Education NEW ZEALAND

TRENDS IN THE GERMAN HIGH SCHOOL MARKET

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AN OVERVIEW OF KEY EDUCATIONAL VARIATIONS AND NEW ZEALAND'S OPPORTUNITIES

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As the sixth largest international education market, Germany is a fruitful and growing export market at a number of educational levels for New Zealand. Particularly interesting, however, is the German market for New Zealand's secondary schools, with 60% (n: 1,023) of all German students in New Zealand coming to the country to study at this level in 2011. The dramatic shifts anticipated in the demography of Germany and dynamic changes to the education landscape, give rise to a number of concerns and opportunities for those institutions targeting Germany as a market for secondary school students.

Recent changes to the education structure in Germany have provided and will continue to provide some challenges to the identity of the German education landscape in the years to come. Education policy is decided and implemented at the State level in Germany and nearly all 16 States in the Federal Republic have instituted a range of changes to their primary, secondary and tertiary education system in recent years. Some States are in the process of consolidating their secondary school options to students while others seek to re-structure both primary and secondary school options for students. Almost all States, however, have made the change from 13 years of schooling for a higher education entrance qualification to 12 years. This shift, known as the transition from G9 (9 years of secondary school) to G8 (8 years of secondary school), has not been uncontroversial in Germany and there continues to be vigorous debate as to the benefits and disadvantages of the change to students in Germany. While it is up to the individual States to decide whether and how they implement a G8 structure, the policy was recommended at the federal level to eliminate an age disadvantage for German students in the European and wider international context. On average, German students are older than their international counterparts when they complete secondary stage II education and start tertiary education or enter the job market. This disadvantage was reflected negatively in the PISA study and it was strongly felt that it needed adjusting. While the new adjusted structure means that students attend school for one year less, the contents and volume of the curriculum have adjusted little in the this process and students have to make up for the shortened school period with increased periods of self-study and more hours spent at school per week.

A further challenge to the German education system posed by this decrease from 13 to 12 years is the double cohorts it produces until 2016. While the scheduling of double cohorts is staggered throughout the nation, so that States produce double cohorts in different years, this increase in secondary school graduates is putting an enormous strain on the German education system, as the tertiary sector is already close to capacity and many students are moving across the borders to study in neighbouring countries to evade *numerus clausus*

requirements and overcrowded lecture halls. Pressure is added by the elimination of a mandatory year of social service and military service, coming into effect as of this year.

In the context of this report, perhaps the most significant consequence of the transition from G9 to G8 is the fact that it changes the ease and convenience with which German secondary students were able to go abroad for a year. While students in the G9 system were able to attend a high school abroad during grade 11 and then return to prepare for their final exam in grades 12 and 13, this has become less possible in the G8 structure. In the new system, students either have to go abroad in grade 10 and aim to re-integrate in their home school in grades 11 and 12, or they can opt to repeat grade 11 if they wanted to leave to go to a foreign high school abroad during grade 11. This has given rise to two critical changes: a) students in the G8 structure, who wish to go abroad, are now typically younger and b) it has become the preferred option for German schools, students and parents that students go abroad for a shorter period of time, typically 3-months or 6-months at most.

Since 2008, Germany and New Zealand have agreed on the equivalency of higher education entrance qualifications and students with New Zealand's National Certificates of Educational Achievement (NCEA) – level 3 are now able to enter German higher education institutions (HEIs) – in principle - without being required to take additional courses for admission. This may, however, vary from institution to institution. This makes it considerably more attractive for German students interested in a stay abroad at one of New Zealand's high schools to complete their higher education entrance qualification at a high school in New Zealand, rather than coming back to re-integrate into the German system. The overall duration of schooling is slightly shorter and there are some differences in which States in Germany accept the shortened duration as the equivalent to the German standards. In principle, German students must make sure they fulfil the basic guidelines of subject selection (at least five distinct subjects) as set forth by the German 'Anerkennung und Bewertung ausländischer Bildungsnachweise' (ANABIN) system. The course offer in New Zealand high schools is often considerably more broad than what German secondary schools offer and German students must be aware of the requirements in the German higher education system in order to fit in once they return – whether that be from a year abroad or a longer period.

Even though the individual States in Germany are able to set their own education policies and implement guidelines presented at the federal level independently, there are not many dramatic differences between the States in the requirements for the new G8 structures. Many of the east German States have long had a policy of 12 years of schooling overall, and adjustments in these States have been minor in comparison to those in some of the western States of the country. The dominant subject requirements for students in the final two

qualifying years leading up to the final exam (*Abitur*) are the subjects German, mathematics and a foreign language. To this, students are typically able to add core subjects from one of three tracks: literature, art and languages; mathematics, natural sciences and technology or social sciences. Secondary schools across the nation have very similar subject requirements and differ primarily in whether they operate the final two qualifying years on a points-based core focus system or a core course and electives structure.

While the recent changes have posed challenges to the robustness of the German education system and its participants, it also offers some opportunity for New Zealand to tap into new and different aspects of the market. With its excellent reputation for education, as evidenced by its PISA standing, New Zealand continues to be an attractive market for German students and there are numerous opportunities to attract a younger target audience and market to greater numbers of students wishing to complete their secondary stage II education in New Zealand entirely, among other options.

2. KEY FINDINGS

- The transition from G9 to G8 in the German education has changed, and continues to change, the secondary school education landscape in Germany considerably – at a national and at State level. This has consequences for secondary school students wishing to go abroad for a period of offshore study.

- Within the new structures, students are more likely to go abroad at a younger age. Where the average age of students going abroad for a period of study used to be between 15 and 16 years in the previous G9 structure, this age bracket is now slightly younger. Students as young as 13 or 14 years old are now going abroad.

- The G8 structure puts greater pressures on German secondary school students, so that offshore study, specifically an entire year abroad, is perceived to be more challenging than in the previous G9 structure. Both students and secondary school institutions are more comfortable with a shorter period of offshore study, so that the student has an easier time to re-integrate into the German curriculum. Three to six months are the preferred duration.

- With the transition from G9 to G8 and the agreed equivalency guidelines between Germany and New Zealand, it is becoming an increasingly attractive option for secondary school students to complete a higher education entrance qualification at a high school in New Zealand. The majority of States in Germany accept the shorter

secondary stage II period for students completing their qualification in New Zealand. Ten States in total accept the 11.5 years of total education such students have, three States decide based on the graduation certification whether the qualification obtained is the equivalent, two require 12 years of schooling for equivalency in principle and only one State outright does not accept 11.5 years as the equivalent.

- A number of States – Bayern, Niedersachsen, Sachsen and Schleswig-Holstein – explicitly enable their students to go abroad between grades 10 and 11 (last term of grade 10 and first term of grade 11), which enables German students to more easily fit into New Zealand school term times.

- All States offer a number of options for students to go abroad for offshore study, whereby the student can choose in most cases whether they wish to repeat the grade they spent abroad or enter the next grade and re-join their previous class. Some States put students on probation for this latter option, while others require evidence of adequate skills before they allow the returning student to move on a grade.

- In terms of subject requirements for German students graduating with a higher education entrance qualification, while there are some slight structural nuances, there are few drastic differences between the individual States.

- All States require German, mathematics and at least one foreign language as core competencies for graduation with a higher education entrance qualification.

- German secondary schools have noted a general shortage of skills in mathematics / natural sciences and German among students returning from offshore studies in general.

- The number of private institutions at the secondary school level is growing in Germany. It is students able to afford attending private schools that are also more likely to be able to have the financial background to spend an extended period of time at an education institution in New Zealand and thus present an interesting niche market for New Zealand schools to target.

3. METHODOLOGY

The aim of this report is to establish key characteristics of the German education landscape, specifically at the secondary school level, and identify crucial changes that have taken place in recent years that may affect German secondary students as a target market for New Zealand schools. The report also points out some of the essential differences between the 16 States in Germany and highlights a number of the opportunities that present themselves, so that New Zealand's schools are able to more effectively target Germany as a market.

The methodologies applied for this research include multiple methods. The report is primarily based on extensive desk research, drawing on the consultant's primary and secondary resources, as well as statistical and data evaluation and key informant interviews.

4. INTRODUCTION

Each year, approximately 20,000 German school students spend a period of time studying abroad. Most of these students go abroad for a relatively short period of time - between three and six months - to get a taste of another country; others are somewhat more adventurous and go abroad for an entire school year or longer. Some students engage in offshore study as part of an exchange programme, for others their education institution facilitates the stay abroad through partnerships and other contacts. The most popular destinations for offshore study among German students are North America, Australia, New Zealand and a range of European destinations, among which the UK is by far the most popular. Offshore study enjoys growing popularity among students in Germany, and even with significant structural changes to the education system in place, this trend remains strong. However, the new changes instituted in the German system are likely to affect the age of students travelling abroad and the overall duration of the offshore study period they decide on. This report delineates the features of the German education system and identifies the key changes in recent years. It further highlights central educational variations between the German States so that New Zealand education institutions can make more educated decisions on how best to market to specific States.

The German secondary education system is currently in a state of considerable flux and has become one of nuanced variations across its 16 States (*Bundesländer*): some States offer secondary level education within a traditional tripartite structure, others have made the switch to a dual system, while others still are only in the planning stages as to how their secondary school landscape is to be structured. And even within the dual systems, there are significant variations in institution types and terminology. In principle, a tripartite secondary system comprises three qualification options at the secondary level: *Hauptschule*, *Realschule* and *Gymnasium*. Each of these types of institutions offers a different level of education

attainment upon graduation: *Hauptschule* offers the most basic level for entry into a vocation, while the *Gymnasium* provides successful graduates with a higher education entrance qualification. Each one of these education pathways offers a distinct qualification.

This is different in the dual systems, where, in addition to the *Gymnasium*, institutions comprise both, *Hauptschule* and *Realschule* in one education structure. This conflation, however, comes with many variations and various names. Some States offer such education through *Regional Schools*, others have introduced *Sekundarschulen*, *Mittelschulen* or *Oberschule*. In short, the country's secondary education system is still in a state of change and has become considerably more complex in the past years. While the complexities of these changes primarily affect the secondary stage I pathways, a higher education entrance qualification – the *Abitur* - can only be obtained within the upper levels of *Gymnasium* education or the equivalent. Where it traditionally students were only able to obtain the *Abitur* in grade 13, this period has been shortened by one year in almost all States and they are in the process of implementing this change. This important transition is generally referred to in terms of the shift from nine years of secondary school (G9) to eight years (G8). This report will refer to the transition predominantly in these terms. The implementation of the transition from G9 to G8 will result in double cohorts until 2016. See Table 01. While the general *Gymnasium* curriculum in most States has changed now to the 12-year G8 structure, comprehensive schools and vocationally-oriented Gymnasiums frequently continue to adhere to a traditional G9 structure, so that students attending those types of institutions graduate with a higher education entrance qualification after 13 years of schooling in total. Section 6 below discusses the implications of this transition for potential offshore students in greater detail.

TABLE 01: *Double cohorts until 2016*

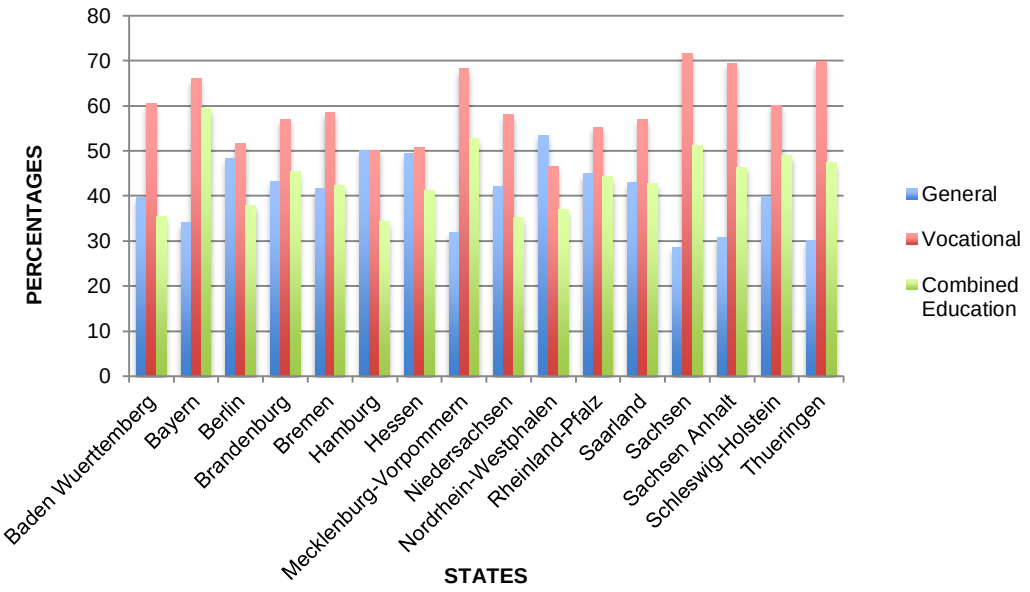
YEAR	STATES
2010	Hamburg
2011	Bavaria / Lower Saxony
2012	Baden Württemberg / Bremen / Brandenburg / Berlin
2013	Hessen I / North-Rhine Westphalia
2014	Hessen II
2016	Schleswig-Holstein

The key rationale underlying the transition from G9 to G8 is the fact that on average, German high school students are considerably older when they graduate with a higher education entrance qualification, and consequently enter higher education of the job market later than their European counterparts. The average age of students entering tertiary

education at the national level is 19.8 years and there are only few variations between the States.

Among 20-24 year olds in Germany, 74% have obtained a secondary stage II qualification. This average varies somewhat between the individual States, whereby Bayern has the highest rate with 80.2% and Bremen the lowest with 64%. Education pathways at the secondary II level can be comprised as general, vocational or a combination of the two. It is notable that throughout Germany, vocational programmes are more prevalent than those providing general education curricula. Here too, there are considerable variations by State as Figure 01 below shows.

FIGURE 01: *Types of secondary II education in %*



The overall structure of the German education system is divided into elementary, primary, secondary and tertiary stages, each of which is denoted by the ISCED classification system, as detailed below. The following provides a brief overview of the broad structures of the German system to offer a clearer understanding of the types of educational pathways that are available to students in Germany.

ELEMENTARY ISCED 0

First phase of structured education for children aged 3 and older. This sector includes Kindergartens, elementary level support classes and nurseries with a typical starting of between 3 and 6 years of age.

ISCED Level	Programme / Institution types	Typical starting age	Students attending
0	Kindergarten	3 years	2,381,945
	Nursery Schools	6 years	19,291
	Preparatory Classes	5 years	8,845

PRIMARY ISCED 1

The primary sector follows on from the elementary sector. There is, however, no requirement for students to have attended elementary education institutions to be admitted to primary level education. This level of education systematically teaches students basic skills such as reading, writing and numeracy. The primary level typically comprises grades 1 through 4. Schools teaching at this level are known as *Grundschule*.

ISCED Level	Programme / Institution types	Typical starting age	Students attending
1	Primary Schools (*Grundschule*)	6 years	3,236,158

SECONDARY I ISCED 2

Secondary stage I builds on primary level education, adding a greater level and range of subject orientations. In this stage, students obtain the qualification to either enter the job market at various professional levels or engage in continuing education to obtain a higher education entrance qualification or a professional qualification. Students have the opportunity to leave with a basic qualification for entry into the labour market as early as 15 or 16 years of age. Institutions that offer the type of education that allows students to leave the education system at 15 are typically called *Hauptschule* and conclude after grade 9. Institutions that terminate the educational curriculum after grade 10 fall within the general traditional category of *Realschule*, providing students with an academic qualification to enter the employment market or continue on to secondary stage II.

ISCED Level	Programme / Institution types	Orientation	Typical starting age	Students attending
2A	Secondary school without qualifications for continuing general education pathways (*Hauptschule* / *Realschule*)	General education	10 years	2,773,827
	Secondary school with qualifications for continuing general education pathways (*Gymnasium* stages 1 and 2)	General education	10 years	2,149,383

	Secondary school – further education: evening schools	General education	18-35 years	22,514
	Vocational prep-schools	General education	18-22 years	551
	Vocational preparation training	Vocational education	16-18 years	62,077

SECONDARY II ISCED 3

Secondary stage II follows on from secondary stage I. This stage provides students with the skills and qualifications for entry into a profession or into tertiary education. For entry into higher education students acquire either a specialised or a general higher education entrance qualification. Secondary stage II is taught at general educational institutions (*Gymnasium*) or vocationally oriented educational institutions (trade schools, *Kollegs*, *Gymnasiums* with a vocational orientation).

ISCED Level	Programme / Institution types	Orientation	Typical starting age	Students attending
3A	Specialised secondary school (no previous education in a dual system) – 2 years (*Fachoberschule*)	General education	16-18 years	104,763
	Vocational school offering a higher education entrance qualification (*Abitur*)	General education	16-17 years	122,336
	Specialised secondary school (*Fachgymnasium*)	General education	16-17 years	151,854
	General secondary school (*Gymnasien*)	General education	16-17 years	863,128
3B	Vocational preparation education	Vocational education	16-18 years	46,031
	Vocational secondary school	Vocational education	16-17 years	
	Medical preparatory schools	Vocational education	17-20 years	5,466
	Vocational secondary schools	Vocational education	16-17 years	377,334
	Vocational secondary schools (dual system)	Vocational education	16-18 years	1,241,011
3C	Public service education	Vocational education	16-18 years	9,324

POSTSECONDARY NON-TERTIARY ISCED 4

After completion of secondary stage II, students are able to enter a post-secondary stage in which they acquire an enhanced secondary school qualification. This stage is not comparable to tertiary education and is predominantly relevant for students who enter into a dual professional education programme or a full-time professional education.

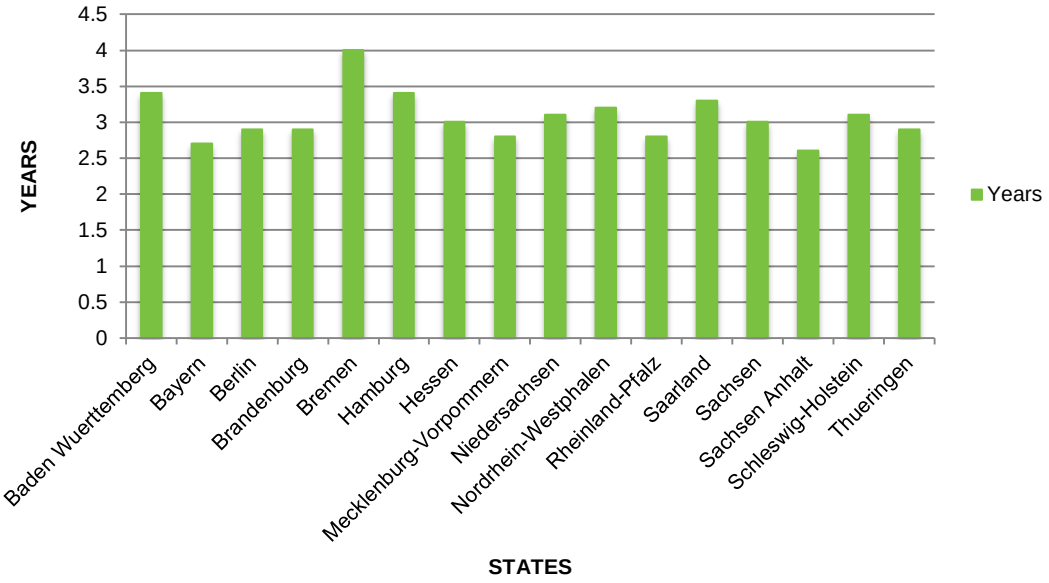
ISCED Level	Programme types	Orientation	Typical starting age	Students attending
4A	Specialised secondary school (no previous education in a dual system) – 1 year (*Fachoberschule*)	General education	19-20 years	25,019
	Professional schools / technical colleges	General education	19-20 years	19,252
	Secondary schools II – evening schools	General education	19-35 year	36,891
	Vocational schools offering a professional qualification (secondary qualification together with a higher education entrance qualification (*Abitur*)	Vocational education	19-20 years	30,602
	Vocational schools (dual system) Secondary education after obtaining a higher education entrance qualification (*Abitur*)	Vocational education	19-21 years	269,834
4B	Vocational secondary school. Secondary education after completion of a professional qualification	Vocational education	19-21years	199,091

A breakdown of the different types of institutions in the German system and the stages they correspond to is listed in Appendix I.

DURATION OF TIME SPENT IN SECONDARY STAGE II

The national average time spent in secondary stage II education is three years. There are minor variations between the States. Most indicate a secondary stage II learning timeframe of just above or below three years. A notable outlier is Bremen with the longest average time spent in secondary stage II (4 years), while Sachsen-Anhalt has the shortest average with 2.6 years. Figure 02 below shows the averages for all 16 States.

