

EUROPEAN DIMENSION ASPECTS IN GREEK SCHOOLS THE STUDENTS' "VOICE" *

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RESUMÉ

Cette brève présentation se réfère aux données préliminaires d'une étude pilote qui examine des "questions reliées à l'Union européenne", à partir d'un petit échantillon d'élèves Grecs du secondaire. De façon générale les élèves semblent être en faveur de l'intégration européenne tant au niveau individuel qu'au niveau collectif. Certaines réserves sont néanmoins exprimées. L'école grecque n'offre pas l'opportunité aux élèves d'en apprendre sur l'Union Européenne alors que le développement éducationnel en Grèce est affecté par ce qui se passe en Europe. La plupart d'entre eux disent avoir une connaissance très limitée sur l'Union Européenne et tout ce qui lui est relié. C'est quelque chose que l'école grecque doit rectifier par le biais de l'enseignement formel et informel. En se basant sur ces données purement indicatives on a développé quelques autres aspects de la "dimension européenne" et de son rapport avec l'école grecque d'aujourd'hui.

ABSTRACT

This cursive presentation reports on the preliminary findings from a pilot study investigating "European Union related issues" as perceived by a small sample of Greek secondary school students. On the whole, students seem to be in favour of pursuing European integration at both personal and collective (national) level, but several reservations are also recorded. The Greek school of today does not offer opportunities for students to learn about Europe, whereas educational developments in Greece are directly affected by the overall developments in the EU. The participants believe that the school should and could provide information and knowledge about the EU. The vast majority of the subjects state that they have a very limited knowledge about the European Union and all related issues/developments. Something that the Greek school should "rectify" via formal and informal teaching. On the basis of these purely indicative results, several important parameters of the rather elusive "European dimension" issue and today's school in the framework of the EU are further elaborated.

A. Setting the pace for a European dimension discussion

There is little doubt, nowadays, that the notion of European dimension in virtually every single aspect of our collective and personal lives has already become the "moto" of our European Union era. European dimension discussions and considerations of one or another kind are literally everywhere. One may even argue that, to a considerable extent, European dimension "talking" has become fashionable across Europe. In short, dealing with European dimension aspects may largely be considered as a highly "in" engagement and activi-

* Paper presented at the 16th CESE Conference (Comparative Education Society in Europe), June 26-30, 1994, Copenhagen, Denmark.

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ty, especially so among a relatively small group of experts and other individuals who make their living from such engagements.

From applied economics to politics, from socio-cultural concerns to defence/security and migration matters, and from external policy issues to education, training and employment/unemployment schemes and initiatives, the concept and the pursued objectives of European dimension are always present. Explicitly stated as such or implied and indirectly referred to, the notion of European dimension has become a de facto “ingredient” and, quite often, a prerequisite for many of our daily pursuits.

Expectedly so, at least for the time being, this apparent interest and involvement with European dimension considerations all over Europe has been registered mostly at a (rather) theoretical or the “talking” level, where the notion of European dimension is being meticulously scrutinized and explored. European dimension aspects in their plausible applied form continue to puzzle most interested parties. All pertinent literature on this matter across the Union member states and the multitude of personal experiences on the part of both experts and the so-called man in the street may serve as the best supportive documentation of the trend.

On the other hand, and this ought to be underlined from the very beginning of this presentation, the notion of European dimension has barely completed its “natural and necessary incubation” period in the context of a contemporary Europe striving to synthesize and construct its new (21st century) face. In that sense, then, the problems and the difficulties associated with European dimension aspects in every day (real-life) situations should be very well understood and appreciated.

Among others, the official “polyglot” documents of the European Commission and the detailed descriptions and references to the European dimension objective in all these publications are more than indicative. European dimension references and pursuits, explicitly stated as such or indirectly stressed and implied, seem to constitute the backbone of all European programmes and initiatives. A simple glance at EC publications - and more so at special publications concerned with education and training matters- may reveal a plethora of European dimension intentions, recommendations, goals, etc.(Commission of the European Communities, 1989; 1991a; 1991b) The perennial fight for securing European funds through the different EC programmes has definitely given European dimension an additional impetus and a rather “peculiar attractiveness”. (Makrakis, 1993; Bombas, 1994)

Yet, definitional ambiguities about the actual and the precise meaning of the European dimension concept as well as about the exact - descriptive and/or normative- content of this highly publicized and cherished notion continue to prevail. Put differently, quite often and for a variety of legitimate reasons, different

people in the twelve member states (and not only) mean and understand different things when using the term or the objective “European dimension”. The apparent relative recency of this European dimension notion at both the theoretical and the practical level (in light of all profound developments within the European Union) combined with the extremely significant consequences and the rather “subjective” nature of this notion, complicate things further. As a result, this definitional controversy is far from settled.

