

## **Greek Education in Germany**

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### **RÉSUMÉ**

Cet article sur l'éducation hellénophone en Allemagne illustre la particularité de celle-ci en comparaison avec ce qui se passe dans le reste de la diaspora grecque. Il examine, en effet, le contexte historique dans lequel s'est développé la dynamique de la création des écoles uniquement grecques qui suivent le curriculum du ministère hellénique de l'Éducation. En même temps cela pose le problème de l'intégration au sein de la société allemande étant donné qu'il n'est plus question pour la grande majorité des Grecs de ce pays de retourner en Grèce. Les auteurs de cet article mettent en évidence la connivence entre intérêts politiques et corporatistes qui empêchent l'adoption d'une politique qui favoriserait réellement l'éducation grecque en Allemagne, tout en permettant l'intégration harmonieuse des enfants d'origine grecque à la société allemande.

### **ABSTRACT**

This article on Greek-language education in Germany illustrates how unique this community became in comparison with other diaspora centres. It first outlines the historical development of Greek-language education in Germany and the community dynamics which led to the establishment of Greek-only schools applying the curriculum of the Greek Ministry of Education. The authors analyse the historical context which permitted this unique development. This situation raises the question of integration in German society because the majority of Greeks in this country do not intend to return to Greece. Overall, this thorough review of the history of Greek-language education in Germany highlights the role of politics and corporatist interests in educational policymaking. The result is the absence of an educational policy favouring Greek education and harmonious integration in the German society.

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## Introduction

Greek-language education in Germany is a special case. It differs not only from education in the “Greek historical diaspora” and New World countries but also from Greek-language education in other European countries with a similar migration history. Greek communities in Germany present the following traits: markedly Greece-centred orientation, insistence on “pure” Greek-language education and noticeable Greek State involvement in Greek-language education in Germany.

The stance adopted by the Parent and Guardian Associations and Greek political parties, on the one hand, and the education policies of German governments, on the other, have led to the creation of two main forms of education for Greek children in Germany. While “Greek-only Schools”<sup>1</sup> following Greek curricula operate in many German cities, most pupils of Greek descent attend ordinary German classes (*Regelklassen*). Pupils at German schools are also able to attend the so-called mother-tongue classes<sup>2</sup>, which generally operate in the afternoon.

Greek-Only Schools receive the greater part of both funding and attention from the Greek State in Greek-language education in Germany. The main focus of this study will thus be on those schools. Greek-language education in mother-tongue classes can be only of secondary interest here.

This study first outlines the historical development of Greek-language education in Germany and dynamics which led to the establishment of Greek-only schools. The results of two empirical studies are presented, with particular emphasis on the second, which was carried out in the 1998 school year, as a follow-up to the 1986 study.

### 1. The Greek presence in Germany after 1960

Although there were 1,510 Greeks working in the Federal Republic of Germany in 1958, the road to migration opened following the Greek-German agreement of March 30, 1960 and closed — partly — in November 1973, in the wake of a unilateral decision by the German government to ban the further entry of workers from non-EEC countries into the Federal Republic, in an attempt to deal with the oil crisis.

On the basis of the 1960 agreement, the Greek Ministry of Labour undertook to co-operate with the German committee, and to assist it by pre-selecting workers with regard to their “*physical and professional suitability*” (Article 7). The same article stipulated that would-be migrants “*whose criminal record includes a term of imprisonment exceeding three months*” should be excluded during pre-selection. Finally, one decisive selection criterion was the age limit, which did not generally exceed forty years. The German committee took the final decision on suitability, once it had submitted candidates to a thorough medical examination.

The conclusion to be drawn is that the agreement guaranteed the centre (Germany) the right to select the most active and productive workforce from the periphery. According to estimates, in the early 1960s, 80% of graduates from the various technical and professional schools in Athens migrated to Germany (Harbach 1976, 192), while over the period from 1960 to 1973, approximately 600,000 Greek citizens did likewise.

In parallel with this wave of emigration there, a trend of return migration began. The 600,000 Greeks were never all in Germany at the same time. In 1972, the number of Greek workers reached 270,000, and remained at approximately the same level for two years.