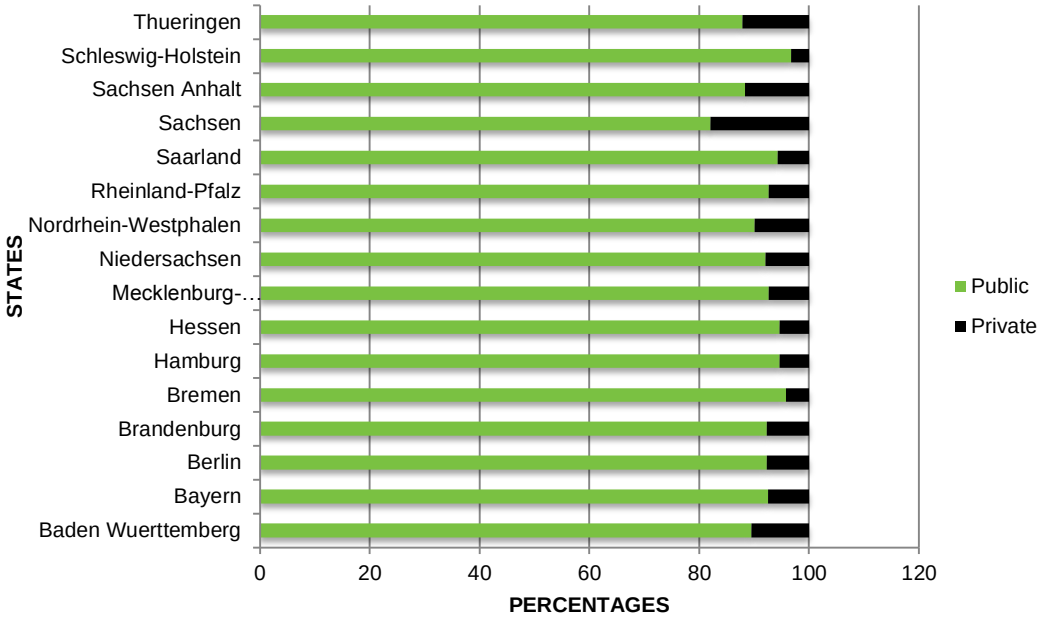
FIGURE 02: *Average number of years spent in secondary stage II – by States*



PRIVATE AND PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS

Secondary school education in Germany is predominantly offered by public institutions (91.1%). For many parents, the concept of paying for private education at this level is still somewhat unconventional, however, it should be noted that this is changing slowly but surely, and a growing number of private institutions now offer education at the secondary levels I and II. According to data gathered by the Federal Agency for Statistics, DESTATIS, approximately 674,900 students were enrolled in private education institutions in 2008. This represents 8% of the student population and this positive trend shows no sign of abating. While there were 4,946 private institutions at all educational levels in 2007/08, this number has risen to 5,200 in 2009/10. The greatest increase has occurred at the *Gymnasium* level in the past decade. It is notable that the number of students enrolled in private institutions in the east of Germany is significantly higher than in the western areas of Germany. The only exception to this general distribution is Baden-Württemberg with 10.5% of all students enrolled in secondary stage II attending private institutions. Sachsen (Saxony) has the highest proportion in this distribution with 17.9% of students enrolled in private institutions. The chart in Figure 03 below illustrates this distribution.

FIGURE 03: *Public and private institutions in percentages*



Private schools tend to charge a fee to students and it is often the more affluent parents that are able to afford to send their children to a private institution. It is these students that are also more likely to be able to have the financial background to spend an extended period of time at an education institution in New Zealand and thus present an interesting niche market for New Zealand schools to target.

5. ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS TO UNIVERSITIES AND EQUIVALENCY GUIDELINES

ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS FOR GERMAN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

Education policy in Germany is regulated and decided at the State level and each State implements education policy independently. This includes the types of secondary schools offered within a State, the duration of secondary schooling, the final exam in secondary stage II and higher education entrance qualification (*Abitur*). However, in order to regulate some of the more important aspects of education and to provide some level of national coherence, national guidelines are decided and set at the federal level by the Kultusministerkonferenz (KMK), the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs, which meets in regular intervals.

For entrance into German higher education, there is a range of formal entrance qualifications that serve as basic requirements for study at Germany HEIs. They all represent a version or the equivalent of the standard qualification, the *Abitur*, and qualify students for either

general access to higher education or restricted access (subject-specific, type of institution). The following table shows the key qualifications typically recognised by German HEIs:

TABLE 02: *Key Qualifications in Germany for Entrance to Higher Education Institutions*

QUALIFICATION	DESCRIPTION
ABITUR	The *Abitur* is the most common and broadest qualification for entrance into higher education. In general, this secondary school qualification allows students to access higher education in all subject areas.
FACHGEBUNDENE HOCHSCHULREIFE (SUBJECT-SPECIFIC HIGHER EDUCATION ENTRANCE QUALIFICATION)	This secondary school qualification gives graduates access to higher education institutions, but with some subject restrictions. In other words, students graduating with this type of qualification are limited in the range of subjects that they are able to study at German HEIs. Subjects students are able to study tend to be limited to the focus area the secondary school institution offer. This qualification is primarily obtained in vocationally and professionally oriented secondary schools.
FACHHOCHSCHULREIFE (HIGHER EDUCATION ENTRANCE QUALIFICATION FOR UAS)	The *Fachhochschulreife* typically qualifies students to enter a University of Applied Sciences (*Fachhochschule*), rather than a programme at a university. However, a growing number of regular universities have started to accept this particular entrance qualification for access to their Bachelor degree programmes.
INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE	The International Baccalaureate is an internationally recognized higher education entrance qualification. Recognition in Germany depends on the graduate's combination of points and subjects. Acceptance is regulated by the *Kultusministerkonferenze* KMK.

As indicated in the table above, a large majority of German entrants to higher education have obtained the *Abitur*. This is particularly evident for German students in higher education programmes in universities, as opposed to UAS. The distribution varies by type of institution (universities and UAS) and type of degree sought (Bachelor or *Diplom*), as Table 03 below shows. International qualifications make up a relatively small percentage and are only indicated as an approximation.

TABLE 03: *Distribution of Higher Education Entrance Qualifications by Type of HEI and Degree in %*

QUALIFICATION	UNIVERSITY		UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES	
	BACHELOR	DIPLOM	BACHELOR	DIPLOM
ABITUR	96	97	53	43
FACHHOCHSCHULREIFE	2	1	38	44
FACHGEBUNDENE HOCHSCHULREIFE	1	1	8	11
OTHER QUALIFICATIONS	1	1	1	2

There are over 3000 *Gymnasiums* in Germany, all of which conclude with the *Abitur* exam. General *Gymnasiums* that focus on a broad education curriculum in secondary stage II (rather than a specific subject or vocational orientation) often offer at least two broad tracks: a humanities track and a natural science track. Students in the humanities track typically study more than two foreign languages, literature or arts and music subjects as their core

subjects at secondary stage II, while students in the natural science track typically place more emphasis on subjects such as physics, biology and chemistry in their secondary school curriculum. With recent curriculum changes and reforms, many schools have instituted an additional third track, focusing on the social sciences, including subjects such as politics, economics and history as focus subjects for the qualification period. The breakdown by individual States in section 7 below discusses in detail the respective curriculum focus and structures in place for the final two years in the G8 system for each State.

Regardless of which track students choose, the *Abitur* exam represents the final exam for all students and, if passed, gives graduating students access to higher education in Germany and elsewhere. The exam itself has in recent years become increasingly centralised at State level for all but one of Germany's 16 States[1], and typically includes a written and an oral element. Written exams must be sat in four core subjects (typically including German, mathematics, a foreign language and another core subject of choice in either languages or natural sciences). Oral exams can typically be taken in a subject of the student's choice. However, despite the centralisation of these examinations at the State-level, there may be differences in the subject choices a student can make, depending on individual institutions. At the very minimum there are four core subject areas, as indicated above, whereby mathematics, German and one foreign language are consistently a key component of the exam, across States. Whether social science subjects such as history or geography are included as mandatory examination subjects for either written or oral exams may again vary depending on the institution and the chosen track.

Foreign languages taught at the *Gymnasium* in Germany frequently comprise English, French and / or Spanish. Other languages such as Russian, Italian or Latin may be offered, depending on the State and the institution. In order to complete the *Abitur*, however, students must have taken at least two foreign languages during secondary school stage II, but may be tested in only one foreign language. A growing number of States have also implemented seminars in the final two years of schooling, which are intended to prepare students for either study at a higher education institution or a professional career. These seminars are often mandatory but students are not tested on the topics.

The subject-specific version of the *Abitur*, the *Fachabitur*, is structured in a very similar manner. Core subjects for written exams typically comprise mathematics, German, English (or another foreign language, if offered) and a subject relevant to the specific subject focus of the institution and / or track, such as economics, business administration and others. Often, this type of higher education entrance exam requires a subject specific practical or a project component for completion. To complete a subject-related higher education entrance

[1] The only State with a decentralized Abitur exam is Rheinland-Pfalz

qualification students are only required to have taken one foreign language (primarily English) throughout their studies.

The equivalencies for international secondary school leavers' certifications vary by country and are regulated by the 'Anerkennung und Bewertung ausländischer Bildungsnachweise' (ANABIN) system – the equivalency of a foreign education credentials system. International qualifications for higher education access may entitle the applying student either for direct entrance to a university or a UAS in Germany or, if equivalency is not granted, it may be required that the prospective student take an additional two-semester course at a *Studienkolleg* and a subsequent exam (*Feststellungsprüfung*). The *Studienkolleg* is comparable to a pathway programme and prepares applying students with lacking qualifications for entrance to HEIs in Germany. *Studienkolleg* programmes are state-funded and allow students to enrol in targeted courses that prepare them for a specific study subject of their choice, making up for any equivalency deficiencies. The *Feststellungsprüfung* determines whether the prospective student has reached adequate skills and knowledge to be able to enter the higher education programme of their choice. Tables 04 and 05 below show the various tracks and related subjects in greater detail. All students must demonstrate a proficient level of German language ability (level II/III – B1) whether they intend to improve their German language skills at the *Studienkolleg* or not.

TABLE 04: *Studienkolleg subject focus areas for entrance to universities in Germany*

TRACKS	MANDATORY COURSES	ADDITIONAL COURSES	EXAMINATION SUBJECTS
TRACK M	German, Natural Sciences, Mathematics	Latin-Greek Linguistics, Informatics, English	German, Biology and / or Chemistry, Physics or Mathematics
TRACK T	German, Mathematics & Informatics, Natural Sciences (Physics / Chemistry)	Informatics, Graphic Geometry or Technical Drawing, Internship in Chemistry, Electrical Engineering, English	German, Mathematics, Chemistry or Physics
TRACK W	German, Mathematics & Informatics, Economics, Business Administration or English, History / Geography / Social Sciences	Business Administration, English, Statistics, Informatics	German, Mathematics, Economics / Business Administration
TRACK G	German, History, German Literature or Advanced English, Social Sciences / Geography	Latin, English, French, Mathematics	German, History, German Literature / English or Social Sciences / Geography
TRACK S	German, History, a second foreign language, a third foreign language or social sciences / Geography or German Literature	Mathematics, German Literature	German, second foreign language, History or Social Sciences / Geography or German Literature

TABLE 05: *Studienkolleg subject focus areas for entrance to Universities of Applied Sciences in Germany*

TRACKS	MANDATORY COURSES	ADDITIONAL COURSES	EXAMINATION SUBJECTS
TRACK TI	German, Mathematics & Informatics, Natural Sciences, Technical Drawing	Informatics, Technical Drawing, including CAD, English	German, Mathematics including Informatics, Physics or Chemistry
TRACK WW	German, Mathematics, Economics and Business Administration, Information Technology and Informatics, English	History of Economics, Economic Geography, History / Geography / Social Sciences	German, Mathematics including Informatics, Economics and Business Administration
TRACK GD	German, Mathematics, Design, Physics, Computer Added Design	Information Technology and Informatics, English	German, Mathematics or Physics, Design or CAD
TRACK SW	German, Mathematics, Social Sciences	Information Technology and Informatics, English	German, Mathematics, Social Sciences
TRACK DÜ	German, second foreign language, third foreign language, Information Technology and Informatics	Social and Economic Sciences, Law	German, two foreign languages.

NEW ZEALAND EQUIVALENCIES FOR ENTRANCE TO GERMAN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

Since 2008, The *Kultusministerkonferenz* (KMK) and The Rectors Conference in Germany (*Hochschulrektorenkonferenz* – HRK) have officially recognized New Zealand's National Certificates of Educational Achievement (NCEA) as the equivalent to the German qualifications for entrance into higher education in Germany, as outlined above. This not only makes it easier for students from New Zealand to come to Germany for their studies, but, more importantly in the context of this report, it enables German students completing high school in New Zealand to return to their home country and enter higher education under the same conditions as German students with entrance qualifications from Germany. In other words, German students with a NCEA level 3 qualifications are not required to complete additional examinations in order to access higher education in Germany. This makes completing high school in New Zealand an increasingly attractive option for those German students looking for an extended stay in New Zealand. This equivalency was determined on a national level and applies, in principle, throughout higher education institutions in the various States in Germany. However, individual institutions may have instituted further guidelines for additional admissions requirements for entrance into their programmes.

The NZQA and the *Kultusministerkonferenz* (KMK) have worked in conjunction to establish equivalencies for entrance to German higher education institutions in recent years. They

largely correspond to the minimum standards applicable for entrance to higher education in New Zealand. The German system, however, requires that students have studied at least five (5) *distinct* subjects. While the KMK accepts level 3 NCEA qualifications as the equivalent of a German higher education entrance qualification, there may be additional requirements by the institutions for a certain breadth of subjects students will have to have taken to be eligible for entrance to a course of study. Furthermore, entrance to some subjects in Germany is highly competitive and the quality of the grades achieved in the subjects studied does play a role in gaining access to study programmes in Germany.

The minimum subject requirements, based on *Kultusministerkonferenz* (KMK) guidelines, are as follows:

- English or Te Reo Rangitara
- Mathematics
- At least three other approved subjects (see Table 06 below)

The NZQA lists a suggested subject selection that follows more closely a German curriculum. This may comprise:

- English or Te Reo Rangatira
- Mathematics
- A Social Science subject
- A Natural Science subject
- Language, Literature and Arts subjects (preferably a second language)

English or Te Reo Rangatire represents an approved and adequate substitution for German in this conversion. The NZQA provides a list with approved *Abitur* subjects, which indicates also the broad fields within which the subject may be categorised in the conversion, to fit the various tracks available in the German system.

TABLE 06: *List of subjects common to both New Zealand and Germany approved for university entrance*

NEW ZEALAND APPROVED SUBJECTS	**CORRESPONDING ABITUR APPROVED SUBJECTS**	**SUBJECT CATEGORY**
Chinese	Chinese	Language, Literature and Arts
Design Painting Photography Printmaking Sculpture	Fine Arts	Language, Literature and Arts (practical art subjects are only counted as one *Abitur* subject)
Drama	Performing Arts / Drama	Language, Literature and Arts
English (or Te Reo Rangatira)	English	Language, Literature and Arts
French	French	Language, Literature and Arts
German	German	Language, Literature and Arts
Japanese	Japanese	Language, Literature and Arts
Latin	Latin	Language, Literature and Arts

Music Studies	Music	Language, Literature and Arts
Spanish	Spanish	Language, Literature and Arts
Agriculture & Horticulture	Agriculture with Biology	Natural Science
Biology	Biology	Natural Science
Chemistry	Chemistry	Natural Science
Computing	Computing	Natural Science
Health Education	Health and Wellbeing	Natural Science
Mathematics with Calculus, Statistics and Modelling	Mathematics	Natural Science
Physics	Physics	Natural Science
Technology	Technology	Natural Science
Economics	Economics	Social Science
Geography	Geography	Social Science
History	History	Social Science
Social Studies	Social Studies / Politics	Social Science
Physical Education	Physical Education	Can be counted in any of the three areas but should be taken as a sixth subject

Source: NZQA

Furthermore, the ANABIN system, which is supported by the *Kultusministerkonferenz* (KMK), lists a range of equivalency requirements for entry to higher education in Germany as shown in Box 1 below.

There are, however, some non-subject related variations among the different States in Germany in terms of recognising a secondary school qualification obtained in New Zealand. These variations relate to the duration of secondary study. Generally, for German students completing their NCEA qualification in New Zealand, the total period of school attendance is 11.5 years. While this length of secondary school study is accepted in most States in Germany as the equivalent for a German qualification at this level, some States do not readily accept 11.5 years as the equivalent. Table 07 below illustrates these variances.

Box 1: *Equivalency for Entrance to Higher Education NCEA*

Students must have taken at least 5 distinct general subjects with the following stipulations:

- *At least three of these subjects must be completed at 'level 3' with no less than 42 credits.*
- *Two subjects must be completed with 14 credits each*
- *One to two subjects must combined be completed with 14 credits*
- *Mathematics must be completed at 'level1' or higher, with no less than 14 credits*
- *English or Maori must be completed at 'level 2' or higher with no less than 8 credits (4 credits in writing, 4 credits in reading)*

TABLE 07: *Variances in accepting 11.5 years of secondary school education as equivalent*

States that fully accept 11.5 years	Baden-Wuerttemberg, Brandenburg, Bremen, Hessen, Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, Nordrhein-Westfalen, Saarland, Sachsen, Sachsen-Anhalt, Thüringen
States that decide based on NZ graduation certificates	Bayer, Berlin, Rheinland-Pfalz
States that require 12 years (HEIs decide on entrance)	Niedersachsen, Hamburg
States that do not accept 11.5 years	Schleswig-Holstein

While the traditional secondary school experience of German students in New Zealand typically only comprises a year abroad, generally taken after grade 9, the recent developments highlighted above give rise to other types of high school study for German students. The new structures introduced to the German secondary school systems and the acceptance of equivalency of German and New Zealand higher education entrance qualifications since 2008, make the option to complete high school in New Zealand an increasingly attractive choice for German secondary school students. In the traditional 13-year system, students were able to go abroad for a high school year after grade 10 and then come back into grade 12 to finish their final two qualification years leading to the *Abitur* exam. Students then were typically around 15 to 16 years of age when they went abroad. In the new, shortened system, students face the choice of going abroad a year sooner, after grade 9, to then come back to grade 11 upon their return or to repeat a year. Students travelling to New Zealand and other destinations for a year abroad are thus likely to be younger, between 14 and 15 years of age, in the coming years. Alternatively, and with the new equivalency acceptance agreements in place, it becomes increasingly attractive for students to go abroad after grade 10, as before, to then complete their secondary school qualification entirely at an institution in New Zealand, within 18 months.

6. REVIEW OF TRANSITION FROM G9 TO G8

TRANSITION IN PROGRESS: CHANGING FROM 13 YEARS TO 12 OF ECUATION

The Path from G9 to G8

As indicated earlier in the report, secondary school structures across Germany have undergone, and are still undergoing a range of curricular, structural and conceptual changes since the early 2000s and the landscape has remained vastly dynamic since. The most significant overhaul to the education system, and that most pertaining to the purpose of this report, was initiated in 2004 across most States: the shortening of the secondary school education curricula by one full year. In the German education landscape this transition is referred to as the shift from G9 (13 years of education in total) to G8 (12 years of education in total) and has repercussions most significantly for the 3000+ *Gymnasiums* across the country. As the terms suggest, this change comprises the transition from 9 years of secondary education to 8 years for students aiming to complete the German higher education entrance qualification, the *Abitur*. Students thus graduate after grade 12 in the new system, instead of grade 13, as it was previously the case. While guidelines as to the rationale, the goals and the aims of this transition were issued by the

Kultusministerkonferenz (KMK), each State is responsible independently to implement the new structures and adjust the curriculum accordingly. The switch to a shorter secondary school period, however, comes at a price and it has numerous wider consequences for the stakeholders: a more condensed secondary school curriculum, double cohorts in all States (albeit staggered on a national level), and increased pressure on students and parents, as well as the higher education system. But, importantly, it also offers the opportunity for students to enter a professional career or higher education at a considerably younger age than before, making young German graduate more competitive in the international context. Nonetheless, it continues to be a controversial topic in the German education landscape and the debates surrounding this shift are bound to continue to influence new reforms in the future.

The reasoning for instituting this impactful transition from G9 to G8 is two-fold. First, while some of the new states in East Germany have had a secondary school system that is based on an 8 year (12 year) structure for many years, it was deemed appropriate to adjust the systems to become more coherent on a national level. Second, and more importantly was the realisation of Germany's declining ranking in recent PISA studies and the contributing fact that German students graduate at an older age with a higher education entrance qualification than their European counterparts. The average age of secondary school graduates after 9 years of secondary education has hitherto been considerably higher than the European average with now 8 years spent in secondary school, the average age of students graduating is reduced (18 years) and reaches a closer approximation to its European counterparts. This age differential was perceived to disadvantage German students considerably within an international context, for both study and entry into the job market. According to recent statistics issued by DESTATIS, the average age of students in their first semester was 21.9 years in 2009/10 in Germany. This is comparatively high when considering the average age of students starting higher education across Europe, specifically in countries like France, Italy, the UK, Portugal or Turkey, where students on average begin their higher education studies between 18 and 20 years. The introduction of a shortened secondary school period thus aims to level this disadvantage and provide a more equal opportunity for students in the international context, so that German students are able to gain a competitive advantage, nationally and internationally.

As each State decides on and implements the new G8 policy independently there are some variations in the duration of secondary school throughout Germany at present. While nearly all States[2] have introduced and implemented the G8 structure, they have done so at different times, so that the resulting double cohorts graduating with a higher education entrance

[2] The exception is Schleswig-Holstein, where institutions across the board still may decide independently whether they offer a G8 or a G9 structure.

qualification are staggered throughout the country. Table 08 below shows the timeline of the implementation and double cohorts by State.

TABLE 08: *Implementation of G8 and double cohorts by State in Germany*

STATES	INTRODUCTION OF G8	DOUBLE COHORT
BADEN WÜRTTEMBERG	2004/05	2012
BAYERN	2004/05	2011
BERLIN	2006/07	2012
BRANDENBURG	2006/07	2012
BREMEN	2004/05	2012
HAMBURG	2002/03	2010
HESSEN	2004/05 (10% of schools in the region) 2005/06 (60% of schools in the region) 2006/07 (30% of schools in the region)	2012, 2013, 2014
MECKLENBURG-VORPOMMERN	2004/05	2008
NIEDERSACHSEN	2004/05	2011
NORDRHEIN-WESTFALEN	2005/06	2013
RHEINLAND-PFALZ	Schools start transitioning in 2008/09	--
SAARLAND	2001/02	2009
SACHSEN	Since 1992	
SACHSEN-ANHALT	2003/04	2007
SCHLESWIG-HOLSTEIN	2008/09	2016
THÜRINGEN	Since 1991	

Source: Kultusministerkonferenz (KMK)

These double cohorts mean that until 2016 the number of students entering higher education will be significantly higher than previously experienced. It is estimated that more than 275,000 additional students will enter higher education by the time the last double cohorts have graduated. This puts a considerable strain on the German higher education system, which already faces capacity issues and it is yet to be seen how the system can cope with this increased demand. In order to meet the challenge, a total of 18 billion Euros have been made available to implement various higher education programmes to accommodate the increased student load in three stages until 2019.

Adapting to this new structure, secondary stage II education at German *Gymnasiums* had to experience some significant alterations. Under the G9 structure the final three qualification years of secondary school education (also known as *Oberstufe*) have comprised grades 11, 12 and 13. In this structure, grade 11 served as the introductory year to the two final qualifying years prior to taking the *Abitur* exam. Grade 11 was also typically the year when students were able to most conveniently go abroad for a year and re-integrate into the German institution at grade 12 without great difficulty (provided academic standards were met). In the new G8 structure, this final phase in which students essentially prepare for the

Abitur exam, starts sooner - in grade 10. Importantly, students interested in a year at a high school abroad go to do so earlier, typically after grade 10. In many States, students are still able to go abroad during year 11, but they are likely to have to repeat the year when they return. A detailed breakdown of the options are available to students by State is included in section 7 below.

