

Education in the Muslim Minority Population in Greece

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Abstract

This research report is a part of the Research Project that aims to analyze the education in the Muslim minority population in Thrace, Greece. Specifically, the report brings into clear view the reasons why the necessity of the reform was undoubtable. The Project for the Education of Muslim Children (P.E.M) was implemented in 1997 and it is a definitely educational project having as principal goal the teaching of Greek as a second language, the development of the educational materials, the teacher training and the academic outcome. School is the best place for encountering the religious or ethnic “other”, and it appears that Greek education is moving in this direction.

Contents

1	Introduction	5
1.1	History-Socio-economic status of Muslims in Greece and their integration into society	7
1.1.1	Treaty of Sevres	7
1.1.2	Treaty of Lausanne	8
2	Background of the Policy	10
2.1	Historical Background: Education of the Minority population before 1997	10
2.2	Reforming the Education of Muslim Minority Children In Thrace	12
3	Data and statistical descriptive analysis	17
3.1	The Educational System	17
3.2	Classroom Materials	25
3.2.1	Greek Textbooks	25
3.2.2	Turkish Textbooks	26
3.3	Greek Teachers	27
3.4	Turkish Teachers	29
3.5	Supplementary Classes	31
3.6	Support Centers of the Program	32
3.7	Work with the Community	32
3.8	Literature Review	33
4	Conclusion	35
5	Bibliography	38

List of Figures

1.1	Map of Thrace	6
1.2	Distribution of Muslim Population in Europe	7
2.1	Educational levels	11
2.2	The number of Muslim minority pupils who succeeded in Greek universities with the quota	14
3.1	2008-2009, Minority Elementary Education: 6th grade	22
3.2	2009-2010, Minority Elementary Education: 6th grade	23
3.3	2010-2011, Minority Elementary Education: 6th grade	23
3.4	Minority vs Public Elementary Schools in Xanthi	24

List of Tables

2.1	Muslim Turkish students entering Greek Universities	15
3.1	The number of Muslim pupils in the Minority Elementary Schools by Prefecture	19
3.2	The number of Muslim pupils in Public Elementary Schools by Prefecture	19
3.3	Students in Minority Secondary education in Xanthi-Komotini	21
3.4	Students in Minority High Schools in Xanthi-Komotini	22
3.5	Curriculum in Elementary Schools	27
3.6	Curriculum in High Schools	27
3.7	Variation in the Number of Students and in their Attendance Rate . . .	31

Chapter 1

Introduction

The term "minority" includes parts of a country that differ from the majority of citizens in terms of language, religion or national consciousness. In Greece, the Muslim minority is the only explicitly recognized minority in Greece. It forms a religious minority considering that it arose after the exclusion of the Muslim population of Thrace from the population exchange based on the Treaty of Lausanne. The region that the majority of the Muslim population live in is consisted of three prefectures, Rodopi, Xanthi and Evros with their main cities Komotini, Xanthi and Alexandroupolis respectively. The members of the Muslim minority are free to declare their ethnic origin (Turkish, Pomak and Roma)¹, to speak their language, to exercise their religion and to respect their customs and their traditions. The only barrier set by the Greek state is the prohibition of the effort from the Muslim minority to establish a unique ethnic identity in order to integrate Pomaks and Roma into a fictional Turkish identity (Michail, 2003). Since the Treaty of Lausanne in 1923 to 1954, Greece had recognized as an official Muslim minority.

Interestingly there are not any reliable official statistics for either the exact size of

¹With reference to the spoken language and the culture, they are divided into three ethnic groups:

- The Turkish-speaking group which does not exceed 50 per cent of the minority population.
- The Pomak group, the members of which speak the Pomak language. They are Slav-speaking Muslims traditionally residing in villages in the Rodopi Mountains near the Greek-Bulgarian boarder. Increasingly, they live in urban or semi-urban centers (Lytra, 2014).
- The Roma group, which speaks the Romani language. This group represents 1/5 of the minority population.

Figure 1.1: Map of Thrace



Source: <http://www.maps-of-greece.com/thrace-map.htm>

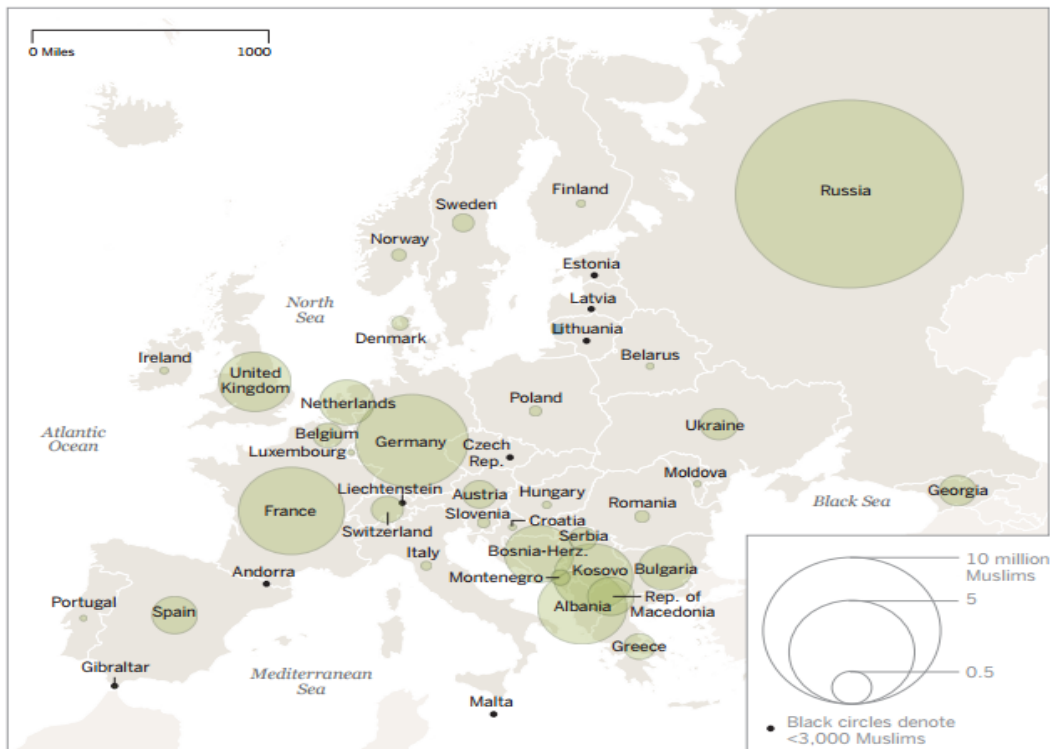
the minority population or for its ethnic composition². Several sources provide different estimates for the size of the minority which vary widely from 90,000 to 130,000 people; with Turks accounting for between 47 per cent and 68 per cent, Pomaks varying between 20 per cent and 40 per cent and Roma from 10 per cent to 25 per cent of the population (Zengin, 1994; Academy of Athens, 1995; Dalegre, 1997). According to the last census (1991), the minority population was 98,000³ to a total of 338,000 inhabitants of Thrace i.e. 29 per cent of the population.⁴

²Greece is among several other EU countries (Belgium, France, Germany, Netherlands, and Sweden) that do not collect data on the ethnic, religious, or linguistic aspects of their populations, because such a declaration would contravene the law on personal data protection.