Notwithstanding all these definitional ambiguities, one may very well discern several commonalities among the Union members vis-à-vis the European dimension notion and its possible applications in the field of education.

Not surprisingly, as one may observe elsewhere, the overall meaning attributed to European dimension appears to depend substantially on each specific country concerned and the concrete goals pursued at each point in time. Accordingly, in very general terms, each member state portrays European dimension in such a way as to best fit and/or serve its own priorities and interests. In so doing, each member state “exploits” European dimension initiatives and opportunities according to its own relative power and influence within the European Union chessboard. If we take, for example, two of the principal aspects of the European dimension issue in education, namely of foreign language teaching and student/ teacher mobility across member states, it is crystal clear which foreign language(s) predominates and which country gets the “lion’s share” in the different mobility schemes.

The most recent opening up and the enlargement/cooperation of the EU with other European countries (including the countries of Central/Eastern Europe) complicate further the European dimension ambiguity and controversy as described above. In addition, the ever-present inequality between the North and the South within the EU context at all levels, the so-called “two gears” of the less developed southern countries and those of the rich North, continues to play a highly significant role in any serious attempt to approach and understand European dimension in depth.

B. European dimension in education

Having said that, and bringing our discussion to the educational field which constitutes the central focus of this exploratory work, it seems appropriate at this point to place European dimension issues against the backdrop of Comparative Education theorizing and historical development.

Such a comparative perspective could highlight all relevant parameters of this European dimension phenomenon. Thus, the well-known Sadlerian theme of “national character” (Sadler, 1964) and its pervasive impact in moulding national systems of education may make its interpretive contribution in this

European dimension context. Each member state of the Union, through its unique national character, formulates its own version of European dimension that is to be "consumed" within and outside the education system. Virtually all Sadlerian "forces" (e.g. race, religion, language, culture, politics, economy) come into play every time a European dimension argument - of one or another kind - is being put forward.

Likewise, several other descriptive and/or explanatory constructs from the Comparative Education "repertoire" could provide additional theoretical ammunition in clarifying further and refining the European dimension "case". Among others, the monumental comparative works of Hans (1958), Newcombe (1977), Kazamias (1962), Mallinson (1966), King (1973), and Bereday (1967), although not dealing directly and as such with European dimension in education, are highly instructive "tools" when investigating European dimension aspects and concerns. In the final analysis, any approach to European dimension aspects in education entails some form of cross-cultural and comparative perspective, rendering thus Comparative Education methodologies and explanations imperative.

On the other hand, as argued throughout different relevant sources, European dimension in education has become (almost) by definition an interesting area of study for those delving into comparative education analyses and investigations across countries. A theme that has already started to make noticeable inroads throughout the pertinent literature. The present International Conference being the most tangible illustration of this highly desirable and promising trend. Among many others, Bouzakis (1993) and Vorberk (1992) have alluded to this trend through their most recent works.

Furthermore, an additional theoretical paradigm or "model" in the education field that has recently acquired some exceptional prominence among the experts, the so-called intercultural approach and learning (Damanakis, 1993; Ulvhammar & Jacobson, 1984), bears direct relevance to the European dimension notion in education. If nothing more, culture in its wider sense (Damanakis, 1993) constitutes the central and decisive feature of both intercultural education and the European dimension aspects in education. Interculturalization of the entire school curriculum proposed by interculturalists within the multicultural and polyethnic Europe, for example, is indeed quite close to applying aspects of European dimension in the education systems of the EU.

With all these introductory remarks in mind and for the purposes of this present small-scale research, let us refer to the European dimension definition provided by the Commission of the European Communities in one of its latest publications dealing with Higher Education in Europe (1991: 28-43). Although this particular official document explores tertiary education issues and contemporary developments within a United Europe, the analogies, the similarities, and

the very essence of the European dimension for the education field as a whole are there.