CURRICULUM AND OTHER IMPLICATIONS FOR STUDENTS

While *Gymnasiums* across the country have largely successfully managed the structural implementation from G9 to G8 on an administrative level, the curriculum itself does not fully reflect this adjustment. Even though the regular duration of secondary school education was shortened by one full year, the material covered continues to comprise the same content and volume as before. The result is a condensed curriculum and additional lesson hours for students to cover the same material in a shorter overall period of time. This means more is demanded from students in terms of daily time commitment and self-study. This has been cause for debate across States as many parents and students feel they are unduly burdened by this change and the quality of learning and teaching suffers as a consequence. As lessons allow for less time to engage in class exercises to deepen the knowledge conveyed, students (and parents) are called on to make up for the truncation by greater levels of independent self-study and homework. Furthermore, while traditionally lessons in the German education system in the *Gymnasium* are predominantly held in the mornings only (until ca. 1pm), the new structure necessitates that additional lessons are conducted in the afternoon. All-day schools, while they do exist, are not the norm in Germany. On average, the number of additional lessons hours held increases by at least one or two hours, depending on the institution and the grade. Figure 04 below illustrates the elevated lesson-load for students in grades five to ten at a *Gymnasium*.

Box 1: *Pros and Cons of G8*

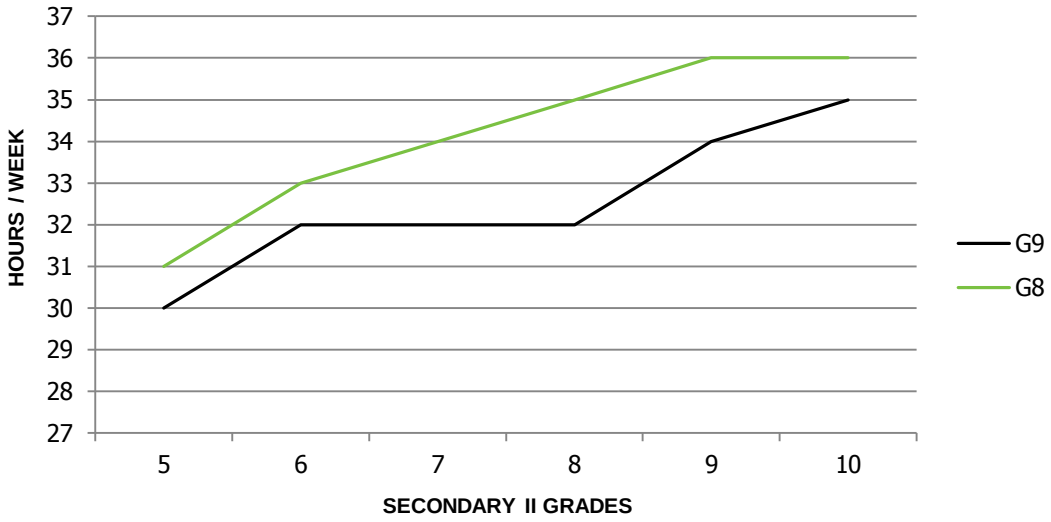
PRO

- *Students graduate at a younger age and are thus able to enter HE or the job market sooner.*
- *Greater national coherence of education structures between States, specifically between east and west German States.*
- *The intensive curriculum structure aims to convey broader knowledge in core subjects and allows for intensive self-study.*

CON

- *More strain and stress for students as they have to learn the same volume in less time*
- *There is a danger that the quality of knowledge diminishes in this fast-paced and exam-oriented approach*
- *Students learn with a distinct 'results' focus rather than learn to retain the acquired knowledge in the long-term*
- *The level of knowledge with which students start HE in Germany is reportedly not as strong*
- *There is a danger that students omit contents in order to be able to cope*

FIGURE 04: *Increased lesson hours for secondary school students*



It is in this additional workload for students and the compressed curriculum that the greatest criticism is levelled against the new structure. Critical voices are pervasive and highlight that the changes in curriculum structure puts students under a considerable amount of stress and overstretches students somewhat. Other critical assessments claim that the compressed curriculum results in education that is predominantly exam-oriented rather than learning oriented. Where a G9 curriculum was generally considered to convey knowledge on a basis that enabled students to retain the acquired knowledge, the compressed curriculum is rather short-term focused. Furthermore, as the first G8 cohorts graduate, voices have emerged in the higher education sector asserting that students graduating from a G8 curriculum lack depth in knowledge required for entry into higher education, specifically in natural science subjects. In short, students, parents and other stakeholders perceive the new structure as highly problematic. Box 2 below summarises in brief the key pros and cons of the G8 switch.

The complex changes German secondary school students are faced with are likely to affect their capacity and willingness to travel during and after their studies. While secondary school students interested in a high school year abroad previously were able to do so after grade 10, the G8 curriculum has made this a less attractive option. Students in G8 structures have a range of options, none of which is perhaps ideal. With the final phase of secondary school starting after grade 10, students no longer have the option to go abroad in grade 11 and then continue on with grade 12 upon their return.

As indicated above, in the G8 system, students typically have to go abroad a year sooner, after grade 9, at a younger age, a trend that is increasingly observed. The minimum age for travelling abroad for a year is generally 15 years. However, given the new structures in the German system, it is increasingly suggested that this minimum age should be lowered to 14

years in order to accommodate younger students wishing to do a year abroad after grade 9. Alternatively, students might decide to do a year abroad after grade 10 and then, adding a year to their overall education, re-enter at grade 11 upon their return into the German system. In the G8 system, students choosing this option thus spend 13 years in the school system in total – not drastically different than prior to the switch. Another increasingly attractive alternative that presents itself for German students in the new system is that they shorten their experience abroad to only a term in New Zealand or other destinations abroad, which can be completed during students' summer vacation. Finally, as addressed earlier, the option to complete a secondary school leaver qualification in New Zealand, where students can complete the NCEA qualification within 18 months after grade 10 becomes an increasingly attractive option for students. This presents a range of opportunities for New Zealand's secondary schools to attract German students in various ways. The trend for German students to spend some period of their secondary education at a high school abroad continues to be strong and, even though there are at present greater levels of insecurities as to what the best options are, there is no noticeable decline in the numbers of students going abroad. Section 7 below illustrates the differences in regulations and options for a stay abroad at the State level.

Although the transition from G9 to G8 is designed to allow German students to enter higher education and/or a professional career at a younger age, many decide to use the additional year to spend some time abroad to work or travel. Travel during or after study is high on the agenda of German students and particularly as the transition to G8 has made it more challenging for students wishing to do a high school year abroad, the likelihood that students take the opportunity to complete a NCEA qualification at a New Zealand secondary school or complete their course of study in New Zealand after graduating from secondary school may well increase.

7. BREAKDOWN OF KEY EDUCATIONAL VARIATIONS BY STATES

As a State matter, education policy in Germany can vary considerably among the 16 States. The dynamic landscape currently dominating education in Germany has given rise to different policies and legislative initiatives as Germany grapples with making its overall education standards better and more internationally competitive. Some States are planning a complete overhaul of the school systems; others make only minor adjustments. But, as discussed earlier, the transition from G9 to G8 has been widely implemented by all States, as encouraged and guided by the *Kutusministerkonferenz* (KMK), since 2004. While many of the structures and policies in place are similar among the States there continue to be finer

nuances between the various systems at the State level. The following section provides a review of the systemic characteristics and features, broken down by State.

7.1 BADEN WÜRTTEMBERG

Capital city: Stuttgart

Population: 10 million

School structure: Grundschule (4 years), *Hauptschule*, *Realschule* and *Gymnasium*

Academic ranking (PISA): places 3rd in a State comparison, ranked 4th in PISA-E 2008.

Secondary school II (Abitur) graduation rate: 35.4%

Percentage of students starting tertiary education: 31.5%

Percentage of population (aged 20-24) with a secondary stage II qualification: 76.9%

School leavers without qualifications: 5.6%

Public expenditure per student (school): €5,100

Proportion of 15 to 19 year olds enrolled: 90.1%

Unemployment rate: 4.4%

Youth unemployment: 4.6%

Baden Württemberg is one of the most successful States in terms of its education indicators. The State has proportionally the largest number of graduates with a higher education entrance qualification and approximately a third of all students enter into tertiary education (31.5%). It is well known nationally for providing academic education of a high standard and is continually aiming to revise its structures in order to be in line with national and global trends.

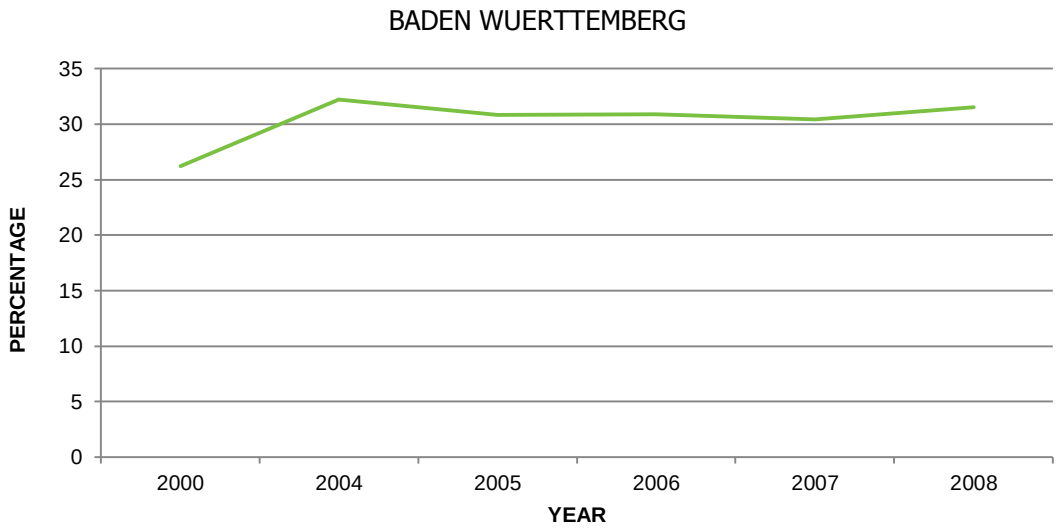
Baden Württemberg follows a traditional tripartite education structure. Primary school takes four years to complete. Which type of secondary school the student enters is then decided by their grades and recommendations are issued for entrance either into *Hauptschule*, *Realschule* or *Gymnasium* are issued. Students attending a *Gymnasium* or an equivalent secondary stage II education institution complete their higher education entrance qualification (*Abitur*) after grade 12. The first cohort of G8 graduates is taking their *Abitur* exam in 20011/12. At present, Baden Württemberg has no further plans to introduce any additional structural education reforms.

CURRICULUM WITH G8

Baden Württemberg has introduced staggered changes to fully adjust to the new G8 system until 2011/12. The new curriculum affects grades 5 to 10, as well as the qualification stages in grades 11 and 12. As one of Germany's high achieving States, Baden Württemberg places great emphasis on reforms and revisions that make the quality of education better, and it has instituted a more extensive range of changes in 2004. The new curriculum includes a stronger emphasis on the natural sciences and technology, in line with contemporary trends. Furthermore, students are expected to learn foreign languages at an earlier age, so that all students have skills in one foreign language at the start of secondary school stage I. Students then continue with at least one other second language. Other changes include a combined focus on the subjects Geography, Economics and Social Sciences implemented into the curriculum. The initially prescribed 265 aggregate hours of tuition per week under G8 have been reduced by five hours per week. The curriculum for the qualifying phase is structured in core subjects and electives.

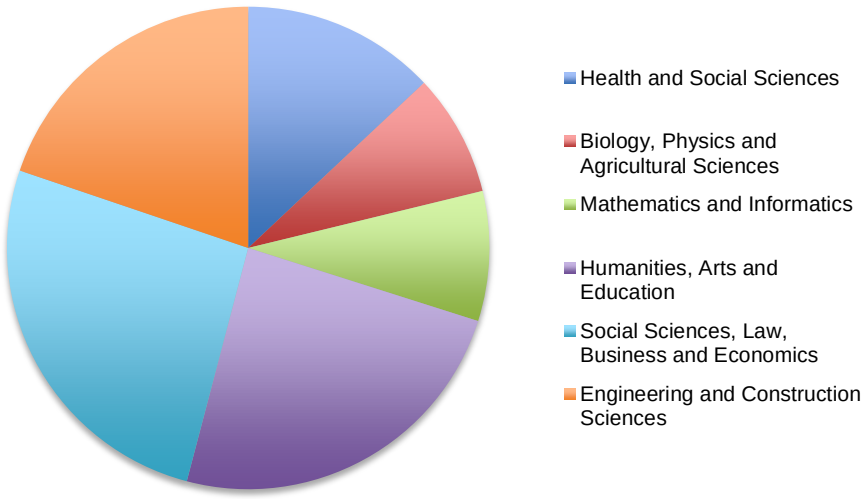
Core subjects are German, mathematics and one foreign language. Furthermore students select additional core subjects: two natural science subjects (biology, chemistry, physics), music or arts, history, social sciences and geography, religion / ethics and sports. Electives include a range of additional subjects such as philosophy, computer science and further languages. Students must complete their *Abitur* exam in the subjects German, mathematics and a foreign language, as well as one additional core subject of the student's choice.

PROPORTIONAL ENTRANCE TO TERTIARY EDUCATION 2000 – 2008 IN %



Proportional entrance to higher education has remained steady in the past decade. Approximately 32% pursue higher education. The fact that there have been few fluctuations in this rate reflects the quality and solidity of the education system and policies in this State.

SUBJECT FOCUS AFTER SECONDARY II:



The humanities, social sciences, law, business, economics, as well as engineering and the construction sciences are popular choices for German students in Baden Württemberg. The health sector and mathematics and computer science are less frequent choices but have been trending upwards.

GUIDELINES FOR A YEAR ABROAD UNDER THE G8 STRUCTURE

Students in Baden Württemberg have a range of accepted choices:

OPTION 1: Students go abroad after grade 9, spending the duration of grade 10 at a school abroad. They then re-enter the German system in grade 11 *on probation*. During the first eight weeks of grade 11, students may still change to go back to grade 10 if they do not feel they can meet the standards required for grade 11. If they remain in grade 11, students then complete their *Abitur* after grade 12. An official certification of the year spent abroad and a record over the performance of the student must be submitted.

OPTION 2: If students go abroad between grades 10 and 11 they complete grade 11 upon their return and then graduate after 13 years in total.

OPTION 3: Students may go abroad for a single term, either during the summer holidays or during school periods, and return to their class upon returning from their stay abroad.

7.1 BAYERN (*BAVARIA)*

Capital City: Munich

Population: 11.6 million

School structure: Grundschule (4 years), *Hauptschule*, *Realschule* and *Gymnasium*

Academic ranking (PISA): places 1st in State comparison, ranked 2nd in Pisa-E 2008.

Secondary school II (Abitur) graduation rate: 23.7%

Percentage of students starting tertiary education: 27.3%

Percentage of population (aged 20-24) with a secondary stage II qualification: 80.2%

School leavers without qualifications: 6.5%

Public expenditure per student (school): €5,200

Proportion of 15 to 19 year olds enrolled: 87.7%

Unemployment rate: 3.8%

Youth unemployment: 4.6%

Bayern (Bavaria) rates as the most successful State in Germany, measured by overall education indicators. It consistently performs well in the *PISA* rankings and, as an affluent State, Bayern has the means to invest larger sums into the education system.

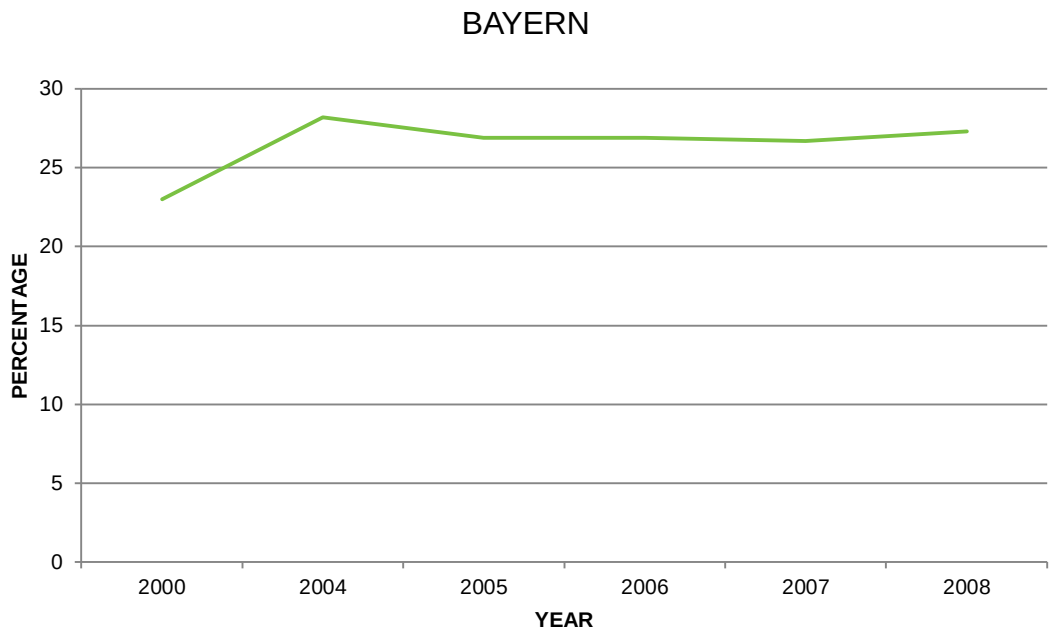
Bayern follows a traditional education structure. Primary school takes four years to complete. Which type of secondary school the student enters then is decided by their grades and recommendations are issued for either entrance into *Hauptschule*, *Realschule* or *Gymnasium*. Students attending a Gymnasium or equivalent secondary stage II education institution complete their higher education entrance qualification (*Abitur*) after grade 12. At present, Bayern does not plan to introduce any structural education reforms.

CURRICULUM WITH G8

With recent reviews instituted in Bayern the system places a stronger focus on the core subjects German, mathematics and languages. Other mandatory core subjects include: religion / ethics, history and social science and sport. Required electives comprise a range of foreign languages (English, French, Latin, Greek, Italian, Spanish, Russian), natural science subjects (physics, chemistry or biology), geography or economics and law, music or arts. Additional subjects may also be taken. Institutions in Bayern typically have a distinct subject

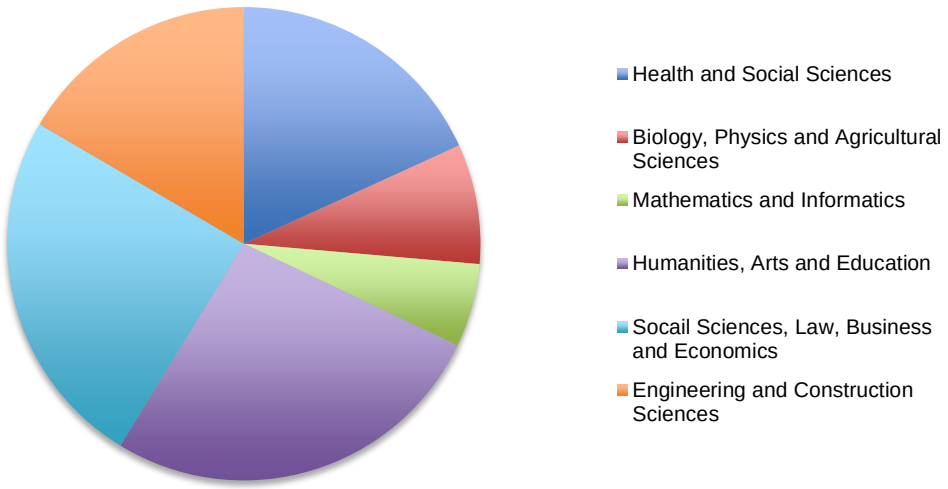
focus in either languages, arts, economics and social science or natural sciences and technology. Institutions also typically offer seminars for graduates that are either academically oriented or project oriented, where students either prepare for an academic career or entry into a profession. In Bavaria, grade 10 is the introductory grade for the final two qualifying years and the system is based on a core course / electives structure.

PROPORTIONAL ENTRANCE TO TERTIARY EDUCATION 2000 – 2008 IN %



As in Baden Württemberg, the proportional entrance to tertiary education in Bayern has remained consistent throughout the past three years, which is a confident indicator of the quality of the policies and administration of education in the State. The proportion is slightly lower with around 27%.

SUBJECT FOCUS AFTER SECONDARY STAGE II:



The dominant subject field for secondary stage II graduates in Bayern is in the humanities, arts and education, followed by the social sciences, law, business and economics. Both, engineering and construction sciences and health and related social sciences are also important. Mathematical and computer science field are less popular with students in Bayern.

GUIDELINES FOR A YEAR ABROAD UNDER THE G8 STRUCTURE

Students in Bayern also have a range of options available to them for a stay abroad:

OPTION 1: Students spend grade 10 abroad and re-enter the German system in grade 11 *on probation*. During the first eight weeks of grade 11, students may still change to go back to grade 10 if they do not feel they can meet the standards required for grade 11. If they remain in grade 11, students then complete their *Abitur* after grade 12. An official certification of the year abroad and a record over the performance of the student is required. It is also possible in this State to go abroad in the second term of grade 10 and the first term of grade 11. This option is particularly attractive for students wishing to go to New Zealand for their year abroad as it corresponds better with the respective term times. Returning students then re-enter the German system in the second term of grade 10 and complete their *Abitur* after 13 years of education in total.

OPTION 2: Students go abroad for only six months in the first term of grade 10 and return to the second term and move on to grade 11 upon successful completion of grade 10.

OPTION 3: Students who go abroad for an entire year in either grades 10 or 11 may repeat the year they have spent abroad. This means students spend an extra year in education and graduate after 13 years.

7.3 BERLIN

Population: 3.45 million

School structure: Grundschule (6 years), dual system: *Sekundarschulen* and *Gymnasium*)

Academic ranking (PISA): places 15th in State comparison, ranked 11th in Pisa-E 2008.