³Ministry of Foreign Affairs: The Muslim minority of Greek Thrace, <http://www.hri.org/MFA/foreign/musmingr.htm>

⁴In 2009, according to the estimates based on 2002 and 2004 European Social Surveys, the Muslim population was 310,000, 3% of the total population

Figure 1.2: Distribution of Muslim Population in Europe



Source: <http://www.europeansocialsurvey.org/data/country.html?c=greece>

1.1 History-Socio-economic status of Muslims in Greece and their integration into society

1.1.1 Treaty of Sevres

The Treaty of Sevres was one of a series of treaties that the Central Powers⁵ signed after their defeat in World War I. The treaty was signed on 22 July 1910 and based on it the Western Thrace was annexed in Greece. The minority Treaty of Sevres signed on 29 September 1923, contained the minority protection provisions in which Greece had complied with. So, it published a legal framework for the protection of minorities in Greece under the League of Nations. According to the Law Library of Congress (2012), the Treaty of Sevres pertaining to freedom of religion for all inhabitants of Greece (which at that time included Bulgarians and Jews, without distinction of birth, nationality, language, race, or religion) and to the enjoyment of all civil and political rights for all inhabitants have been superseded by the European Convention. On the 29 of September

⁵Germany, Hungary, Turkey, Bulgaria, Austria

1924, representatives of Greece and Bulgaria, signed a protocol about the protection of the Bulgarian minority in Greece.⁶ The Politis-Kalfov protocol obliged Greece to secure fair treatment for all members of this minority according to the terms of the Treaty of Sevres between Greece and its major allies in the First World War, signed on 10 August 1920 (Ministry of Foreign Affairs 1920: Articles 2, 8 and 9). In particular, Article 2 pertains to the minority's needs about education and religion. With respect to education, the focus point was the following: the Bulgarian minority schools with more than forty students would be sponsored by the Greek state. If there were fewer than forty students, then it would be the community's task to support its school financially. Furthermore, it was compulsory for the teaching personnel to obtain Greek citizenship (Michailidis, 1996). On January 25, 1925, Greece announced that it would not put into effect the Politis-Kalfov protocol.⁷

1.1.2 Treaty of Lausanne

The matter of minorities in Greece figured prominently in the Treaty of Lausanne Conference which was signed on July 23, 1923. In southern-eastern Europe and more specifically in Greece and Turkey, the Peace Conference included the protocol, between the two countries, about the exchange of their population using religion as the criterion, i.e Orthodox Turkish nationals swapped with Muslim Greek nationals⁸. The Treaty of Lausanne constitutes polymer text with some ordinances (Articles 38-44) related to non-minorities in

⁶Nikolas Politis and Christo Kalfov signed the protocol at the league of Nations in Geneva and it is known as Politis-Kalfov protocol

⁷see The Law Library of Congress, 2012

⁸One of the major objectives of the Treaty of Lausanne was the protection of the rights of the Greek Orthodox minorities in Turkey and the rights of the Turkish minorities in Western Thrace. In the agreed protocol the following groups were not included (Article 2 of the Convention on the Exchange of Greek and Turkish Populations):

- The Greek inhabitants of Istanbul.
- The Muslim inhabitants of Western Thrace.

It is estimated that 130,000 Orthodox Greeks established in Istanbul and about the same number of Muslims living in the Greek province of Thrace were swapped. It stated that all Greeks who were already established prior to October 30, 1918, within the areas under the Prefecture of the City of Constantinople, as defined by the law of 1912, shall be deemed Greek inhabitants of Constantinople. As far as the Muslims living in Western Thrace, article 2 elaborated that "all Muslims established in the region to the east of the frontier line laid down in 1913 by the Treaty of Bucharest shall be considered as Moslem inhabitants of Western Thrace" (Law Library of Congress, 2012)

Turkey and minorities in Greece(Article 45).

According to an Article by Andreas Notaras ⁹, education of the minority population is governed by a special regime arising from the International Treaty of Lausanne of 1923 (Articles 40 and 41)¹⁰ and a series of educational agreements and protocols between Turkey and Greece. The law 3065/1954(FEK ' 239, 9.10.1954) was the first law, regulating the issues of minority education which is valid until today. In Spring 1954, Greece ratified a decree which legitimized all the minority schools as Turkish.

During the years of Greek dictatorship (1967-1974) policies aimed at reducing the rights of minorities and at loosening their connection with Turkey were implemented. Among these measures were denial of the minority's ethnic identity; strict limits on the use of the word "Turkish" for self-identification; expropriations of large parts of minority owned land; prevention of purchases or sales of land and property; refusing the right to set up businesses; Greek banks not giving credit or loans to minority members; restricting freedom of expression, information and movement; not permitting the repair of old mosques or the building of new ones; difficulties in obtaining a driver's licence; and government refusals to give minority members jobs in the civil service and the government sector (Anagnostou, 1999; Yagcioglu, 2004). Consequently, the minority in Western Thrace were not able to participate in the socio-economic changes of Greek society, which were particularly rapid in the 1970s and 1980s. As it becomes evident, the Greek Muslim minority is ethnically, linguistically and culturally diverse and its members have different historical trajectories.

⁹Professor of Social Anthropology at the Panteion University of Athens

¹⁰The following articles of the Lausanne Treaty clearly define the Turkish Muslim minority's educational rights:

- Article 40(Communal Property): Minorities have the right to create, manage and control through their own means charitable, religious, and social institutions, any schools and other establishments for instruction and education, with the right to use their own language and to exercise their own religion freely therein.
- Article 41(Education): As regards public instruction, the Turkish Government will grant in those towns and districts, where a considerable proportion of non-Moslem nationals are resident, adequate facilities for ensuring that in the primary schools the instruction shall be given to the children of such Turkish nationals through the medium of their own language. This provision will not prevent the Turkish Government from making the teaching of the Turkish language obligatory in said schools.

Chapter 2

Background of the Policy

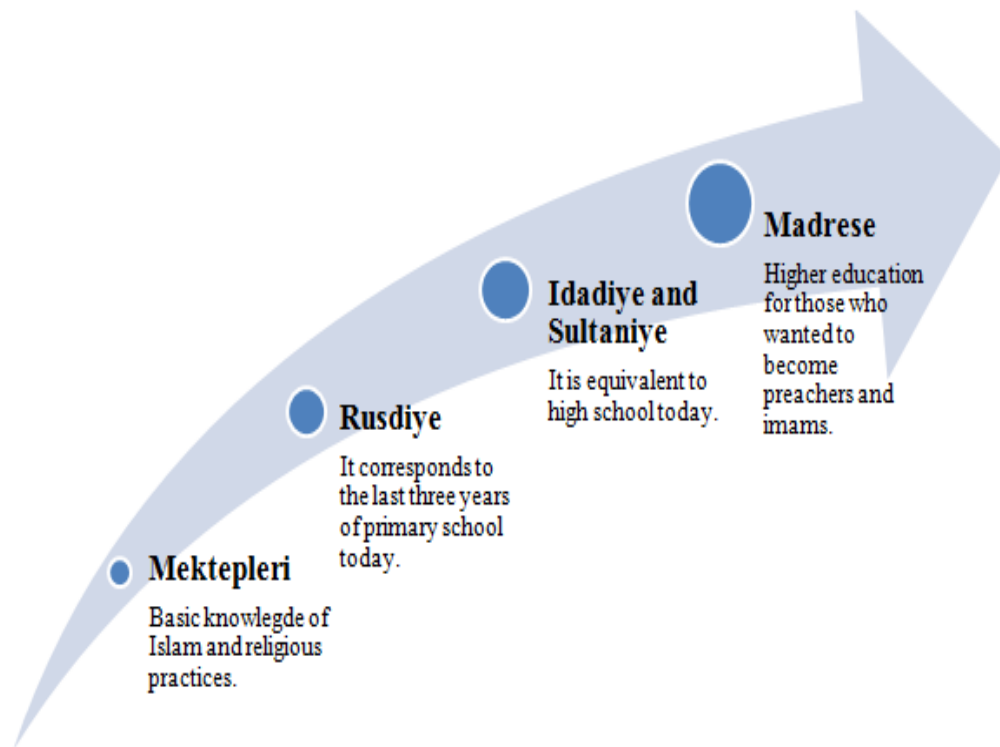
2.1 Historical Background: Education of the Minority population before 1997

Before Western Thrace became a region of Greece in 1923, Muslim students used to be taught in Ottoman and Arabic languages under the modern Tanzimat era Ottoman Education system (Cihan 2007, Fortna 2002). There were some schools which are called Mahalle Mektepleri where students were taught basic knowledge of Islam and religious practices. In addition there were some primary schools which provided elementary mathematics in Arabic and Ottoman. When Muslim Turkish students finished the Mektep, the next step for them was Rusdiye, which corresponds to the last three years of primary schools today. For those who wanted to go to high school there were the Idadiye and Sultaniye and finally the Madrese for those who wanted to become preachers and imams at mosques across the region.¹ By the time of the 1920-1923 Ottoman-Greek regime change, there were one Idadiye, one Rusdiye and six Medrese in Komotini, one Rusdiye and two Madrese in Xanthi and one Rusdiye and three Madrese in Alexandroupolis (Akin, 1984). The fact that the majority of Muslim population were farmers and they were living in rural areas had impacted the attendance of children at school. The children were going to school during the winter months, while in seasons of family farming, they usually in-

¹The Madrese included the learning of the Holy Koran, Muslim Law and the Prophet's teachings in Turkish and Arabic

interrupted or neglected their studies to help their parents out. As a result, significant gaps in these students' education prevented them from continuing their studies. Until 1952, there was no secondary minority education in Western Thrace. A handful of pupils who wished to progress with their studies had to either register in a Greek-language secondary school or emigrate to Turkey for secondary schooling (Featherstone et al, 2011).

