



## International Schools – Definition and Unique Selling Points

*The demand for international education is growing dramatically in virtually all parts of the world and in Germany too. The number of International Schools worldwide is stated as being over 6,000 establishments, with over 3,000,000 pupils. International Schools generally prepare pupils for an international school-leaving qualification, the International Baccalaureate (IB). The schools are known as IB World Schools and their quality is continuously evaluated by the IBO in Geneva on an external and independent basis ([www.ibo.org](http://www.ibo.org)). There are currently 4,940 IB World Schools across the globe; their school leaving examinations entitle the pupil to attend institutes of higher education all over the world. Thus, the number of International Schools is many times larger than usually assumed.*

*The term “International School”, however, is not protected by law. This means that the question repeatedly arises as to what kinds of clientele make use of International Schools, what the unique selling points of a “real” International School are, and how International Schools differ from the educational and inclusive provision of, in particular, other bilingual schools, European schools and ‘foreign schools’.*

**Thanks to standardised curricula, International Schools can offer their particularly internationally mobile clientele compatibility of education across the globe**

- International Schools are the ideal solution above all for international children whose parents are internationally mobile professionals and executives and come to Germany for a limited time.
- In addition, international schools are also a very good option for children of mobile German families if they have grown up abroad or are planning to go abroad in the near future for professional reasons together with their family.
- A global compatibility of education thanks to internationally standardised and accredited curricula permits a school career without any lost time or interruptions to education at the around 5,000 IB World Schools currently in existence.

**International Schools offer a holistic, international school profile and offer English as the language used in the school and on campus, as well as multilingualism**

- At International Schools, English is always the language used in the school and on campus.
- International Schools are not bilingual but rather offer on a regular basis, depending on the size of the school, up to 20 native languages on the campus in order to keep up the pupil’s mother tongue competency and – based on academic research findings – to enable them to learn further foreign languages with the aid of this.
- With the International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma, International Schools offer their clientele an internationally recognised qualification which entitles pupils to attend higher educational institutes across the world.
- The international teachers at International Schools are for the most part native speakers of English and have excellent training in educational theory. Usually they come with several years of experience and professionalism when dealing with diversity. They see the diversity of up to 65 different nations not as a handicap but as something that enriches everyone’s lives.
- International Schools are pioneers in the field of digital education.
- International Schools offer a holistic educational approach which focuses, among other things, on the social skills of pupils in an increasingly global and interconnected world.

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- International Schools offer a very broad extra-curricular programme of afternoon activities for pupils and families to complement their international academic and pastoral approach.

### International Schools offer active cultural exchange and therefore enduring cultural understanding and a strong (alumni) network

- International Schools are educational facilities marked by mutual respect and by pupil democracy, also because they combine numerous pupils from different nations under their roof.
- Pupils at International Schools learn to accept other cultures at the school and learn the culture of the host country.
- International Schools offer strong personal networks and simultaneously enable friendships between pupils and between parents stretching right across the world.
- Speaking a different language is the norm and part of everyday life at these schools. Pupils from up to 65 nations attend the schools. The pupils establish close friendships for life there and are active as alumni of the schools even once their school days are over.

### International Schools offer help with integration in Germany

- Alongside an excellent education, International Schools also offer assistance with integration of the international pupils AND their families.
- Diverse school events, international school sports competitions, lots of parental participation – family members take an active part in school life.
- Native German families and international families liaise closely and together make an important contribution to successful integration and to ‘feeling at home’.
- International Schools cooperate with local sports clubs both in terms of normal club activities and as part of competitions.

### International Schools are an economic development tool and a regional location factor – particularly when it comes to recruiting executives and specialist staff (Keyword: skills shortage)

- International Schools can be considered an important location factor for international companies and are, for these, of “existential” significance. International Schools are an important part of the system when it comes to the regional economy.
- International Schools are indispensable as an infrastructure for recruiting internationally mobile, foreign specialist staff and executives and their families to stay in Germany for what in general is a limited period of time.
- International Schools often constitute a medium-sized company themselves and offer numerous jobs for people from home and abroad.

### International Schools are non-profit-making and altruistic and shoulder social responsibility

- International Schools, as educational institutions, are generally non-profit-making, §52 paragraph 2 clause 7 AO [German Fiscal Code].
- International Schools therefore act altruistically and without aiming to make a profit.
- With their educational services they shoulder social responsibility.
- International Schools, as free schools, are in close contact and cooperation with other state and private schools and thereby indirectly support the state education system.
- International parents are frequently voluntary members of the boards of international schools.

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### International Schools take the pressure off the state school system and the state on an ongoing basis

- International Schools offer educational and integration services which the state generally cannot provide.
- Despite the partial state subsidies, International Schools help the state save money as the state school system does not have to become involved and International Schools can be economically very efficient.
- International Schools put in place complex, regular quality assurance processes by means of international and external (multiple) accreditations (CIS - [www.cois.org](http://www.cois.org) / NEASC - [www.neasc.org](http://www.neasc.org) , IB World School – [www.ibo.org](http://www.ibo.org) )

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