Secondary school II (Abitur) graduation rate: 36.9%

Percentage of students starting tertiary education: 32.8%

Percentage of population (aged 20-24) with a secondary stage II qualification: 70.7%

School leavers without qualifications: 10.6%

Public expenditure per student (school): €5,800

Proportion of 15 to 19 year olds enrolled: 87.9%

Unemployment rate: 3.8%

Youth unemployment: 4.6%

Berlin has only very recently introduced structural reforms in 2010. The State switched from the traditional structure of a tripartite system to a dual system, in which primary school takes 6 years to complete, instead of the conventional four years, and *Hauptschule*, *Realschule* and *Gesamtschulen* are comprised as *Sekundarschulen*. The *Sekundarschulen* enable students to graduate at various stages with different qualifications. Students in *Sekundarschulen* may obtain a higher education entrance qualification (*Abitur*) after grade 13. Alongside the *Sekundarschulen*, students can attend the *Gymnasium* and graduate with a higher education entrance qualification after grade 12. No further changes to the education system are planned by the State administration at this stage.

CURRICULUM WITH G8

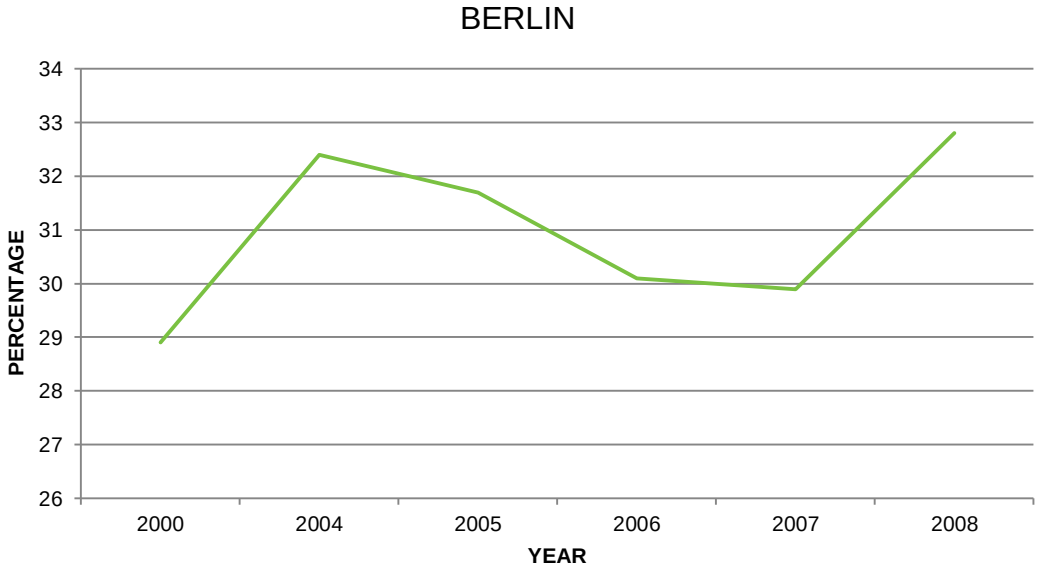
The curricular structure in Berlin depends largely on the type of secondary school institution, as not all have implemented a G8 structure in this particular State. Most *Gymnasiums*, however, operate a 12 year G8 structure, which means students enter the qualifying stage in years 11 and 12. Vocationally oriented *Gymnasium* and comprehensive schools typically teach on a 13-year structure. In either structure, students choose from three core tracks: languages, literature, arts; social sciences; mathematical, natural sciences, technology. Table

09 below illustrates the subjects more distinctly. Students must select subjects from all three areas. Sports are offered outside the three focus areas. Berlin conducts a points-based course structure, which requires two focus courses, one of which must be German, mathematics, a foreign language or a natural science subject. Two of the following have to be exam subjects: German, mathematics, and a foreign language.

TABLE 08: *Subject focus Berlin*

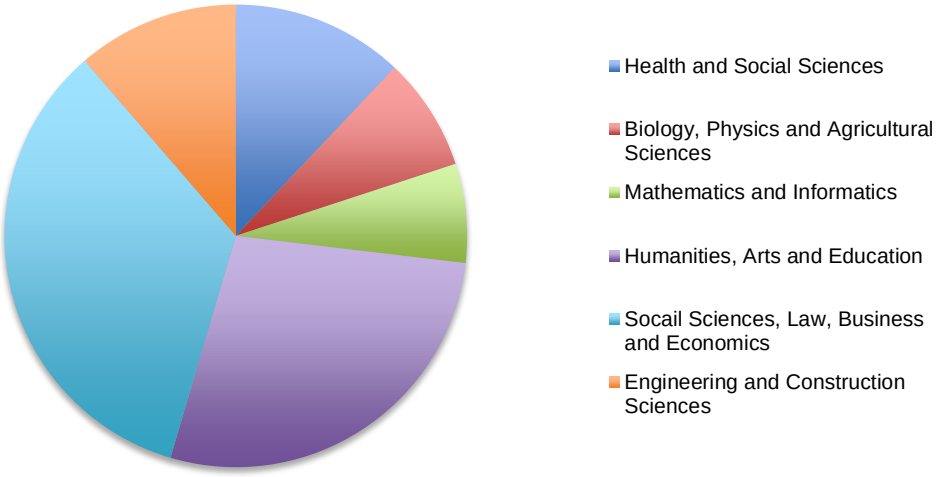
FOCUS 1: LANGUAGES, LITERATURE, ARTS	FOCUS 2: SOCIAL SCIENCES	FOCUS 3: MATHEMATICS, NATURAL SCIENCES, TECHNOLOGY
German	Political Science	Mathematics
English	History	Physics
French	Geography	Chemistry
Italian	Sociology	Biology
Spanish	Psychology	Computer Science
Polish	Philosophy	
Russian	Economics	
Turkish		
Japanese		
Chinese		
Latin		
Music		
Fine Arts		
Performing Arts		

PROPORTIONAL ENTRANCE TO TERTIARY EDUCATION 2000 – 2008 IN %



Proportional entrance to tertiary education in Berlin has shown to be a bit more volatile in Berlin, ranging from 28.9% in 2000 to 32.8% in 2008, having spiked in 2004 and dipped in the subsequent yeas. This reflects perhaps a lacking confidence in the existing system, an attitude that has triggered the need for a changed structure in the State. It has yet to be seen if the transition in the overall school structures and legislation instituted in 2010 will have an effect on the tertiary entrance proportions for the State.

SUBJECT FOCUS AFTER SECONDARY STAGE II:



The social sciences, law, business and economics and the humanities, arts and education are by far the most popular focus areas for students in Berlin. Engineering and construction, typically a stronger subject across Germany, is of lesser relevance in Berlin. This is perhaps not surprising given the overall character of the education system in the capital State.

GUIDELINES FOR A YEAR ABROAD UNDER THE G8 STRUCTURE

The choice for a year abroad is much more restricted for students in Berlin, compared to other States. Students in Berlin are able to complete a year abroad only as an additional year between grades 10 and 11 and in either case, they are required to repeat the year that they have spent abroad. They thus graduate after 13 years of school education in total. Shorter stays of three months, for example, during the summer, are possible in theory but require the approval and cooperation of the student's respective institution if the time abroad affects regular term times in Germany.

7.4 BRANDENBURG

Capital City: Potsdam

Population: 2.67 million

School structure: Grundschule (6 years), dual system: *Oberschulen* and *Gymnasium*)

Academic ranking (PISA): places 13th in State comparison, ranked 8th in Pisa-E 2008.

Secondary school II (Abitur) graduation rate: 34.4%

Percentage of students starting tertiary education: 28.5%

Percentage of population (aged 20-24) with a secondary stage II qualification: 77.1%

School leavers without qualifications: 10.6%

Public expenditure per student (school): €4,900

Proportion of 15 to 19 year olds enrolled: 84.3%

Unemployment rate: 9.8%

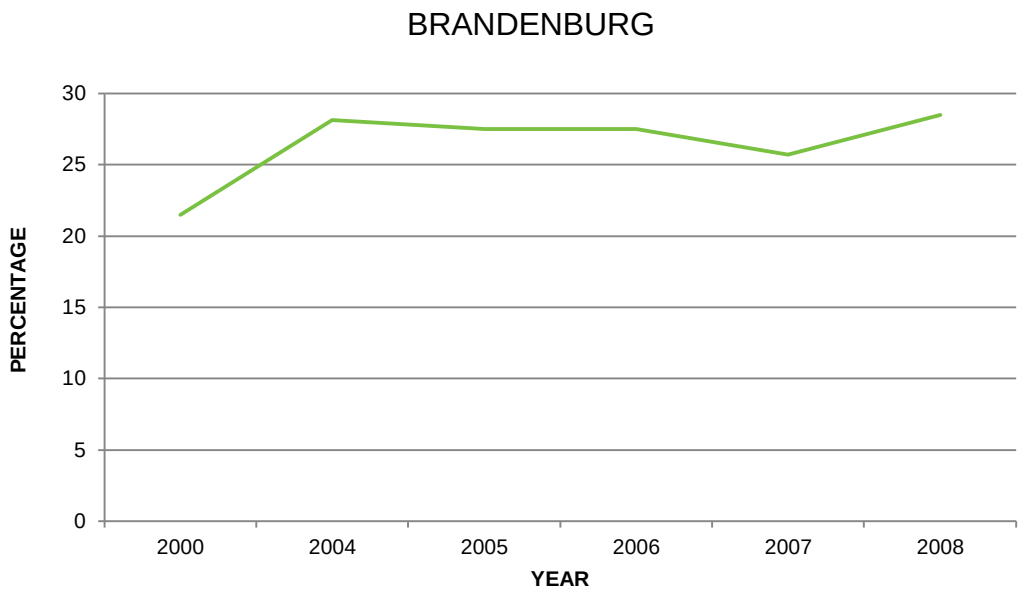
Youth unemployment: 12.5%

As most States in the east of Germany, Brandenburg's education structure follows a dual structure, whereby primary school takes 6 years to complete and secondary education is divided into *Oberschule* (comparable to the *Sekundarschulen*) and *Gymnasium*. Students can obtain a higher education entrance qualification after grade 13 in *Oberschulen* and after grade 12 in the *Gymnasium* structure. This formation is a comparatively new model for education in Germany and no further changes are planned at this stage.

CURRICULUM WITH G8

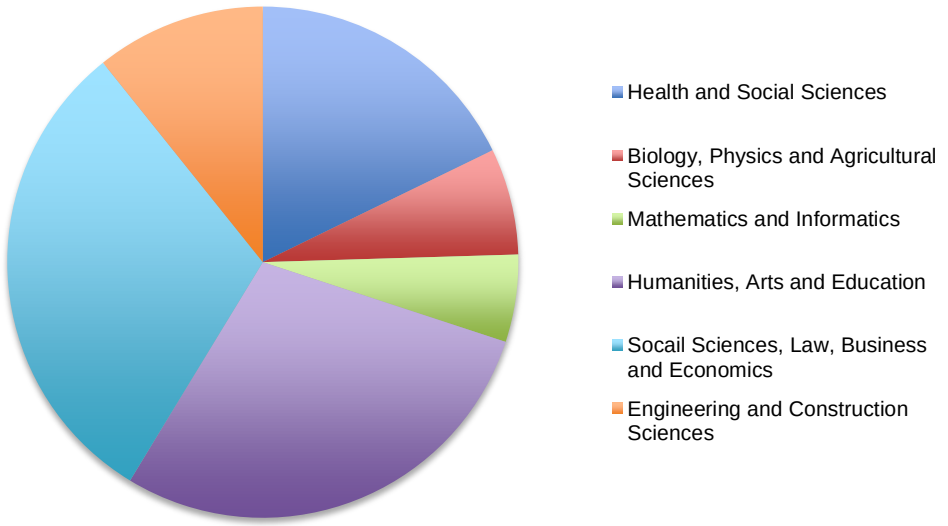
There have been no dramatic changes to the system in Brandenburg, and thus no dramatic changes to the curriculum. Students enter the *Oberstufe* in grade 10, whereby this grade has a dual function in the Brandeburg system: it represents the last year of secondary stage I and serves as the introduction to secondary stage II in a 12 year system. Comprehensive schools, however, typically run a 13-year curriculum. The qualification phase in the *Oberstufe* comprises a range of core subjects which include German, two foreign languages, arts, music or performing arts, history or a social science subject, mathematics, at least one natural science subject and one additional mathematics, technology or natural science oriented subject.

PROPORTIONAL ENTRANCE TO TERTIARY EDUCATION 2000 – 2008 IN %



Proportional entrance to tertiary education in Brandenburg has grown fairly consistently in the past decade. Where it was at 21.5% in 2000, this number has grown to 28.5% by 2008. Like many other States, entrance to tertiary education had spiked in 2004, before then declining briefly.

SUBJECT FOCUS AFTER SECONDARY STAGE II



Similar to Berlin, social sciences, law business and economics are the dominant subjects for students in Brandenburg, followed by a focus on the humanities, arts and sciences, which, with 28.5%, reflects the highest interest among students in comparison to other German States. Mathematics and computer science subjects are typically of less interest among students with only 5.5%.

GUIDELINES FOR A YEAR ABROAD UNDER THE G8 STRUCTURE

As in Berlin, students in Brandenburg are only able to complete a year abroad only as an additional year between grades 10 and 11. This would mean having to repeat a year upon return, so that students are unable to join their previous class when they come back from a year abroad. Students choosing this option, thus graduate after 13 years of school education in total. Shorter stays of three months, for example, during the summer, are possible but require the approval and cooperation of the student's respective institution if the time abroad affects regular term times in Germany.

7.5 BREMEN

Population: 0.68 million

School structure: Grundschule (6 years), dual system: *Oberschulen* and *Gymnasium*)

Academic ranking (PISA): places 16th in State comparison, ranked 16th in Pisa-E 2008.

Secondary school II (Abitur) graduation rate: 37.8%

Percentage of students starting tertiary education: 32.7%

Percentage of population (aged 20-24) with a secondary stage II qualification: 66.4%

School leavers without qualifications: 8.2%

Public expenditure per student (school): €4,900

Proportion of 15 to 19 year olds enrolled: 112.5%*

Unemployment rate: 11.7%

Youth unemployment: 10.7%

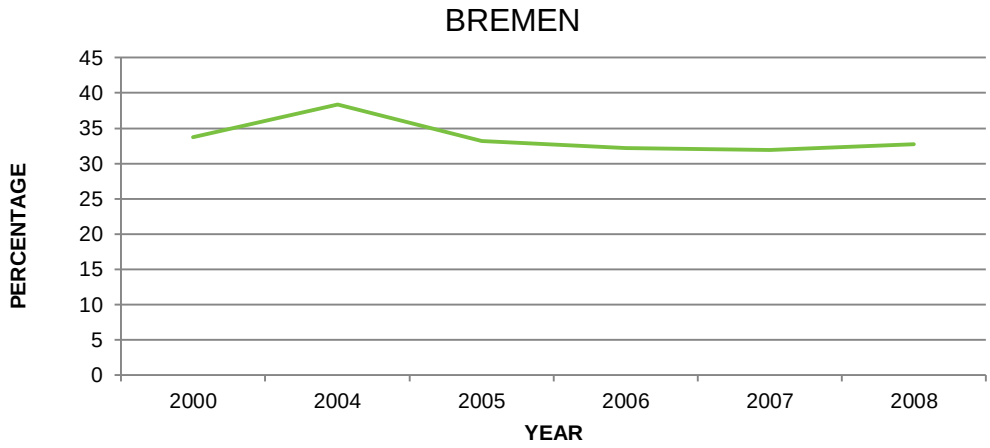
** (a higher number of students in Bremen start elementary education early which results in a value of over 100)*

Bremen operates a dual system, with primary school taking 6 years to complete and students are then recommended to attend the appropriate secondary school institution, based on their grades and an evaluation provided by the primary school. Students enrolled in comprehensive schools and vocational *Gymnasiums* graduate with a higher education entrance qualification after grade 13. Students enrolled in the regular *Gymnasium* graduate with the *Abitur* after grade 12. No further restructuring is planned at this stage.

CURRICULUM WITH G8

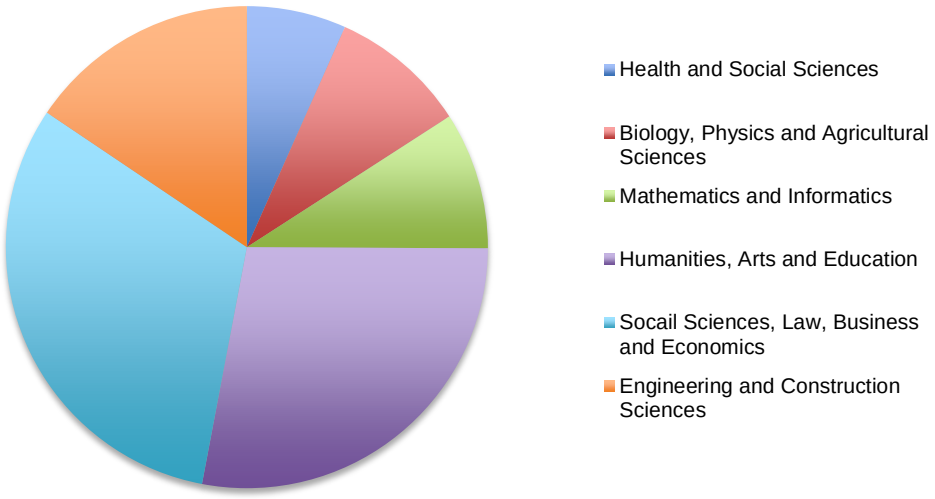
Changes to the curriculum are implemented throughout grades 5 to 10 so that the compressed workload for students is moderated somewhat and they are appropriately prepared for the qualifying stages in grades 11 and 12. Grade 10 represents the introduction year to the *Oberstufe* and the conclusion to secondary stage I in this system. Similar to other systems throughout Germany, there are core courses and required electives in the curriculum. The core courses include languages (German, English, a second foreign language), mathematics, another natural science subject (chemistry, physics, biology), a subject in the field society and politics (politics, geography, history, economics, technology), art or music or performing arts.

PROPORTIONAL ENTRANCE TO TERTIARY EDUCATION 2000 – 2008 IN %



Proportional entrance to tertiary education in Bremen has dipped in recent years, after spiking in 2004 with 38.4%. However, the overall proportion is comparatively high among German States with still 32.7% in 2008. This number has remained fairly consistent in the past years.

SUBJECT FOCUS AFTER SECONDARY STAGE II



In Bremen, students focus primarily on two broad areas: social sciences, law, business and economics, and the humanities, arts and education. Engineering and construction sciences is in third place with 15.4% of students choosing this field as a broad subject area. Health and related social sciences are the least popular choice for Bremen's students with only 6.6% expressing interest.

GUIDELINES FOR A YEAR ABROAD UNDER THE G8 STRUCTURE:

Students in Bremen have two broad options for a year abroad.

OPTION 1: Students can take a maximum of one year abroad during grade 10 and are then able to re-enter the German institution in grade 11 if their academic performance is adequate. This means that they do not lose a year and can re-join their classmates in the final two years.

OPTION 2: Students may go abroad for a year after grade 10. However, upon returning to Germany they would have to repeat grade 11 and then graduate after 13 years of schooling in total.

OPTION 3: Students are able to go abroad for a shorter period of time during the summer. They will need the approval of the institution if the time spent abroad overlaps with regular term times in Germany. Institutions make such decisions on an individual case basis.

7.6 HAMBURG

Population: 1.69 million

School structure: Grundschule (4 years), *Gymnasium* and *Municipal Schools*

Academic ranking (PISA): places 14th in State comparison, ranked 15th in Pisa-E 2008.

Secondary school II (Abitur) graduation rate: 38.5%

Percentage of students starting tertiary education: 36.4%

Percentage of population (aged 20-24) with a secondary stage II qualification: 69.5%

School leavers without qualifications: 8.9%

Public expenditure per student (school): €6,000

Proportion of 15 to 19 year olds enrolled: 91.9%

Unemployment rate: 7.6%

Youth unemployment: 8.1%

Hamburg has among the highest expenditure per student for education and also a strong graduation rate. The State has recently introduced structural changes and now operates a dual structure in contrast to a traditional structure, however, primary school only takes four years to complete before students enter the secondary school stage, where it is the parents' decision whether the student enters a *Gymnasium* or a municipal school (*Stadteilschule*). Students enrolled at the *Gymnasium* obtain their higher education entrance qualification after year 12, while students at municipal schools can complete a higher education entrance qualification (*Abitur*) after year 13. No further structural changes are planned.

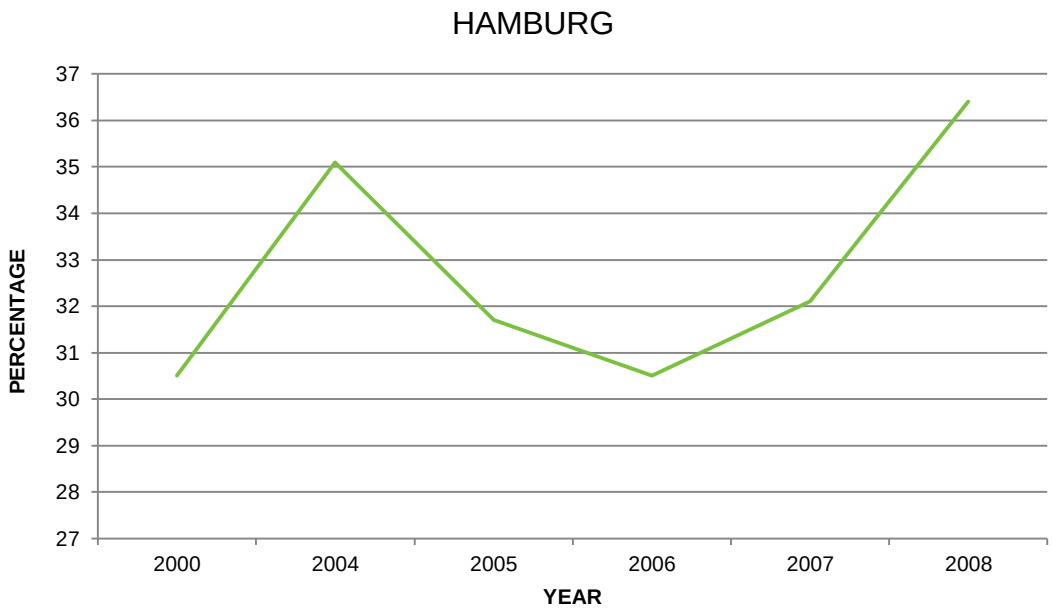
CURRICULUM WITH G8

In Hamburg too, grade 10 serves as the introductory stage for the *Oberstufe* and students select their focus area in this grade. Adjustments made to the curriculum begin to take effect from grade 5 onward, with secondary stage I, in order to alleviate the compressed curriculum and prepare students adequately for the final two years of school. The qualification phase under the new G8 model comprises three focus areas in preparation for the *Abitur*. Table 10 below shows the basics the structure and subject comprised within it. Sport is included as a required subject but does not fall within the respective categories. As in most other States, comprehensive schools and vocationally oriented secondary schools typically operate a G9 structure and students graduate after 13 years in total. Core subjects in Hamburg comprise German, Maths and a foreign language.