Figure 2.1: Educational levels



In 1954, the Papagou government adopted the Law 3065/1954² which is still accepted by both Greek and Turkish scholars. Together with Law 2203/1952, they are the first significant Greek measures regulating education of minority children after 1923. Greece drafted Law 2203/1952 in order to establish the first minority secondary and high school (Celal Bayar) in Komotini³. As a result of this law, Greece and Turkey contracted the agreement of 1954 regarding the use of textbooks⁴, to rename the "minority schools" as "Turkish schools", to appoint Greek teachers and finally generously fund the minority

²The law 3065/1954 (FEK ' 239, 9.10.1954), was the first law, regulating the issues of minority education which is valid until today. In spring 1954, Greece ratified a decree which legitimized all the minority schools as Turkish.

³The "Celal Bayar" High School, named after the Turkish president, was founded in Komotini

⁴From 1954 to 1990 Turkey prepared textbooks specifically for minority students and Greece did the same for its kin in Istanbul. While doing so, both sides agreed not to use labels, pictures or documents that were unacceptable to the other party (Trakya, 1955)

schools.⁵ In 1957, Papagou government institutionalized the law about the bilingual schools which is valid until today. The decision 149251/1958 (FEK B' 162) introduced the first analytical program for the Turkish curriculum; the only Greek course at these bilingual schools was the Greek language course (Huseynoglu, 2012). Articles 3 and 4 regulated issues like exams and the transfer of students between classes; Articles 5,6 and 7 set the basics for all the regulations about school boards and teachers, and finally Article 8 enumerated the public holidays applied at Turkish minority schools. The level of Turkish teachers remained low since the majority of them were religious workers who only completed primary school.

In Greek-Turkish Protocol of 1968, permission was granted to operate the first minority high school in Xanthi and all of the courses would be taught in Greek and "minority language".⁶ The Turkish language program continued as described in the detailed program of 1957.⁷

2.2 Reforming the Education of Muslim Minority Children In Thrace

The establishment and operation of schools for the minority community is subject to reciprocity. In 1997, Greece signed the Council of Europe Framework Convention for the Protection of Minorities. The Greek Ministry of Education presented the authors with a big challenge: the reform of the education of Muslim minority children in Western Thrace, Greece.⁸ (Lytra, 2014) The new policy has been created for the following purposes:

1. To teach respect for Human Rights

⁵During this period, many Greek teachers were appointed in Minority schools and they were paid by the Greek state. The Turkish teachers were appointed for 3 years and their mandate could only be prolonged after proposal of the school board and the consent of the foreign and minority schools inspector

⁶The term minority language referred to the existence of a single language in the field of minority, namely Turkish, ignoring the existence of the other two languages (Pomak and Romany language).

⁷Y.A 149251/28.11.1957 (FEK B' 162,1958) on curricula and timetables of Muslim minority schools

⁸The authors was a large interdisciplinary team comprised of academics from various Greek universities working across a range of disciplines, including sociology, psychology, education, linguistics, anthropology, history, physics, mathematics, geography and the arts (music, design, photography) as well as primary and secondary teachers

2. Political equality for both the minority and the majority population
3. To design educational policies to prevent social exclusion of minority groups

The necessity of a reform was undoubtable and according to a research study of the "Friends Group of Nikos Raptis" (1995) the existing problems were categorized as follows:

1. Non-existence of Preschool Education: The lack of preschools in mountainous areas led to the ineffectiveness of the elementary minority school.
2. Building Infrastructure: The building infrastructure of schools was not satisfactory and the custodial material was not sufficient. Thanks to the state interventions, the situation had improved significantly in the previous decades but it was far being defined as positive. In this regard, there are several multi-grade schools with a few students and co-teaching of the courses.
3. Detailed Curriculum: There was no specific curriculum for minority schools.
4. Poor Social and Education level of families: The low income family environment did not facilitate the success of children at school.

The events that were a catalyst for action in the minority area until the mid-1990s were:

1. The low educational outcome in the minority schools.
2. The students' significantly limited understanding of the Greek language.
3. The high drop out rate from compulsory school, particularly for girl.⁹
4. The lack of access to the Greek higher education.

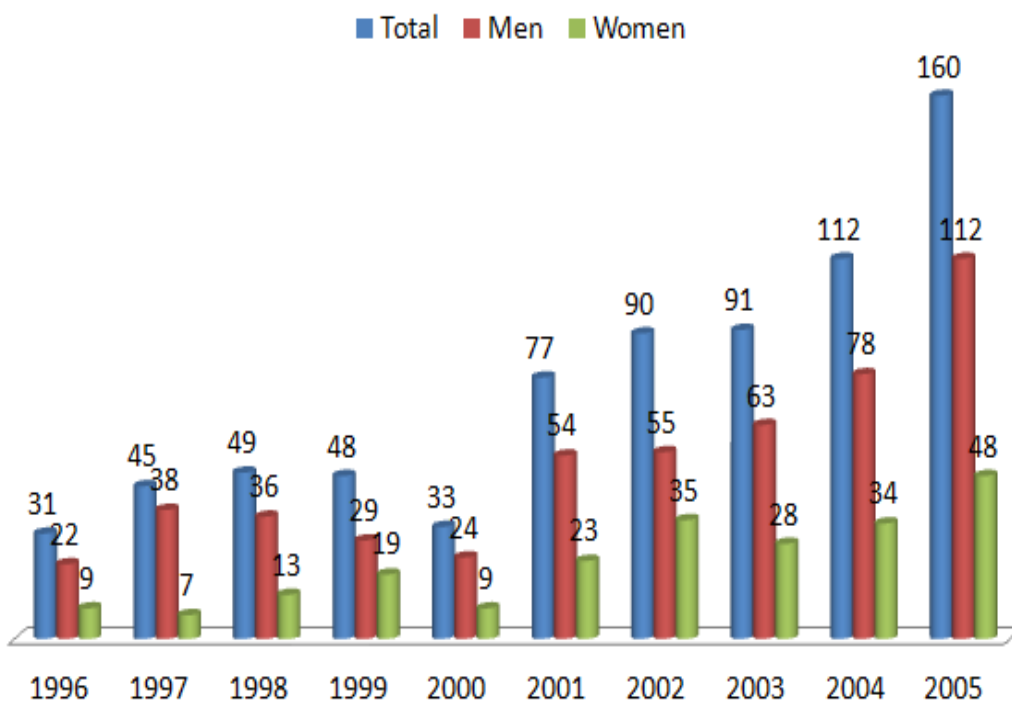
Last but not least, the writing of books for courses taught in Turkish was a pressing need. This would end the use of Turkish pictures and graphics in textbooks and allow the customization of the material to Greek speaking programs in minority primary school.¹⁰

⁹Moreover, both the nomination of Greek teachers in Minority schools was vital, considering that the communities did not appoint teachers from the Community, and the appointment of women teachers in schools as well in order to allow girls to continue school and not run into the ethics of the Muslim society

¹⁰Since 2000, the Greek books that students had during the school years were the same books used by all schools in the country. It naturally follows that this requires excellent speaking language of Greek.

