thus, at universities training language specialists (philologists, translators) the number of candidates from Yerevan prevails. It is explained by the fact that the passing score at these universities is high and candidates from regions, who have weak opportunity to take tutorial courses, are not competitive with candidates from Yerevan. The fact, that the tuition fee at these universities is quite high and not affordable for many people in the regions, also plays a big role. The studies show that “poverty level continues to be considerably high outside Yerevan.”<sup>11</sup>

The number of candidates from regions at the Pedagogical University and the main university training Armenian language specialists prevails, which is conditioned by low passing scores and lower tuition fee.

### 9.2.3. Exam Results

According to “Armenia’s social outline and poverty” (2007) research, 34.5% of the candidates has taken tutorial courses to enter the universities. Besides, the results of the research show that private tutorial courses of Armenian and foreign languages<sup>12</sup> are more widespread. In 2007, 7615 candidates took written exams in foreign languages. Majority of candidates for liberal arts and economics, as well as for language specialties, take written exams. Below we introduce the number of candidates (by %) in 2007, who got “excellent” (18-20) and “bad”(<8) marks in entrance written exams in foreign languages (English, French, German and Russian).

**Number of candidates (by %) in 2007 with “excellent” (18-20) and “bad”(<8) marks in entrance written exams**



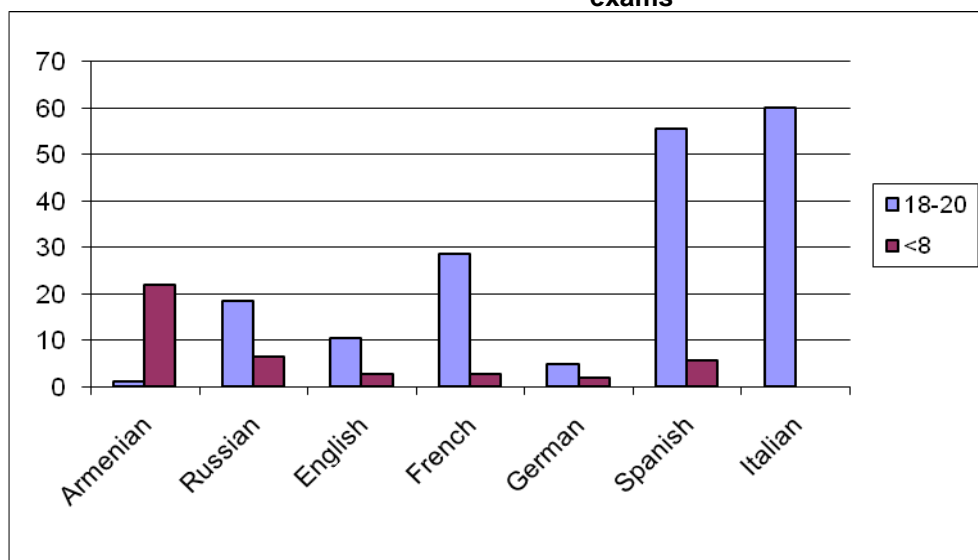
<sup>5</sup>Armenia’s social outline and poverty, p.23

<sup>6</sup> Armenia’s social outline and poverty, RA NSS, Yerevan 2007, p. 91

The data show that nearly half of the candidates taking English, French and German exams, get “Excellent” marks. The number of candidates who got “bad” marks does not exceed 10%. These kind of high results are conditioned by the fact that candidates learn by heart the tasks that are published in a questionnaire beforehand. The diagram shows that the results of Russian language exam are rather low: nearly 30% of the candidates get “bad” marks. Unlike other foreign languages, the written exam in Russian language is a dictation, which, from the viewpoint of many specialists, is not the best way to check knowledge.

Only candidates to language faculties take oral exams. Nevertheless, the results of oral exams are considerably lower than the written exams. Below is a diagram showing the number of candidates (by %) in 2007, who got “excellent” (18-20) and “bad” (<8) marks from oral exams in Armenian, English, French, German and Russian languages.

**Number of candidates (by %) in 2007 with “excellent” (18-20) and “bad”(<8) marks in entrance oral exams**



The data show that the results of the mother tongue are of special concern. Nearly 1% of the candidates got “excellent” and 22% “bad” marks. The reason for this kind of result is that, besides language knowledge the exam in Armenian also checks the knowledge in literature. Another reason is that candidates mainly from regions apply to the faculty of Armenian philology, and most of them come to the exam without taking private tutorial courses. Few “excellent” and “bad” marks are noticed in German exam. The small number of “excellent” marks proves that we have serious problems in teaching this language. Specialists of German language say that every year the number of candidates in German decreases and the oral examiners have to do a favour to some



candidates who got “bad” and “close to bad” marks. In particular, during the 2007 entrance oral exams in German 14.7% of the candidates got 8 points, 13.7% got 9 points which are the lowest passing scores. The French language had the highest results. Nearly 30% of the candidates got “excellent” marks.

#### **9.2.4. Content-based requirements for entrance exams**

Oral exams for language professions check the skills of reading, translation, comprehensions of an unknown text and communication around a topic familiar from the school programme. During the written exam, the candidates do different types of grammar exercises, e.g. translate sentences, form sentences with the given words, change the direct speech into an indirect one and vice versa, make the sentences interrogative, etc. Some exercises also check the reading skills, in particular to what extent the context was perceived.

Unfortunately, the oral communicative skills in foreign languages are checked only in language faculties.

### **9.3. Language Teaching in the Field of Higher Language Education**

#### **9.3.1. Staff of Language Learners and Teachers**

##### *Learners*

According to RA NSS data, in 2006, at all state and private HEIs in Armenia the number of learners specializing in languages was

- Armenian language and literature – 2107 learners, of which 1949 (92.5%) were girls
- Russian language and literature – 998 learners, of which 939 (94%) were girls
- Foreign languages - 5978 learners, of which 5588 (93.5%) were girls.

On the whole, in 2006, at all state and private HEIs in Armenia the number of learners specializing in languages was 9083, which is 8.6% of the total number of students.

In 2006, 330 students (nearly 15% of students for master’s degree) took courses of master’s degree in philology at state universities, of which 245 were girls. In the same year, 250 students graduated from the master’s courses in philology. In fact, we notice increase in the number of learners of philology.

### *Teachers*

According to RA NSS<sup>13</sup> data, in 2006-07 school year 1324 trainers taught philology at RA state universities (18.5% of the trainers at state universities), of which 1085 (nearly 82%) are women. 71 of them have Doctor's degree, 395 have Ph.D. 277 trainers teach at private universities, of which 217 (nearly 78%) are women. 15 of them have Doctor's degree and 64 have Ph.D.

### **9.3.2. Language Teaching as a Profession**

There is one linguistic university in Armenia, (Yerevan State Linguistic University named after Brusov) and the State University has faculties of Armenian philology, Russian language and literature and Romance-Germanic languages, the Armenian-Russian (Slavonic) interstate university has a faculty of Romance-Germanic languages. Yerevan State Pedagogical University has philological faculties (teaching Armenian and Russian sections) and a faculty of foreign languages (teaching English, French and German). Foreign language teachers are also prepared at pedagogical and other universities. There is one private linguistic ("Interlingua") university, and at other private universities there are foreign language faculties and professions (universities named after H. Acharyan, A. Shirakatsi, Northern University and others).

In relation to foreign languages, there are five professions: philology, linguistics, intercultural communication, pedagogy and translation.

