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Working Group of Turkic Minorities in FUEN

**A pilot project implementation in six public kindergartens in Western Thrace
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ABTTF President Halit Habip Ođlu: "Our demand is very clear that we want bilingual minority kindergartens within the minority schooling system"

The Institute of Educational Policies under the Ministry of Education of Greece declared that they would carry out a pilot project which envisages that a bilingual minority member, graduated from one of the higher education



institutions in Greece, would work with a teacher in a kindergarten class in public schools in six provinces where children belonging to the Turkish Minority of Western Thrace live.

According to the statement published by the Institute, the pilot project would be implemented in the remaining part of the academic year in six public kindergartens for an easy adaptation of the children to kindergartens, where minority children have no option than to go the public kindergartens since there is no permit for minority kindergartens in the country. The institute declared that the project, which will be implemented in 6 schools at the initial stage, would be expanded into 12 kindergartens in the next academic year and further noted that necessary proposals after the assessment of the results of the pilot program would be presented to the Ministry at the end of the academic year.

Halit Habip Ođlu, the President of the Federation of Western Thrace Turks in Europe (ABTTF) said, "The pilot project, which would bring that a member of the minority, who speaks Turkish and Greek will work together with the teacher in the six public kindergartens located in villages where the Western Thrace Turkish Minority live, shows that our minority's demand for bilingual minority school is insistently being ignored. Despite all the interventions by the Greek state and governmental authorities, our minority is autonomous in fields of education and religion. Therefore, we want from the Greek authorities to allow the minority to open its bilingual minority kindergartens within the minority schooling system, not a project which would allow a minority member to

work with the Greek teacher in the public kindergartens. This demand is so clear! We demand our right to have education in mother tongue at the pre-school level with no intervention to the autonomous structure in education and want the establishment of minority kindergartens where our minority children have bilingual education in Turkish and Greek”.