**Table 1: Greeks in Germany 1967-2004\***

1967	201,000	1982	300,800	1991	336,900
1969	271,000	1984	287,100	1992	345,200
1971	385,200	1986	278,500	1995	359,600
1973	407,600	1988	274,800	1997	363,200
1975	390,500	1989	293,600	1999	364,400
1977	328,500	1990	320,200	2000	365,400
				2004	316,000**

Sources: 1) Statistisches Bundesamt 1968 κ.ε. – [www.destatis.de](http://www.destatis.de)  
 2) [www.bundesauslaenderbeauftragte.de/daten/index.stm](http://www.bundesauslaenderbeauftragte.de/daten/index.stm)

\* *Figures rounded to hundreds.*

\*\* *Figures include those with Greek citizenship.*

Greece’s full accession to the EC in 1981 brought about significant changes to the *status quo* of Greek workers and their families, granting

freedom of movement between Greece and Germany and opportunities for self-employment in Germany.

The continued decline of the Greek population in Germany from 1974 until the late 1980's (*see* Table 1) created the false impression that developments would confirm the temporary residence status (*Provisorium*) of Greeks in Germany. Nevertheless, the advent of the 1990's overturned this position; in other words, the presence of Greeks in Germany is now a permanent state of affairs. Numbers have increased significantly over recent years, mainly on account of freedom of movement within the framework of the European Union.

The fact that the Greek presence in Germany is a permanent state of affairs emerges from data concerning date of birth and duration of residence. According to Federal Statistics Service data for 2004, 72.5% of the 316,000 Greeks in Germany were born there. Furthermore, over half of the population had been living in Germany for over twenty years.

We should stress that 16% of the sample in our 1998 study had been living in Germany for only six (6) years, while 42% of fathers and 45% of mothers in the same sample had been there for under ten (10) years, which is indicative of a "new migration"<sup>3</sup> from Greece to Germany. It goes without saying that this new migration is not comparable with that of the 1960s, given that the latter is occurring within the framework of the freedom of movement in the European Union.

### *1.1 Development of the student population*

As can be seen in Table 2, in the early 1980s the number of Greek pupils at ordinary German schools exceeded 50,000. In contrast, by the late 1990s this figure had decreased to 33,000. The decrease stemmed not only from demographic changes, but also from the fact that a significant number of pupils transferred or enrolled from the start at the Greek-only Schools which had been established in the meantime.

Pupils at Greek-only Schools are not included in German statistics so the actual number of Greek pupils in Germany is greater than that reported. In recent years, the number of pupils attending German comprehensive and technical education hovered around 42,000, while those attending Greek-only primary and secondary schools number fluctuated between 6,000 and 7,000. The total number of Greek pupils attending primary and secondary

comprehensive and technical schools would come close to 50, 000.

According to statistics compiled by the Institute for Migrant and Intercultural Education (IPODE), in the 2002/3 school year there were 13 Greek pre-primary schools, 13 primary schools, 8 junior high schools and 15 senior high schools operating in Germany, with a total roll of 6, 377 pupils.

**Table 2: Greek pupils at German comprehensive and technical schools (1980-2004)**

Comprehensive Education			Technical Education			Total number of Greek pupils
Year	Total number of foreigners	Greeks	Year	Total number of foreigners	Greeks	
1980	638,301	50,776	1980	99,254	6,128	56,904
1981	698,495	52,366	1981	118,587	6,560	58,926
1982	724,804	51,718	1982	120,283	6,989	58,707
1983	714,221	48,368	1983	116,561	7,284	55,652
1984	667,589	44,521	1984	113,614	7,322	51,843
1985	667,200	41,495	1985	116,694	7,074	48,569
1986	684,473	38,612	1986	122,989	6,995	45,607
1987	707,503	37,398	1987	133,646	7,340	44,738
1988	737,207	37,534	1988	147,891	7,756	45,290
1989	760,259	38,024	1989	164,096	8,445	46,469
1990	779,662	37,063	1990	178,993	9,178	46,241
1991	799,875	37,347	1991	194,371	10,099	47,446
1992	837,014	37,404	1992	208,496	11,009	48,413
1993	866,218	36,196	1993	218,321	11,082	47,278
1994	887,150	35,505	1994	220,952	10,452	45,957
1995	913,238	34,787	1995	218,347	9,966	44,753
1996	941,103	34,351	1996	218,693	9,599	43,950
1997	950,707	33,562	1997	228,141	9,932	43,494
1998	936,693	31,520	1998	220,058	9,691	41,211
1999	946,300	33,149	1999	214,152	9,674	42,823
2002	995,718	33,628	2002	200,445	9,270	42,898
2003	961,381	33,564	2003	194,328	8,780	42,344
2004	962,835	33,760	2004	192,808	8,379	42,139

Sources: [www.destatis.de](http://www.destatis.de)

[www.Bundesausländerbeauftragte.de/daten/index.stm](http://www.Bundesausländerbeauftragte.de/daten/index.stm)

## **2. The historical development of Greek-language education in the Federal Republic of Germany**

Education for Greek children was the most significant issue preoccupying Greeks in Germany; hence, the development of the matter also belongs to the history of Greeks in that country. In order to best trace the development of Greek-language education in Germany, we shall divide it into five periods.