#### **Number of state and private universities having language professions**

Language	Number of state universities having corresponding profession	Number of private (accredited) universities having corresponding profession
Armenian language and literature (language specialists, teachers)	6	7
Russian language and literature (language specialists, translators, teachers)	6	0
English language (language specialists, translators, teachers)	6	
French language (language specialists, translators, teachers)	4	

<sup>7</sup> RA social situation in 2006, RA NSS, 2007, p. 96

German language (language specialists, translators, teachers)	4	
Oriental languages	2	2
Spanish	1	
Italian	1	
<b>Total</b>	28	36

The above-mentioned data show that there are accredited language specializations at many universities in Armenia.

During the Soviet years Russian, English, French and German were taught as specialization at the universities in Armenia. Recently Spanish and Italian have been added to the above-mentioned languages. At faculties where language specialists are trained, the learners study a second and a third foreign languages, including European and non-European languages. At the Faculty of Oriental studies at YSU there are specialties of Persian, Arab and Turkish studies. At these departments, along with Arabic, Persian and Turkish languages (as well as Ottoman, Azerbaijani), they teach Kurdish, Hindi and Hebrew.

Oriental languages are also taught at other universities, as well as at the YSU faculties of International relations and History.

According to specialists' assessment, one of the difficulties of teaching languages as specialties is the difference in the learners' starting level of knowledge. It is very difficult to use the same programme for learners with excellent and average knowledge of the language. This problem is especially obvious in case of German, as the competition for this specialty is small and in some cases, candidates with low level of knowledge are admitted. We have problems with Spanish and Italian too, as most of the learners have no knowledge of the language at the moment of being admitted to the university, as the teaching of these languages is very rare at public schools.

The teachers and trainers complain that in many cases the groups consist of 20-22 people, which does not contribute to effective language teaching. However, there are no researches that in groups with 15 learners, teachers and trainers provide higher quality, than in groups with 20 learners.

The other problem is connected with the reducing of the hours. The specialists stress that recently the hours for major languages have been reduced (e.g. at one of the universities instead of 20, at present 16 hours are allocated), which negatively affects the quality.

In the field of language teaching, a lot of work has been done in compiling textbooks. Previously we mainly used books published in Russia, but today a great number of textbooks have been compiled by the specialists from universities in Armenia. In addition, in many cases those textbooks are published after they have been piloted for a year: that allows improving their content. In some cases, electronic versions of the lectures are put in an internet site. But the usage of electronic materials is not widely spread, as computers and Internet are not available for a great number of students. In the sense of textbooks compiled by the efforts of local specialists, the situation with the English language is all right. A great number of textbooks have been compiled, which, from the specialists' viewpoint need revision and bringing in conformity with the newly developed standards. The specialists of French language are doing considerable work. There are textbooks for other languages too, though textbooks published abroad still prevail.

There are extension courses at universities teaching language as specialty. With some periodicity, lecturers and trainers must take those courses. The lecturers are concerned with the fact opportunities of being retrained abroad are very limited.

### **9.3.3. Language Teaching in Combination with other Professions**

Language teaching in Armenia does not aim at preparing only language specialists, translators and teachers. Sometimes language education is combined with other specialties. In particular, recently the YSLU has successfully introduced language education in combination with journalism, political science, psychology and intercultural communication. Such an approach enables preparation of graduates with competence in foreign languages and some other specialty, thus increasing their competitiveness in the job market.

### **9.3.4. Language Teaching at Non-language Faculties**

Foreign language teaching in language education is important and is conditioned by the fact of Armenia's integration in the international community. Competence in foreign languages is important not only for communication: it is also a precondition of being a qualified specialist, as considerable part of the professional literature is in foreign languages.

By all professions, it is mandatory to learn Armenian, Russian and a foreign language. According to the data provided by the universities in Armenia, 14 foreign languages were taught at universities in 2007. As the universities in Armenia have

academic freedom, there are no unified requirements for language teaching. The only requirement is connected with the Armenian language. According to RA Law on language, entrance exam in Armenian and teaching Armenian at all RA upper secondary vocational schools, vocational-technical and higher educational institutions are mandatory.

As a result, at different universities, different number of hours is allocated to foreign language teaching and different methods of checking the knowledge are used. As a rule, teaching Armenian and foreign languages start from the first year. At most of the universities languages are taught up to four semesters. The universities having Baccalaureate and Master's systems teach languages in both degrees.

Foreign language teaching at non-language faculties does not only impart necessary knowledge for communication, but it also aims at helping the learner to make use of the professional foreign language literature. However, we do not always succeed in reaching this goal. One of the problems is that in the faculties where no entrance exam in a foreign language is needed, many students enter with very low, sometimes even with nearly zero knowledge of a foreign language. At many faculties, students with different level of language competence study in the same groups. Under such circumstances, teachers have a hard time to provide effective teaching. In such cases differentiated language teaching is needed, which, in practice, is not implemented.

It is much more difficult with problem of teaching a language as specialty. Though foreign language textbooks have been compiled for many specialties, there is still a lot to do in teaching the foreign language for specialties.

Highlighting the fact, that foreign language competence is a means to catch up with the modern development of the given profession, in the "State Programme of Education Development" (2008-2015) it was suggested to take steps to implement the teaching of the professional subjects in foreign languages.

There are complaints that the programme in the Master's degree is the same as in Baccalaureate.

Another problem is that there are no professional extensions courses for language specialists, who work at universities with no language faculties. In this respect, the teachers need serious professional support.

### **9.3.5. Distant Language Learning**

Recently the distant language education system has been resumed in Armenia. This system was first resumed in pedagogical universities and aimed at supporting teachers who worked at school without having a higher education. In 2007, distant education was restored at the Romance-Germanic faculty of the YSU as well, where the students attend classes nearly 6 months a year. There are no studies about how effective the distant language teaching as a profession is. It is obvious, that organization of the distant language teaching requires a specific approach.

#### **9.4. Qualification of foreign language teachers (current situation)**

- It is well-known that the quality of education depends on the quality of pedagogical education. The parallel model of pedagogical education is implemented in Armenia. Pedagogical education does not catch up with the system changes, as the theoretical approaches still prevail, and the hours and form of organizing pedagogical practice that contributes to the development of practical skills is not enough to solve that issue.
- As to the professional development of pedagogical personnel, two things in Armenia work in this direction: trainings and publication of methodological journals.

Within the frames of WB credit project, in 2008, in 52 school-centres foreign language teachers will attend 8-day courses on applying new syllabuses, textbooks, cooperative methods of teaching and information technologies. The National Institute for Education publishes “Foreign languages in Armenia” and “Russian language in Armenia” methodological journals, which are given to schools free.

Today it is necessary to organize trainings taking into consideration the teachers’ needs, their requirements; to equip them with theoretical knowledge, to organize joint open classes and discussions, because many teachers, for example, use the interactive methods in the teaching process, though sometimes they do not consider how appropriate they are. Not all the schools have financial resources to pay for their teachers training. The state, international organizations and embassies in Armenia fill this gap.

NGOs have serious contribution to the process of professional development. In particular, “Armenian Association for the Study of English – AASE” carries out serious activities through organizing international conferences, seminars, discussions of theoretical and practical issues involving foreign specialists, publishes an international

scientific periodical. The members of the Association deliver reports in foreign countries introducing Armenia’s language policy issues. (For details see Chapter 11.2)

### 9.5. Demand for Language Specialists in the Job Market

During the recent years, the demand for language specialists has grown in the job market. Nevertheless, the studies show, that the job market greatly demands specialists of Russian philology French and German, but the number of candidates for these professions has reduced recently. This means, that higher language education is not always based on the demand of the job market. According to two indexes (the demand in the RA job market and the assessment of the process of preparing specialists), professions can be divided into four groups.