Up until the mid-1990s, there were no extensive educational policies enforced for minority education. In 1995, the Minister of Education George Papandreou passed the law 2341/2.10.1995 (FEK A' 208,1995) of quota for the access of minority students to higher education. The entrance of minority pupils to universities and to technical-vocational institutes takes place on the basis of a separate selection process, allowing a special 0.5 per cent minority quota to register in Greek universities. The Muslim students participate in the pan-Hellenic exams as a separate group competing among themselves. Recent measures following the same logic is the 2005 extension of this measure to the Technological Educational Institute (T.E.I) in addition to the Technical Professional Institutions (T.E.E), the first entitlement of scholarships in higher education and the important measure of importing the teaching of the Turkish language in public secondary schools in Thrace in 2006. The following graph cites the categories and the data regarding to the number of Muslim minority pupils who succeeded in entering into the Greek universities with the quota.

Figure 2.2: The number of Muslim minority pupils who succeeded in Greek universities with the quota



Source: Georgiadou K.(2006)

We notice that around 1/3 of those places remained vacant. Not all minority applicants succeeded in their application into Greek Universities, as evident from the volume of still vacant places.

Table 2.1: Muslim Turkish students entering Greek Universities

Academic Year	Number of Reserved places	Total of candidates	Passed	Failed	Vacant places
2006-2007	730	618	470	148	260
2007-2008	756	641	487	154	273

Source:Huseyinoglou 2012

The project for the reform of the education of the Muslim minority children, named "Muslim Children Education" (known in Greek as "P.E.M"), was funded 80 per cent by the European Social Fund and 20 per cent by the Greek Ministry of Education. It is directed by Professors Anna Fragoudaki and Thalia Dragonas.¹¹ The program was designed by the Special Secretariat for the Education of Greeks Abroad and Intercultural Education in collaboration with the National Kapodistrian University. The logo of the project is: "Addition, not Subtraction, Multiplication, not Division". The policy objectives of the Ministry of Education for each phase are clear in so-far-as they provide for:

- Structural improvements to reduce educational and social inequalities that prevent children from obtaining a professional education and training, which then has adverse local effects on the economy.
- More attractive teaching materials, in terms of content and specific pedagogical design, to encourage students interest in learning Greek.
- A more convenient and better way of learning of the Greek language.
- The training of teachers in all of the above issues.
- The integration of new generations of the minority through school and their subsequent acceptance in the society as equal citizens.

¹¹It involved four phases: Greek Ministry of Education, Lifelong Learning and Religious Affairs, Operational Program in Education and Initial Vocational Training I(1997-2000), II(2002-2004), III(2005-2008), IV(2010-2013)(Dragonas, 2014)

- The rise of awareness in the educational community and society for the recognition and the acceptance of the Muslims.

As far as the language of learning materials for minority schools is concerned, Greek was taught as a second language and it responded to the specific conditions of minority schools: bilingual education, immigrant students with significant cultural differences, from limited to non-existent knowledge of Greek by the majority of students, lack of preschool education and the teaching of Greek language from the beginning.

This project began its life as a three-year plan which has been extended three times, under seven different Ministers of Education, over five consecutive governments, thereby demonstrating the long-standing interest of the Greek state to improve minority education (Fragoudaki, 2008). This 15-year intervention can be placed in the tradition of action research, the aim of which is to challenge discrimination, bridge research and activism in the field of educational policy and pedagogy and ultimately achieve social change (Abraham and Purkayastha, 2012). Although, the project is applied to the whole Thrace (Alexandroupoli, Komotini, Xanthi), the majority of the Muslim population resides in Western Thrace (Xanthi, Rodopi), hence the outcome of the program is more obvious in these cities.

Chapter 3

Data and statistical descriptive analysis

3.1 The Educational System

Education for minorities has a history that follows the policies and social changes made in the Greek state during the last 100 years. The legal status of minority schools combines elements of both private and public schools.¹ The schools are provided and supervised by a special Co-ordinating Bureau for minority schools. The main peculiarity of the minority primary schools is that they follow the public holidays of both religions, therefore they have less school time than the other schools. The number of minority elementary schools, with small fluctuations in the last decade is 220. Most of them are single (around 80 per cent), while more than half operate with fewer than twenty students (Frangoudaki, 2008). The students of primary schools, approximately 7,500 children between 6 and 12 years old, enter the first grade without speaking Greek. The main cause of this phenomenon is the isolation of the minority population which live in culturally pure settlements (except those who live in big cities). In addition, a large percentage of women do not speak Greek, most families watch Turkish TV and children grow up in an environment without any contact with the Greek language. The lack of knowledge of the Greek language was also

¹The elementary schools are all private and are administered by school boards whose members are elected by local parents.

influenced by the non-inclusion of minority children into the higher education. Until 1995, there was complete absence of any prospect for social mobility through school. It was impossible for minority students to enter the Greek universities. As a result, almost all of the few graduates from this group of citizens have diplomas from Turkish universities. In conclusion, the Greek language was not of great value for the members of the minority, since the sole perspective for further studies beyond primary school was to be found in Turkey.

For the secondary education, minority students have a range of schools to choose from: two bilingual schools which are located in Xanthi and in Komotini, two religious schools (Madrese)², monolingual Greek schools³ or schools in Turkey. There are no reliable statistics on numbers of enrolment in the Turkish secondary schools. Some Turkish and minority sources mention that around 3,000 – 4,000 pupils were registered in these schools in the first half of the 1990s (Onsounoglou, 1997), but a survey conducted as part of P.E.M presented much smaller numbers (Askouni,2006). Furthermore, during the last decade there is an increasing number of students who attended public high schools, since this option provides them with more valuable tools for their integration into society and the labor market. It should be noted that more than 1,500 Muslims students choose to study in public Greek schools while, there is an undetermined proportion of pupils who study in secondary and high schools in Turkey (Tsitselikis, 2007).

According to research data in 1997, almost 80 per cent of minority children have finished six-year primary education.⁴ Contrary to this, a large percentage of pupils had a poor knowledge of the Greek language, hence more than 50 per cent of them had difficulties in the language classes in secondary schools (Dragonas and Frangoudaki, 2006).

²Today, there are only two Ierospoudastiria (Madrese), one in Komotini and one in Xanthi. In 1998, the policy for the functioning of Ierospoudastiria was adjusted for the first time including a change in the duration of the studies, which increased to six years (two three-year cycles). These schools were defined as equivalent to the public religious schools and high schools. The curriculum in Ierospoudastiria differs from the one in Minority schools, since the majority of the subjects are taught in Greek language, while students are taught the Turkish language, the RE and the Islamic history in Turkish (Askouni,2006). It is important to mention that in 2000-2001, the Muslim minority girls started enrolling in the Ierospoudastiria of Komotini.

³It is worth mentioning that the majority of the Pomaks goes to the monolingual Greek schools, since their roots are different from the Turkish-speaking students and the language they speak (Pomak) is closer to the Bulgarian language.

⁴It was 30 years ago that compulsory education was extended to nine years.

Parents play a pivotal role in the education of minority children. In the beginning of the P.E.M, parents did not seem to be enthusiastic about their children learning Greek. However, qualitative research (Plexousakis, 2005) has pointed out that parents are now very keen to have their children well educated.

Within twenty years (1989-2008) the number of minority students attending high school almost quadrupled: from 769 students in 1989-1990 to 3,381 between 2007 and 2008. In high school the figure is ten times higher since 231 students were enrolled in 1989-90, while in 2007-08 the number of the students reached 2,256. The greater percentage of the minority population prefers public Greek-language secondary and high schools. Due to the limitations of the minority school network (minority high schools can accommodate a limited number of students), students attend the public Greek-language schools. At the same time, as shown by previous research data, students express their desire for integration in the Greek social community. One of the main reasons for this choice is the teaching of the Greek language, which parents and students recognize as essential and necessary requirement for a future professional and social integration. The choice of public schools is closely linked to the measure of the quota, i.e. the privileged access to Greek higher education given to the minority in 1995.