*First period:* From the advent of migration in 1960 until the overthrow of democracy in Greece in 1967.

*Second period:* The seven-year dictatorship, 1967-1974.

*Third period:* From the fall of the dictatorship to the late 1970s

*Fourth period:* The 1980s

*Fifth period:* From the early 1990s to the present day.

### ***2.1. First period: From the advent of migration in 1960 until the overthrow of democracy in Greece in 1967***

The Education Agreement between the Kingdom of Greece and the Federal Republic of Germany (10-5-1956) obliged both countries not only to promote each other's language in their universities and other centres of learning, but also to take steps to fully re-open any pre-primary, primary or secondary schools which had been closed or restricted in operation<sup>4</sup>.

In March 1960 (30.03.1960), the agreement regulating matters relevant to work by Greeks in what was then West Germany was signed between that country and the Kingdom of Greece<sup>5</sup>.

One serious oversight was the absence of any reference to educational issues arising from the presence of Greek children in Germany. These issues arose early on, since the Greeks were not slow in bringing their families to the Federal Republic. In fact, studies report that in 1965, 40% of Greek men had their spouses and children with them, while by 1970 the percentage stood at 84%<sup>6</sup>.

The first Greek migrants set their sights on an education system equivalent to that in Greece. At that time, their wish for Greek schools was intimately bound to their plans for residence in Germany, which first-generation

Greeks regarded as a temporary affair. With this in mind, they fought for a form of education conducive to their children's reintegration upon their imminent return.

Pressure by Greek parents led the Greek state to *ad hoc* measures to deal with the problem. Although by 1964 there were 40 Greek-language schools operating in Germany, they went no way to solve the problem of language teaching. Not only were they very few in number but also those that did exist were not fully operative.

In his study, Kladas reports only 25 of these 40 Greek-language schools, because, as he writes, the Greek Embassy did not possess a full inventory of the Greek schools operating in West Germany in 1964<sup>7</sup>. Convinced by personal experience and the reactions of the Greeks that the state of education for Greek children was far from "satisfactory", he suggested a number of steps that should be taken to improve matters<sup>8</sup>.

On 14/15 May 1964, a decision by the Ministers of Education in the federal states required foreign children to attend German schools. The decision led to consternation among the Greeks, who were calling for Greek schools in the belief that they would soon return home. They reacted against the German measures, terming them "enforced assimilation"<sup>9</sup>.

Far from backing down, the German authorities took more drastic measures under a May 1965 decision by the Federal State Education Ministers that foreign children should be integrated into German school classes.

The Greek newspapers of the time criticized the measures by the German Education Ministries (*To Vima*, 9-8-1966, *Avgi*, 9-8-1966, *Patris*, 18-4-1966, *Ta Nea*, 11-8-1966), while also stressing the need for "Greek education". The Greek embassy did not, however, seem to share the Greeks' concerns or views.

On March 23, 1966, the Federation of Greek Communities in West Germany and West Berlin submitted a memorandum to the Greek ambassador, in which they set out their demands relating to the education of Greek children. They did so in the hope that the ambassador would mediate with the German authorities so as to forestall the integration of children into the German education system.

Nonetheless, the ambassador advised the Greeks to accept the measures, arguing that German schools were better than Greek ones. When the Greeks

refused to adopt his position, the ambassador stated quite categorically that there was no common ground for further discussion. The consequence of this was a conflict of opinions between the Greeks and the then representatives of the Greek State in Germany.

One way out of the Greek children's educational problem was provided by the first Greek private school, founded in Munich in August 1965 by the "King Otto of Greece" Educational Society. The Greek school in Nueremberg was founded along the same lines the following year, with the locally based Greek consulate as its patron.