**Classification of specialties according to the present demand in RA job market and assessment of the process of preparing specialists**

	<b>Specialties of comparatively high demand in the RA job market</b>	<b>Specialties of comparatively low demand in the RA job market</b>	
<b>The process of specialist training was assessed comparatively high</b>	<u>Russian Philology</u> , <u>French and German languages</u> , Medical science, musical professions, sociology and social work, medical prevention and pharmacology	Chemistry, Physics, Geography, History, Oriental Studies, Physical Education, Theology, Lithosphere studies, Energetic and electrical technology, Psychology and Philosophy, <u>English language</u> , Law, Professions of producer and actor	<b>+</b>
<b>The process of training specialists was assessed comparatively low</b>	IT technologies and programming, pediatrics, architecture and engineering, journalism, fine arts, economics	International relations, radio-techno- logy and communication systems, Transport systems, veterinary science and cattle-breeding, food products technology, light industry	<b>-</b>
	<b>+</b>	<b>-</b>	

In fact, the process of preparing foreign language specialist has been assessed high. There is great demand for specialists of Russian, French and German, while specialists of English are less demanded.

## **9.6. Post-Graduate Education**

Foreign language teaching is also important in post-graduate education. Candidates in all professions take an exam in a foreign language and a qualifying examination for the candidate degree. In 2007, a new system of entrance examinations was introduced. Before introducing the new system, preliminary testing and courses had been organized for candidates of post-graduation education. 654 (TOEFL), 73 (TCF) and 34 (on DaF) candidates in English, French and German respectively, took part in state funded<sup>14</sup> courses. Though courses for TOEFL, TCF and DaF exams are being organized for the post-graduate student, there is still discrepancy between teaching foreign languages at the professional education stage and the requirements of the mentioned examinations. Introduction of the new system has given rise to certain debates and divergence of opinions.

### **9.6.1. Language professions**

863 candidates took part in English exam of which 49% have overcome the defined threshold<sup>15</sup>.

55 candidates took an exam in English philology profession, of which only 23 overcame the defined threshold.

67 candidates took an exam in French of which 38 candidates overcame the threshold (57% of the participants). 24 candidates took an exam in French philology profession, of which only 3 overcame the defined threshold.

32 candidates took an exam in German of which 9 candidates overcame the threshold (28% of the participants). 6 candidates took an exam in German philology profession, none of which succeeded in overcoming the threshold.

### **9.6.2. Non-language professions**

476 candidates took an English exam in professions of social sciences, of which 276 overcame the defined threshold. 262 candidates took an exam in professions of natural sciences, of which 122 overcame the defined threshold.

29 candidates took a French exam in professions of social sciences, of which 21 overcame the defined threshold. 22 candidates took an exam in professions of natural sciences, of which 14 overcame the defined threshold.

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<sup>8</sup>The candidate had the right to cover the expenses himself. These are the data of candidates for who the state has paid.

<sup>9</sup> Different thresholds have been defined for different professions. The highest is for philological professions.



20 candidates took a German exam in professions of social sciences, of which 5 overcame the threshold. 6 candidates took an exam in professions of natural sciences, of which 4 overcame the defined threshold. The data show that most of the candidates have not overcome the English exam. Low results have been registered with the candidates for the professions in social sciences, who have taken exams in German.

### 9.6.3. Content-based requirements for post-graduate students

Post-graduate students for language professions take qualification exams in a foreign language. At YSLU after Brusov the content-based requirements include 25 questions in Lexicology, Stylistics, Theoretical Grammar and Phraseology respectively. The post-graduate student also introduces his/her research work done. At YSU the qualification examination program includes Phonetics, Pragmatic Linguistics, Text interpretation, Functional Stylistics, Modern Problems of Grammar and Theory of Translation.

**Number of post-graduate students in philology by years**



The post-graduate students not specializing in languages can take a qualification exam for the candidate degree in a foreign language, but he/she can also transfer his/her entrance exam points.

According to NSS data, 32 candidates were admitted to post-graduate courses for philological professions, of which 24 get free education.

## 10. REGIONAL OR MINORITY LANGUAGES IN THE SYSTEM OF EDUCATION

### 10.1. Regional or Minority Languages in the Republic of Armenia

The regional or minority languages in the Republic of Armenia are Assyrian, Yezidi, Greek, Russian and Kurdish, which, in fact, are the languages of minorities and only the representatives of corresponding national minorities have spoken those languages and brought them to Armenia. None of those national minorities is indigenous (autochthon) in RA and neither traditionally, nor historically are they connected with any area, though there are certain small settlements (villages), which are mostly inhabited by those minorities.

Russian is the only language that a great number of non-Russians know (Russian is the second language of nearly 85% of the RA population, and the first language of 13% of the population).

As it is mentioned in Armenia's second Report on European Charter on Regional or Minority Languages (2007), "...there is no problem of regional languages in Armenia: ratifying the European Charter on Regional or Minority Languages, Armenia has undertaken obligations to work out a policy and draft programme of activities only for the preservation and development of national minority languages (Russian, Greek, Yezidi, Kurdish, Assyrian.)"

The issue could be argued, as the above-mentioned communities came to be in Armenia since 1820s, however Armenia, irrespective of everything, protects other languages and cultures (not included in the Charter) living in Armenia too, and as to the five mentioned languages, it has special obligations. It is noteworthy that three of them (Assyrian, Yezidi and Kurdish) are not official languages in any country<sup>16</sup>.

Which languages do the representatives of national minorities living in Armenia consider a mother tongue?

#### Number of people speaking minority languages in Armenia<sup>17</sup>

Language	Number of people, considering it as a mother tongue
Assyrian	3150 people (90% of Assyrians living in Armenia)
Yezidi	32400 people (80% of Yezidis living in Armenia)
Greek	750 people ( 58% of Greeks living in Armenia)
Kurdish	1250 people (nearly 78% of Kurds living in Armenia)

<sup>16</sup> For details see RA 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Reports According to Par. 1 of Article 15 of the European Charter on Regional or Minority Languages (2003, 2007), as well as the Expert Committee Report and the CE Committee of Ministers' Recommendations on the implementation of the Charter in Armenia (2006)

<sup>17</sup> RA 1<sup>st</sup> Report According to Par. 1 of Article 15 of the European Charter on Regional or Minority Languages Yerevan, (2003)

Not all of the above-mentioned people are proficient in their mother tongue (there are no true data about how many and to what extent). At least, the number of people proficient in their mother tongue, does not exceed the numbers mentioned (e.g. 80% of Assyrians are proficient in oral speech and 2% in writing). 98% of Russians (14.500 people) living in Armenia consider Russian as their mother tongue.

Certain individuals in Armenia are to some extent or other proficient in Ukrainian, Byelorussian, Polish, Georgian, Hebrew, etc.

In the sense of the Charter requirements, it is natural for Assyrians, Yezidi, Kurds and Greeks to misuse the opportunities given by the RA Legislation, especially in the fields of education and press.

The Assyrians and Greeks often prefer Russian to their language, and publish press in Russian, get Russian education and finally become Russian speaking. It contributes to their isolation from Armenian speaking environment and emigration to Russia.

There are very few foreigners in Armenia, who consider Armenian as their first language. They happen to be among Yezidis, Greeks and Assyrians. In areas with mixed population (Armenians with other nations), most of the Armenians are to some extent or other proficient in the minority language. The situation is like that in Assyrian Dimitrov and Verin Dvin villages, where part of the Armenians can speak Assyrian; Armenians living in villages Amre-Taza, Sadunts, Alagyaz, Derek, Jamshlu, Avshen, Yeraskhahun, Zovouni and others, are to some extent or other proficient in Yezidi.

There are a number of problems in Armenia connected with the protection of minority language rights: part of them is legal, the rest are conditioned by Armenia's social-economic condition (e.g. physical condition of schools, human resources, etc.).