Thus, in very short and purely descriptive terms, the framework that defines European dimension is the following :

- Student mobility within the Community ;
- Cooperation between institutions at European level ;
- Europe in the curricula ;
- The central importance of language ;
- The training of teachers ;
- Recognitions of qualifications and periods of study ;
- The international role of Higher Education ;
- Information and policy analysis ;
- Dialogue with the Higher Education sector.

Similar, more or less, definitions and pursued objectives of the European dimension in education may be found in most EU documents and publications. The most recently adopted programme in the field of education (“SOCRATES”, 1994) that aspires to “cover” all levels of education (from primary school to University within the European Union - and not only) keeps stressing the same European dimension “ingredients”: Student mobility, cooperation between schools, foreign languages, teacher training and the introduction of Europe in school curricula. In other words, awareness and knowledge about/for Europe constitute the cornerstones of European dimension in education. The extent and the degree to which present-day schools across Europe are in a position to successfully perform this European dimension “mission” in the meta-Maastricht era, that is another serious issue that needs serious, systematic and comparative undertakings (CEC 1993).

On the whole, these apparently obvious European dimension “ingredients” when it comes to the education field seem to characterize all talking and all writing about this important notion of our present-day era across Europe.

Educator after educator, researcher after researcher are continuously entering this European dimension discussion and dialogue. More so, educational planners and policy makers are keeping themselves alert in order to incorporate into their proposed reforms the most functional and most realistic European dimension elements. The differences among member states with respect to differential rates of emphasis, frequency, or depth vis-à-vis European dimension issues in education may very well be explored along the comparative education domain.

Thus the “Greek case”, within the European dimension in education continuum, presents part of itself here as a concrete - however tentative and cursive-stimulus in this respect.

C. European dimension and Greek schools

Let us begin this particular section on European dimension and the Greek schools by a rather unusual and, perhaps, provocative reminder in the context of this exploratory empirical research.

It will not be very far from the truth if one argues that a relative “time-lag” characterizes Greece when compared to most of the other EU member states. An easily discernable time-lag that extends itself to matters of economic development, to science and research/technology, to welfare and pension plans, to environment and education - to name only a few crucial fields of socio-personal activities and developments.

For a plethora of historical, political, and several other reasons, the analysis of which lies well beyond the scope of this presentation, this relative “delay” of Greece tends to become something like a tradition. Numerous well-documented and absolutely well-meant references from virtually all fields and disciplines attesting to such a tradition, may be recorded within and outside the Greek bibliographic production. Yet, exaggerations and ill-founded hyperboles of this “Greek-tradition” have always been around by both Greeks and non-Greeks alike.

Thus, European dimension in education, aspects and parameters of which concern us here, seems to follow the same long tradition in the case of the Greek education arena in general, and the Greek schools in particular. European dimension concerns and ensuing considerations at the different levels of the Greek education apparatus have not attracted the attention of all those (officially and/or unofficially) charged with developing and moulding the Greek education system towards the 21st century (Mavrogiorgos 1993).

For better or worse, the conceptual difficulties characterizing the European dimension notion in the post-Maastricht era, the definitional ambiguities associated with the term itself as explained earlier, and the intra-European Union “power struggle” among the member states with respect to European dimension, have made the Greek “lag” even more pronounced and more acute. There is no doubt, that if one looks at the European South, Greece is not alone in this seemingly delayed route to European dimension avenue and its educational “ingredients” (Bombas 1994).

Nonetheless, in the midst of all these traditional and deep-rooted “Sisyphian” problems (Kazamias, 1993) characterizing the Greek education system since its establishment in 1830 (Bouzakis, 1985), things seem to have started to take a

rather positive turn over the last couple of years with respect to European dimension considerations. If nothing more, European dimension in education has already made its appearance in most agendas and discussions initiated by concerned educationalists and other experts in related fields. A growing number of specialized researchers have started to include European dimension variables into their research proposals along educational lines, whereas - quite often - active collaboration with non-Greek experts has started to enhance this latent interest. In short, nowadays in Greece, something “is moving ” along the European dimension phenomenon in the education field. Pertinent literature is indicative and quite illuminating in this respect.

Expectedly, as most probably could be argued for the entire EU, this awakened interest for European dimension parameters and aspects in Greece limits itself - almost exclusively - to the interested experts in each field who, among others, strive to proclaim themselves specialists in European dimension matters.