The first Greek school in Munich owed its foundation to Konstantinos Kotsovilis. He succeeded by exploiting the connections of his father-in-law, a high-ranking Bavarian government official, and the friendly disposition of the Bavarians towards the Greeks. Added to this was the historical fact that following liberation from the Ottoman Empire, the first king of the Modern Greek State was Otto, a scion of the Bavarian royal family.

The school operated along the lines of Greek schools in Greece and funding was provided in full by the Bavarian government. It initially included a pre-primary school and classes 1-6, to which classes 7-9 were subsequently added. Attempts to run classes 10-12 did not come to fruition on account of the short period for which the school operated.

Although when founded the school gained wide acceptance, shortcomings in its operation forced Greek parents to turn to the consular authorities and seek their intervention to have it closed. Thus the school ceased operations at the end of the 1976-1977 academic year, and its pupils enrolled in the Greek-Only School which had been founded in the meantime by Greek consular authorities in Munich.

For all its operational shortcomings, the first Greek school had a positive impact on education for Greek children in Bavaria for two main reasons. First, it offered Greek-language education at a time when the Greek State had still not assumed due responsibility for matters concerning Greek children's education. Second, it laid the groundwork for the funding of Greek-language education by the Bavarian Government. In other words, acting on the precedent established by the funding of the aforementioned school, the Greek Government sought and gained 80% Bavarian funding for



classes 1-9 in the school it had itself established, as still applies to this day.

Bavaria remains the only Federal State providing 80% of the funding for Greek schools; in the other States, Greek-only schools are funded exclusively by the Greek Government.

On the other hand, it should be stressed that the foundation of Greek schools in Bavaria as early as the mid-1960s exercised a decisive influence on the educational aspirations of Greek families in other German States.

## *2.2. Second period, 1967-1974*

As might be expected, the dictatorship made every effort to impose its ideology. Not even the Greek schools in what was then West Germany escaped this aim. Greek dictatorship governments regarded school as the ideal venue and vehicle not only for the propagation of their ideology among Greek children, but also for the “observation” of pupils’ parents. They were thus keen to embrace Greek parents’ demand for the establishment of Greek Schools. Within a short time, the dictatorship set up schools in the form of afternoon classes and organized education so as to suit its intentions. The Education Department in the Greek Embassy in Bonn was also set up during the dictatorship. Thus it was not concern for Greek workers that motivated the dictatorial regime to meet the Greeks’ educational demands, but rather the desire to serve its own goals and aims.

On the other hand, the second period also witnessed a change in the Greeks’ stance regarding the form of their children’s education. The entrenchment of the dictatorship and, above all, its prolonged grip on power, forced democratically minded Greeks in Germany to rethink their position on residence in the country. After the rise of the dictatorship, even those who had previously been able to determine precisely when they would return realized that the decision was no longer in their own hands.

Democratically-minded Greeks, who had come to Germany for two or three years, were forced to stay seven more years. In the interval, some brought their families out and others started a family. The end result was a change in the relationship between the Greeks and their new social environment, as they became ever increasingly open towards it.

Whereas before the dictatorship the majority of Greeks had fought for a

school system which would facilitate or better still guarantee the reintegration of their children into the Greek education system, they later began to set their sights on a new system that took the new reality into account.

Without abandoning thoughts of return migration, a high proportion of Greeks saw the need for education which would assist their children in integrating into the new environment on the one hand, while fostering Greek language and culture, on the other.

### *2.3 Third period, 1974-1981*

When the collapse of the dictatorship in 1974 occurred, the education problem in Germany remained. Rich in experience free of fear, and, above all, well organized the Greeks undertook to assert their right to participate in making decisions about their children's education. Experience had taught them that no goal can be attained without organization, so the first decisive step was thus the foundation of Parent and Guardian Associations on a German-wide level.

For Greeks in Germany, the period from 1974 to late 1981 was the most dynamic of all with regard to education. So as to best coordinate the efforts of Parent and Guardian Associations, acting on their own initiative and at personal expense, parents also set up Association Federations at State (*Land*) level.

Yet what were Greek parents' basic demands immediately after the fall of the dictatorship? We get a good idea from the five-page announcement (6-6-1975) issued by the Steering Committee of the Nordrhein - Westfalen Parent and Guardian Committees, in which proposals by Greek parents in the area are detailed in fourteen points. The basic ones are:

- The creation of "autonomous" Greek classes from years 1-9;*
- Nine-year compulsory attendance;*
- Absorption of Greek classes into German schools;*
- Teaching of all lessons in the Greek language "The only exceptions can be for classes in handicrafts, drawing, music and PE, which may be taught in the German language";*
- Adaptation of material for Greek lessons to "the local environment";*
- Adaptation of teaching methods to the German system;*
- Proper preparation of Greek teachers working in Germany;*
- Close co-operation between Greek education authorities, teachers and Parents'*

*and Guardians' Committees;*

*Recognition of the parents' right to choose the education system for their children*<sup>0</sup>.

