



**REPUBLIC OF CYPRUS
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, SPORT AND YOUTH**

**Address by the Minister of Education, Sport and Youth Dr Athena Michaelidou at the
Press Conference for the “Weeks of the German Language 2024”**

Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth, 31 October 2024, 1100 a.m.

It is with great pleasure that I welcome you again this year here at the Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth for the Press Conference held on the occasion of the “Weeks of the German Language 2024”.

Herzlich Willkommen!

Last year’s cooperation with the Embassies of Germany, Austria, Switzerland and the Goethe Institute of Cyprus was very successful and I am sure that our cooperation this year will be even more constructive.

This year’s events will last from the 5th to the 26th of November and the Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth has already informed accordingly all secondary schools in order to participate through creative actions that promote the German Language and contribute to the development of various student skills. Within this context, on the 12th of November, our Ministry in collaboration with the Technical School of Larnaca is organizing an event during which students will prepare breakfast recipes inspired by the cuisine of the German-speaking countries.

The Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth supports the “Weeks of the German Language”, as multilingualism constitutes a basic pillar of our educational policy. Multilingualism contributes decisively to the all-round development of our youth, in the context of the modern, student-centered and inclusive school we pursue. Aligned with EU priorities, we consider multilingualism as one of the key competences needed for personal fulfilment, a healthy and sustainable lifestyle, employability, active citizenship and social inclusion. We thus promote language competences,

which are at the heart of building the European Education Area and indispensable for mobility, cooperation and mutual understanding across borders.

The German language in particular can provide our young generation with many benefits, opening doors to endless possibilities. Most importantly, it offers a multitude of educational and professional opportunities in a globalized world. Learning German is a worthwhile investment in the future. Anyone who speaks German has the opportunity to participate in one of the most diverse language communities in the world and to develop both personally and professionally.

For this reason, I am particularly pleased that for a second consecutive year we offer, on a pilot basis, to our students the opportunity to learn German in public schools. This Pilot Programme of learning German in Secondary Education will open to our youth doors to German-speaking countries, enabling them to explore their horizons, understand the beauty of diversity and broaden their global outlook.

The Pilot Programme of learning German started last school year in four public secondary schools in Nicosia and Limassol, and it has expanded to Paphos since the beginning of the current school year. Therefore, the four Pilot schools have now increased to six, with a subsequent increase of the number of students, who opted to learn German and have expressed their gratitude for joining the programme.

The prospects of the Pilot Programme look promising and our intention is to evaluate and gradually expand the Programme to schools of other regions as well.

The importance of the Programme was also acknowledged by the President of the Federal Republic of Germany, Mr. Frank-Walter Steinmeier, who visited the Archbishop Makarios III Gymnasium in Platy Aglantzia, in order to have a first-hand experience of the programme, during his official visit to Cyprus last February.

Our next short-term goal is the certification of the language level in cooperation with the Goethe Institute of Cyprus. At this point, I would like to thank both the German Embassy to Cyprus and the Goethe Institute for their support in supplying the schools with the appropriate books.

In conclusion, I would like to assure you that, the Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth, is committed to enhancing language education and expanding educational horizons for our students. We want to provide the foundations for a better future for our youth and multilingualism is a key component in this effort. Therefore, we promote the German language in our schools and we further strengthen our bilateral relations with German-speaking countries, such as Austria, Germany and Switzerland.

I would like to thank you all for your presence here today and wish every success in the upcoming events that will take place during the “Weeks of the German Language 2024”.

Zusammen für Deutsch! Μαζί για τα Γερμανικά!

Thank you.



