

Source: <http://vecer.mk/makedonija/vo-turcija-zhiveat-pet-milioni-makedonci>



## Five million Macedonians live in Turkey!

March 2, 2018 - 21:25

The most populated are in the cities of the coast, Bursa, Izmir, Aydin ... but also in Istanbul. In Aydin, in the municipality of Tepegik, the mayor is Tuljai Olgun, who is a Macedonian and has many councilors in the municipality, so you can often hear the Macedonian language there, says Shenol Memish, president of the Macedonian-Turkish association Mustafa Kemal Atatürk.



Five to six million Macedonians live in Turkey. They are found in all parts of the country, mostly inhabited in the Aegean part. Although most of them were born in Turkey, and their ancestors from Macedonia have been settling for decades starting more than a century ago, they do not forget their origin. They cherish traditions, customs, even speak the Macedonian language and come to their native place with joy, explains the president of the Alliance of Macedonians with Islamic Religion, Ismail Boyda, on the first visit to Večer three years ago. Now, driven by economic motives, there are more. There are mostly Macedonian families in Manisa, Bursa, Izmir, Karshiyaki, Bostanli, and about a hundred thousand residents of Macedonian origin are in Istanbul.

Shenol Memish, president of the Macedonian-Turkish association "Mustafa Kemal Atatürk" from Bitola, confirms that there are Macedonians in several cities in Turkey.

- The most populated are in the cities of the coast, Bursa, Izmir, Aydin ..., but also in Istanbul. In Aydin, in the municipality of Tepegik, the mayor is Tuljai Olgun who is a Macedonian and has many councilors in the municipality, so you can often hear the Macedonian language there. When they emigrated in the fifties, they mostly settled in the seaside towns because they were engaged in agriculture, but today they work in all areas and are well organized.



Historically, the emigration from Macedonia and the Macedonian regions took place in several stages. The first major migration took place after the Balkan wars and after the Second World War, in the name of Islam and the promised Turkish state as a Muslim state that would give religious help, even though this population did not know the Turkish language.

- However, the biggest migration from the territory of Macedonia took place from 1950 to 1970 and then entire villages went to Turkey. Part of western Macedonia, central Macedonia and the eastern part of Macedonia, all of whom followed Muslim religion, were in this promised state of Islam, because in these regions speculation was made that Orthodox countries would be built. These people renounced their Macedonian citizenship, renounced their property, and went to Turkey with Turkish citizenship, received in the consular representation of the Republic of Turkey in Skopje, were detained in Edirne, in camps, and changed their surnames. For example, we would mention only one - from Maslar in Demirali. That was the case then, and today the greatest desire of our emigrants is to obtain Macedonian citizenship, says Boyda.



Macedonian professor in Turkey Sladjana Janceva told Radio Free Europe in 2015 that she taught over 3,500 people in three years to speak Macedonian.

These are mostly descendants of Macedonians who migrated to Turkey in the last century.

Janchevska who is a Macedonian language teacher from Skopje, left three years ago, on the initiative of the state, to enable the Macedonian minority there not to forget their mother tongue, Radio Free Europe reports.

The interest is huge. In the three years I've been conducting classes, 3,500 Macedonians who want to learn the language, have come through. They speak it. Because the interest is so big, I can not meet every day with all the students, but once a week, it's like a course. They are most interested in the Cyrillic alphabet, so that they can read, understand, and in that manner to be closer to the homeland. Slagjana Jancheva, a Macedonian language professor.

Teaching is held in several settlements at the end of Imir. She travels daily by bus, between 35 to 250 kilometers in each direction. There are students from Cili, Selcuk, Jenikent, Aydin, Manisa and others.