To achieve their aims, the Parent and Guardian Associations confronted both German and Greek authorities. They had no hesitation in organizing spirited protests and demonstrations in Düsseldorf, Munich, Wuppertal and elsewhere.

### *2.3.1 The demand for the foundation of Greek Schools*

Together with German government education policy, which was highly assimilative in nature, migrant policy based on the guestworker (*Gastarbeiter*) rationale and Greek political circumstances strengthened the case for the foundation of Greek schools. The cause was not espoused by all Greeks, but it served the majority of them, for it was fertile ground for political exploitation.

For example, in supporting the foundation of Greek Schools, the up-and-coming Panhellenic Socialist Party (PASOK) attempted to rally as many Greek parents as possible around the party and “amongst other things, offer Greek parents the genuine potential to choose”<sup>11</sup>. In turn, other political parties also attempted to make use of the school issue, either to play opposition politics or to swell their ranks with those who either had reservations about the foundation of Greek schools or opposed the idea<sup>12</sup>. Regardless of motives, from the early 1980s onwards, each political group wished to found Greek schools and the issue was being debated throughout Germany.

At this point we should note that those who supported the foundation of Greek schools did not wish to impose them on all Greek children. Nevertheless, they regarded such schools as an alternative to incorporation into classes at German schools and, above all, as a guarantee that their children could gain access to tertiary education in Greece — the last of these matters will concern us below.

### *2.4 Fourth period: the 1980s*

Greek-language education remained a problem in the 1980s, as is evident from the view of the Federation Greek Parents' and Guardians' Associations

and Committees in Nordrhein-Westfalen. In a letter dated 4/410/1982 to local associations and committees in Nordrhein-Westfalen, the Federation refers to the educational *status quo* of Greek children for the 1982-1983 school year, describing it as stagnant and in some cases retrogressive<sup>13</sup>.

The same letter reveals that parents' morale was at a psychological low. What caused this unusual state of mind among parents? Had their children's education really changed so much for the worse that it justified such disappointment?

For years, parents in Nordrhein-Westfalen had fought first for short-term (2-year) and then long-term (4-year) preparatory classes. At a later stage, initially motivated by the fear, and later the certainty that all long-term preparatory classes would be abolished, they turned all their attention to the creation of Greek Schools.

At one point in the early 1980s, they came to realize that on the one hand, what they had achieved with the creation of preparatory classes had not lasted long. On the other, their dream of founding Greek schools was not materializing, despite the fact that the PASOK party, which had undertaken to found Greek Schools, had come to power in Greece.

The parents appear to have felt trapped, given that most members of Boards of the Parents Associations, the Greek Communities and their respective Federations were PASOK party members. This meant that they had no political interest in a confrontation with the new Greek government on the issue of education.

Nevertheless, the parents anticipated that the government would show due concern for education problems and provide solutions. They thus opted to wait the situation out, in the certainty that the government had no other option than to keep its promises. *"We have every right to believe that the new government of the country, whom the parents among others brought to power with their votes, will show due concern for our children's problem and will provide solutions which are in the national interest"*<sup>14</sup>.

PASOK governments did ultimately keep their pre-election promises and commitments to a great extent, and in the 1982/83 school year they proceeded to found the first Greek-only primary and secondary schools, mainly in the state (*Land*) of Nordrhein-Westfalen, where one third of the

Greek population in Germany lives.

By the early 1980s, two basic forms of Greek-language education had emerged: a) attendance at ordinary German classes (Regelklassen), with simultaneous optional attendance at mother-tongue classes, and b) Greek-only primary and secondary schools.

Approximately 85% of pupils of Greek descent attend the first form of education, and the remaining 15% the second. Nevertheless, the Greek parents of the second group monopolize Greek government interest and absorb the greater part of funding provided by Greece for Greek-language education in Germany<sup>15</sup>.

The fortunes of both Greek-only schools and mother-tongue classes were the subject of the two empirical studies mentioned in the introduction.

In what follows, selected results from the second study will be presented. These reveal both the course of Greek-language education in Germany, and its distinctive features when compared to its equivalent in other countries.