These are general problems for Armenia, but certainly, they affect the preservation and development of national minorities, their languages and cultures.

In January 2004, the Department of National Minorities and Religious Affairs at the RA Government was established, which also deals with the issues of minority languages.

In 2007, responsible people were appointed in the regional governing bodies, who deal with national minority rights.

## **10.2. Regional or Minority language rights**

The RA Constitution and the Law on Language protect the language rights of minority languages. According to Article 1 of RA Law on Language, “the Republic of Armenia guarantees the free usage of national minority languages in its territory”.

The next article of the same law defines, that teaching and education in the communities of national minorities can be implemented in their mother tongue, with state programmes and protection and mandatory teaching of Armenian.

It is natural, that for RA residents, including national minorities, the knowledge of Armenian is mandatory, and the aim is not the forced “Armenization”, but providing socially harmonious and peaceful relations in the society. Though the number of national minorities is comparatively small in Armenia, on the whole, they make nearly 2% of the population and their role and importance is quite essential.

As it is mentioned in the state programme on language policy, besides being a factor preventing tension in international relations, “the national minority languages are an integral part of Armenia’s language culture, its wealth. The state protection of these languages is of great importance for further democratization of our country and for the development of a civil society.”

The Republic of Armenia has undertaken special responsibility in the country for preservation of those minority languages and cultures, which do not have national state system. It especially refers to Assyrians and Yezidis. Armenia is the only country where these languages are taught at schools and are introduced in mass media.

At present, the ethnographic picture of Armenians and national minorities in Armenia is nearly as follows:

**Table 1. Distribution of RA permanent residents in cities and villages<sup>18</sup>**

	<b>NATIONALITY</b>							
	<b>Armenian s</b>	<b>Assyrian s</b>	<b>Yezidis</b>	<b>Greeks</b>	<b>Russian s</b>	<b>Ukrainia ns</b>	<b>Kurds</b>	<b>Othe r</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>3145354</b>	<b>3409</b>	<b>40620</b>	<b>1176</b>	<b>14660</b>	<b>1633</b>	<b>1519</b>	<b>4640</b>
<b>City</b>	<b>2041622</b>	<b>524</b>	<b>7413</b>	<b>853</b>	<b>10489</b>	<b>1386</b>	<b>315</b>	<b>3551</b>
<b>Villag e</b>	<b>1103732</b>	<b>2885</b>	<b>33207</b>	<b>323</b>	<b>4171</b>	<b>247</b>	<b>1204</b>	<b>1089</b>

<sup>18</sup> Armenia’s second report on Regional or minority languages according to Par. 1 of Article 16 of European Charter, Yerevan, 2007

During the Soviet times teaching minority languages except Russian, Azerbaijani and Kurdish, was not only discouraged; it was even forbidden like the case with the Assyrian language. This is the reason that for some national minorities certain contradiction arises between their native and national languages, and their native language has become Russian. In these cases, they attend Russian classes, where their national languages (Assyrian, Greek, in some places Kurdish) are gradually being introduced too. At present, they teach Yezidi, Kurdish, Assyrian and Greek in schools in Armenia, and in one school, they also teach Georgian.

The rest of the minorities are small in number and do not have densely populated areas, but with the help of local governing bodies they implement the teaching of the mother tongue through national cultural centres and Sunday schools. After joining the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, the Republic of Armenia has undertaken extra responsibilities too.

The strategic goal of Armenia's language policy is to create a society, where natural development and universal knowledge of Armenian language will be provided, the national minority languages will develop and be preserved and the citizens will be proficient in at least two foreign languages. Being ethnically a homogeneous country, Armenia at the same time strives for creating a multilingual society.

### **10.3. Public Education of Minorities in Armenia<sup>19</sup>**

#### **10.3.1. Preschool Education**

The Republic of Armenia supports the national minority communities, whose languages are under protection, to organize the basic part of preschool education in corresponding languages. First of all, the support is that, according to Order N 29-N of RA Minister of Education and Science, dated January 26, 2007, on "Ratifying the normatives, group density and exemplary staff of RA state and community level preschool educational institutions", a special provision has been intended in the group density appendix, to start groups with insufficient number of national minority children. Thus, if in Armenian preschool educational institutions the index of staff in kindergarten groups is 25-30 children, then national minority groups are allowed to start with 8-10

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<sup>19</sup> When writing this sections we referred to the materials, facts and analyses of the following documents:

- RA 2<sup>nd</sup> Report According to Par. 1 of Article 15 of the European Charter on Regional or Minority Languages Yerevan, (2007)
- the European Charter on Regional or Minority Languages: Charter implementation in Armenia; Report of the Charter Expert Committee, Strasbourg, 14.06.2006
- Tytti Isohookana-Asunmaa. *Education Policy and Minorities in Armenia*. 2<sup>st</sup> draft version, 2003.

children. Irrespective of our hopes, that this permission would encourage such children's involvement in preschool education, the results are not satisfactory yet. According to RA Law on Preschool Education, passed on November 15, 2005, local governing bodies provide the implementation of state policy on preschool education.

Local governing bodies of settlements with Yezidi and Kurdish speakers do not take measures to establish preschool educational institutions, saying there is shortage of enough funds. In fact, in some communities the number of preschool age children is so little, that it becomes very difficult to organize preschool education.

First steps have been taken in establishing preschool educational institutions with teaching of Assyrian. Since 2006, preschool education of Assyrian children is being organized in the school of village Verin Dvin inhabited with Assyrians. One kindergarten is running in village Dimitrov (inhabited with Assyrians) of Ararat Region (25 children, 3 educators), which is still with Armenian education, but steps are being taken to add the second group with Assyrian education.

In Armenia, preschool educational institutions or groups exist in all those settlements, where there are enough Russians. In most of other preschool educational institutions teaching of Russian is organized by the parents' request (all preschool educational institutions in Yerevan and Numbers 4, 6, 8, 11, 15, 16, 18, 23, 26, 27, 30 in Gyumri, etc.) These institutions or groups are open for those minorities, which prefer Russian language education.

There is a group of children with Greek education in Yerevan kindergarten 52, initiated by one of the representatives from Greek community. Here they teach children Greek by the parents' request, irrespective of what nationality the child is.

### **10.3.2. Primary school**

Article 2 of the Law on Language defines, that in the national minority communities located in Armenia the general education can be organized in their mother tongue with state programme and patronage and with mandatory teaching of Armenian. Article 1 of the same law defines, that "*the Republic of Armenia guarantees the free usage of national minority languages in its territory.*"

The National Institute for Education has developed and introduced an "Exemplary plan for national minority public schools (classes)", according to which 42 hours a week are allocated for teaching mother language and literature of national minorities from the 1<sup>st</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> grades.

In all RA comprehensive Armenian schools, **Russian** language and literature are taught from the 2<sup>nd</sup>- 10<sup>th</sup> grades. The teaching is implemented with textbooks published in Armenia, in which peculiarities of teaching Russian language in national schools have been taken into consideration. By the RA Government resolution dated 16/11/99, 60 schools with advanced Russian education have been established, in which Russian is taught from the 1<sup>st</sup> grade. Special textbooks and methodological handbooks have been developed and published for these schools.

Primary education in corresponding languages under RA protection is available to national minority communities, or within the frames of primary education teaching of corresponding minority languages is provided as an integral part of education programme, for the families who have requested and if their number is considered enough.

In reality, that teaching is organized even in case of insufficient number of pupils. E.g., Assyrian language teaching in primary classes is organized in villages Verin Dvin, Dimitrovo, Arzni and in two Assyrian-language classes at Yerevan school 8, even if there are 2-3 children (see Table 4).