TABLE 10: *Subject focus Hamburg*

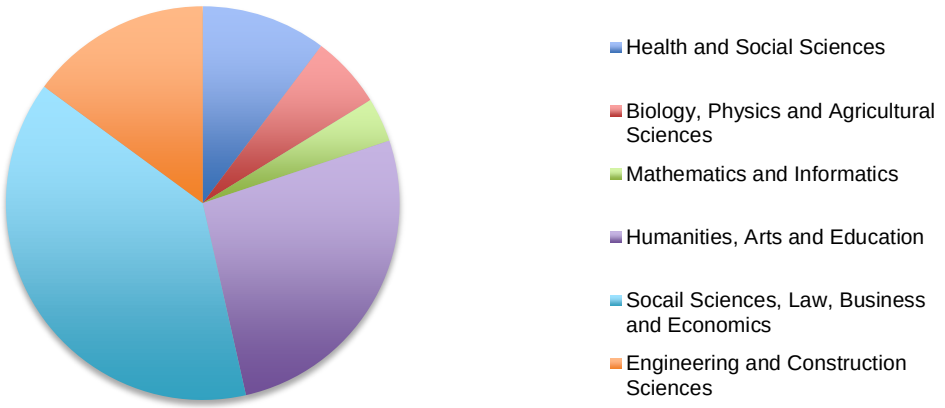
Focus 1: Languages, Literature, Arts	Focus 2: Social Sciences	Focus 3: Mathematics, Natural Sciences, Technology
German	Political Science	Mathematics
Chinese	History	Physics
English	Geography	Chemistry
French	Pedagogy	Biology
Greek	Psychology	Computer Science
Latin	Philosophy	
Polish	Economics	
Russian	Law	
Spanish	Religion / Ethics	
Turkish		
Performing Arts		
Music		
Fine Arts		

PROPORTIONAL ENTRANCE TO TERTIARY EDUCATION 2000 – 2008 IN %



With a high graduation rate, Hamburg also has among the highest percentage of entrance into higher education. This is facilitated by the fact that Hamburg, like Bremen is a city State and there are higher funds available for education spending. However, there have been considerable fluctuations in proportionality between 2000 and 2008. Here too we see a spike in 2004 with 35.1% and a subsequent dip. However, since then, the proportionality has risen to 36.4%, the highest nation-wide.

SUBJECT FOCUS AFTER SECONDARY STAGE II



In Hamburg the predominant subject focus is in social science, law, business and economics with 38.3%. This is the highest proportion for this broad subject area throughout Germany. This is followed by the humanities, arts and education. Notably little interest is shown in fields relating to mathematics and computer science with only 3.6% of students enrolled in these subjects.

GUIDELINES FOR A YEAR ABROAD UNDER THE G8 STRUCTURE

In Hamburg, students have three broad options for a year at a high school abroad. These are in line with what other State offer throughout Germany:

OPTION 1: Students are able to spend grade 10 abroad and re-enter the German system in grade 11 without any interruption to the 12-year curriculum. Whether students are able to re-enter in grade 11 is contingent on the student's academic ability and achievements during the stay abroad. The institution in Germany decides on an individual case basis.

OPTION 2: Students going abroad between grades 10 and 11 may repeat the year and complete their *Abitur* after 13 years rather than 12.

OPTION 3: Students are able to go abroad for a shorter period of time during the summer. They will need the approval of the institution if the time spent abroad overlaps with regular term times in Germany. Institutions make such decisions on an individual case basis.

7.7 HESSEN (*HESSE*)

Capital City: Wiesbaden

Population: 5.9 million

School structure: Grundschule (4 years), *Hauptschule*, *Realschule* and *Gymnasium*. The system also comprises comprehensive schools

Academic ranking (PISA): places 8th in State comparison, ranked 12th in Pisa-E 2008.

Secondary school II (Abitur) graduation rate: 31.4%

Percentage of students starting tertiary education: 33.8%

Percentage of population (aged 20-24) with a secondary stage II qualification: 73.6%

School leavers without qualifications: 7.0%

Public expenditure per pupil: €5,000

Proportion of 15 to 19 year olds enrolled: 86.7%

Unemployment rate: 5.9%

Youth unemployment: 7.0%

Hessen has a traditional education structure with four years of primary school and the three key pathways, *Hauptschule*, *Realschule* and *Gymnasium*. Parents are able to decide which school the pupil continues on after primary school. Hessen is planning to introduce a new structure that combines *Hauptschule* and *Realschule* into a '*Mittelstufe'*, which offers both qualifications, in 2011/2012. In Hessen, students complete their *Abitur* at the Gymnasium after grade 12, and after grade 13 at comprehensive schools.

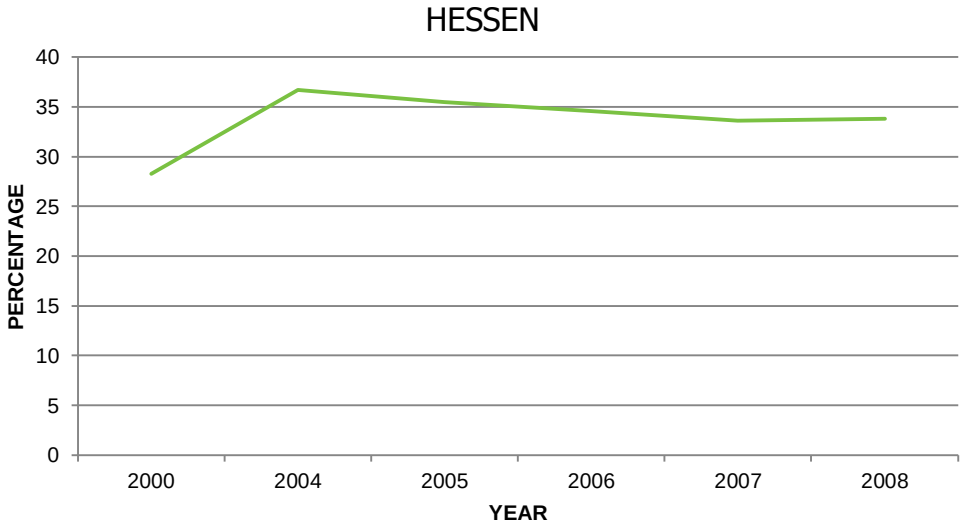
CURRICULUM WITH G8

Hessen has revised its curricula twice in light of the transition from G9 to G8, once in 2005 when the changes were first introduced and again in 2008. In 2011/12 the curriculum structure changes again to reflect a core subject focus for the final two years of high school, rather than the points-based course structure previously in place in the G9 structure. The structures in place affect grades 5 to 10 primarily so that students are adequately prepared to enter the qualification phase in grades 11 and 12m after completing grade 10 as an introductory and preparatory year. Overall, grades 5 to 10 were shortened by 14 aggregate hours per week and four weekly hours were added in grade 10. Table 11 below illustrates the subject selection for secondary school in Hessen by broad subject area.

TABLE 11: *Subject focus Hessen*

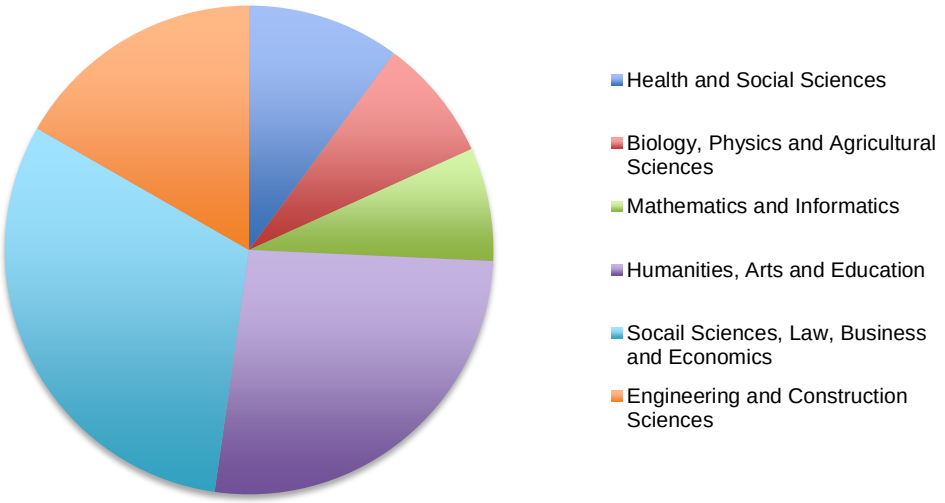
Focus 1: Languages, Literature, Arts	Focus 2: Social Sciences	Focus 3: Mathematics, Natural Sciences, Technology
German	Political Science and Economics	Mathematics
English	Law	Physics
French	Economic Sciences	Chemistry
Italian	History	Biology
Spanish	Geography	Computer Science
Latin	Religion / Ethics	
Greek	Philosophy	
Japanese		
Russian		
Music		
Arts		
Performing Arts		

PROPORTIONAL ENTRANCE TO TERTIARY EDUCATION 2000 – 2008 IN %



Similar to Hamburg, the proportion of entrants to tertiary education is relatively high in a State-by-State comparison. Hessen has experienced a relatively stable proportionality of entrants to tertiary education between 2004 and 2008, whereby a slight decline can be noted. Where the proportion of entrants to higher education in 2004 was at 36.7%, this number declined to 33.8% in 2008.

SUBJECT FOCUS AFTER SECONDARY STAGE II:



In Hessen, considerable interest is shown in the broader fields of social sciences, law, business and economics, reflecting 31% of the post-secondary stage II subject focus of students. In line with the national trend, this is followed by the humanities, arts and education, with just over 26%. The distribution of interest for the remaining subjects in Hessen is a little more even than in some other States, whereby engineering and construction take the greater share.

GUIDELINES FOR A YEAR ABROAD UNDER THE G8 STRUCTURE

Similar guidelines for a year abroad apply in Hessen as in many other States in Germany:

OPTION 1: Students are able to spend grade 10 at a high school abroad and re-enter the German system at grade 11, re-joining their previous classmates. Whether a student is allowed to do so is contingent on his or her academic ability and performance upon return. If it is not entirely evident to the school that the student may meet the full academic requirements necessary to successfully complete grade 11, the school may require an exam to assess the student's skill level.

OPTION 2: Students going abroad between grades 10 and 11 may repeat the year rather than move on to the next grade. This means an additional year for the student and they are able to complete their *Abitur* after a total of 13 years.

OPTION 3: Students are able to go abroad for a shorter period of time during the summer. They will need the approval of the institution if the time spent abroad overlaps with regular term times in Germany. Institutions make such decisions on an individual basis.

7.8 MECKLENBURG-VORPOMMERN

Capital City: Schwerin

Population: 1.85 million

School structure: Grundschule (4 years), dual system: *Gymnasium* and Regional Schools. Also Comprehensive Schools

Academic ranking (PISA): places 7th in State comparison, ranked 7th in Pisa-E 2008.

Secondary school II (Abitur) graduation rate: 50.2%

Percentage of students starting tertiary education: 26.2%

Percentage of population (aged 20-24) with a secondary stage II qualification: 76.7%

School leavers without qualifications: 17.9%

Public expenditure per student (school): €4,600

Proportion of 15 to 19 year olds enrolled: 86.7%

Unemployment rate: 11.1%

Youth unemployment: 12.0%

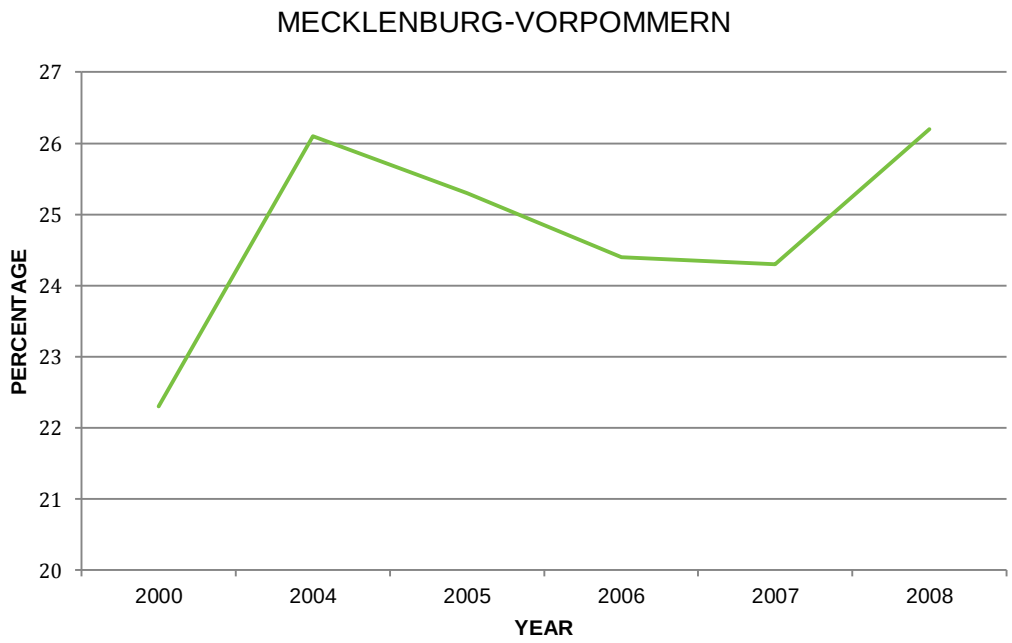
Similar to Hamburg, Mecklenburg-Vorpommern has introduced a dual structure, however, primary school continues to take four years for completion. After primary school parents decide, based upon recommendations, which institution the student attends. Some institutions may require a 6 months trial period before deciding whether the student can continue on in the chosen school type. Students complete their higher education entrance qualification after grade 12 for all types of secondary stage II schools. This is not a new structure for the east German State, as it had implemented a G8 structure long before the KMK issued the respective guidelines for all of Germany. No further structural changes are planned in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern at this stage.

CURRICULUM WITH G8

Here too students gain a secondary stage 1 qualification with completion of grade 10 and can then enter the qualification stage for the final two years leading up to the *Abitur* exam. Grade 10 is thus considered as an introductory grade for this final stage. As Mecklenburg-Vorpommern did not have to grapple with a dramatic shift from 13 to 12 years of education, there are few major curriculum revisions, however, change toward a broader canon of mandatory subjects has recently been implemented. Emphasis is placed on core subjects such as German, mathematics, history, political sciences, one foreign language and a natural science subject. An additional subject can then be chosen as a core subject. Students must also enrol in one of these following subjects: religion/philosophy, music/performing or fine

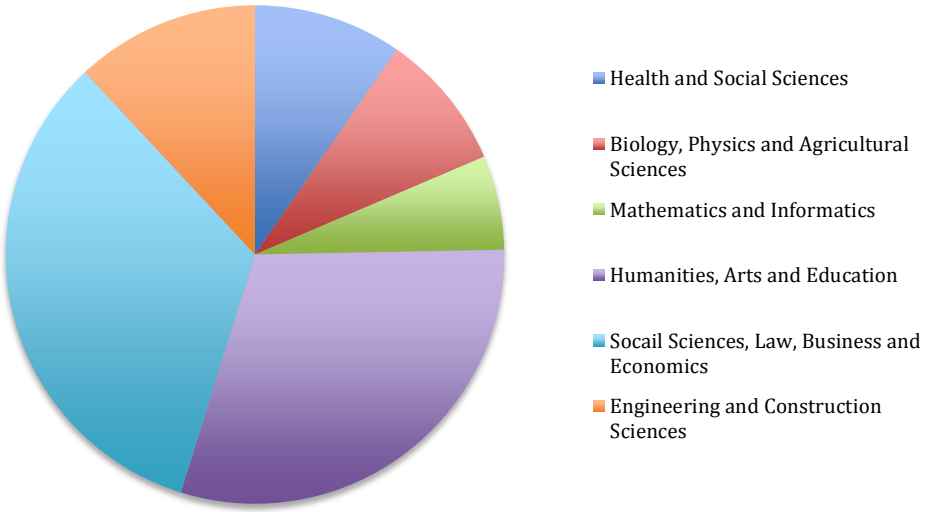
arts and sports. The following subjects are electives from which students may choose: geography, economics, sociology and computer science.

PROPORTIONAL ENTRANCE TO TERTIARY EDUCATION 2000 – 2008 IN %



Proportional entrance to tertiary education has risen substantially between the years 2000 and 2008. Where the proportion of students at the start of the millennium was at merely 22.3%, this number has considerably increased by 2008 to 26.2%. Education is an important topic for the State and Mecklenburg-Vorpommern has been actively seeking to improve its structures and system in the national competition.

SUBJECT FOCUS AFTER SECONDARY STAGE II:



In line with national trends, the subject focus in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern is primarily within the social sciences, law, business and economics, and the humanities and arts and education, making up a total of 63.1% These two broad and dominant subject fields are followed by engineering and construction sciences, with 12%. Interest in the remaining subject areas is evenly spaced.

GUIDELINES FOR A YEAR ABROAD UNDER THE G8 STRUCTURE

The following options are available for students going abroad:

OPTION 1: Students may spend grade 10 abroad and move on to grade 11 once they return. The head of the school decides whether a student may enter grade 11 after their stay abroad. As with many other States, schools here can require an exam to assess whether the student has adequate knowledge and skills in key subjects to be able to enter grade 11.

OPTION 2: Students going abroad between grades 10 and 11 may repeat the year rather than move on to the next grade. This means an additional year for the student and they are able to complete their *Abitur* after a total of 13 years.

OPTION 3: Students are able to go abroad for a shorter period of time during the summer. They will need the approval of the institution if the time spent abroad overlaps with regular term times in Germany. Institutions make such decisions on an individual basis.

7.9 NIEDERSACHSEN (*LOWER SAXONY*)

Capital City: Hannover

Population: 7.48 million

School structure: Grundschule (4 years), *Hauptschule*, *Realschule* and *Gymnasium*

Academic ranking (PISA): places 10th in State comparison, ranked 13th in Pisa-E 2008.

Secondary school II (Abitur) graduation rate: 27.7%

Percentage of students starting tertiary education: 29.3%

Percentage of population (aged 20-24) with a secondary stage II qualification: 69.1%

School leavers without qualifications: 7.4%

Public expenditure per pupil: €4,800

Proportion of 15 to 19 year olds enrolled: 87.2%

Unemployment rate: 6.9%

Youth unemployment: 7.6%

Niedersachsen has a traditional education structure, however, the State is planning to make some significant changes to the structure and a vote will be held later this year. At this stage the system comprises primary school, which concludes after 4 years and the tripartite structure of *Hauptschule*, *Realschule* and *Gymnasium*. Additionally, the State offers comprehensive schools. Students enrolled in the *Gymnasium* obtain their higher education entrance qualification after grade 12. Changes ahead involve potentially combining *Hauptschule* and *Realschule* into a more comprehensive *Oberschule*, which would be offering both qualifications to students.

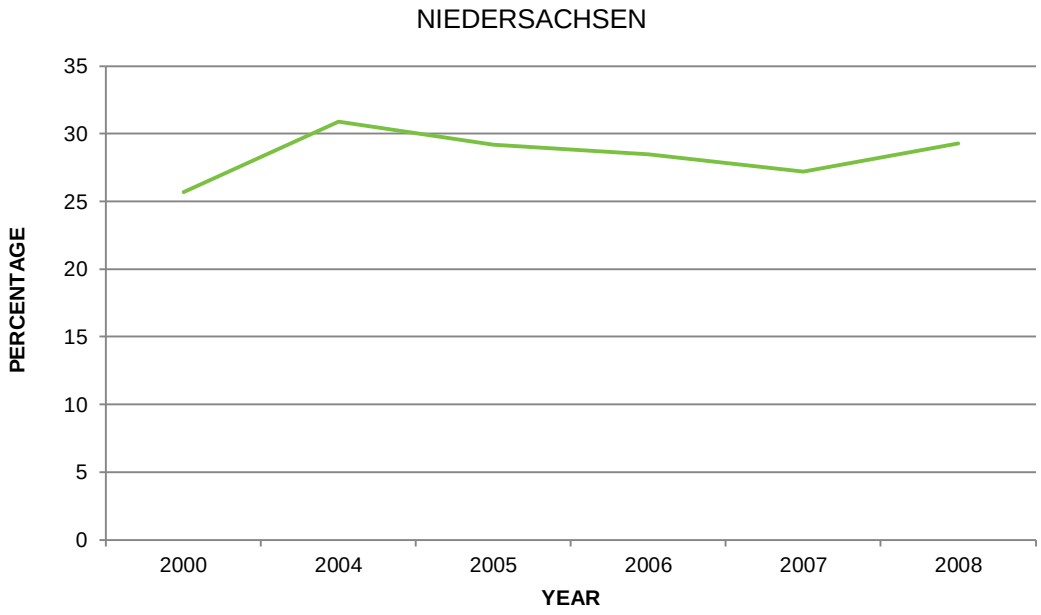
CURRICULUM WITH G8

In Niedersachsen, the G8 structure is implemented by Gymnasiums, whereby comprehensive schools continue to conclude after year 13. In the G8 structure, students in secondary school choose from a range of subjects including German, two foreign languages, music, arts, history, geography, politics and economy, religion/values and norms in philosophy, mathematics, biology, chemistry, physics, and sports. Year 12 comprises 34 hours per week for students. In the qualification stages in grades 11 and 12, students can select from five focus areas: language focus, natural science focus, musical-artistic focus, social science focus, sports focus. Table 12 below illustrates the subjects available. Core subject are mathematics, German and a foreign language. Niedersachsen institutions also offer a seminar in preparation for a further academic or professional curriculum.