### **3. Greek Schools and Mother-Tongue Classes: Developments in the 1990s**

In 1986, within the framework of an EU-Commission funded research project, an investigation was carried out into Greek-only schools and mother-tongue classes (MTCs) in the State of Nordrhein-Westfalen, Germany<sup>16</sup>.

The aim of the 1986 study was to collect and evaluate empirical data relating to:

*The conditions under which mother-tongue lessons were carried out (organization, administration, teaching and learning media etc.);  
pupil attitude towards mother-tongue lessons (MTLs);  
the use of one or the other or both languages (form of bilingualism);  
particular problems faced by Greek migrant families and Greek teachers in relation to mother-tongue lessons.*

The above study was repeated at the same schools in 1998, within the terms of the Education for Greeks Abroad project<sup>17</sup>. The same methods were

used, the main aim being to pinpoint any changes and developments occurring over the twelve-year intervening period, and to ascertain whether these had led to pupil integration into the German educational and socio-cultural system, together with a concomitant distancing from the Greek system.

The Greek-only schools included in both studies were those at Düsseldorf and Wuppertal.

The parent and pupil samples at the schools were as follows:

**1986: Düsseldorf:** 171 pupils, 155 parents, **Wuppertal:** 189 pupils, 111 parents.

**1998: Düsseldorf:** 162 pupils, 80 parents, **Wuppertal:** 151 pupils, 122 parents.

Questionnaires were completed by 356 pupils attending years 4-6 in 1986, and 74 pupils in 1998.

### *3.1. Outline presentation of key research findings*

In summarizing the key findings of the follow-up study, the following can be argued<sup>18</sup>:

The 1990s saw a new wave of migration from Greece to major urban centers in Germany, resulting in an increase in the Greek population from 320 200 in 1990 to 365 400 in 2000 (*see* Table 1).

This tide of “new migrants”<sup>19</sup> and the concomitant renewal of the community differentiate Greek communities in German metropolises from those in other countries, and to a great extent assist in maintaining their initial features. On the other hand, children of “new migrants” are largely responsible for sustaining Greek-only Schools.

Developments taking place over the period from 1986 to 1998 and relating to parents concern the following main points:

- The percentage of “new migrant” parents at Greek-only Schools increased, and in 1998 lay between 42% (fathers) and 45% (mothers).

- In comparison with 1986, there was an observable improvement in the parents' educational level and professional status. In particular, the number of self-employed people increased considerably; in 1998 30% of fathers of pupils at Greek-only schools were self-employed, while 54% were company employees. Both of these professional categories have their sights firmly set on Greece (return migration) and regard residence in Germany as temporary, as was also true in 1986.
- Reasons leading parents to opt for Greek-Only Schools as their children's form of education were pragmatic or utilitarian, i.e. admission to Greek universities via special easy examinations under the provisions of Law 1351/1983 (Government Gazette 56A), which apply to Greek children graduating from Greek Schools abroad.

On the other hand, parents also make attempts to justify their choice on the ideological and cultural level. In particular, the arguments put forward by Greek School parents lie within the following frames of reference: intention to return migrate to Greece; maintenance of Greek identity and tradition; prevention of assimilation and estrangement from their children; prevention of any possible negative effects of bilingualism on children.

Yet the most significant and unforeseen development taking place between 1986 and 1998 relates to parents and pupils at Greek Schools alike: this was the creation of "*parallel communities*" which rally around the Greek Schools in a symbiotic relationship.

The main features of these "parallel communities" may be summarized as follows:

They rally around Greek Schools, which are isolated from the German socio-political milieu and are funded in full by Greece, the country of origin. The "*parallel communities*" in one city interconnect with their counterparts in neighbouring cities or states to create *local* and *inter-local* networks, which serve mainly as interest networks. These *local inter-local networks* then link up with politicians and institutions in Greece to create *supra-local networks* acting in the main as political lobbies. In order to legitimize their presence and activities, they create an ideology revolving around the formation of Greek identity and consciousness, and protection of the younger generation from assimilation into the host society, with resultant estrangement from the

Greek language and culture.

Among other things, this unforeseen development is evident from the fact that between 1986 and 1998, there was a significant increase rather than a decrease in the use of Greek as the pupils' exclusive code of communication, both between themselves and with their parents, while German receded in the “*parallel communities*”.