Yezidi and Kurdish language teaching in primary classes of village communities inhabited with Yezidis and Kurds is carried out in all the schools where there is a relevant specialist, irrespective of how many children there are in that class (see Table 3).

Within the frames of primary education (2<sup>nd</sup>–3<sup>rd</sup> grades), by the support and financing from Greek Embassy in Armenia, the **Greek** language teaching is being implemented since 1996 in Yerevan school 74 as a mandatory subject and in schools 12 and 132 upon request. Greek is also taught in one of the schools in Vanadzor. **Greek** language teaching within the secondary education (3<sup>rd</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> grades) is implemented in the same schools, again with the support and financing from the Embassy.

### **Textbooks**

By the support from National Institute for Education at RA MES in 2005-2006 “Yezidi language and literature” textbooks for the 1<sup>st</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> grades was published. As mentioned above, the subject is taken in schools of all communities inhabited with Yezidis and Kurds, where there is a relevant specialist. Activities are being carried out to train and have specialists in all communities. In 2002, publication of the “Zmane de” Alphabet in Yerevan with the authorship of Karlene Chachani, Head of the Kurdish

Department at RA Writers' Union, was a great event in the life of the Kurdish community.

In 2005, **Assyrian** language textbook for the 1<sup>st</sup> grade was published, and in 2007, the National Institute for Education at RA MES published "Assyrian Alphabet" for primary classes. During the school year 2006-2007, 70 primary class pupils from Verin Dvin, 15 pupils from Dimitrov village schools (Ararat Region) and 38 pupils from Arzni village school (Kotayk region) were taught with the new Assyrian language textbook. Village Nor Artagers of Armavir Region also takes steps to organize and implement Assyrian language teaching. Only the problem of training an Assyrian language teacher has been solved so far. Five pupils from primary classes attend the Assyrian language courses at Yerevan school 8 named after A. Pushkin.

### **10.3.3. Middle (secondary low) school**

Upon request, representatives of national minority communities in the Republic of Armenia have an opportunity to get education in their national language in the middle school, or within the frames of the middle school, national minority language teaching can be provided as part of the education programme.

**Assyrian** language teaching within the frames of secondary education is implemented at Yerevan school 8 named after A. Pushkin and at schools in Verin Dvin, Dimitrov villages of Ararat Region and in village Arzni of Kotayk Region.

At present teaching of **Yezidi and Kurdish** languages is implemented at 22 secondary school in Yerevan and in regions.

There is only one state Russian school in the Republic, where the language of schooling is **Russian** (village Fioletovo), as well as two private schools in Yerevan – "Slavyanskaya" and "Mashtots" (the latter has Russian language classes). In 37 schools, there are Russian language streams in all grades. 16 out of 37 schools are in Yerevan and 21 are in regions. Total number of pupils in these classes is about 10.000.

Russian language is in the list of subjects for annual Olympiads held among the pupils in the Republic (levels of Olympiad: school, community, city, regional and republic). Competitions and festivals are also being organized. Armenian schoolchildren take part in distant Olympiads in Russian language organized by the Russian Federation and there are already three winners from Yerevan, Kapan and Sisian.



#### **10.3.4. High (secondary upper) school**

There are opportunities to learn minority languages in high school too, in particular Russian, Assyrian and Greek languages. As to Kurdish-Yezidi languages, in high school there is almost no request from the adult population.

There are also problems with providing secondary schools with personnel teaching these languages; in particular, activities are being carried out in training teachers of Yezidi, Kurdish and Assyrian languages.

### **10.4. Professional education for minorities**

#### **10.4.1. Vocational educational institutions**

Technical and vocational education is available to national minority communities in their languages, or within the frames of technical and vocational education, the teaching of minority languages is provided.

At Yerevan Pedagogical College named after Bakunts departments of **Yezidi/Kurdish** languages were founded several years ago, which closed down two years later, because there were no applicants?

Nobody from **Assyrian and Greek** ethnic communities expressed a wish to get technical or vocational education. The only wish is to get higher education.

There is a **Russian** department at Yerevan State College of Humanities. In all other technical and vocational educational institutions teaching of Russian as a foreign language is provided as part of the educational programme.

#### **10.4.2. Higher education**

Higher education is available to national minority representatives in corresponding languages, or within the frames of higher education, the teaching of minority languages is provided as part of the educational programmes.

**Yezidi/Kurdish and** Assyrian are taught at the department of Oriental studies at Yerevan State University. Yezidi/Kurdish languages in higher education are not separated, as these two ethnic groups in Armenia use the same language. At present, there are 3 Assyrian and 1 Kurdish students in the Department, who can work as teachers of their native language.

Since 2005-2006 school year, classical Assyrian is being taught at the department of Oriental studies at Yerevan State University.

The "Davit Anhaght" private university trains specialist in "*Assyrian studies*" and Yerevan State University of Management trains specialists in "*Yezidi*".

During every school year students from Yerevan State University (308), Yerevan Brusov State Linguistic University (493), Yerevan State Pedagogical University (503), Gyumri State Pedagogical University (329), Vanadzor State Pedagogical University (315), Gavar State University (104) and Russian-Armenian “Slavonic” University (380) take Russian as a mandatory subject.

**Greek** as a mandatory subject is taught at Yerevan State and Brusov State Linguistic Universities. Every school year 140-150 students take this subject at these two universities. Other universities also teach Greek, e.g. Yerevan “Monte Melkonyan” University and University of Management, Yerevan University of Culture has a Department of Greek, “Atcharyan” University provides special courses of Greek.

After studying the implementation of the Charter in Armenia, the Charter Expert Committee appreciated the fact that the Armenian authorities contribute to the development of the education in regional or minority languages, especially in the primary education. The situation with the Russian and Greek languages is satisfactory. However, there is shortage of Assyrian, Yezidi and Kurdish teachers and educational materials. In-service training of teachers and the development of the studies and research of these languages are dissatisfactory, and there is still a lot to do in the field of preschool and secondary education<sup>20</sup>£

### **10.5. Situation of languages not included in the Charter<sup>21</sup>**

As it is mentioned above, Armenian also protects the languages and cultures (not included in the Charter) of other nationalities living in Armenia, respecting their culture, traditions and values.

The RA Government finances and publishes a bilingual (**Ukrainian-Armenian**) newspaper in Yerevan. The paper includes news from the Ukraine, and part of the newspaper is about the Ukrainian language.

A Polish monthly is published in three languages (**Polish, Armenian and Russian**). There are publications in **Belorussian** and **German** too.

A number of festivals have been organized attracting the attention to minority languages and cultures (Georgian, Hebrew-Idishi, Belorussian, Polish, German, Ukrainian). These activities have been financed by the RA authorities and by corresponding countries.

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<sup>20</sup> The European Charter on Regional or Minority Languages: Charter implementation in Armenia; Report of the Charter Expert Committee, Strasbourg, 14.06.

<sup>21</sup> For this section the data are taken from the “European Charter on Regional or Minority Languages: Charter implementation in Armenia; Report of the Charter Expert Committee”, Strasbourg, 14.06.2006

## Education in other languages

**German** – Sunday schools are being organized for the children for the German community. The textbooks are sent from Germany.

The “German Cultural Centre” NGO organizes and holds courses of practical German for representatives from the German community too, national holidays are being celebrated.

German, as a foreign language, is taught at the majority of universities, and there are special faculties of German language at YSU and YSLU.

**Idish** – this language is spoken by nearly 50-60 people from older generation. The younger generation is rather inclined to learn Hebrew, and courses of **Hebrew** have been organized for children and adults, though there are financial problems. Israel provides textbooks.

**Ukrainian** – a Sunday school has been organized for the children (2 hours a week), where they teach Ukrainian, History, Literature with textbooks sent from the Ukraine (in 2002 the Ukraine Ministry of Foreign Affairs has provided books). Ukrainian is taught at YSLU.