TABLE 12: *Subject focus Niedersachsen*

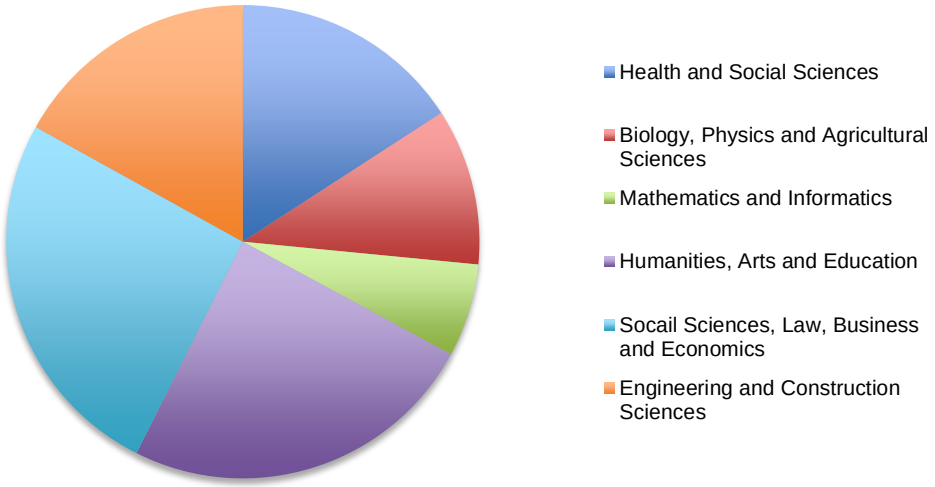
	Language Focus	Natural Science Focus	Music or Arts Focus	Social Science Focus	Sports Focus
Focus Subject	Foreign Language 1 Foreign Language 2	Natural Science 1 Natural Science 2	Arts or Music German	History Political Science, Economics, Geography, Religion or Philosophy	Sports Natural Science
Core Subjects	German Mathematics	German Foreign Language Mathematics	Foreign Language Mathematics	German Foreign Language Mathematics	German Foreign Language Mathematics
Supplementary Subjects	Natural Sciences Music, Arts or Performing Arts History Political Economy Religion, Values and Norms in Philosophy Sports Seminar	Music, Arts or Performing Arts History Political Economy Religion, Values and Norms in Philosophy Sports Seminar	Natural Sciences Music, Arts or Performing Arts History Political Economy Religion, Values and Norms in Philosophy Sports Seminar	Natural Sciences Music, Arts or Performing Arts Political Economy Religion, Values and Norms in Philosophy Further Foreign Languages or Natural Science Sports Seminar	Music, Arts or Performing Arts History Political Economy Religion, Values and Norms in Philosophy Further Foreign Languages or Natural Science Seminar

PROPORTIONAL ENTRANCE TO TERTIARY EDUCATION 2000 – 2008 IN %



Proportionality in terms of entrance to tertiary education in Niedersachsen has remained relatively consistent throughout the past decade and even in 2004, Niedersachsen has seen less of a spike than other States. The Proportion of entrants to tertiary education in 2008 was at 29.3%. Niedersachsen falls within the average within Germany. The State aims for a greater proportionality in entrants, however.

SUBJECT FOCUS AFTER SECONDARY STAGE II:



The subject areas engineering and construction and health and related social sciences find greater representation as a subject focus in Niedersachsen than a number of other States in Germany. Proportionally, these two areas make up over a quarter. The traditionally popular subject areas social sciences, law, business and economics and the humanities, arts and education, make up just under half the subject focus for students in Niedersachsen with 25.4% and 24.3% respectively.

GUIDELINES FOR A YEAR ABROAD UNDER THE G8 SYSTEM

Students in Niedersachsen have a range of options to choose from when considering a year abroad. Like Bayern and a few other States, students in Niedersachsen are able to go abroad between two grades.

OPTION 1: Students complete grade 10 abroad and move on to grade 11 once they return, given they have attained adequate academic achievements during their studies abroad. In

this State, students also have the option to go abroad in the second term of grade 10 and the first term of grade 11, allowing for a better correspondence of the respective terms times for New Zealand institutions. After returning, students would be able to enter the second term of grade 11 and complete their *Abitur* after 12 years.

OPTION 2: Students going abroad between grades 10 and 11 may repeat the year rather than move on to the next grade. This means an additional year for the student and they are able to complete their *Abitur* after a total of 13 years.

OPTION 3: Students are able to go abroad for a shorter period of time during the summer. They will need the approval of the institution if the time spent abroad overlaps with regular term times in Germany. Institutions make such decisions on an individual basis.

7.10 NORDRHEIN-WESTFALEN (*NORTH RHINE-WESTPHALIA*)

Capital City: Düsseldorf

Population: 17.69 million

School structure: Grundschule (4 years), *Hauptschule*, *Realschule* and *Gymnasium*

Academic ranking (PISA): places 10th in State comparison, ranked 14th in Pisa-E 2008.

Secondary school II (Abitur) graduation rate: 33.8%

Percentage of students starting tertiary education: 31.6%

Percentage of population (aged 20-24) with a secondary stage II qualification: 69.5%

School leavers without qualifications: 6.8%

Public expenditure per student (school): €4,500

Proportion of 15 to 19 year olds enrolled: 92.8%

Unemployment rate: 8.2%

Youth unemployment: 8.5%

Nordrhein-Westfalen still operates a traditional education structure, however, there experimental changes were put in place for the year 2010/2011, in which individual municipalities may apply for introducing secondary schools that combine *Hauptschule* and *Realschule*. Additionally, the State offers comprehensive schools as an alternative at the secondary level. Parents retain the decision over which secondary institution the student attends. Students enrolled in a *Gymnasium* can complete their higher education entrance qualification after grade 12.

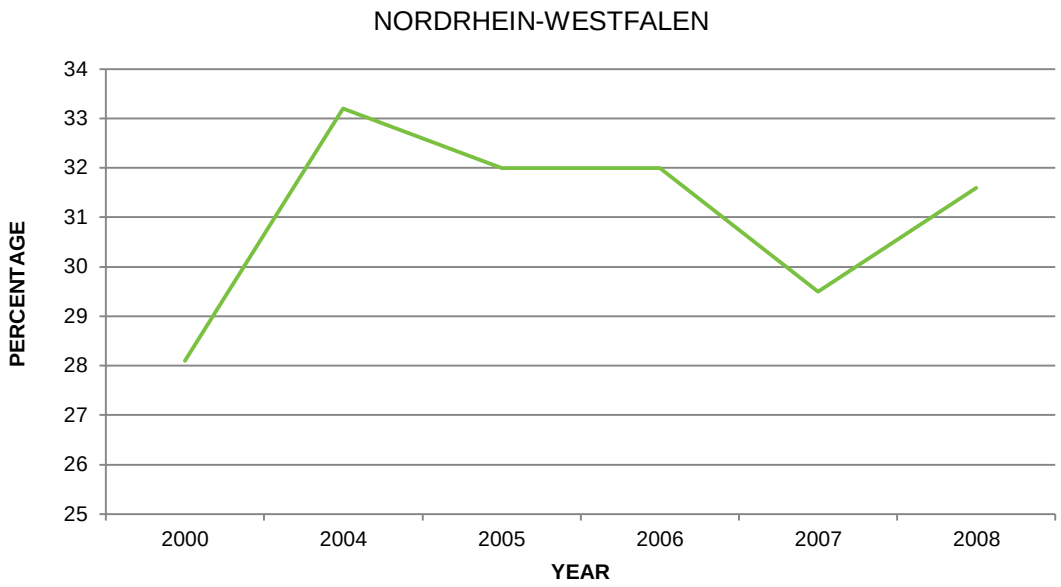
CURRICULUM WITH G8

Here too, the system comprises a total of three years students spend in the qualification period / *Oberstufe,* in grade 10, 11 and 12. This means that grade 10 represents the introductory phase for the final two qualification years prior to the *Abitur*, as well as forming the final grade students have to complete to conclude secondary stage I education. Subjects are divided into three broad areas for secondary school students, comprising the three traditional areas literature, languages and arts; the social sciences and mathematic, natural sciences and technology. Included in the subject register are also religion / ethics and sports, but neither are allocated to a specific focus area. Furthermore, students are able to engage in focus area specific projects and immersion subject of a broad variety. Mandatory core subjects in preparation for the *Abitur* exam are German, mathematics and a foreign language. Table 13 below provides an overview of the wide range of subjects available in this State.

Table 13: *Subject focus Nordrhein-Westfalen*

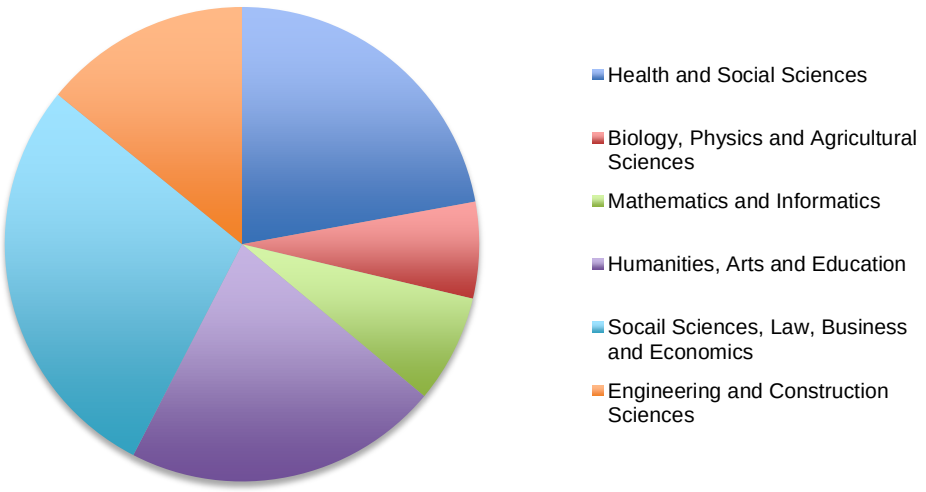
Focus 1: Languages, Literature, Arts	Focus 2: Social Sciences	Focus 3: Mathematics, Natural Sciences, Technology
German	History	Mathematics
English	Social Sciences	Physics
Latin	Geography	Chemistry
French	Philosophy	Biology
Italian	Pedagogy / Education	Computer Science
Japanese	Psychology	Nutritional Science
Russian	Law	
Chinese		
Spanish		
Greek		
Turkish		
Dutch		
Hebrew		
New Greek		
Portuguese		
Arts		
Music		
Literature		

PROPORTIONAL ENTRANCE TO TERTIARY EDUCATION 2000 – 2008 IN %



The number and proportion of entrants to tertiary education has fluctuated somewhat in the years between 2000 and 2008, whereby in 2000 the proportion of entrance to higher education was 28.11%, a number that has climbed to 31.8% in 2008. Nordrhein-Westfalen is thus broadly in line with the national average for entrance to tertiary education.

SUBJECT FOCUS AFTER SECONDARY STAGE II:



Like in most German States, the subject areas social science, law, business and economics make up approximately half of all subject focus areas after secondary stage II, the remaining subject fields make up the rest. Notable here is that health and related social sciences is proportionally more popular as a subject field than in many other States with 21.9%. Least popular are biology, physics and agricultural sciences for this State.

GUIDELINES FOR A YEAR ABROAD UNDER THE G8 STRUCTURE

Students in Nordrhein-Westfalen have a range of options for going abroad for a year, however, they are also facing more stringent requirements by which it is assessed whether they are able to return without having to repeat the year they spent abroad.

OPTION 1: Students may go abroad for year 10 and re-enter the German system in grade 11 upon return. There is, however, a requirement to have attained certain grades:

- Grade average: C (*satisfactory*)
- Students may not have received grade E (*deficient*) or lower in any subject
- Students may not have received grade D (*sufficient*) in more than one core subject. If a student has received a grade D in one core subject, he or she must make up for it in another core subject.

OPTION 2: Students going abroad between grades 10 and 11 may repeat the year rather than move on to the next grade. This means an additional year for the student and they are able to complete their *Abitur* after a total of 13 years.

OPTION 3: Students are able to go abroad for a shorter period of time during the summer. They will need the approval of the institution if the time spent abroad overlaps with regular term times in Germany. Institutions make such decisions on an individual basis.

7.11 RHEINLAND-PFALZ (*RHINELAND-PALATINATE*)

Capital City: Mainz

Population: 3.88 million

School structure: Grundschule (4 years), presently changing structure to introduce *Realschule Plus* and *Gymnasium* as well as integrated comprehensive schools

Academic ranking (Pisa): places 4th in State comparison, ranked 6th in Pisa-E 2008.

Secondary school II (Abitur) graduation rate: 30.4%

Percentage of students starting tertiary education: 29.4%

Percentage of population (aged 20-24) with a secondary stage II qualification: 73.1%

School leavers without qualifications: 7.2%

Public expenditure per student (school): €4,800

Proportion of 15 to 19 year olds enrolled: 84.6%

Unemployment rate: 5.2%

Youth unemployment: 6.6%

Rheinland-Pfalz is presently on route to switching the education structure from a traditional tripartite structure to a dual system in which secondary education is comprised in what is termed '*Realschule Plus'* and the *Gymnasium*. Primary school takes four years to complete in Rheinland-Pfalz, after which parents decide which secondary institution the student will attend. Students may complete their higher education entrance qualification (*Abitur*) after grade 12 at a Gymnasium or 13 at integrated comprehensive schools.

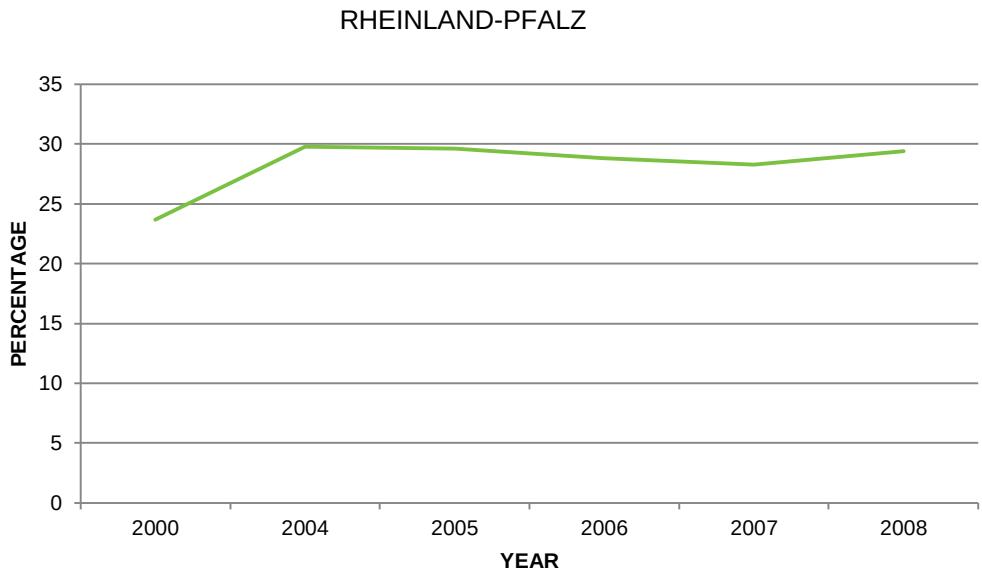
CURRICULUM WITH G8

The structure in Rheinland-Pfalz is somewhat more complex and still considers the option for grade 13 to a greater degree than other States in its current guidelines. Students must gain entrance to grades 12 and 13 (if applicable) to then be admitted to sit the *Abitur* exam. Rheinland-Pfalz continues on with a points-based course structure for the final qualifying year. Here too, subjects are largely offered in three focus areas as table 14 below illustrates. Rheinland-Pfalz has not yet implemented a centralised *Abitur* for students completing secondary school stage II and the exam is not set by the respective State level Ministry but is given at the institutional level by teachers and staff. Students have to complete a minimum of 32 hours.

TABLE 14: *Subject focus Rheinland-Pfalz*

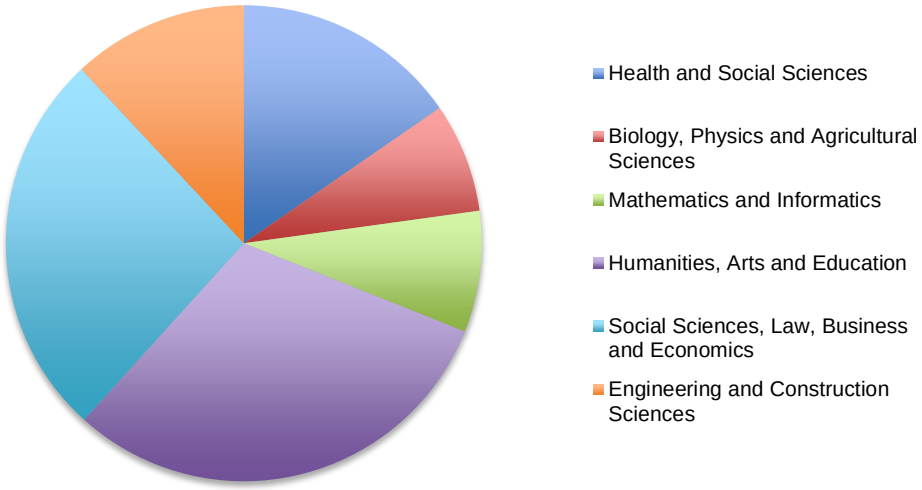
Focus 1: Languages, Literature, Arts	Focus 2: Social Sciences	Focus 3: Mathematics, Natural Sciences, Technology	Subjects not allocated to a specific focus area
German English French Latin Greek Russian Spanish Italian Japanese Fine Arts Music Performing Arts	Social Sciences (comprises elements of History, Geography and Sociology)	Mathematics Physics Chemistry Biology	Religion Ethics Sports Computer Science Philosophy

PROPORTIONAL ENTRANCE TO TERTIARY EDUCATION 2000 – 2008 IN %



Entrance to tertiary education is on average at just below 30% and this figure has remained steady for the past four years. Rheinland-Pfalz is thus broadly in line with the national average. The consistency of this proportion reflects the consistency to date of the education system until very recently. As new changes are implemented into education system in Rheinland-Pfalz, this proportion may fluctuate slightly more in the years to come.

SUBJECT FOCUS AFTER SECONDARY STAGE II:



The humanities, arts and education represent the largest proportion in terms of subject focus for post secondary stage II students with 30.1%, among the highest in the nation. This is followed here too by a strong interest in social science, law, business and economics with 26.2%. The heath and related social sciences field in Rheinland-Pfalz is more strongly represented in terms of focus interest than engineering and construction sciences. Both together make up a quarter of subject focus orientations in the State.

GUIDELINES FOR YEAR ABROAD UNDER THE G8 STRUCTURE

Schools in Rheinland-Pfalz are only slowly beginning their transition to G8 (having started the first cohorts in 2008/09). Until very recently, it was still possible for students to go abroad for year 11 and then enter year 12 upon return, without having to repeat a grade, and a number of institutions still offer this option. In those institutions that have transitioned to G8, students are able to go abroad in grade 10 and re-enter grade 11 upon the same conditions as it is the case with most States. As students settle into the new system, it will transpire which option is realistic for students. In general the following options are also available to students:

OPTION 2: Students going abroad between grades 10 and 11 may repeat the year rather than move on to the next grade. This means an additional year for the student and they are able to complete their *Abitur* after a total of 13 years.

OPTION 3: Students are able to go abroad for a shorter period of time during the summer. They will need the approval of the institution if the time spent abroad overlaps with regular term times in Germany. Institutions make such decisions on an individual basis.

7.12 SAARLAND

Capital City: Saarbrücken

Population: 1.08 million

School structure: Grundschule (4 years), *Gymnasium*, extended *Realschule*, Comprehensive School

Academic ranking (PISA): places 8th in State comparison, ranked 9th in Pisa-E 2008.

Secondary school II (Abitur) graduation rate: 26.9%

Percentage of students starting tertiary education: 32.7%

Percentage of population (aged 20-24) with a secondary stage II qualification: 66.7%

School leavers without qualifications: 6.7%

Public expenditure per pupil: €4,400

Proportion of 15 to 19 year olds enrolled: 88%

Unemployment rate: 7.0%

Youth unemployment: 7.6%

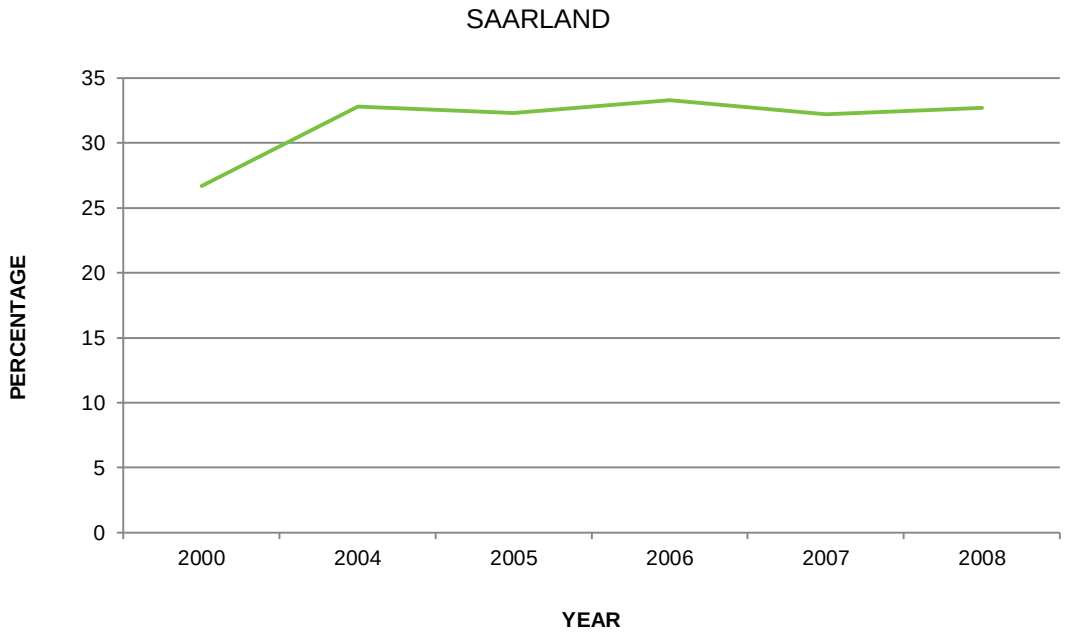
Saarland has presently a tripartite system but is planning to switch to a dual system later this year. In the current system, primary school takes four years to complete, after which parents retain the right to decide which secondary school the student attends. Students are able to complete their higher education entrance qualification at the *Gymnasium* after grade 12 and after grade 13 at comprehensive schools. Unusual for this State is that approximately 90% of all general education schools are all-day institutions. Typically in Germany, schools lessons are held in the morning. However, the geographical proximity of Saarland to France has influenced some of the structural considerations. The structural changes are scheduled to be implemented for the 2012/2013 academic year.