Occasionally, this European dimension interest is also reflected in several Greek news-papers and other media agencies, a coverage which is, by definition, sporadic and fragmented. Thus, not only the average Greek continues to remain, principally, unfamiliar with the European dimension “repercussions” in the entire education field, but virtually all “school-related” people as well. The vast majority of teachers, of school principals, and the students do not seem to participate (yet?) in this European dimension dialogue. And that is, of course, a highly noticeable feature of Greek education even today. European dimension considerations continue to remain outside the school/classroom walls.

At any rate, several analyses and a number of empirical studies investigating European dimension related issues and the Greek schools have started to make their presence felt.

Without delving into every single research and related analysis exploring European dimension issues and education in an attempt to portray the present “state of affairs” in Greece, a synoptic account of the trends may be quite illuminating and instructive. Although we do not refer directly to them at this point in time, it is more than certain that a number of additional studies on European dimension aspects and education are presently underway in Greek universities and other research institutes. A growing number of international (joint) projects under the auspices and the funding of the EU - projects that involve Greek experts and Greek institutions /organizations -are also concerned with European dimension issues and the field of education in one form or another. And these are, definitely, quite positive and encouraging developments.

In short, as already mentioned above, European dimension considerations have - for good - come out of the “closet”. The Greek Ministry of Education itself - this highly centralized and rigidly bureaucratic body resisting change and reform - has started talking about these issues, however reluctantly and superfi-

cially. Special Conferences and Seminars have been organized by both public and private institutions (Kakavoulis 1993) aimed at exploring in depth and with systematic scrutiny the entire range of European dimension related aspects and their plausible educational impact and relevance. All Departments of Education of the Greek Universities have already started including into their programmes special courses about different aspects of the EU, whereas European dimension references are gaining more and more ground in most teachers training departments. Greek academic reviews and magazines are now publishing papers and articles pertaining to European dimension in the educational field, and the Greek publishing houses have already produced several useful books along these lines.

Among others, the Greek Educational Society has dynamically entered this European dimension dialogue through its bi-annual international conferences and other collective activities and initiatives. Several papers presented during the 1991 international conference of the Society

(“Education in the Intergrated Europe”) are indicative of the trend (e.g. the papers presented by Vamvoukas & Kanakis ; by Troulis ; by Papoulia -Tzelepi).

Thus, Vamvoukas & Kanakis (1991) have investigated the knowledge and the opinions of future Greek teachers vis-à-vis the European Community, whereas Papoulia-Tzelepi (1991) looked at “The European dimension in the education of teachers : Needs and prospects”. Along similar lines, Troulis (1991) has attempted to highlight the “main features in the training of the Greek teachers within a United Europe”. Furthermore, in a more recent article, Papoulia-Tzelepi (1992) examined attitudes and expectations of university students towards Europe and concluded by stressing emphatically that: “The need for including European dimension aspects in university programmes/courses and especially so in the course of studies for training future teachers is obvious” (p.256).

Tsaoussis (1990) in his collection of papers on “The European Challenge in Higher Education” has elaborated on European dimension aspects in university studies in Greece, whereas Kakavoulis (1993) has devoted his most recent work on European dimension in education by combining empirical research findings (Greek teachers) and general theoretical observations. As a matter of fact his last chapter (“European dimension in Greek schools : A case study of experience”) summarizes the main initiatives taken by the Greek State towards promoting European dimension in Greek schools, while several “Case Study Schools” are also presented. More so, Zafaras (1993) has concerned himself with European dimension aspects in the initial training of teachers in all twelve member states and has also analyzed teachers’ in-service training in the framework of the European Union.

A number of additional publications (in Greek) which may be considered as dealing indirectly with European dimension related issues and education have become available over the last 5-6 years. Among them one could very well mention Zigos (1988 ; 1990) books on “The Educational Policy of the European Community” dealing with the official EC documents, and the “European Systems of Education and the Comprehensive (Common) School” where the author presents a comparative picture of several EC educating systems along with the historical development and the need for comprehensive schools across Europe - and certainly in Greece. Along the same lines, Markopoulos (1990) has presented a descriptive work on European systems of education and the educational policy of the European Community, making several direct and indirect references to European dimension aspects in education.

Yet the need for additional and, principally, empirical data on different aspects of European dimension related issues and the Greek schools of today is imperative.

This urgent need for primary and empirically collected data has been stressed time and again (Papoulia-Tzelepi, 1992; Vamvoukas, 1991). Not only by academics, educational researchers, and other experts of the scientific community, but by a growing number of “men in the street” as well who have started to become aware and sensitive about such issues in the post-Maastricht era.