**Belorussian** – a Sunday school has been organized for the children and adults (2 hours a week: 1 hour language, one hour culture). Cultural event are supported by the Belorussian Embassy, and the latter supports the community with textbooks. Besides, the Ministry of Education of Belorussia supports the obtaining of books (their library has 800 books).

**Polish** – polish is taught at Yerevan school 24. On the third-grade level it is taught in one class and Armenian children can also learn Polish. The “Polonia” NGO has organized courses of Polish twice a week: two teachers were invited from Poland; there are six groups for adults and three groups for children. The same organization has established the “University of Polish Culture.” There is Division of Polish language at YSLU, and students are sent to Poland to study. The new textbooks for basic and higher education are sent from Poland.

## 11. LIFELONG LEARNING IN ARMENIA<sup>24</sup>

### 11.1 Lifelong Learning System in Armenia

The mission of lifelong learning is involvement of all social layers of population in the processes of modern society, innovation theory and educational reforms. Lifelong learning is the integral part of the higher education process, aimed at “withstanding challenges of competition and application of new technologies, social integration and development of solidarity, equal opportunities and improving the quality of life”<sup>22</sup>.

There is no unified approach to content of lifelong learning. As it is mentioned in the European Commission Memorandum on Life Long Learning<sup>23</sup>, it includes three concepts:

- Lifelong education
- Adult education
- Lifelong professional development (training)

Armenia has not created yet a legislative and institutional ground for the implementation of lifelong learning concept, especially in higher educational level.

Today lifelong learning of languages in Armenia is implemented partly in universities (YSLU language centre, Courses at American University of Armenia, etc.), though affiliates of international organizations, NGOs (associations of foreign language teachers) and private educational centres (“Yeva”, “OK”, “France Formation”, etc.) are much more actively involved in that process.

### 11.2. NGOs

Foreign language teachers’ professional associations have been functioning in the republic, which have become special places for professional discussions. Thus, in Armenia there function:

Association of German language teachers and German Philologists (ADV) was established in 1993. It is a member of International Association of German Language

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<sup>22</sup> Prague Communiqué from the meeting of the Ministers of Higher Education in European countries

<sup>23</sup> European Committee (2000). Memorandum on Life Long Learning, Brussels, Committee of the European Communities

<sup>24</sup> When narrating this section we referred to the materials of the analytical report “The present status of Bologna process, objectives and trends of development in EHEA and in Armenia” prepared by the National Center for Higher Education Strategic Researches (RA MES and NIE, “Higher Education” Inquiry book, brochure 4, pp. 300-314)

Teachers; has 115 members (the President is Doctor of Science, Professor M.Astvatsaryan, Head of the Chair of Pedagogy and Methods of Teaching Languages). The main goal of the organization is dissemination of German language and culture in Armenia, which is implemented through branch offices located in 6 marzes of the Republic. The organization provides not only courses of German language, but also teacher training, as well as organizes conferences, weeks of German language and culture, days devoted to the culture of German language speaking countries, etc.

“Association of English Language Teachers of Armenia – AELTA”, was established in 1995, which has 200 members and two branches. The organizations implements English language teaching, supports the English language teachers through disseminating information about the newest methods and standards of teaching English.

The “Armenian Association for the Study of English – AASE” was established and became a full member of the European Federation for the Study of English in September 2003 (the President is S.K. Gasparyan, Doctor of Philological Sciences, Professor, Head of the Chair of English Philology at YSU). The organization holds international conferences and seminars, supports the cooperation and exchange of experience between specialists of English, assists university teachers in different marzes of Armenia. It periodically publishes the “Armenian Folia Anglistika” journal and “Newsletter” (see Appendix 5).

The “Solidarity of French-Armenian Protestants” (*Solidarité Protestante France-Arménie – SPFA*) organization was established in 1991; it has a club of young speakers of French (CLEF). The Club has its newspaper, holds conferences, shows films in French and holds discussions. Established initially as a benevolent organizations (after the earthquake) it later got actively involved in dissemination of French language and culture; it provides free courses of French. It also organizes visits of French students and benefactors to Armenia and Mountainous Gharabagh. There are also other organizations disseminating the French language (Lycée Professionnel, Alliance Française, etc.)

There is also an Association of Russian language teachers.

It is noteworthy that, on the one hand this diversity provides a wide range services, on the other hand they lack a unified approach (standards, programmes, assessment mechanisms). Besides, the defined European descriptors for language proficiency are not being used.

As the Bologna process and the amended Lisbon strategy context give special importance to the role of university, as the main institution to provide lifelong learning

services, in Armenia especially the language universities (faculties) having corresponding scientific, methodological, human and material base can be an institutional base for lifelong learning.

From the viewpoint of lifelong learning needs, we should reconsider the foreign language courses, provided services and develop new, shortened and adapted programmes.

### III ARMENIA'S LANGUAGE EDUCATION POLICY AND EUROPEAN REQUIREMENTS AND STANDARDS

## 12. VISION AND TASKS

### 12.1. Positive trends in language education policy

Today it is impossible to organize precise language education policy without introducing Council of Europe language policy profile.

Positive trends and changes in Armenia's language education policy are conditioned by accepting and introduction of Council of Europe language policy principles, which are called up to develop

- **plurilingualism**, which contributes to the formation and perfection of lifelong communicative skills and competence in several languages to the necessary level

- **language diversity**. All the languages are equally valuable for communication and self-expression; learning and applying any of them is protected by the Council of Europe agreements

- **mutual understanding**. The opportunity of learning other languages is an important condition for accepting intercultural communication and cultural diversity

- **democratic citizenship**. Multicultural skills and abilities of individuals contribute to the active participation in democratic and public processes in a multilingual society

- **social cohesion**, which provides equal conditions for individual development, education, work, free movement, accessibility to information and cultural heritage.

Positive trends are also observed in the following fields:

#### 1. Legal and Regulatory Issues

1. In the process of Armenia's educational reforms the RA "Law on Language", "Law on Education" (pre-school, vocational, higher and post-graduate education), "State Curriculum on Public Education" and "State Standard for Secondary Education" played a crucial role. In the last two documents for the first time in our educational system we tried to define the principles of creating state standard for secondary education, the structure, the fields of general education, contextual components, as well as the principles of subject standards. We have also tried to define the general requirements to the learner, according to the fields of education.

2. “The State Standards for Secondary Education”, in fact, is the first document that defines mother and foreign language teaching standards in the public school, clearly defining the requirements for the three levels at the public school (primary, middle and high schools).

However, it have not been taken into consideration the Council of Europe principles and requirements in the filed of language education, in particular the levels of language proficiency (A1-C2).

3. Armenia’s school education system is three-language: mother language, starting from the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade Russian is taught as a mandatory first foreign language, then from the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade a mandatory second foreign language (English or French or German, sometimes Spanish, Italian, etc.) are taught. The new foreign language teaching profile, introduced for discussion by the RA MES, suggests teaching a tertiary foreign language.

By the RA Government Resolution (N 111 – N, dated January 10, 2008) amendments have been made in the basic educational plans for primary and high schools, according to which “Foreign language” subject is introduced not in two, but in three languages. This means that through state funding the secondary school has the opportunity to teach three foreign languages instead of two.

This will contribute to the development of the plurilingualism and promote diversity in languages learned, therefore this will overcome the predominance of the English language and will restore the distorted proportion of foreign languages studied at educational institutions.

The decision for teaching four languages (mother language + Russian + 2 other foreign languages) at public school is especially important and creates favourable conditions for

- the development of plurilingualism - one of the most important provisions of the Council of Europe language policy,
- the restoration of the proportion of the foreign languages in the field of language education in Armenia (which was distorted because of the dominance of English at the expense of French and German).

