

and involvement is especially evident in those schools where the teaching is carried out by external or retired teachers.

There is a lower degree of interest in continuing education in vocational schools. As to the reasons why the teachers in some schools aren't interested in continuing education programmes, the most frequently given reasons were poor accessibility to educational centres or the fact that the teachers weren't regular staff at the school. In accordance with the requirements that are part of the reforms taking place in the educational system, the teachers were pursuing continuing education and training in the area of teaching methods and training in particular subject areas and they participated in training courses on state graduation exams. At 11 schools, the language teachers were trained to work with students with special educational needs. The teachers at 37 schools were enrolled in language courses. Some of the schools indicated that there were an insufficient number of continuing education options for teachers of German.

At four-year grammar schools, the students are continuing to study the foreign language that they studied at primary school. In grammar schools with additional grades, English is taught as the mandatory number one foreign language. Students from four of the inspected secondary professional schools and four of the vocational schools didn't have an option to continue with the language that they had studied at primary school, after their enrolment in the secondary school. When asked about the reason for this, the schools stated that the number of students choosing the particular language was either too few or that the choices were made after consideration was given to the future likely career of the student (areas near the border). In two of the schools with IT as their area of specialization, English was selected as the foreign language to be studied by all students. In two other cases, the schools stated that they were unable to offer a requested language due to a lack of staff.

The level of care provided to students with learning disabilities varied substantially from school to school. There are only a few schools where all of the teachers have been trained to work with students with special educational needs, where individual educational plans had been prepared for these students and where the teachers adhered to these plans during the teaching process and when evaluating the performance of the students. The predominant approach has been for teachers to provide assistance on an individualized basis, following their own intuition. There were also secondary schools that indicated that they either didn't have any students with special educational needs or, that if they do, they don't consider it to be necessary to have to provide any special assistance to these students. The majority of the inspected schools – including grammar schools – also indicated that they