It is consoling the fact that, even at a slow pace and somewhat reluctantly, most of the Greek teachers themselves have started entering this apparent plea for more and better knowledge about European dimension features. Their growing interest, no doubt, signals “something good” for the education system as a whole. In that sense, prospects are recently turning more and more promising to the extent that the teachers concerned do not get discouraged by the seemingly “slowness” of the official state.

The present small-scale empirical study, investigating indicative parameters and a limited number of European dimension related variables in a Greek secondary school, aspires to make a token contribution in this respect. Its principal aim is to serve as an additional (much needed) stimulus for continuing and broadening the European dimension dialogue in the education field by introducing into this current discussion the “voices” of the students themselves.

D. Recording the students’ “voices”

i) the research

The present small-scale research attempted to explore several European dimension related issues by recording the responses of a small number of secondary school students. It was assumed that the individual items/questions making up the respective questionnaire that was administered to the students

(N=36) of the study bore relevance to European dimension features, as these features have been discussed in the preceding sections of this presentation.

More specifically, on the basis of existing literature and the emerging discussions on European dimension related issues within the education field, it was assumed that a number of tentative answers to questions pertaining to “how I feel about the EU”, “how much do I know about the EU”, and “If and how much the school teaches /informs me about the EU” may provide an overall picture on the specific issue under consideration here, namely European dimension aspects and the Greek school through the “eyes” of the students themselves. There is no doubt that, to a considerable extent, how one feels about the EU depends substantially on how much he knows about the EU. And, how much one knows about the EU (and not only) depends, among others, on how much information and knowledge is being provided by the school - especially in the case of school - aged youngsters. In that sense, European dimension aspects and parameters are (or are not as the case may be) “cultivated” within both the formal and the informal school curricula.

Thus, the subjects of the study were asked to register their feelings and attitudes about the European Community and the European Union, their level of knowledge concerning different EU related themes and parameters, as well as their overall opinion about the contribution of today’s Greek school towards promoting and strenghtening European dimension objectives and pursuits. Aspects of the relationship between the Greek education system developments and the developments within the EU in its entirety were also (partially) explored through some of the students’ responses.

ii) the sample

The sample of the study consisted of 14 boys and 22 girls attending grade three of a public Lyceum (upper secondary school) located in the downtown Athens area. The educational level of the subjects’ parents was as follows :

a) their fathers:

- 13.9% had completed primary school (6 years) only ;
- 8.3% had completed junior high school (9 years) only ;
- 22.2% had completed senior high school (12 years) only ; and
- 52.7% had post-secondary or university education.

b) The respective percentages of their mothers, per level of education completed, were: 19.4%, 11.1%, 19.4%, and 47.2%.

The results of the research

Section A on feeling and attitudes of the subjects about the EU and several related issues (five items) revealed an interesting picture.

It should be stressed that for only a relatively small percentage of the sample (36.2%) the highly publicized European citizenship appears to be a “good thing”. Almost one out of five seemed to believe that such a citizenship in the framework of the EU will be a “bad thing”, whereas 13.9% of the respondents opted for the “I do not know” answer. Interestingly enough, three out of four (75%) of the students expressed their support of the efforts that are being made towards achieving a United Europe. Yet another 19.4% were against (“almost against/very much against”) such efforts (Table 1 ; and Table 2).

The “expectations” of the sample from the realization of the Single European Market were registered at the level of 41.7% (“many expectations” 27.8% ; “not many expectations” 13.9%) which appeared to be noticeably lower than the “fears” (50%) expressed either as “many fears” (33.2%) or as “not many fears” (16.7%). A total of 36.1% felt that the realization of the Single Market is going to be “something good for people like myself”, whereas for 5.6% of the participants this development at European level is going to be “something bad for people like myself”. The “neither good nor bad” (27.8%) option and the “I do not know” response (27.7%) in this particular question represented the larger segment of the sample. Only 22.2% of the students appeared to be optimists stating that “next year” is going to be a better year in the framework of the European Community. For 38.9% of the sample “next year” was expected to be worse (Table 3 ; Table 4 ; and Table 5). Section B of the responses codifying the “knowledge level” of the subjects revealed that a little more than four out of ten (41.7%) thought that they had satisfactory knowledge about EU related issues and matters. However the majority of the respondents (55.5%) opted for the “No” answer to this crucial question. Thus, the overall response pattern and the corresponding percentages of the above item appeared to be in line with the specific options to the following question, where 83,4% of the participants would like to “know more” about the structure, the function, and the different activities of the EU (Table 6 ; and Table 7).