4. In accord with the RA Government decision from May 8, 2008, amendments have been made in the clarifications of the basic educational plan for the public school, according to which upon the agreement by the Ministry amendments can be made in the basic educational plans “with the programmes, textbooks and other literature recommended by the Ministry for advanced teaching of certain subjects.” This decision



can be a good ground to enhance the network of schools with advanced teaching of foreign languages as well.

## **2. Standards, programmes and textbooks**

5. The next important step towards educational reforms is the creation of subject standards and programmes for the public school. In this phase of the reform the subject standards and programmes for the mother language (2006) and foreign languages (Russian, English, French and German - 2007) have been created and published.

For the first time foreign language subject standards have been created and, based on them, principally new educational programmes have been made, which will considerably contribute to the innovation of the language education and bringing to conformity with the modern trends.

- Astvatsatryan M.G. and others

- “English Language: Subject standard and programme for public school”, Yerevan, 2007
- “German Language: Subject standard and programme for public school”, Yerevan, 2007
- “French Language: Subject standard and programme for public school”, Yerevan, 2007
- Tatkalo N. and others, “Russian Language: Subject standard and programme for public school”, Yerevan, 2007

6. It is also positive, that for the first time the standards for knowledge, abilities and skills for every phase of education are introduced in three levels (lowest, middle and high).

7. Another positive trend is that the new generation of textbooks is made based on the new subject standards.

Based on the mother language standards and programmes tender was announced for the new generation of textbooks and the new textbooks for the primary school have been published.

Tender for new textbooks of foreign languages (Russian, English, French, German) has also been announced.

## **3. Objectives of Teaching Foreign Languages**

8. It is the first time that in the new subject standards and programmes the goals of foreign language teaching have been defined in accord with the Council of Europe requirements and language policy principles.

The new standards for foreign languages have almost been worked out based on the requirements and principles of the Common European Framework of references. The new educational standards and programmes are aimed at implementing foreign language teaching based on **learner-oriented, communicative, sociocultural activity** approaches.

According to the programmes made, the goals of the foreign language teaching must ensure verbal and written communication, i.e. listening, speaking, reading and writing, as well as language mediation, i.e. translation.

That kind of communication is realized through comprehensive demonstration of the following functions:

- **cognitive.** Communication, information inquiry and their acquisition in the process of listening and reading
- **regulatory.** Forming a request or advice, encouraging spoken and non-spoken production
- **value-orienting.** Expressing opinion and assessment, formation of view and beliefs, argumentation
- **behavior regulating.** Preserving rules of polite speech, that has its peculiarity with every nation.

In the result of realizing extended communicative goals of foreign language teaching the learners form foreign language spoken skills and abilities, as well as ability and willingness to apply the language, area study and cultural knowledge in practice.

9. Formation and development of communicative competence also suppose mastering a foreign language in the literature and cultural context of the native people, as well as ability and skill to use the language in corresponding to their age vital spheres and situations.

Communicative competence includes the following main components: linguistic, sociocultural, pragmatic, compensatory, cognitive skills.

The language learner/user's communicative language competence is activated in the performance of the various language activities, involving reception, production, interaction or mediation (in particular interpreting or translating) (CEFR-2.1.3.).

#### **4. Cooperation with the Council of Europe and its Structures in the Field of Education**

**10.** The interest of specialists and institutions of languages and professional organisations towards the new trends and issues of language education and teaching has grown.

Before Armenia became a member of Council of Europe in 2001, starting from 1998 the Yerevan State Linguistic University after Brusov was actively cooperating with the Council of Europe Language Policy Division and European Centre for Modern Languages, through participating in international joint seminars and conferences in the field of education. In particular, from 1998-2007 Yerevan State Linguistic University after Brusov has organized 20 seminars and conferences in the field of language education (see the list of seminars and conferences in the appendix).

**11.** Since 2001 a number of documents, complete articles and materials concerning Council of Europe language policy and language education issues have been translated and delivered to specialists which contributed to the introduction and dissemination of the Council of Europe language policy principles among the public.

- Packet of documents and materials devoted to the European year of languages (2001).
- Complete collection of materials in the field of Council of Europe language policy (2001).
- Language passport of the European Language Portfolio (2003).
- Common European Framework of References - CEFR (2005).

#### **12. Development of the Armenian Version of European Language Portfolio.**

In February 2007, the European language policy committee certified the “EUROPEAN LANGUAGE PORTFOLIO. PRIMARY SCHOOL. ARMENIA” (certified sample N 86-2007). This Armenian model of the portfolio is designed for teaching foreign languages (Russian, English, French, German, etc.) at Armenian schools (primary classes: ages 6-10).

In the process of making the portfolio, the working group was guided by and took into consideration the fundamental provisions of “European Language Portfolio. Principles and Guidelines. Version 3.1” and “Common European Framework of References: learning, teaching, assessment”.

13. Another positive step is Armenia's active cooperation with other European structures. In particular, the following centres function at YSLU

- the ECML National Contact Point
- the ECML National Nominating Authority
- at the Chair of Pedagogy and Methods of Teaching Languages of YSLU the Information Centre of ECML and Council of Europe Language Policy Division is situated, which provides service not only to the students, post-graduate students and teachers from the university, but to language specialists and interested people from educational institutions in Yerevan and in marzes.
- the YSLU Internet site has the Armenian version of the ECML site, which contributes to wider dissemination of the information about the Council of Europe language policy and ECML activities.

Even with the positive changes available, we cannot state that the principles of the Council of Europe language education policy have been completely introduced and are being applied in Armenia: they are not universal and fully in the system yet.

## **12.2. Suggestions and solutions**

### **Legal and Regulatory Issues**

1. To improve the language situation and the language policy it is necessary

- Persistently implement the theses of normative documents referring to language policy and language education (Law on Language, State Standard on Language Policy, etc.)
- Create a database and an information-analytical centre to collect all the information on language education and language policy, to review, to analyze and to introduce it to the public.

2. Suggest that changes should be made in the RA Law on Education and that in primary school foreign language textbooks (like the textbooks for other subjects) should also be given to children free.

3. At some educational institutions certain subjects and special language courses are taught in foreign languages. Besides, at a number of universities functioning based on interstate agreements, teaching is implemented in foreign languages. The above-mentioned is against the existing legislation and to overcome this, legislative changes should also be made.

4. To clarify the legislative field for additional and adult education. That field should have its content; a special center at the RA MES should be established dealing with adult education.

### **Standards, Programmes and Textbooks**

5. In the educational standards and programmes for non-language subjects the role and peculiarities of the language of schooling must be clearly considered, and in every subject course special attention should be paid to the vocabulary, terminology, functional styles, structural peculiarities and language mentality typical for that profession.

6. To bring the educational standards and programmes of the Armenian language in conformity with the requirements of the CEFR.

7. Introduction of unified exams and tests is a positive step towards improving Armenian language teaching and learning, but the language tasks should be made so that besides knowledge of grammar they also check the communicative skills.

8. It is impossible implement the standards and goals suggested for foreign language teaching in public schools with the hours (2 hours a week) envisaged in the basic educational plan for foreign language teaching, which cannot even provide the mandatory minimum level of foreign language proficiency of public school graduates.

It is necessary to have 3 hours a week for foreign language teaching, as well as to have small groups for foreign language teaching in high schools (to divide the class into two groups). It will help the learners to have the envisaged level (A1 A2, B1/B2) of language awareness at the end of every stage of learning.

9. To announce the competition for the textbooks (including foreign language textbooks) at least one year before the final decision. An independent analytical-information body should be established and standards should be developed for the selection of the winner textbooks.

