



properly qualified. The practice of English language teachers most often ranged from four to ten years (36.4%); however, there were also teachers who had taught English for less than one year (26.9%). Teachers entered language education through studies of languages in higher education institutions (17.3%); by passing a relevant school-leaving examination (21.2%); by means of a language certificate (26.9%); in national development programmes (3.8%); or in any other way (30.8%). 50.8% of teachers acquired education in the area of language propaedeutics in the national development programmes, 39.9% participated in the further education of teachers, 18.1% were trained in this area during their studies; and only 7.3% were not trained in this area.

### B.3.2

#### Teaching of Foreign Languages in Basic Schools

Teaching of foreign languages in basic schools, in particular English language teaching, ranks among the priorities of curricular reform in the Czech Republic. The FEP BE assumes compulsory learning of foreign languages from the third grade of BSs with a recommendation to give priority to the English language. 1,500 head teachers of basic schools completed electronic questionnaires relating to this issue. The CSI found that in the 2008/2009 school year in total 94.6% of pupils of third grades decided on English, with the greatest interest being seen among pupils of the South Moravian Region, followed by the Zlin and Pardubice Regions. Only pupils from the regions neighbouring Germany, i.e. in the Karlovy Vary, Pilsen and Liberec Regions, displayed a lower interest in learning the English language, varying between 80 and 88%.

60.7% of the responding schools see the lack of qualified teachers as the largest obstacle to meeting the given obligation and 53.0% of the responding schools pointed out that there are insufficient funds for teachers' salaries. A lack of appropriate teaching aids for teaching English was reported from 14.8% of BSs.

The data provided by schools demonstrate, *inter alia*, that most teachers for teaching English were lacking in 88.5% of schools in the Karlovy Vary Region. Schools from the Moravian-Silesian Region and the South Bohemian Region reported insufficient payroll funds but the largest problems with payroll funds were reported by schools established in Prague.

27% of schools took the opportunity to comment on what the other obstacles to the priority of teaching English from the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade of basic schools are. Almost 6% of them saw an obstacle in putting together more grades to establish one learning group made up of pupils of more grades. These were primarily one or two class schools, where pupils of different grades are merged into one group. Therefore a teacher has to work differentially in one lesson with several groups that have a different level of English. More than 3% of schools can see problems in the further education of pedagogical staff and in the unwillingness of pedagogical faculties to offer additional studies in only one language. Out of 303 schools which took the opportunity to express their opinions concerning this issue, 106 BSs stressed that they did not have any difficulties with ensuring the instruction of the English language from the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade of basic school.

During the school year the CSI also observed how English language teaching is provided in relation to the aims arising from the FEP BE, "Language and Language Communication" section. All basic schools incorporated this area into their SEPs and provide different forms of language instruction. Of the total numbers of pupils registered in classes 86.1% of them chose English as the first foreign language, 13.6% of pupils learned English within extended instruction, 9.1% of pupils learned English as an optional subject and 4.6% of pupils attended language clubs. The average number of pupils registered in one class was 15.7 and the average number of pupils actually present was 13.6.

When pupils leave the primary level of BE and start to attend the lower secondary level of basic schools (or they leave one or two class schools and start to attend a multi-