Clearly, the central importance attached by the sample to the EU was reflected in the total percentage (72.2%) of the respondents who emphasized that the overall functioning/activities of the European Union influence the daily lives of all Greeks in general, and the daily life of “each of us separately” (table 8).

Questioned as to “who” should decide (the Greek government only by itself or jointly with the European Union) on several political issues/actions (questions that are usually included in the annual “European Barometer” questionnaire), the sample provided its own interesting “version” concerning these topics.

The specific items that registered over 50% through the students’ responses in the “co-decision” option (jointly decided by the Greek government and the EU were: a) protection of the environment (80.6%) ; b) co-operation with the developing countries of the third world (69.4%) ; c) health and social protection

(50%); d) scientific and technological research (75%); e) external policy with respect to non-EU countries (55.6%). Furthermore, it is worth mentioning the fact that the respective percentages or “who should decide” in the field of education were 44.4% for the Greek government and 47.2% for a “joint decision” (the Greek Government and the EU).

Finally, the exploration of education and school related issues (Section C of the questionnaire) in the framework of the EU as investigated in the present study has pointed to the following tentative results :

Fifty percent of the sample believed that all developments in the larger EU area do influence (positively or negatively) Greek educational “affairs”. It is worth mentioning in this context the fact that a relatively high percentage (36.1%) of the students expressed their ignorance with respect to this particular question by opting for the “I do not know” answer (Table 11). Today’s school in Greece “rarely” (38.9%) or “almost never” (55.5%) provides opportunities and the means for students to acquire some knowledge about EU activities and the different developments at a European level. Only 5.6% of the respondents felt that today’s Greek school provides such opportunities either “frequently” or “sometimes”. A particularly noticeable - if not alarming - finding on the eve of 2000 (table 9).

Nonetheless, 69.4% of the students felt that their classmates (and their age-mates in general for that matter) “rarely” (58.3%) or “almost never” (11.1%) have adequate information and knowledge about the EU and its multitude of developments/activities (Table 10).

Almost unanimously (91.7%) the participants registered their strong belief that today’s school has the obligation to provide information and relevant knowledge about the EU. But for a percentage of 72.2% of the students the Greek school (as operating today) is actually in no position to inform its population about EU issues and developments effectively. Only 16.7% of the sample appeared convinced that the school is able to carry out such undertakings successfully (Table 12 ; and Table 13).

One out of four of the respondents (25%) felt that there are several specific school subjects through which today’s Greek school could “initiate” its students to the EU activities and developments. For a total of 33.3% of the sample no such school courses existed. It should be noted in this context that a high percentage (38.9%) of the participants opted for the “no answer” response, an option that most likely bears its own significance in the framework of this exploratory research (Table 14).

E. Keeping alive the European dimension debate

All methodological limitations of the present small-scale research granted and in light of both conceptual and definitional ambiguities surrounding the notion of European dimension in education, the data collected here could serve as an instructive stimulus for further discussion. The “Greek case”, as revealed in this context through the indicative voices of the students themselves who have delineated a series of specific European dimension aspects in today’s Greek schools, deserves its own consideration in any comparative analysis of similar phenomena Europe-wide. Without claiming originality or generalizability across socio-cultural contexts, the results obtained pose some challenging questions to both theorists and - principally- policy makers concerned with European dimension and the schools in the E.U.

There is no doubt, whatsoever, that Greek students - as most likely many other youngsters all over the EU - have come to realize the “dual” status of Greece as both an independent state and as a member state of the EU. This relatively recent realization appears to gain more and more momentum among the younger generations, even if their formal schooling continues to somehow evade and/or ignore all profound developments at a European level. Unfortunately, today’s Greek school does not provide its students with this much-needed (and wanted) information about Europe. It is, perhaps, a bit too extreme to resort to such comments nowadays, but one is tempted to remind himself of the traditionally arteriosclerotic nature of the Greek school resisting change and adaptability to contemporary demands and priorities.

Attempting an overall summary of the entire data collected in the course of this highly tentative study, and reformulating the core of the central arguments for keeping the debate for European dimension and education alive, one may stress the following observations in a point form :

1. Greek students seem to be aware and cognizant of the central and decisive rôle of the EU vis-à-vis the Greek society in its entirety and education field in particular. The Greek Government is expected to co-decide and co-operate with the EU in several important domains/activities of public life, including education and technology.