Table 3.1: The number of Muslim pupils in the Minority Elementary Schools by Prefecture

Prefectures	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012
Xanthi	3047	3034	2972	2975	2909	2844
Rodopi	3094	3117	3068	2991	2943	2859
Evros	553	531	491	447	447	431
Total	6694	6682	6531	6413	6299	6134

Source: Tsareksi Tz.(2013)

Table 3.2: The number of Muslim pupils in Public Elementary Schools by Prefecture

Prefectures	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012
Xanthi	1265	1350	1409	1621	1728	1602
Rodopi	364	439	460	525	480	576
Evros	597	637	640	737	717	744
Total	2226	2426	2509	2883	2925	2922

Source: Tsareksi Tz.(2013)

Until today the P.E.M program has five phases. The first three phases titled "Program for the Education of Muslim Children", while the fourth and the fifth phase is called "The Program for the Education of minority Children in Thrace 2010-2013" and "Integration and education of the Muslim Children" respectively.

The first phase (1997-2000) of P.E.M was focusing on the primary education with a major goal, the improvement of the Greek-speaking part of the primary schools. The activities of this phase included:

1. The production of new textbooks and materials for the Greek language program of the primary schools.
2. The training of teachers.
3. Research on the educational system for minority students and its challenges and opportunities.
4. Actions involving the entire community.

The second phase (2002-2004) continued the improvement of the goals that the first phase had set and added new targets, with emphasis on higher education. The main goal of P.E.M during this second phase was the gradual reduction of the considerably high minority drop out rate in secondary education (which is compulsory). A study carried out during the second phase revealed that more than 50% of minority pupils drop out of school without completing secondary school. This phase included:

1. The production of new textbooks and educational material for the Greek language program of the secondary schools.
2. The training of teachers.
3. The organizing of supplementary classes at secondary schools.
4. Promoted the connection with the local community through the establishment of two support centers (KESPEMs).

5. Continued to conduct surveys and qualitative studies on language use and language assessment, improving Greek-language competence, reducing drop out rates from the compulsory nine-year schooling period, and families' attitudes towards secondary education.

The third phase (2005-2008) continued the work from the previous two phases, adding the following:

1. Producing a “Teacher’s Guide” and training materials for the teachers of minority primary schools.
2. Supporting the work of minority school teachers through systematic visits of trainers to schools.
3. Organizing training cycles for secondary school teachers to familiarize them with the use of the new teaching materials and for those who take part in the supplementary classes.
4. Training secondary teachers on inter-group relations and on communication management in the classroom.
5. The development of KESPEMs in the each region of Thrace.

The fourth phase(2010-2013) improved the quality of reinforcing classes in the courses of the Greek language, the mathematics and natural science and training for the teachers.

The fifth phase is still in progress (2016-2018).

Below the relevant tables are quoted:

Table 3.3: Students in Minority Secondary education in Xanthi-Komotini

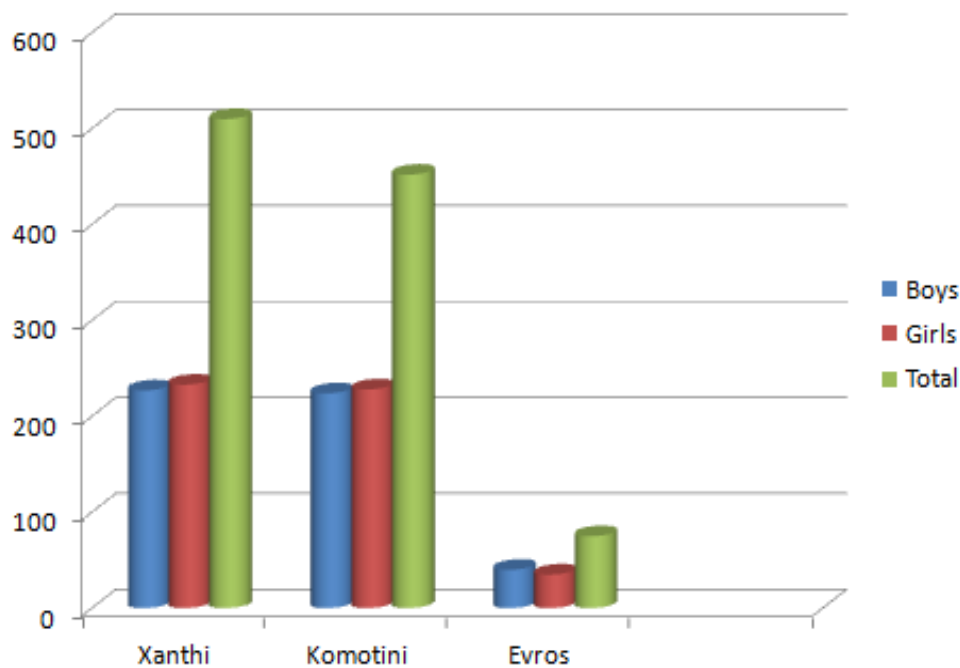
Year	Public Secondary	Minority Secondary	Ierospoudastiria	Total
1991-1992	504	262	175	941
2002-2003	2,089	659	188	2,936
2006-2007	2,410	714	304	3,428
2009-2010	2,640	668	273	3,581

Table 3.4: Students in Minority High Schools in Xanthi-Komotini

Year	Private High Schools	Minority High Schools	Technical-Vocational Education	Total
1989-1990	49	55	127	231
2002-2003	431	330	465	1,226
2006-2007	807	416	773	1,996
2009-2010	1,098	443	1,061	2,602

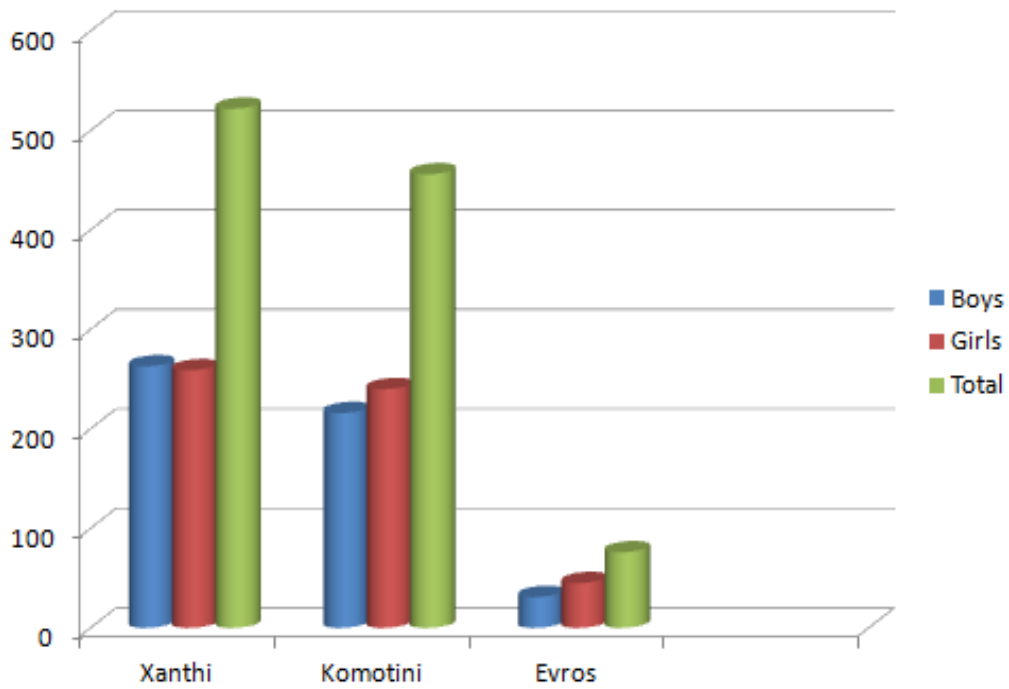
The graphs below present the number of students who attend the last grade(6th) of minority elementary school in three consecutively years. In 2009-2010, we notice a slightly increase in the number of students in the three cities of Thrace comparatively with the two other school years.