In the case of pupils attending mother-tongue classes, developments with regard to linguistic behaviour have occurred in precisely the opposite direction. Greek is receding as the exclusive code of communication, giving way to German.

There was also significant drop in the percentage of those attending mother-tongue classes. In 1998, half of all integrated pupils went to such classes, whereas in 1986 the proportion was 65-70%.

Nevertheless, a significant improvement in school integration was observed among those pupils attending German high schools. Although not on a par with their German counterparts, in 1998 the percentage of Greek pupils gaining the high school leaving certificate (*Abitur*) which leads to university education was relatively satisfactory, and stood above the average of other foreign students<sup>20</sup>. More recent studies<sup>21</sup> have shown that the percentage of Greek-origin pupils studying at German schools and gaining admission to German universities is just as high or even higher than that of German pupils.

If we compare the two groups of pupils in our sample (those at Greek Schools and those at mother-tongue classes) with regard to their migration and school background, their linguistic behaviour and their orientation, and if we then draw up the differences between them, we can arrive at the following conclusions:

A considerable proportion of pupils at Greek Schools are children of “new migrants”. From the outset they only attend Greek Schools; as a rule they communicate in Greek, and only secondly in both languages. They are strongly attached to their communities and have their sights firmly set on return migration to Greece. In contrast, pupils at mother-tongue classes are as a rule “born and bred” in Germany and attend German schools. As a rule they communicate either in both languages or solely in German, and do not



have their sights set on return migration to Greece. Nevertheless, far from being cut off or estranged from their community, they maintain powerful, positive sentimental ties to Greece and everything Greek.

Comparative analysis of the two pupil groups thus reveals that there is one student population (mother-tongue class attendants) which moves between two education and socio-cultural systems – and which in that sense has an intercultural outlook. On the other hand, we have another student population which rallies around Greek-only Schools, entrenched in the Greek “*parallel communities*” now being formed.

The creation of “*parallel communities*” is a new phenomenon, which is discussed in part by Damanakis in the present volume.

#### **4. Conclusions**

In sum, the evaluation of Greek-language education in Germany leads to a number of general conclusions with regard to the phenomenon itself and the socio-economic, political and cultural framework within which it occurs.

In combination with migrant and education policies on Germany’s part, the historical course of Greek migration to Germany and the fact that the majority of Greek migrants in the 1960s were workers, both played an important role in Greek-language education issues.

The above analyses reveal that Greek-language education in Germany lies between two extremes. On the one hand, there are the Greek Schools, which are to a great extent isolated from the German socio-cultural environment, and on the other, there is the normal German education system.

This dichotomy finds its equivalent within Greek communities. On the one hand, these are composed of a majority of Greeks, who are integrated into German society and are striving for social advancement for themselves and their children within that system. Yet on the other hand, there is a minority of Greeks who rally around Greek-Only Schools, have their sights firmly set on Greece and look to that country to solve any educational problems their children may have.

This small yet vocal – if not aggressive – group of Greeks has managed to

monopolize the interest of Greek governments, and absorb the greater part of funds provided by Greece for Greek-language education in Germany. The peculiar relationship between the above group and both Greek governments and political parties is deeply political in nature. It can only be interpreted using categories applied in political analysis, though that is not attempted in the present brief study.

### ENDNOTES

1. Greek-only schools are those operating under the auspices of the Greek State, which follow Greek curricula and award Greek (Greece-based) academic qualifications. The main feature of these schools is that leavers have the right to gain admission to Greek universities via special (concessionary) examinations. To be precise, 4% of the total number of university places is reserved for graduates from such high schools.
2. Mother-tongue classes generally operate in the afternoon or on Saturdays. They are aimed at pupils of Greek descent who attend German schools and wish to be taught Greek in parallel.
3. New migrants are those who have been residents in Germany for less than ten years.
4. A chronology of the school problem is given in *Stathmos – Periodiko gia tous Ellines sti Germania*, issue 2, special edition, Frankfurt, February 1979.
5. Kladas, Sokratis: *Ta themata ton en Ditiki Germania Ellinon Ergaton*, Athens 1965, pp. 66ff.
6. Matzouranes Georgios: *Ellines ergates sti Germania (Gastarbeiter)*, 2nd ed., Athens 1974, p. 219. Bingemer, Karl: Soziale Situation der Gastarbeiter, das Heim: Jugend und Kinder. In: Bingemer Karl/Meistermann-Seeger Edeltrud/Neubert Edgar (ed.): *Leben als Gastarbeiter Geglückte und Missglückte Integration*. Opladen 1972Ç, p. 59.
7. Kladas, op. cit., p. 42.
8. Among other things, Kladas proposes that: “a. Existing schools be given further support and at least fifteen new ones should be founded; b. An Education Inspector

should be appointed to the Embassy in Bonn; c. Negotiations should be initiated with the German Government to settle issues relating to schools, so that they be accredited. At the present time pupils have withdrawn from German schools and only attend Greek ones, which are not accredited; d. As soon as possible, the schools should be equipped with textbooks from Greece.” (Kladas, op. Cit., pp. 42-43).