2. However, reluctance and, occasionally, fears and anxieties appear to “colour” the attitudes and the feelings of the Greek youngsters with regard to their prospects and their future life within a Single European Market, and within the EU where a European citizenship is proposed for all member states’ citizens.

3. The students’ knowledge about EU related issues is not at a level desired or wished. The Greek school shares great responsibility for this apparent lack of adequate information and knowledge.

4. Today's Greek schools should undergo several reforms and changes in their curricula so that they could be in a position to respond effectively and "narrow the information gap" with respect to European dimension related aspects and initiatives.

5. On the whole, it is clear that European dimension aspects are still "outside" the formal education system and the daily functioning of today's Greek schools. The students themselves express their interest in getting to know more about the EU and they seem prepared to support a more active involvement of their school in European dimension related developments and activities.

Undoubtedly future empirical research along similar lines, employing representative student population from all Greek schools and using more extensive and more sound methodological instruments, is in great need and urgency if we are to explore and unravel all relevant parameters of European dimension and education. This present "Greek case" delineated through the "voices" of the students themselves may be considered as a tiny - yet aspiring - contribution to this end of scrutinizing European dimension and education at both theoretical and practical terms.

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APPENDIX (Tables 1-14)

Table 1

The proposed (common) "European citizenship" for all country-members' citizens is :

%	
A good thing	36.2
A bad thing	19.4
Neither bad nor good	19.4
I do not know	13.9
Both good and bad	2.8
No answer	8.3

Table 2

Concerning the efforts towards a United Europe, I am :

%	
Very much in favor	13.9
In favor (almost).....	61.1
Against (almost)	8.3
Very much against.....	11.1
I do not know	2.8
No answer.....	2.8

Table 3

The realization of the Single European Market gives me :

%	
Many hopes.....	27.8
Few hopes.....	13.9
Few fears	33.2
Many fears	16.7
I do not know.....	2.8
Both fears and hopes	2.8
No answer.....	2.8

Table 4

For people like myself, the realization of the Large European Market will be :

%	
Something good.....	36.1
Something bad.....	5.6
Neither bad nor good.....	27.8
I do not know	27.7
Both good and bad	2.8

Table 5

As far as myself is concerned, I believe that next year (in the framework of the EU) will be :

%	
Better.....	22.2
Worse.....	38.9
The same	22.2
I do not know.....	16.7

Table 6

I believe that I have a satisfactory knowledge about EU issues and matters:

%	
Yes, I agree	41.7
No, I disagree	55.5
No answer.....	2.8

Table 7

I would like to know more things about the structure, the functioning and the different activities of the EU:

%	
Definitely, Yes.....	83.4
Not necessarily.....	8.3
I am not sure	8.3

Table 8

The overall functioning and the different activities of the EU do influence the daily lives of all Greeks and the daily life of each of us separately :

%	
Yes, I agree.....	72.2
No, I disagree.....	13.9
I do not know.....	13.9

Table 9

Today's Greek school and the school subjects provide opportunities for acquiring information/knowledge about EU aspects and developments :

%	
Yes, quite often	2.8
Sometimes (only)	2.8
Rarely (very).....	38.9
Never (almost).....	55.5

Table 10

My classmates and my agetates in general have a satisfactory knowledge and information about EU issues and developments :

%	
Always.....	5.6
Quite often.....	25.0
Rarely	58.3
Never (almost)	11.1

Table 11

All developments within the EU do influence (positively or negatively) the Greek "educational affairs" :

%	
Yes, I agree	50.0
No, I disagree	13.9
I do not know.....	36.1

Table 12

The (Greek) school has the obligation and it should provide (at least) some concrete information/knowledge about the EU :

%	
Yes, I agree	91.7
No, I disagree.....	8.3

Table 13

Today's Greek school is in a position and has the "means" to inform its students effectively for and about the EU :

%	
Definitely, Yes.....	16.7
Rather, No.....	72.2
I do not know.....	11.1

Table 14

There are specific school subjects through which today's greek school could introduce and "initiate" its students into EU aspects and developments:

%	
Yes, I agree.....	25.0
No, I disagree.....	33.3
I do not know.....	38.9
No answer.....	2.8