Figure 3.1: 2008-2009, Minority Elementary Education: 6th grade



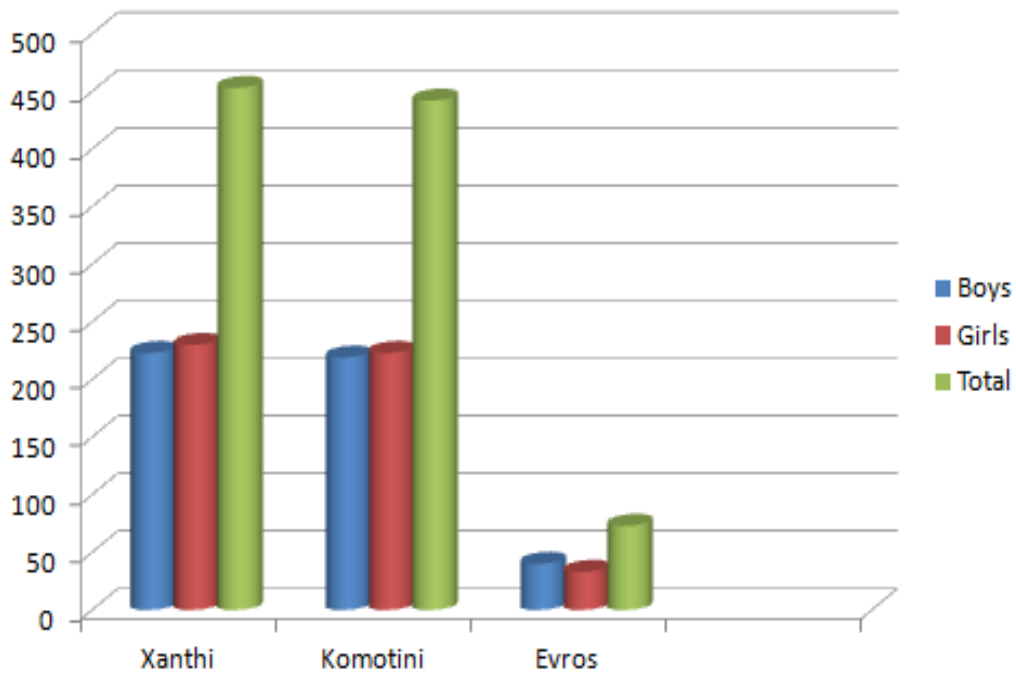
Source: Dimasi M. (2014)

Figure 3.2: 2009-2010, Minority Elementary Education: 6th grade



Source: Dimasi M. (2014)

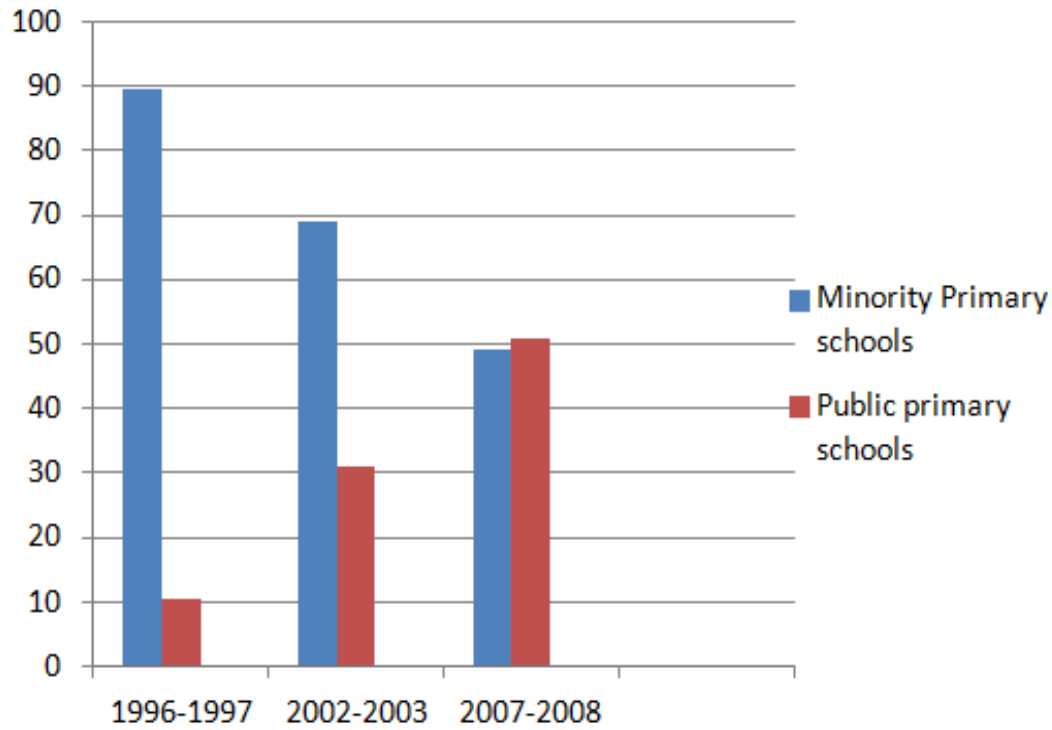
Figure 3.3: 2010-2011, Minority Elementary Education: 6th grade



Source: Dimasi M. (2014)

One of the positive outcome that has noticed over the years is the preferring trend of minority children to attend the mainstream Greek primary school instead of their own.

Figure 3.4: Minority vs Public Elementary Schools in Xanthi



Source: Dimasi M. (2014)

3.2 Classroom Materials

3.2.1 Greek Textbooks

From the 1920s until the 1950s, Greece applied various policies to teach Greek across the country (Katsikas and Therianos, 2007). During the education assessment inspector visit in Thrace, he reported that the standard of minority schools' Greek language education was very low. In the 1929 report, he wrote down that from the 241 minority primary schools that existed only 20 of them were included Greek courses in their curriculum.⁵ His inference was that the current teaching method was inappropriate for minority students learning Greek, a language that they never spoke at home or amongst themselves (Huseyinoglu, 2012). The same situation continued in the mid-1940s when A.Papaevgeniou (the General Inspector of Foreign and minority Schools) called the Jewish and Muslim minority schools' Greek teaching methods as "inappropriate". The preparation of the new official minority primary schools took more than a half century. The books of the courses taught in the Greek language are published under the responsibility of the Greek educational authorities. By the year 1999-2000 minority schools used the same books taught in all schools in the country. These books were replaced with new ones which were made especially for the minority schools from the Education Program for Muslim. Since 2000, they are the official books of the Greek-language program.

In 1997, 40 new textbooks History, Geography, civic and environment related books were introduced in primary school for those with Greek as a second language.⁶ In the secondary education, new materials were created, related to grammar exercises, literature, history, mathematics, natural sciences and geography. Furthermore, the project has produced three different dictionaries for minority pupils, designed on the basis of their needs. All three dictionaries take into account the age of these pupils and the fact that they are foreign speakers of Greek, and they each have a distinct goal. The dictionaries produced by the project are: A Greek-Turkish dictionary for children, an explanatory

⁵The education assessment inspector's 1929 and 1930 reports, which were presented to the Greek Prime Minister

⁶The Greek language is taught from 9 to 11 hours in all the classes

dictionary of Greek as a foreign language and a trilingual dictionary of terminology. Director of the program, who believed that learning becomes pleasure and a creative adventure through games, created two electronic educational games. They are based on the use of personal computers, in order to make pedagogical use of games and of children's great attraction to new technologies. It is for this purpose that they have been designed on the basis of the language needs of children and the pedagogical principles of the project. Finally, to support teachers who work under the difficult conditions that characterize minority education, P.E.M has produced a large variety of educational material intended for the teachers themselves. The objective of this material is to provide teachers with information and tools that would facilitate their everyday teaching practice, and to enhance their pedagogical skill.⁷ Additionally, new teacher training materials have been developed on salient themes pertaining to minority education, broken down to 34 booklets, called "Key and Skeleton Key"⁸ (Georgiadis et al, 2011). The educational community as a whole considers that the program P.E.M which assumed the change of books for courses taught in Greek had a positive effect on the educational matters in the region.