9. On this issue see Kanavakis, Michael: Griechische Schulinitiativen in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland. Eine Untersuchung über die Entstehungsgründe und –bedingungen sowie über die pädagogischen Motive griechischer Auswanderer, Frankfurt/M. 1989, p. 95. Tsiakalos, Georgios: *I istoria tou scholikou provlimatos sti D. Germania*. In: *Provlmatismoi* 1/83, pp. 64-69.

10. Kanavakis: «*Piges*» vol. 1, pp. 363-371. The «*Piges*» series is edited by Kanavakis, and consists of 9 volumes containing primary information. See Kanavakis Michael (ed.): ΠΗΓΕΣ-Quellen zur griechischen Schulinitiativen in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland. Vols. 1-5, Peter Lang, Frankfurt 1989 Kanavakis Michael (ed.): ΠΗΓΕΣ-Quellen zur griechischen Schulinitiativen in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, vols. 6-9, Ioannina 1993 (vol. 6) 1995 (vol. 7), 1998 (vols. 8 and 9).

11. PASOK party Prefectural Committee in West Germany and West Berlin. School Question Working Party: PASOK Education Policy in FRG and West Berlin, in: Kanavakis: «*Piges*», vol. 1, pp. 136-187, this reference p. 140.

12. Democratic Unity. “School ghettos make problems worse rather than solving them. Realistic proposals on the education of Greeks living abroad, in: Kanavakis: «*Piges*», vol. 6, pp. 101-102.

13. Kanavakis: «*Piges*», vol. 8, pp. 116-118.

14. Steering Committee of the Nordrhein-Westfalen Parents’ and Guardians’ Association, Bonn 4.11.1981: To Minister of Education Verivakis, in: Kanavakis: «*Piges*», vol. 8, pp. 74-76.

15. For a more in-depth, thorough study of the education policies adopted by PASOK and New Democracy Governments in the 1970s and 1980s, see Michelakaki, Theodosia: *Greek Education Policy for Greek Migrant Children in Germany (1975-85)*, *E.DIA.M.M.E, Rethymnon 2001*. Michelakaki examines Greek education policy for Greek migrant children from 1975 to 1985, highlighting the powers which shaped that policy and the ulterior motives it served. The study in question is interesting in that the author attempts to analyze efforts by one sovereign state to intervene in the educational affairs of another.

16. The results of the study are published in the Annual Academic Review (Epistimoniki Epetirida) of the Primary School Education Department, University

of Ioannina, issue 1, 1987.

17. A detailed presentation of the “Education for Greeks Abroad” project is given by D. Kontogianni in the present volume.

18. The results of the second, follow-up study were published as part of the Education for Greeks Abroad project as Damanakis, Michael: *Greek Schools and Mother-tongue Classes in Germany (1986-1998) E.DIA.M.ME, Rethymnon 2003* - see also [www.uoc.gr/diaspora](http://www.uoc.gr/diaspora). (studies on a country-by-country basis).

19. Readers are reminded that “new migrant” is used to describe those residents in Germany for less than 10 years.

20. In particular, 29.6% of Germans, 18.25% of Greeks and 11.9% of the total number of foreign students graduating from the 13<sup>th</sup> (final) year of Senior School in 1997 gained the High School Leaving Certificate (Abitur).

21. In a study by Kristen, C. and Granato, N. published in the Institut für Migrationsforschung und Interkulturelle Studien Universität Osnabrück periodical (see IMIS-Beitrage 23/2004 pp. 123 ff.), 46% of Greek-origin pupils aged 18 are reported as being successful enough at school to gain admission to German universities, compared to 43% of their German peers. In our opinion, the extent to which success at school by Greek-origin pupils is a stable, enduring phenomenon — as argued from time to time by German researchers — remains the subject of further investigation.