CURRICULUM WITH G8

Saarland's geographic location near the French border also influences the curriculum requirements somewhat as many institutions have a Francophile orientation. However, a revised curriculum has been implemented since 2010. This curriculum comprises core subjects and electives. Core subjects are German, mathematics, and at least one foreign language. The complete list of subjects comprises: religion, German, foreign languages

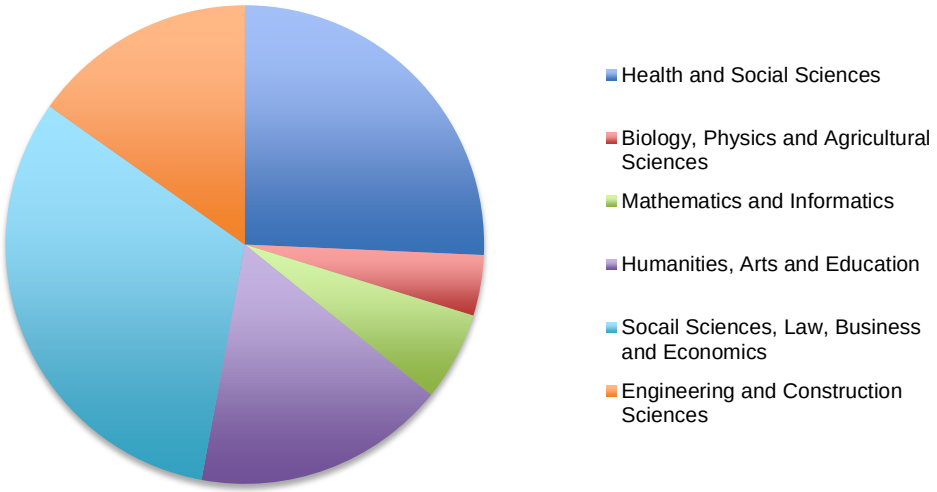
(French, Latin, English – individual institutions may have different offers), mathematics, natural sciences, biology, chemistry, physics, geography, history, social sciences, fine arts, music, sports. Electives comprise: economics, technology, computer science, performing arts, philosophy, sports theory, new media, additional natural science topics, social sciences or arts.

PROPORTIONAL ENTRANCE TO TERTIARY EDUCATION 2000 – 2008 IN %



The proportion of students starting tertiary education in Saarland is comparatively high and has remained fairly consistent over the past decade without major fluctuations. As in all States, there was a distinct increase in the proportion from 2000 to 2004 from 26.7% to 32.8%. In 2008, the proportion of students entering tertiary education was 32.7%.

SUBJECT FOCUS AFTER SECONDARY STAGE II:



Saarland presents an exception to the general national trends in terms of subject focus after secondary stage II as students show a strong interest in the medical field, i.e. health and related social sciences with 25.7%, whereby the humanities, arts and education is less strongly represented with only 17.1%. The most dominant field is social sciences, law, business and economics with 31.5%.

GUIDELINES FOR A YEAR ABROAD UNDER THE G8 STUCTURE

In Saarland, students have similar options as in most States, where they can choose to go abroad and keep up the academic standards required to continue on upon return, or are able to repeat the grade they missed.

OPTION 1: Students spend grade 10 abroad and re-enter the German system in grade 11. This is contingent on the student's academic ability and achievements during the stay abroad.

OPTION 2: Students going abroad between grades 10 and 11 may repeat the year rather than move on to the next grade. This means an additional year for the student and they are able to complete their *Abitur* after a total of 13 years.

OPTION 3: Students are able to go abroad for a shorter period of time during the summer. They will need the approval of the institution if the time spent abroad overlaps with regular term times in Germany. Institutions make such decisions on an individual basis.

7.13 SACHSEN (*SAXONY*)

Capital City: Dresden

Population: 4.6 million

School structure: Grundschule (4 years), dual system: *Gymnasium* and Middle Schools

Academic ranking (Pisa): places 2nd in State comparison, ranked 1st in Pisa-E 2008.

Secondary school II (Abitur) graduation rate: 32.7%

Percentage of students starting tertiary education: 28.9%

Percentage of population (aged 20-24) with a secondary stage II qualification: 80.1%

School leavers without qualifications: 11.8%

Public expenditure per student (school): €5,200

Proportion of 15 to 19 year olds enrolled: 87%

Unemployment rate: 10.5%

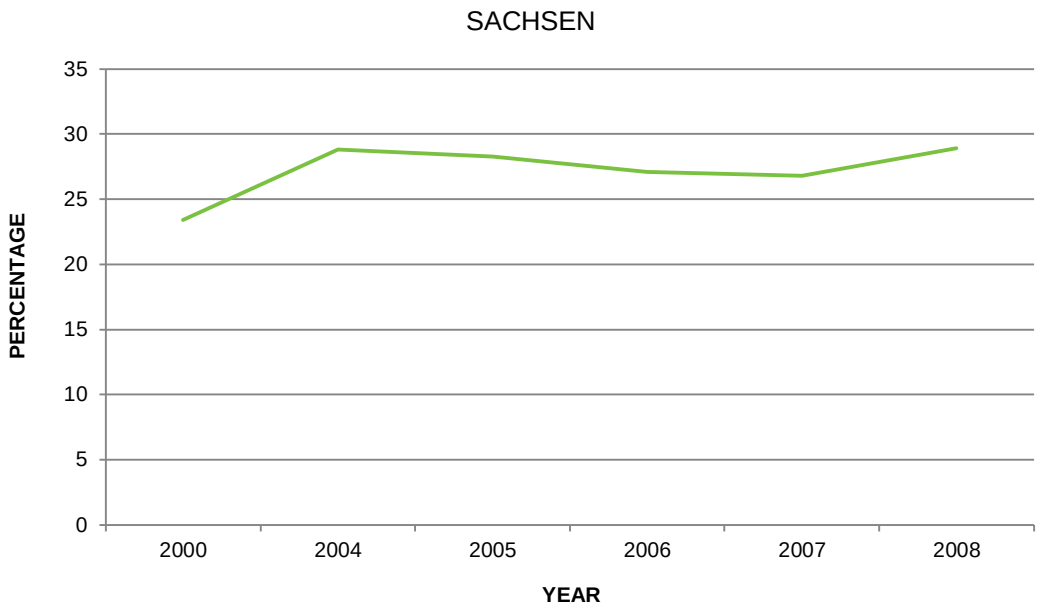
Youth unemployment: 12.5%

Sachsen operates a dual structure whereby students complete the primary stage after 4 years and parents retain the right to decide on which type of secondary school the student attends. In some cases, the student may have to sit entrance exam, depending on the institution. Students graduate with a higher education entrance qualification after grade 12. Similar to education institutions in Saarland, a large proportion of the school institutions are all-day schools (80%). At present, Sachsen does not plan to introduce any further changes to the education system.

CURRICULUM WITH G8

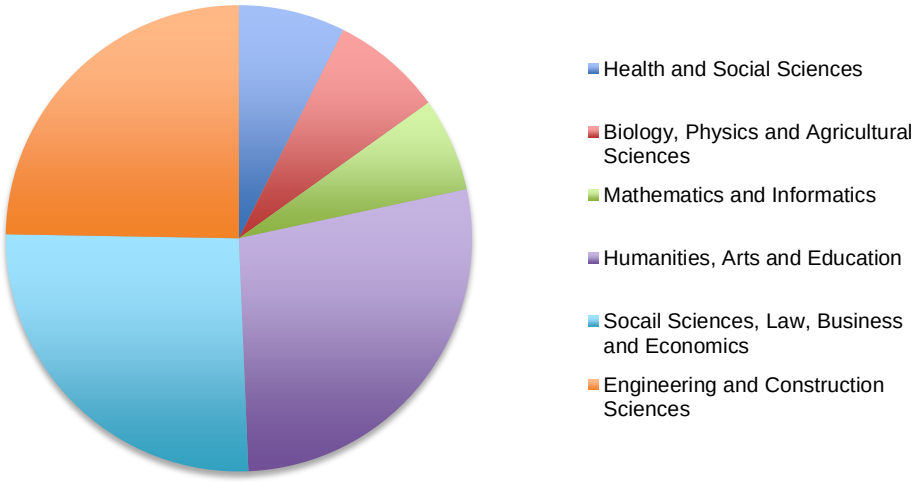
Students finish secondary school stage I after grade 10 and receive a qualification to enter the job market upon completion. The structure is a points-based course structure, whereby each student must take the either German or mathematics as his or her first focus course. A second focus course may be selected from the subjects foreign languages, physics or history and, in some institutions, arts or chemistry. Subjects from which students may select a foundational course include German, mathematics, two foreign languages, biology, chemistry, physics, art or music, history, geography, social sciences / law, economics, religion or ethics and sports. Other subjects may be available and offered on an institutional basis.

PROPORTIONAL ENTRANCE TO TERTIARY EDUCATION 2000 – 2008 IN %



The proportion of students entering tertiary education in Sachsen is comparable to that of a number of other States in Germany and lies within the broader national average and was at 28.9% in 2008. This level was maintained fairly consistently throughout the past decade, having been at only 23.4% in 2000.

SUBJECT FOCUS AFTER SECONDARY STAGE II:



Notable here is the strong emphasis on the broader subject area of engineering and construction sciences, which makes up 24.7%, and presents an exception in the national

comparison with other States. Only marginally more popular are the focus areas social sciences, law, business and economics and the humanities, arts and education. The remaining subject areas make up less than a quarter in this distribution for Sachsen.

GUIDELINES FOR A YEAR ABROAD UNDER THE G8 STRUCTURE

In Sachsen, students have a range of options, but must provide evidence of their achievements and academic performance during their stay at a foreign high school.

OPTION 1: Students can complete grade 10 abroad and then re-enter the German institution after grade 11. However, this is contingent the student's academic performance during the year abroad. Students are also required to provide evidence that they have attended classes continually and full-time. Students may also go abroad in the second term of grade 10 and the first term of grade 11. Again, this is more convenient for destinations such as New Zealand and Australia. Returning students enter their institution in the second term of grade 11 and are able to graduate in grade 12. However, in order to enter in the second term of grade 11, students have to pass an exam on the material covered in the first term in grade 11.

OPTION 2: Students going abroad between grades 10 and 11 may repeat the year rather than move on to the next grade. This means an additional year for the student and they are able to complete their *Abitur* after a total of 13 years.

OPTION 3: Students are able to go abroad for a shorter period of time during the summer. They will need the approval of the institution if the time spent abroad overlaps with regular term times in Germany. Schools make such decisions on an individual basis.

7.14 SACHSEN-ANHALT (*SAXONY-ANHALT*)

Capital City: Magdeburg

Population: 2.8 million

School structure: Grundschule (4 years), dual system: *Gymnasium* and *Sekundarschulen*. Also available are comprehensive schools

Academic ranking (PISA): places 6th in State comparison, ranked 5th in Pisa-E 2008.

Secondary school II (Abitur) graduation rate: 29.5%

Percentage of students starting tertiary education: 33.8%

Percentage of population (aged 20-24) with a secondary stage II qualification: 72.9%

School leavers without qualifications: 12.1%

Public expenditure per student (school): €5,600

Proportion of 15 to 19 year olds enrolled: 80.4%

Unemployment rate: 11.1%

Youth unemployment: 13.0%

Sachsen-Anhalt has a dual system comprising the *Gymnasium* and *Sekundarschulen* after four years of primary school. Parents decide on the secondary institution, based on recommendations, but in some cases, entrance exams to secondary schools may apply. Students graduate with a higher education entrance qualification (*Abitur*) after grade 12. Sachsen-Anhalt has no plans for any changes to the structure at this point.

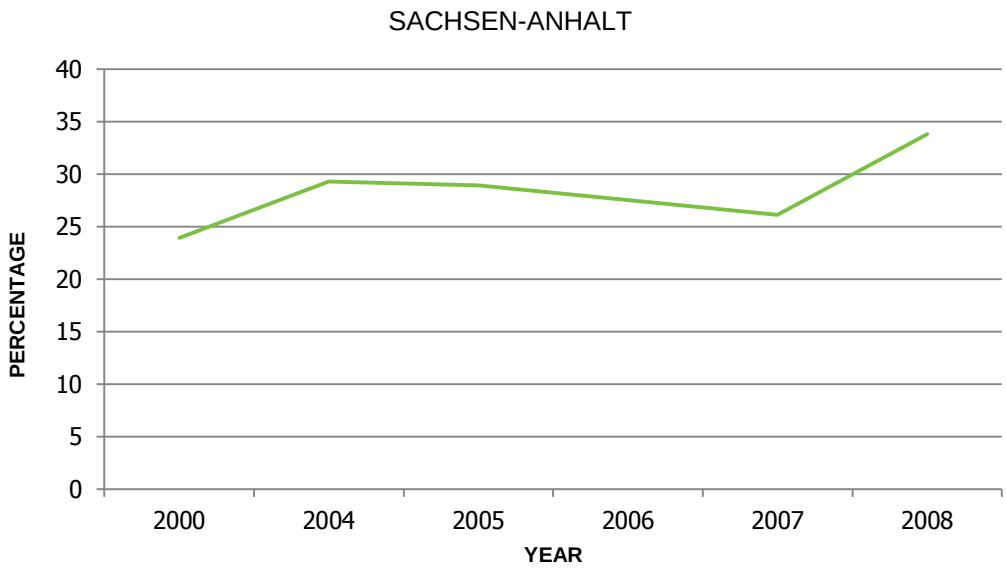
CURRICULUM WITH G8

Sachsen-Anhalt also operates on a points based course structure for the final two qualification years that lead to the *Abitur*. Subjects are categorised by three broad fields, as it is the case in a number of other States. Sports is not allocated to any specific subject area. Core subjects include German, history and mathematics. Table 15 below comprises all subjects by focus area.

TABLE 15: *Subject focus Sachsen-Anhalt*

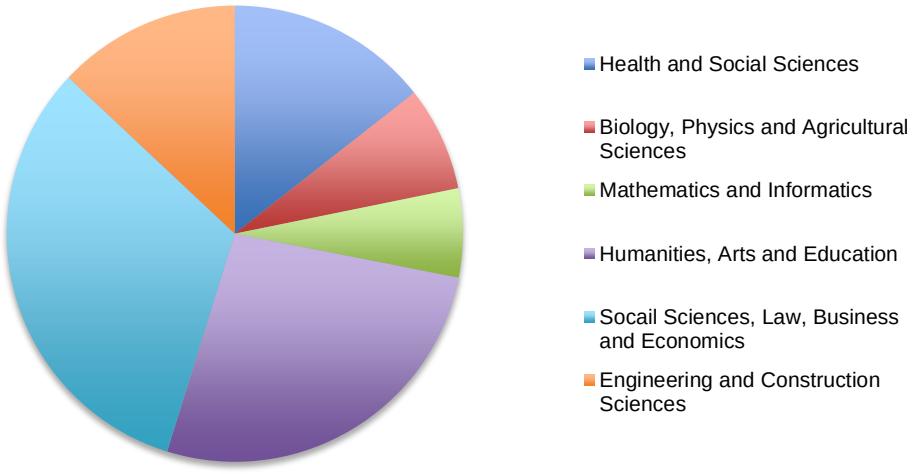
Focus 1: Languages, Literature, Arts	Focus 2: Social Sciences	Focus 3: Mathematics, Natural Sciences, Technology
German	Sociology	Mathematics
English	History	Physics
French	Geography	Chemistry
Russian	Philosophy	Biology
Latin	Psychology	Computer Science
Greek	Law	Technology
Spanish	Economics	Astronomy
Italian	Religion / Ethics	
Other languages		
Arts		
Music		

PROPORTIONAL ENTRANCE TO TERTIARY EDUCATION 2000 – 2008 IN %



Entrance to tertiary education in Sachsen-Anhalt has increased considerably in the past years since 2000. Where the proportion of students entering tertiary education in Sachsen-Anhalt was 23.9% in 2000, this percentage has increased by 10% to 33.8% in 2008.

SUBJECT FOCUS AFTER SECONDARY STAGE II:



The distribution in subject focus in Sachsen-Anhalt more closely resembles that of most other States with the subject areas social sciences, law, business and economics and the humanities, arts and education forming the majority of subject focus areas for students post secondary stage II education. Health and relation social sciences and engineering and construction sciences make up a quarter, while the remaining two subject areas,

predominantly in natural science oriented fields and agriculture, are consistently are less relevant.

GUIDELINES FOR A YEAR ABROAD UNDER THE G8 STRUCTURE

Students have a broad range of options in Sachsen-Anhalt. There are, however, formal requirements for students wishing to go abroad for grade 10 and return entering grade 11.

OPTION 1: Students go abroad in grade 10 and then move on to grade 11 once they return, provided they can meet the academic standards required. They also must apply formally for transfer into grade 11 at the respective education office.

OPTION 2: Students going abroad between grades 10 and 11 may repeat the year rather than move on to the next grade. This means an additional year for the student and they are able to complete their *Abitur* after a total of 13 years.

OPTION 3: Students are able to go abroad for a shorter period of time during the summer. They will need the approval of the institution if the time spent abroad overlaps with regular term times in Germany. Institutions make such decisions on an individual basis.

7.15 SCHLESWIG-HOLSTEIN

Capital City: Kiel

Population: 2.7 million

School structure: Grundschule (4 years), dual system: *Gymnasium* and Regional Schools
Also: Comprehensive Schools

Academic ranking (Pisa): places 12th in State comparison, ranked 10th in Pisa-E 2008.

Secondary school II (Abitur) graduation rate: 31.1%

Percentage of students starting tertiary education: 27.3%

Percentage of population (aged 20-24) with a secondary stage II qualification: 69.0%

School leavers without qualifications: 8.4%

Public expenditure per student (school): €4,600

Proportion of 15 to 19 year olds enrolled: 86.2%

Unemployment rate: 6.8%

Youth unemployment: 8.4%

A dual system is in place in Schleswig Holstein. Students attend primary school for four years and parents then decide on the further secondary institution. Students either attend a

Gymnasium, regional schools or comprehensive schools. Students enrolled in a *Gymnasium* graduate with a higher education entrance qualification after grade 12. Schleswig-Holstein is planning to reform their structure, the comprehensive schools in particular, whereby, counter to the current trend in Germany, the comprehensive system should become more differentiated, where students are able to study separately toward a specific qualification. Furthermore, entrance to secondary II levels will become harder in Schleswig-Holstein.

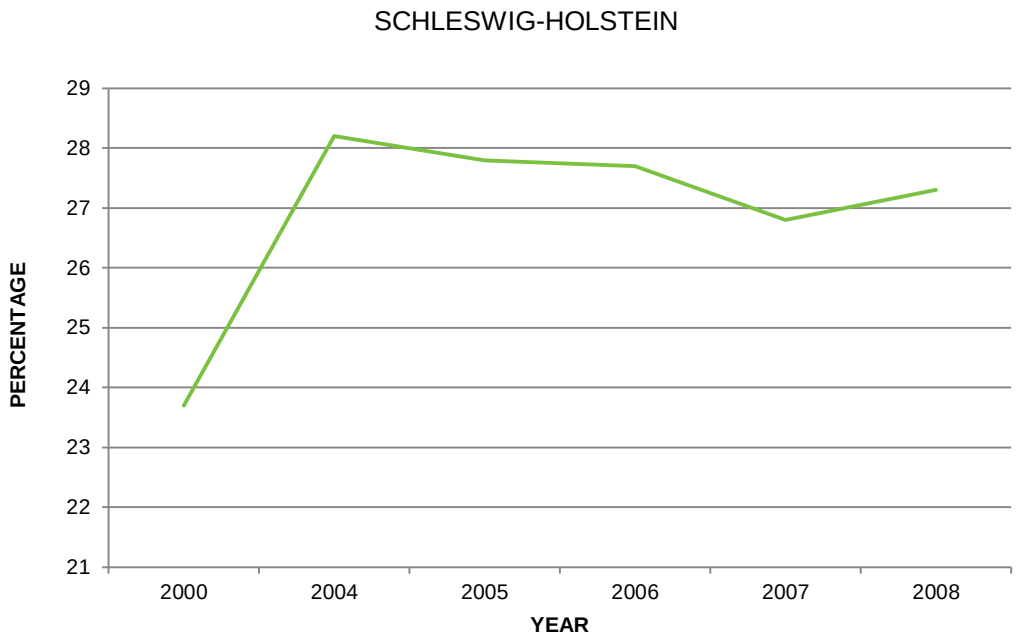
CURRICULUM WITH G8

Schleswig Holstein, as one of few States, has recently enacted legislation that allows institutions to choose whether they want to offer a G8 or G9 structure or whether to offer both structures in parallel. This comes into effect as of 2011/12. Subject fields relevant for students completing the final grades of the qualification stage fall into three broad categories here as well. Core subjects comprise German, Mathematics and one foreign language. Table 16 below offers an overview of the subjects available.