3.2.2 Turkish Textbooks

According to the principle of reciprocity, textbooks for the Greek and Turkish programs of minority schools in Western Thrace and Istanbul are imported from Turkey and Greece respectively (Tsitselikis, 2008). The need for a reform in Turkish books was urgent because until then the books for the Turkish course were photocopies of books from the 1950s. In 2005 the Greek Ministry of Education institutionalized Turkish as a curricular subject in Greek secondary minority schools. Consequently, there is huge resistance by nationalists on both sides, while the main disagreement from the side of Turkey was its lack of involvement in the design and development of the textbooks. Therefore in 2006, P.E.M asked members of the minority in conjunction with two members of the

⁷see more at <http://www.museduc.gr>

⁸Available online at www.kleidiaantikleidia.net

Rum minority of Istanbul who live in Greece to design the Turkish textbook.⁹ This textbook, called Turkish Textbook,¹⁰ published in 2008, is incomparable with all the previous Turkish books, because it is composed of texts written by academics, writers and poets who are minority members.¹¹

Table 3.5: Curriculum in Elementary Schools

Curriculum in Elementary schools				
Greek language	History	Geography	Civics	Study of environment
Turkish language	RE(Qur'an)	Mathematics	Art	Physics

Source: Dragonas Th. & Frangoudaki A. (2006)

Table 3.6: Curriculum in High Schools

Curriculum in High school						
Greek language	Ancient- Modern Greek	History	Civics	Geograpgy	Art	French/English
Turkish language	Physics	Math	Art	Musik	RE	Turkish

Source: Dragonas Th. & Frangoudaki A. (2006)

3.3 Greek Teachers

”Even in the Turkish language, when I finished the primary school I didn’t know how to read[…], the teacher was coming into the class, commanded the pupils to read the text, she ordered only those who knew how to do it and we were passing unnoticed.”

Excerpt from the interview of a member from a minority group (Plexousakis,1999).

An important landmark in the history of minority education in Greece is the 1968 establishment by the Greek authorities of the Special Pedagogical Academy of Thessaloniki (EPATH). The primary goal of the Academy in the beginning was to educate teachers who would then exclude the minority teachers with the ideological load from Turkish academies (Georgiadou, 2006). Tsioumis(2010), lists all the categories of teachers who currently work at minority schools:

⁹The Rum Orthodox community comprises ethnic Rums in Istanbul, Gökçeada (Imros) and Bozcaada (Tenedos), as well as Arabic- and Turkish-speaking Antakya Rum Orthodox Christians (Antiochians) who are not ethnically Ru

¹⁰The Turkish language is taught from 7 to 9 hours a week depending on the grade.

¹¹See Stathi 1997 ”The Turkish School Textbooks in Thrace”

1. Greek Muslims, graduates of EPATH. This group of teachers is the largest among the other minority teachers. Many of them work as civil servants and others work under a private law employment contract. (In 2003, 301 graduated teachers of EPATH were working in minority schools in Thrace).
2. Greek Muslims, graduates from special Turkish schools (In 2003, 76 teachers graduated from the special Turkish schools were working in minority schools).
3. Turkish Muslims, graduates from Pedagogical Academies in Turkey who work in Greece under reciprocity agreements with their Greek counterparts who provide their services in Istanbul.
4. Greek Muslims, graduates from Ierospoudastiria or graduates from private secondary and high schools who gradually retire (In 2003, 29 graduated teachers of Ierospoudastiria (=Medrese) were working in minority schools).
5. Greek non-Muslims, graduates of Pedagogical Academies and of University of Primary Education.

Today according to statistics, received by the Coordinating Office of Minority Education at Komotini, there are 354 teachers graduates of EPATH out of 411 teachers working at minority schools. Until recently¹², the majority of teachers had an ambivalent attitude towards the education of minority students, identifying the Turkish ethnic identity as the identity of the "enemy." In contrast, the teachers wanted the complete assimilation of the students with Pomak or Gypsy ethnic identity. The negative perception of the majority of teachers against the minority students was leading to discrimination and to the creation of a negative environment in the classroom.

One of the most critical and difficult tasks though, was and still remains the teachers' training on the process of accepting diversity. This aspect was enriched by previous experience through teacher training programs and student projects (innovative educational

¹²From 1997 onwards, the P.E.M program undertook the training of teachers and the teachers' attitudes considerably changed.

experiment in Athens undertaken by a group of “animators”) (Georgiadis, 2011). Additionally, new teacher training materials have been developed on several themes pertaining to minority education, spread across 34 booklets.¹³ For the first time in the history of minority education in Greece, teachers from both the minority groups and the rest of Greece were trained side by side. The teacher training workshops focused on the didactic and pedagogic skills, the use of new materials, the development of self-reflective practices and the negotiation of different behaviours (Lytra, 2014). Moreover, a documentary video titled “What’s your name”, examining the dialects of identity in Western Thrace was created. The objective of the film was to show, through images and words, the differences and similarities, the variety, the conflicts, the desire for negotiation, the difficulties in communication, the multiple cultural traditions but also the common land which connects the different residents of the same region (www.museduc.gr). The training of the teachers was the most difficult part and the least successful of all the activities of P.E.M.¹⁴

3.4 Turkish Teachers

Teachers of the Turkish-speaking program may be graduates of specific Turkish school¹⁵, EPATH or Ierospoudastiria.¹⁶ The former usually have an average of thirty years of work in minority schools. The teachers are mostly men and are called as “qualified” teachers¹⁷ in order to make the distinction from the graduates of Ierospoudastiria. The “qualified”

¹³see www.Kleidia kai Antikleidia.net

¹⁴More information can be found on www.museduc.gr (available in Greek, English and Turkish) and on the article of Magos, 2006 for the procedure and the results of the research.

¹⁵These schools are specifically designed to provide the training for these teachers; the duration of the education is 6-7 years and it take place immediately after the primary school. The studies of teachers in these Turkish schools were made available due to special agreements between Greece and Turkey in order to staff the minority schools with trained teachers. A small group of these teachers has a university degree.

¹⁶Most teachers in this category are simultaneously religious functionaries. They teach, in their majority, in minority secondary schools, which have a religious direction, and are placed in isolated areas. There are two such schools currently in Thrace. These teachers have usually attended seminars, although some have only attended a few classes therein. Their pedagogical training is incomplete, and they often only teach the lesson of Religious Education.

¹⁷The “qualified” teachers are considered to have adequate education, better knowledge of the Turkish language and more progressive ideas in comparison to their colleagues who are graduates of Ierospoudastiria.

teachers act as official spokesmen of the educational demands of the minority, underlining the importance of the teaching of the Turkish language, which they consider to be the official language of the minority.

The graduates of EPATH is numerically the largest category of the minority teachers, and they gradually replace the other categories (graduates of Turkish Schools and of Ierospoudastiria). The majority of them have graduated from a Turkish school or a minority high school and subsequently from EPATH. The graduates of EPATH are civil servants and they are appointed as officials or deputies in minority schools. In comparison to the "qualified" teachers, the graduates of EPATH are considered to have reduced pedagogical competences and lack of knowledge of the Turkish language. These claims arise both from the fact that the majority of the graduates of EPATH are of Pomak origin, since EPATH is considered incomplete due to the course instruction being in Greek, and the fact that Turkish is a second language for them.

The teachers that graduated from the EPATH could only teach at minority primary schools. The status of EPATH was not ever equal to a university department, therefore teachers could not apply for other posts other than for minority primary schools. Due problems of EPATH concerning the quality of Turkish education, a number of EPATH teachers started to face significant problems using the new Turkish textbooks (Huseyinoglu,2012). In 2010, EPATH came to an end and it replaced from a program specializing in Minority Education from the Pedagogical Department of Primary Education in the Faculty of Education of Aristotle University of Thessaloniki.

