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Press Release

**FUEN 2021 Congress was held in hybrid way**

The Federal Union of European Nationalities (FUEN) organised its 65<sup>th</sup> Annual Congress on 9-12 September 2021 in the city of Trieste, Italy, hosted by the Slovenian minority living in Italy. Western Thrace Turks from the Working Group of Turkic Minorities/Communities in FUEN (TAG) participated in the hybrid congress physically, while other TAG members participated online due to travel restrictions within the scope of covid-19 outbreak.

The Federation of Western Thrace Turks in Europe (ABTTF), the Friendship, Equality and Peace (FEP) Party and the Western Thrace Minority University Graduates Association (WTMUGA) representing the Turkish community in Western Thrace, the Public Organisation of Meskhetian Turks "VATAN" and the Public Union Of Meskhetian (Ahıska) Turks living In Azerbaijan "VATAN" representing Meskhetian Turks, the Mejlis of the Crimean Tatar People representing the Crimean Tatars, the Kosovo Youth Union Association representing the Turks in Kosovo and the Social Organisation for Fostering and Development of the Karachay-Balkar Traditions (Bars El) representing the Karachay-Balkars all attended the online seminar.

FUEN 2021 Congress' official opening was moderated by writer and journalist Vida Valenčič and realised by FUEN President and MEP Loránt Vincze, Mayor of Trieste Roberto Dipiazza, host of the event President of the Confederation of Slovene Organizations (SSO) Walter Bandelj, Regional Minister for Local Autonomies, Local Authorities, Security and Immigration Pierpaolo Roberti, Minister for Slovenes Abroad Dr. Helena Jaklitsch and State Secretary for Hungarians Abroad Árpád János Potápi.

The future of Europe's cultural and linguistic diversity, the educational models of minorities in Europe and the situation of Italy's Slovenian minority were discussed in panel session held on 9-10 September.

The FUEN Prize, awarded to those who contribute to the protection of national minorities, was presented this year to UN Special Rapporteur on Minority Issues Dr. Fernand de Varennes.

**Two draft resolutions submitted by FUEN TAG member organisations were adopted by the FUEN Assembly of Delegates**

FUEN TAG members ABTTF, FEP Party, WTMUGA, the Public Organisation of Meskhetian Turks "VATAN" and the Public Union of Meskhetian (Ahıska) Turks living In Azerbaijan "VATAN", Kosovo Youth Union Association, QTMM and Bars El attended the FUEN Assembly of Delegates held in hybrid way on Saturday 11 September.

FUEN Vice-President and FUEN TAG Spokesperson Halit Habip Oğlu delivered a presentation with respect to FUEN TAG's 2020-2021 activities at the FUEN Assembly of Delegates. Habip Oğlu stated that FUEN TAG events have been moved to the online platform due to the Covid-19 outbreak, adding that FUEN TAG members come together in thematic seminars held every 3 months.

In the FUEN Assembly of Delegates, where amendments to the FUEN charter were also voted on, the resolution on the non-execution of the ECtHR judgements by Greece regarding the Bekir-Ousta and Others Group of Cases which includes the Xanthi Turkish Union the Cultural Association of Turkish Women of the Rodopi Province and Evros Prefecture Minority Youth Association, which violates the freedom of association of the Turkish community in Western Thrace jointly presented by FUEN TAG member ABTTF, FEP Party and WTMUGA, was adopted by a majority vote.

The draft resolution on the issues and current situation of the Turks of Rhodes, Kos and Dodecanese Islands in Greece, presented by FUEN TAG member Rhodes, Kos and the Dodecanese Turks Culture and Solidarity Association (ROISDER) at the FUEN Assembly of Delegates was adopted by a majority of votes.

The representative of the Tatar community in Romania, whose applications for membership in FUEN were accepted in the FUEN Board of Delegates, became the new member organizations of the Tatar Democratic Union and the Italian Union FUEN, which represents the Italian community in Slovenia and Croatia. As FUEN TAG, we welcome the Tatar Democratic Union to FUEN and the FUEN TAG family.

Representatives of the Tatar community in Romania known as the Democratic Union of Tatars and the Italian Union which represents the Italian community in Slovenia and Croatia whose applications for membership to FUEN were accepted have effectively become the new member organisations of FUEN during the FUEN Assembly of Delegates. As FUEN TAG, we welcome the Democratic Union of Tatars to FUEN and the FUEN TAG family.

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**TAG Koordinasyon**

Wemerstr. 2 · D-58454 Witten

+49 2302 913291 · tag@fuen.org · tag.fuen.org