



OSCE HUMAN DIMENSION  
IMPLEMENTATION MEETING

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Thank you Ms/Mr Moderator,

I would like to underline some of the Greek violations of the established minority and human rights of the Turks of Western Thrace very briefly.

- The ethnic identity of the Turkish minority is still being denied.
- The Minority's historic associations were closed because of their titles included the word 'Turkish'. Despite the European Court of Human Rights decisions in favour of the Minority, the re-opening or establishment of new associations with 'Turkish' within their titles is not permitted.
- Between 1955-1998, under the implementation of No. 3370/1955 of the Greek citizenship code; Article 19, 60 thousand Turkish Minority members lost their Greek citizenship. (According to the statement of the Interior Minister the figure is 46638) No steps have been taken to eliminate the loss of minority individuals affected by the application of Article 19.
- For many years, laws against the autonomous structure of the Turkish Minority of Western Thrace education have downgraded the level.
- In Western Thrace almost half of the population is Turkish. However, there are only 4 minority secondary and high schools (two of them are religious schools) in relation to 109 state secondary and high schools. Although a need and attempts new schools have not been allowed to open.
- Every school can choose its head-teacher, however in minority schools head-teachers are not elected but appointed.
- Minority schools are closed immediately in the absence of a sufficient number of students. However, in some areas despite an adequate number of children, the opening of minority schools are not permitted.
- Permission has not been granted for bilingual (Turkish-Greek) kindergartens.
- The 3% electoral threshold is undemocratically applied to independent candidates. Therefore, the minority cannot be freely represented with independent candidates in the Greek Parliament.



- Use of the Minority's mother tongue Turkish is still prohibited in the public domain.
- In regions inhabited by the minority, in addition to the names of the places in the official language, they should also be written in the Minority's language.

Therefore, we call upon the OSCE Participating States to monitor Greek implementations of the OSCE commitments.

We would like to repeat once more that we will be honored if a fact finding mission of OSCE High Commission on National Minorities pay a visit to Western Thrace.

And we call upon the Greek State to have a concrete and constructive dialogue with the Turkish Minority representatives.