3.5 Supplementary Classes

From November 2010, an intensive intervention program begun, designed to support those children with irregular attendance and low performance at school. Classes take place in the afternoons and also during the summer vacation in the prefectures of Xanthi, Rodopi and Evros. The teaching method of these classes differ from the traditional teaching, while students are positioned as active learners and language is for meaningful communication (Lytra,2014). During the summer vacations the classes that pupils can attend are:

1. Greek language classes for primary school children.
2. Preparatory classes for secondary school

The evaluation of this program is presented as below:

Table 3.7: Variation in the Number of Students and in their Attendance Rate

February - June 2011		
Prefectures	Number of Pupils	Attendance Rate
Xanthi	298 - 344	50%
Rodopi	185 - 180	50%
Evros	219 - 216	63%

Source: www.museduc.gr

October 2011 - June 2012		
Prefectures	Number of Pupils	Attendance Rate
Xanthi	158 - 72	46%
Rodopi	101 - 40	40%
Evros	156 - 72	46%

Source: www.museduc.gr

Summer Courses 2012		
Prefectures	Number of Pupils	Attendance Rate
Xanthi	198 - 147	74%
Rodopi	-	-
Evros	165 - 87	53%

Source: www.museduc.gr

October 2012 - June 2013		
Prefectures	Number of Pupils	Attendance Rate
Xanthi	282 - 166	59%
Rodopi	63 - 47	75%
Evros	174 - 69	40%

Source: www.museduc.gr

3.6 Support Centers of the Program

The two support centers (one in Xanthi and one in Komotini) of the project, or KESPEMs as they are known in Greek, has been running since 2003. These centers provide free of charge Greek language lessons for primary school children using computers and special educational materials. Moreover, the KESPEMs offer creative activities for children and adolescents, Greek courses for adults, Turkish language courses for teachers and a library which operates for students and teachers (Notaras, 2008). They are staffed with members of the minority and the majority. In 2006, the P.E.M launched the “mobile” KESPEMs, which are specially configured vans equipped with laptops and many educational materials. These vans visit remote villages on a daily basis, and bring the educational activities of the program (www.museduc.gr). In the current phase there are ten KESPEMs¹⁸ and four mobile KESPEMs. Last but not least, KESPEM was successful between 2013 and 2014 since of the 68 pupils who attended class, 43 went on to higher education.

3.7 Work with the Community

Opening up to the community was deemed an important step to overcoming the structural inequalities of minority education (Notaras, 2008). There are ten community centers¹⁹, with members both from minority and majority. As a result, this process leads to the elimination of the discrimination and to the creation of a new world without boundaries. They offer a wide range of activities such as creative play and the arts for preschool children, compensatory classes in the afternoon and summer courses for primary and sec-

¹⁸Three of the KESPEMs are in the urban areas and the remaining seven are in a small towns of villages.

¹⁹Three in the urban centers of Xanthi, Komotini and Alexandroupoli and seven in semi-urban and rural areas

ondary students. Finally, many courses are taught with the use of computer, Greek language classes are offered to the parents and Turkish language classes for Greek-speaking teachers. These centers represent a microcosm, where different identities can coexist and languages can alternate.

3.8 Literature Review

Ironically, the Muslim children in Thrace have received a bilingual education for the past 70 years, illustrating the fact that the language of instruction itself is only superficial. Coercive power relations can be expressed as effectively through two languages as through one (Cummins, 2004, p.10). As the major director of P.E.M, Professor Frangoudaki, says "One great difficulty in the work was the dearth of reliable information and basic education and population statistics". However, a number of surveys and qualitative studies conducted during the years of the project concerned the pupil and teacher population, the educational and social background of parents (Askouni, forthcoming), language use, Greek language competence (Tzeveleku et al., forthcoming), drop-out rates from the compulsory nine-year period of education (Askouni, forthcoming), attitudes towards education, and representations of ethnic identity. Three thematic units, Teaching Methodology, the socio-cultural context of education, Identity, Diversity issues are very important factors, in which different scientific approaches trying to answer the questions of everyday educational practices. Moreover, recent studies dating from the mid-90s repeatedly showed that Greek Muslim minority members tended to be geographically isolated, socio-economically marginalised and educationally disadvantaged vis-à-vis majority Greeks. These studies reported that only a small percentage of minority children successfully completed secondary education and an even smaller one moved on to tertiary education in Greek Universities (Chondroyanni et al, 2005).

The language research project which conducted by some researchers (Tzeveleku et al, 2005) showed the following:

1. The majority of children begin elementary school without attending the pre-school

education since there are no bilingual kindergartens in Thrace. Hence, their knowledge of Greek language is extremely limited.

2. The assessment of children's language proficiency was based on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages and it addresses adults and not young learners. The survey presents the distribution of children regardless of age and of social parameters, in levels of proficiency.

Looking from a theoretical perspective, as Huseyinoglu (2012) mentions neither the minority under study nor other minorities in Greece were treated as primordial or eternal communities. Rather, he treated Minorities as socially-constructed groups with their own distinct ethnic, religious or linguistic characteristics.

Chapter 4

Conclusion

Between 1997-2000, when the P.E.M program was implemented, its total cost for a duration of 32 months was 3,371,973.59 Euros. Following that period, an extension was needed, therefore from September 2000 to December 2001, the budget for the P.E.M program was 763,022.74 Euros. P.E.M started operating with approximately 7000 students from the minority primary schools, while every school year the exact number of the pupils was the following:

- In 1997 - 1998: 7,437
- In 1998 to 1999: 7,212 and
- In 1999-2000: 7,056

According to the data that are provided by Frangoudaki A., Scientific Coordinator of the program, the students who benefited from the program fell within the following categories:

- With regard to the improvement of the teaching of the Greek language (the creation of the new textbooks and the teaching materials) is deemed that an estimated total of 7,000 students who were going in the elementary school have benefited.
- As to the impact of teachers' training in the improvement of the teaching methods and the acceptance of the particular cultural identity of the students, considered that approximately 1/5 of all students have benefited, since only some teachers of

minority schools have experimentally used the new books and implementing the new teaching methods.

- In relation to the influence of the awareness of the local community with festive actions addressed to the students of the target population, 400-500 students have benefited.¹

What are the results after many years of hard work? The question is difficult to answer. If the more than 100 people who worked on the P.E.M project were to be asked, the answer would be a mixture of great satisfaction and frustration, a sense of success and a Sisyphean struggle (Dragonas and Frangoudaki, 2006). The P.E.M. has managed to reduce the initial suspicion of students and especially of parents towards the program and to greatly help their smooth integration in the school, while it strengthened the motivation for learning the Greek language by children. The positive discrimination measure mentioned earlier, concerning access to tertiary institutions, has strengthened the minority's motivation to attend Greek secondary education (Dragonas and Frangoudaki, 2006). The new textbooks were based on modern pedagogical principles and innovative teaching approaches were appropriate for minority children, and they were taking into account the specific socio-cultural background of the students. The teaching methods used in the education of minorities, in particular the design of textbooks, could be used to improve public education in Greece. Moreover, the training of teachers of primary and high students resulted in the elimination of discrimination towards foreign language speaking children, but also had great success rate in educational issues and teaching techniques.

There is also a notable trend among the minority towards preferring the mainstream Greek primary school instead of their own. So in 2002–03, out of a total of 6887 minority children only 12% attended mainstream Greek primary schools; in 1996–97 the percentage

¹In 2002-2004, there was the second evaluation of the program regarding to the teaching of Greek as a second language with the new textbooks, to the training of the teachers with according to the new textbooks, the teaching of Greek as a second language and new approaches for dealing successfully with the pupils' cultural heterogeneity and finally, to the work of the Supportive Centers (KESPEMs). The pupils who took part in P.E.M were 10,000 (7,000 Minority elementary students and 3,000 Minority secondary students). The results of the evaluation was especially high while the majority of the pupils have benefited from the program.

had been 5% and, prior to that, practically zero (Askouni, forthcoming). Since 1995 when the positive discrimination measure for university entrance examinations was introduced, 70 to 110 minority students entered tertiary education every year. This number is still very low, given the allotted quota of 410 places,² and reflects the inefficiency of the secondary school as well as the difficulties students face when they find themselves at university (Dragonas and Frangoudaki, 2006). Finally, the most important achievement that P.E.M accomplished is the gradual formation of a new "we", which tends to overcome stereotypes and create a new society.³

Last but not least, as relations between Greece and Turkey remain in tension, educational policies towards minorities in Thrace (in particular bilingual education) has yet to meet its full potential. It remains to be seen if it will promote substantial bilingual literacy.

²European Monitoring Center on Racism and Xenophobia (2004, p. 171).

³www.museduc.gr

Chapter 5

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