10. To create opportunities for post-graduate students at non-language faculties to learn certain professional subjects in foreign languages.

### **Rational and Debate**

11. We have concerns regarding the proportionality of the European languages studied at schools and universities (English prevails over other languages), which can result in the danger of knowing only one language. To avoid this we need to provide studies of other European languages (especially French and German) at educational

institutions, first clarifying the status of those languages. The suggestion by RA MES to introduce a foreign language teaching profile (in particular, teaching a third foreign language in public schools) and the above-mentioned government resolution may play a positive role in this issue. In the result of teaching three foreign language at public schools, including two European languages (English and German, English and French, etc.), we shall have four-language schools.

**12.** Regulate the tendency for spontaneous language teaching at an early age (preschool educational institutions).

The teachers, psychologists and language specialists should work out educational and methodological materials specially for preschool age children, as well as they should organize training of corresponding teachers to put the early age foreign language teaching on correct and effective grounds.

**13.** According to the new profile of stream teaching for high schools, to implement advanced teaching on the one hand for language streams, on the other for natural science streams, where the advanced studies of foreign languages will be implemented to solve the problems of certain professions.

**14.** Increase the number of schools with advanced language teaching.

### **Teacher Training**

**15.** To integrate in the world educational system we need to review the system of pre-service and in-service teacher training, so that in future we have **plurilingual teachers**.

**16.** To organize advanced foreign language teaching at non-language faculties according to language proficiency level.

**17.** To give opportunity to language teachers at language faculties to get in-service training abroad, to take part in international conferences.

**18.** To include teachers from higher, secondary and vocational educational institutions (especially from non-language universities) in periodically organized training courses.

**19.** To create mechanisms for studying, analyzing, summarizing and disseminating the positive experience of teaching.

### **Information-Communicative Technologies (ICT)**

**20.** As there are no foreign language milieu, that gap can be filled in through mass implementation of ICT and their purposeful use, in particular expanding the network of distant foreign language learning.

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**October 1998** – “Language policy in multilingual and multicultural Europe” international conference together with Council of Europe Language Policy Division

**1998** - “Foreign languages in Armenia: new approaches and educational programmes” international conference together with Council of Europe Language Division

**October 2001** – European Year of Languages: CE Language Division has chosen YSLU as a basic organization to hold events in Armenia

**2003** – “Languages of ethnic minorities in RA school educational system” international conference together with Council of Europe Language Division

**2004** – “CEFR language policy and ELP as important tools for goal implementation”, seminar, Coordinator – **Vilio Cohonen**, CE Expert

**2004** – IT application in secondary schools, seminar, together with Council of Europe Language Division

**September 2004** – Information seminars on European Charter on Regional or Minority languages, coordinator – **F. Blair**, Head of the CE Education Directorate

**June 2005** – “Development and introduction of European Language Portfolio”, seminar, Coordinator – **Dick Mayer**, CE Expert

**September 2005, Tsakhkadzor** – “Linguistic typology and anthropology – 4<sup>th</sup> international school”, international conference together with the Russian University of Humanities

**2005** – “Linguistics and language education in the 21<sup>st</sup> century: Dialogue of languages and cultures”, international conference and assizes of CIS member states language and cultural basic organization (together with the Moscow Linguistic University and basic organization. Resolutions were made on the issues discussed within the assizes, which can be characterized as an important step in the process of language education integration and unification of educational standards).

**2006** – “Multilingual and multicultural society”, seminar, Coordinator – **Adrian Butler**, CE Expert

**November 2006, Moscow** – “Intercultural communication”, international conference together with the Moscow State Linguistic University

**November 2006** - “Armenian-French language and cultural relations” conference. Specialist from France were invited

**December 2006, Moscow** – “Problems of teaching Armenian in Russian Federation”, seminar-lecture. It was decided that with the efforts of professors from the Chair of Armenian language at YSLU a textbook of Armenian language will be compiled (in Russian language) for learners of Armenian in Russia.

**April 2007** – “Education – Human Rights – Society: Objectives and Prospects”, conference

**April 2007** – “Intercultural communication in preparing language teachers”, seminar, Coordinator – **Ildiko Lazar**, CE Expert

**June 2007** – “Armenian-French intercultural relations and problems of comparative linguistics”, international conference, together with the Paris Institute of Oriental languages and civilizations

**August 2007, Goris** – “International workshop-conference devoted to the national corps of Eastern Armenian”, Conference organizers were YSLU, Paris Institute of Oriental languages and civilizations, Moscow State University of Humanities

**October 2007, Tsakhkadzor** – “Translation as a magnetic field for mutual penetration of cultures”, international forum, (together with the RA Ministry of Culture and Humanitarian Cooperation Fund of CIS member states). Within the framework of the forum problems of educational standards and programmes for the profession of “Translation and Translation Science” were discussed. The discussions resulted in signing a document on solving the problems of universities in training high-quality translators, and future activities.

## Foreign language teaching at preschool educational institutions

## Case Study

	Kindergarten	Language	Groups/ Children	Hours	Programme, textbook	Teacher	Education	Payment
1	N6 in Kapan	Russian	2 senior groups	Twice a week	Russian language at national kindergarten	Kindergarten educator	Pedagogical	Free
2	v. Malishka, Vayots Dzor	Russian	2 senior groups, 45 children	3 times a week	Russian language at kindergarten	Kindergarten educator	Pedagogical, Vocational, Russian	Parents pay
3	N14 in Echmiadzin	Russian	4 groups	Twice a week	Methods of teaching Russian language in Armenian kindergartens	Kindergarten educator	Pedagogical, Primary, Russian	Free
4	N10 in Echmiadzin	English	4 groups (Pre-school)	3 times	Private, adapted materials	Kindergarten educator	Pedagogical, foreign languages, YSLU	Parents pay
		French	2 groups (Pre-school)	Twice a week	Adapted and training materials	Kindergarten educator	Trained by a French organization	Free
5	N15 in Echmiadzin	English	5 groups, 150 children	2-3 times	Primary school English textbooks, didactic materials	Kindergarten educator	Pedagogical, vocational, foreign language courses at FES educational center	Free
6	N1 in Sevan	English	2 groups (senior and pre-school)	Once Twice	Russian language at kindergarten (changed)	Specialist	higher, foreign languages	
7	N2 in Sevan	Russian	3 groups (middle, senior, pre-school)	Twice	Exemplary programme of teaching Russian in national kindergartens	Former educator	Pedagogical, vocational, Russian	Free

			65-70 children					
<b>8</b>	N13 in Hrazdan	Russian	4 groups 64 children	Twice	Teaching Russian in kindergartens			--
		English		Twice	Teaching English in kindergartens	Contracted specialist	Pedagogical, higher, foreign languages	
<b>9</b>	N35 in Vanadzor	English	2 groups, 30 children	3 times	-	English language teacher	Pedagogical, higher, foreign languages	Parents pay
<b>10</b>	N19 in Vanadzor	English	1 group	Twice	Foreign language teaching methodology	Educator	Higher professional	Free
<b>11</b>	N15 in Vanadzor	Russian	2 groups, 16 children	Twice	Russian language at national kindergarten, Pictorial alphabet	Educator	Higher	--
		English		Twice	Foreign language programme for preschool institutions	Specialist of English	Higher	--
<b>12</b>	N4 in Artashat	Russian	8 groups 140 children	Twice	Old materials	Specialist (in the staff)	Higher professional	Free
		English		Twice				
<b>13</b>	N188 in Yerevan	Russian	3 groups 20-25 children	Twice	Materials developed by the Department of education	Specialist	Higher professional	Free
		English		Twice		Specialist	Higher professional	Free