

of the 'European Language Portfolio', the objectives of the 'Common European Reference Framework' and the objectives that are part of the 'National Plan for Teaching Foreign Languages'. The concepts presented for the development of foreign language studies most frequently consisted of a combination including the teaching of foreign languages with support for international collaborative efforts and motivational activities, improvements in the quality of the available human resources, improvements in the language skills of the teaching staff and the utilization of the latest trends in the area of language studies.

The newly introduced requirement to create school educational programmes for each school has resulted in the need for the teaching staff to pursue their own continuing education and work together, holding discussions, presenting arguments and respecting the opinions of others – all of which are designed to positively affect the ability of the teachers to collaborate and work together as a team. This collaboration is taking place through groups focused around teaching strategies and curriculum committees looking at foreign language study programmes. In the current reform era, such collaborative efforts primarily revolve around shaping school educational programmes for the schools, implementing modern educational methods and procedures, standardizing curriculum materials and methods of ranking students, exchanges of expertise, motivational activities, the continuing education of the academic staff, passing on information and knowledge, acquiring material resources for foreign language training and visits of teachers between schools.

In more than half of the inspected schools, the continuing education of the teaching staff focused on the methods and approaches to be used in teaching foreign languages; and, in less than half of the schools, these efforts focused on improving the teacher's language skills. Teachers in 28% of the schools were enrolled in special training programmes related to the creation of school educational programmes for the schools. Although ICT is one of the priority areas in continuing education, this training isn't always focused on the use of these technologies as part of foreign language studies. Only a few of the inspected schools focused on teaching students with special educational needs when it comes to the further training of their teachers in the foreign language area; and, only a small fraction of the schools inspected took advantage of the educational activities available that focus on working with the 'European Language Portfolio' and the 'Common European Reference Framework'. To improve their language skills, the teachers also participated in the MEJA development programme and the 'Language Gate' lifelong learning project. 15 of the teachers were enrolled in a university programme in order to enhance their qualifications and meet the necessary criteria.