TABLE 16: *Subject focus Schleswig-Holstein*

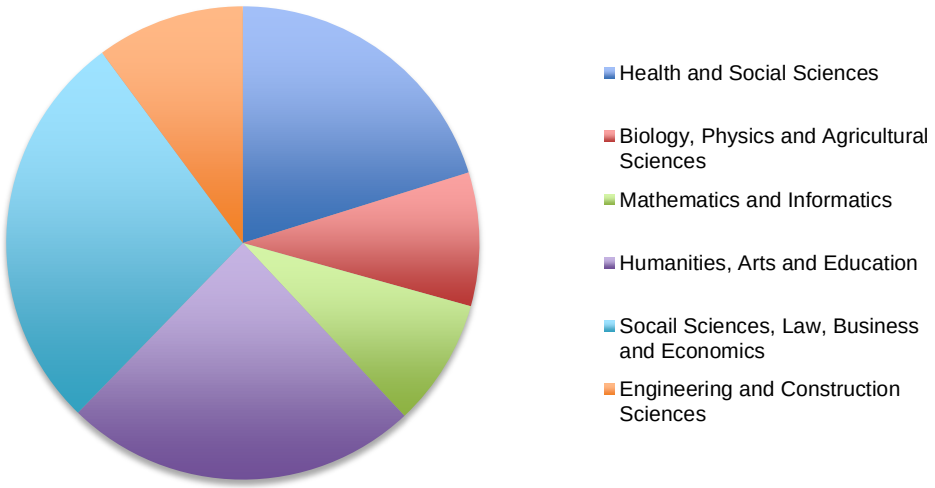
Focus 1: Languages, Literature, Arts	Focus 2: Social Sciences	Focus 3: Mathematics, Natural Sciences, Technology
German Foreign Languages (offer depends on institution) Arts Music Performing Arts	History Geography Economics/Politics Religion Philosophy	Mathematics Biology Chemistry Physics Computer Science

PROPORTIONAL ENTRANCE TO TERTIARY EDUCATION 2000 – 2008 IN %



The proportion of students entering tertiary education in Schleswig-Holstein has increased substantially in the past decade, whereby it peaked in 2004 with 28.2% and then declined subsequently to 27.3% in 2008. With Schleswig-Holstein's unusual approach to education reform and education policy, and plans to make entrance to secondary stage II harder, this proportion is likely to stay at this level or decline slightly in the years to come.

SUBJECT FOCUS AFTER SECONDARY STAGE II



A similar pattern as with other States emerges here, where the two broad subject areas social sciences, law, business and economics and the humanities, arts and education

represent approximately half of the subject focus area proportion for post-secondary stage II students, divided fairly evenly in this instance. A third notable subject focus area here is health and related social sciences with 19.9%.

GUIDELINES FOR A YEAR ABROAD UNDER THE G8 STRUCTURE

In Schleswig-Holstein, it is perhaps still easier in general for students to go abroad for a year of high school as more institutions have the opportunity to decide between the G8 and G9 structure. For those students in a G9 structure, they would take their year abroad in grade 11 and then return to grade 12, starting the final two qualifying years before graduating after grade 13. For G8 students, the following options apply.

OPTION 1: Students go abroad in grade 10 and transfer to grade 11 after their return, provided they are able to meet the academic standards required for grade 11. Students may also go abroad in the second term of grade 10 and the first term of grade 11. Again, this is more convenient for destinations such as New Zealand and Australia. Returning students enter their institution in the second term of grade 11 and are able to graduate in grade 12. Entry into term two of grade 11 is only possible, however, if students meet the respective academic requirements.

OPTION 2: Students going abroad between grades 10 and 11 may repeat the year rather than move on to the next grade. This means an additional year for the student and they are able to complete their *Abitur* after a total of 13 years.

OPTION 3: Students are able to go abroad for a shorter period of time during the summer. They will need the approval of the institution if the time spent abroad overlaps with regular term times in Germany. Institutions make such decisions on an individual basis.

7.16 THÜRINGEN (*THURINGIA*)

Capital City: Erfurt

Population: 2.54 million

School structure: Grundschule (4 years), dual system in principle: *Gymnasium* and *Regelschule*. Additionally, Comprehensive Schools starting with grade 1 are introduced from 2010/2011 onward.

Academic ranking (PISA): places 6th in State comparison, ranked 3th in Pisa-E 2008.

Secondary school II (Abitur) graduation rate: 34.0%

Percentage of students starting tertiary education: 30.8%

Percentage of population (aged 20-24) with a secondary stage II qualification: 80.1%

School leavers without qualifications: 9.4%

Public expenditure per student (school): €6,000

Proportion of 15 to 19 year olds enrolled: 86.1%

Unemployment rate: 8.3%

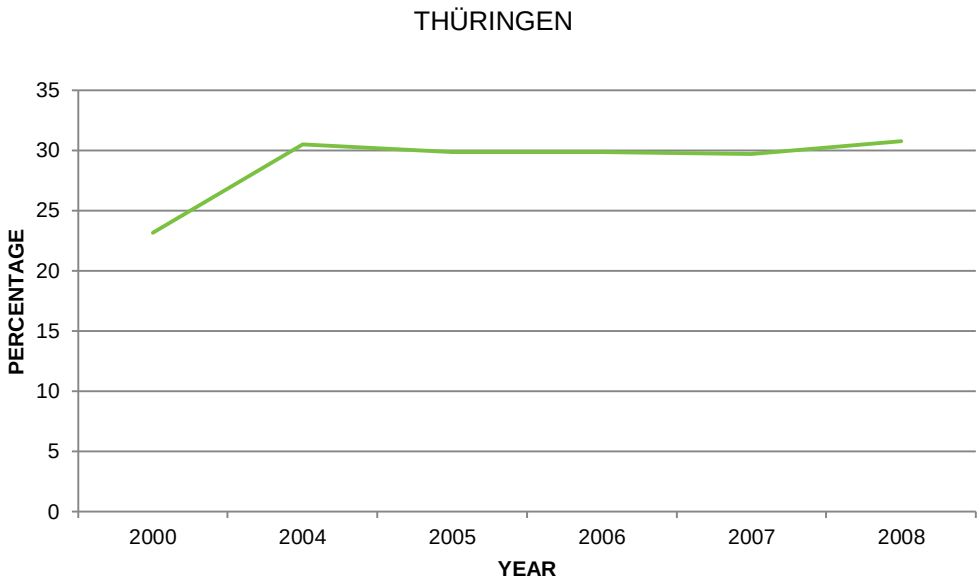
Youth unemployment: 10.2%

Thüringen presently has a dual system in place and is in a transitional phase with the introduction of comprehensive schools, in addition to the *Gymnasium* and *Regelschulen* to the system. This requires a legislative change however. These comprehensive schools will start with grade 1. Primary school takes four years to complete, whereby the secondary school pathway is determined predominantly by grades. Parents may request a recommendation for Gymnasium if the pupil's grades are not sufficient and in some cases entrance exams may apply. In Thüringen students complete their higher education entrance qualification after grade 12 at the Gymnasium, and after grade 13 at comprehensive schools and vocational Gymnasiums.

CURRICULUM WITH G8

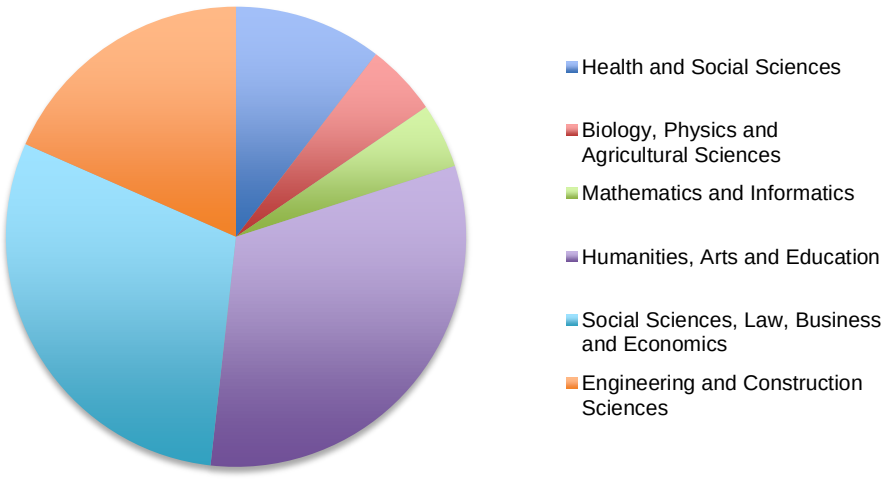
Thüringen, like most other East German States, did not face a dramatic transition from 9 years of secondary education to 8. The curriculum reflects a broad educational focus for the qualification stages in grades 11 and 12 and subjects comprise: mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology, astronomy, computer science, history (offered also bilingually for English and French), geography (offered also bilingually for English and French), arts, performance and design, sports, music, religion, German, English, French, Russian, Spanish, Greek, Latin, Italian, ethic, sociology (also offered bilingually for English), economics and law. These subjects are broadly categorised in the three traditional strands of subject fields: language, literature and arts; social sciences and mathematics, natural sciences and technology. Students must take a minimum of 12 subjects during the qualification phase. German and Mathematics are mandatory core subjects. The general structure adheres to a points based course system.

PROPORTIONAL ENTRANCE TO TERTIARY EDUCATION 2000 – 2008 IN %



With little changes to the education system in Thüringen, the State has maintained a fairly consistent level of proportional entrance to tertiary education since 2004. With an average of 30% this is at the higher end of the national average, albeit just slightly. When Thüringen implements more drastic changes to the education system, this percentage is likely to fluctuate somewhat.

SUBJECT FOCUS AFTER SECONDARY STAGE II:



Three dominant areas form the core of the subject focus in Thüringen: social sciences, law, business and economics; the humanities, arts and education and engineering and construction sciences. Together they make up nearly 80% of the subject focus for secondary stage II students with 29.5%, 31.4% and 18.2% respectively. Least significant in this

distribution are the broad areas biology, physics and agricultural sciences and mathematics and informatics with 5% and 4.5% respectively.

GUIDELINES FOR A YEAR ABROAD UNDER THE G8 STRUCTURE

In Thüringen, students have the same range of options for a year abroad as is the case with many other States.

OPTION 1: Students may go abroad during grade 10 abroad and return to their old class in grade 11 in the German system, as long as they are able to meet the academic requirements for grade 11. This depends on the student and the institution and the institution makes this decision on an individual basis.

OPTION 2: Students going abroad between grades 10 and 11 may repeat the year rather than move on to the next grade. This means an additional year for the student and they are able to complete their *Abitur* after a total of 13 years.

OPTION 3: Students are able to go abroad for a shorter period of time during the summer. They will need the approval of the institution if the time spent abroad overlaps with regular term times in Germany. Institutions make such decisions on an individual basis.

8. EXPECTATIONS OF GERMAN HIGH SCHOOLS FOR STUDENTS RETURNING FROM OFFSHORE STUDY

The switch from to a shorter secondary education period in the German education landscape has impacted on German students wishing to study offshore as well. While the curriculum structure previously allowed students to re-integrate more easily into the subsequent years of study after a period spent abroad, the new schedule puts greater strains on students and makes it for some less attractive for some to run the risk to go abroad for a year, not always knowing whether they are able to continue on with the next grade or whether they will have to repeat a year. Some institutions report that the number of students going abroad for a year has declined dramatically since the shift has been implemented; others see less of a decrease in numbers. However, the majority of institutions now prefer their students to go abroad for a shorter period of time – for three months or six months – as the re-integration into the appropriate grade level is often easier than after an entire year abroad.

Most institutions leave it up to the students to decide on whether or not they want to go abroad for an entire year or a shorter period of time and whether they are willing to repeat a year, if necessary. If the student returns with insufficient academic skills to continue on within their previous class, the institution makes the decision that the student must repeat

the year. However, it is predominantly those students who are already academically more advanced who decide to go abroad. Institutions report that it is very rare for academically challenged students to go abroad, specifically for an extended period of time and in some cases schools would advise against such a student to go abroad. Some institutions enable even younger students to conduct a year abroad, during grade 9. However, students going abroad in grade 9 typically stay for a shorter period of time (three to six months), in line with institutional recommendations.

Expectations for students returning from their studies offshore vary by geographic location (rural or urban) of the institution, the type of institution, the programme, the State and of course the individual. In order to identify the key expectations of high schools across the country for student returning from offshore study, this report has surveyed a cross-section of relevant schools, comprising all of the 16 States in Germany. The answers received were varied and nuanced and differed somewhat based on the size of the institution and the level of support they offer to their students. While some remained in touch with students during their stay abroad, in order to ensure that the student will find it easier to re-integrate into the German curriculum, others were less 'hands-on" in their support during the exchange year. However, from the survey, a number of relevant points and expectations emerged across schools. The key aspects of what German secondary school institutions expect from students returning from offshore study are described in the following.

A key expectation for students that have spent time in high schools abroad is that they are able to re-integrate into the German academic curriculum. As indicated earlier in this report, there is an understanding of equivalency of individual subjects between the German and New Zealand curricula. However, the subject range offered by New Zealand institutions is considerably broader, which may tempt German students into focusing less on those subject that have greater importance upon their return to Germany. German schools thus stress that the German student abroad should strive to do well academically and also keep in mind the core subject requirements at secondary stage II level upon their return to Germany. Specifically core subject as listed above should not be neglected in favour for more 'fun' subjects offered by schools in New Zealand. Concretely, institutions have voiced that returning students sometimes have some deficiencies, specifically in German and mathematics, as well as in the natural sciences. Where in mathematics and the natural sciences, students often lack specific knowledge that is more prevalent in the German curriculum, a more nuanced methodical repertoire is lacking in terms of German skills among those going abroad. Institutions expect students to ensure that their skill level is adequate when they return to Germany and wish to re-join their previous class. Some institutions keep in contact with students, specifically when the year abroad is organised through the school directly rather than through an external organisation.

If students return and are not entirely on par with the knowledge levels that the German curriculum demands, they are expected to make up for the deficiencies on their own account. However, some German secondary schools have shown themselves to be more proactively supportive of the student abroad by ensuring that the student is well informed before and during their studies abroad of the standard expected upon their return. If the student is unable to catch up with the standards required, it is likely that he or she will have to repeat the grade that they took abroad. The more pro-active institutions offer a "crash-course" for students returning from offshore study. These refresher courses are run by teachers and enable students to get up to speed with some of the material they may have missed.

The most frequently cited expectation by German secondary schools for students returning from offshore study is that they display a greater level of independence, that they have developed a more tolerant perspective and that they, to a degree, function as a role model to others with a greater level of maturity. These non-academic expectations were of key importance to schools across the nation.

In many cases, students taking part in an exchange programme abroad are expected to compile a report detailing their educational and cultural experiences. This is often instituted so that students retain a greater awareness of the benefits such a stay has in terms of exposure to language, culture and education. A considerable part of the experience is aimed at the development of character and personality and a broadening of cultural awareness, as well as greater levels of independence.

Students going abroad typically have very few problems re-integrating into the German day-to-day life. Some schools report that students, especially those who leave for a longer period, have initial difficulties connecting with their class environment if they need to repeat a year and cannot join their pervious class, but the majority of surveyed schools contend that students typically have no or few problems.

SURVEY SUMMARY – REPRESENTATIVE ANSWERS:

Number of institutions contacted for the survey	48
Number / proportion of students going abroad in your school	Between 5 – 15%
Which countries do your students go to	Ranked by frequency: USA, Canada, UK, France, South America, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa
Are you working with external agencies	Predominantly no
Are you working with partner schools?	Many do not but wish they had more and better partnerships with schools abroad. New Zealand is a destination of high interest for partnerships

Are you actively supporting your students in offshore studies	Most offer advice on practical and academic issues the student may face. Even if students go abroad through an agency, the schools are able to provide some level of support. All respondents were positively inclined toward offshore study for German students
When do you recommend that students go abroad	1. In grade 10; 2. In grades 9 or 10 for a shorter period of time
What academic expectations do you have	Students must have adequate knowledge, specifically in German and mathematics / natural sciences.
What other expectations do you have	Greater levels of maturity, a greater tolerance and openness. Greater levels of independence and the ability to draw on this international experience overall
What are frequent problems for students returning from offshore study	Problems are of academic nature through lacking skills in core subjects (frequently German and mathematics / natural sciences). No dominant problems of other nature
Advantages of offshore study	Greater social competencies, international experience and exposure, greater awareness of cultural diversity, greater levels of independence
Disadvantages of offshore study	Some academic disadvantages. Otherwise none.

9. PUSH AND PULL FACTORS FOR STUDY IN NEW ZEALAND

PUSH FACTORS

Based on the highly dynamic and complex changes in the German secondary school structures, there is a range of push factors that provide a fertile opportunity for New Zealand as a destination for secondary school students. In the past ten years, New Zealand has become an increasingly popular destination for German secondary students, second only to North America (US and Canada) and ahead of Australia. While the changing structure has made it somewhat more challenging for students to plan a year abroad during secondary school education, the option to complete the equivalent of the *Abitur* at a secondary school in New Zealand is becoming increasingly attractive. What follows is a preliminary overview of some of the push factors that might compel German students to attend New Zealand high schools.

- Germany's comparatively poor PISA performance has given rise to students and parents to consider alternatives. While Germany is persistently aiming to improve its standing in the PISA studies, New Zealand has a considerably better result in the OECD study overall.

- The dynamic structural changes to the German secondary school landscape place greater pressures and stress on German students as indicated above. Furthermore, the new system continues to be debated fervently, which imperils the stability and reliability of the system itself in the students' and parents' perceptions. This makes

going abroad to complete the equivalent of the *Abitur* an increasingly viable and interesting option.

- Similarly, the perception that the quality of the education suffers may become an increasingly important push factor compelling German students to seek better quality education and a more positive experience abroad by completing secondary stage II offshore.

- German students are eager travellers and keen to seek an experience abroad. Despite the changes to the education structure in the secondary school sector in Germany, German students continue to be eager to engage in exchange years and years abroad during secondary school and demand shows no clear sign of abating at this stage.

PULL FACTORS

New Zealand as a study destination for German students has a number of attractive features specifically for German students. It is the third most popular destination for German secondary school students seeking an experience abroad. The cultural correspondences between the two countries contribute to a relatively low barrier for students to come to New Zealand for an international secondary school experience. The following are some of the key pull factors that highlight why New Zealand is an attractive destination for German students at this time.

- New Zealand is among the top performing countries in the OECD's PISA study and has performed well consistently throughout the past decade. Of the 65 countries taking part in the PISA study in 2009 only two OECD countries and two non-OECD economies performed better than New Zealand. This gives New Zealand an excellent reputation for its education standards.

- New Zealand offers the opportunity to complete secondary school stage II in 18 months, making it an attractive option for German students to complete the equivalent of the German *Abitur* at a New Zealand secondary school. This means that German students are still graduating with a higher education entrance qualification at a younger age while already having gained an international experience.

- The standard of life and living in New Zealand enjoy a high reputation. It is well known for its beautiful landscape and rich offers in terms of leisure activities. According to the UN's Human Development Report 2010 it is the 3rd best country to live in (after Norway and Australia), which is a substantial endorsement of the qualities New Zealand has to offer. It is typically considered a safe country, an important aspect for parents sending their children across the globe for a year.

- Secondary school education in New Zealand offers a broader subject range, including a wide range of arts and humanities, practically oriented technical subjects, sports and similar subjects. Consequently, education in New Zealand is typically perceived to be more relaxed and enjoyable than in Germany as students are able to engage more deeply with varied subjects of interest they might have. This stands in positive contrast to the challenging German learning structure at present.

APPENDIX I

EDUCATIONS INSTITUTIONS IN GERMANY AND THEIR CORRESPONDING EDUCATION STAGES IN THE ISCED CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM

EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS IN GERMANY	ISCED EDUCATION STAGES
Grundschule	ISCED I Primary Education
Waldorfschule	ISCED I Primary Education ISCED II Secondary Stage I Education ISCED III Secondary Stage II Education
Integrierte Gesamtschulen (Integrated Comprehensive Schools)	ISCED I Primary Education ISCED II Secondary Stage I Education ISCED III Secondary Stage II Education
Hauptschule	ISCED II Secondary Stage I Education
Realschule	ISCED II Secondary Stage I Education
Regelschule	ISCED II Secondary Stage I Education
Oberschule	ISCED II Secondary Stage I Education
Sekundarschule	ISCED II Secondary Stage I Education ISCED III Secondary Stage II Education
Stadtteil Schulen (Municipal Schools)	ISCED II Secondary Stage I Education ISCED III Secondary Stage II Education
Regional Schule (Regional School)	ISCED II Secondary Stage I Education ISCED III Secondary Stage II Education
Gymnasium	ISCED II Secondary Stage I Education ISCED III Secondary Stage II Education
Fachgymnasium	ISCED III Secondary Stage II Education
Fachoberschule	ISCED III Secondary Stage II Education ISCED IV Post-Secondary – Non Tertiary
Berufsfachschule	ISCED III Secondary Stage II Education
Berufs-/Technische Oberschule	ISCED IV Post-Secondary – Non Tertiary
Abendgymnasium	ISCED IV Post-Secondary – Non Tertiary
Kolleg	ISCED IV Post-Secondary – Non Tertiary
Universität	ISCED V Tertiary I Education
Fachhochschule	ISCED V Tertiary I Education
Berufsakademie	ISCED V Tertiary I Education

APPENDIX II

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR GERMAN HIGH SCHOOLS

Erwartungshaltungen der Gymnasien

1. Wie viele Ihrer Schüler gehen pro Jahr ins Ausland für ein Austauschjahr?

2. In welche Länder gehen diese Schüler vorwiegend? Ist Neuseeland ein attraktives Zielland?

3. Pflegt Ihre Schule Partnerschaften mit High Schools im Ausland / Neuseeland?

4. Arbeiten Sie mit speziellen Agenturen zusammen die ein Austauschjahr / Jahr im Ausland organisieren?

5. Unterstützt Ihre Schule aktiv den Auslandsaustausch oder ein Jahr im Ausland für Ihre Schüler?

6. In welcher Klasse empfehlen Sie Ihren Schülern ins Ausland zu gehen (10. Klasse? 11. Klasse?)

7. Welche Art und Länge des Austausches bevorzugen Sie für Ihre Schüler (3 Monate / 6 Monate / Jahr?)

8. Welche Erwartungen haben Sie an die Schüler welche aus dem Ausland zurückkehren?

    a. Akademische Erwartungen und Spezielle Kenntnisse
    b. Kulturelle Erwatungen
    c. Persönliche Erwartungen

9. Finden es Schüler die aus dem Ausland zurückkehren oft eher einfach oder eher schwierig sich wieder in den deutschen Schulalltag zu integrieren?

10. Wiederholen viele Ihre Schüler das im Ausland verbrachte Jahr?

11. Was sind die häufigsten Probleme für Schüler die aus dem Ausland zurückkehren (akademischer Natur / kultureller / persönlicher Natur).

12. Welche Vorteile haben Schüler die ins Ausland gehen gegenüber den Schülern die eine reguläre Schullaufbahn absolvieren? Welche Nachteile?