

## **SURVEY ON HATE SPEECH TOWARDS MEMBERS OF DIFFERENT ETHNIC GROUPS IN THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA**

The survey on hate speech towards members of different ethnic groups in the Republic of Macedonia was conducted from 13th until 15th December 2014 through a telephone poll on 800 respondents having a representative scope of all ethnic communities, urban and rural environments in the Republic of Macedonia. Statistical error for this type of survey amounts in -3.5% to +3.5%.

According to the socio-demographic data, the analysis has revealed that 48% of all respondents are men, whereas 52% are women. The most prevalent group of respondents according to their age are the ones aged 30-49 years (35.5%); 34.6% of all respondents are aged 50-64; 15.8% are over 65 and the least prevalent age group is the one between 18-29 years with 14.1% representation. Half of all respondents have completed secondary school (51.6%), 32.6% hold a college or university degree, master or PhD degree and 15.8% of all respondents only hold a primary school degree. The majority of all respondents are ethnic Macedonians (69%), 24.1% are ethnic Albanians, and 6.9% belong to another ethnic group. The structure according to the place of residence shows that 25% of the respondents are from Skopje, 41% live in other towns and 34% of all respondents live in rural areas.

Furthermore, the respondents were asked to say on what basis they largely create their image of the other ethnic communities living in the Republic of Macedonia. 40% of the respondents answered that they base their image on their day-to-day contacts with members of other ethnic communities, and 22.1% on watching the media and reading the press in the Republic of Macedonia. The rest of the respondents develop their image of the other ethnic communities on the basis of discussions with friends and acquaintances (11.6%); 6.1% through the activities of politicians from other ethnic groups, and 5.5% by watching the media and reading the press from the region and beyond and on the basis of what is being said and done by politicians of their ethnic group.

Through a list of features that can be attributed to the members of various ethnic groups in the country, the respondents have divided their positions as to the features of ethnic Macedonians, Albanians and Roma. Namely, the main features attributed to members of the Macedonian ethnic group are as follows: intelligent (87.3%), smart (84.6%), hardworking (83.8%), peaceful (82.9%) and proud (82.1%). Respondents disagree that Macedonians are filthy (80.3%), impolite (73.9%), lazy (72.6%), cowardly (70.5%), and only 16.2% of all respondents believe that the Macedonians are not hardworking. On the other hand, the main features of ethnic Albanians according to the surveyed citizens are as follows: hardworking (90.3%), proud (86.9%), smart (77.8%), intelligent (68.8%),

peaceful (63.4%). A large percentage of all respondents, 86.3%, disagree that ethnic Albanians are lazy, filthy (76.1%), cowardly (75.9%), peaceful (36.6%). According to the respondents, the Albanians are larger in extent to dislike other people (43.9%) compared to Macedonians who are represented with 23.2% in this category. As far as the position towards members of the Roma ethnic community is concerned, 88.2% of the respondents agree that they are peaceful; 62.7% share the opinion that they are filthy, whereas 60.2% believe that they are lazy. Nearly half of all respondents (43.1%) said that the Roma people are not smart, and 59.5% disagree that the Roma are dishonest.

Analyses performed according to ethnic affiliation have demonstrated certain differences. Namely, Macedonians are deemed hardworking by 71% of ethnic Albanians; 13% of them consider the Macedonians impolite, whereas 28% of them find Macedonians dishonest. The positions of the Macedonians on Albanians in reference to the aforementioned features are as follows: 90% of ethnic Macedonians agree that the Albanians are hardworking; 41% consider them impolite, and 40% think that the Albanians are dishonest.

The survey has allowed us to find out the citizens' opinions on several social issues. The following questions were put: "Do you agree for a member of a different ethnic group to marry a member of your family?"; "Do you agree for a member of a different ethnic group to live in your town or village?"; "Do you agree for a member of a different ethnic group to live in your neighbourhood?"; "Do you agree for a member of a different ethnic group to be your co-worker?". Most of the respondents (95%) agree to work together with a member from a different ethnic group; 61.5% disagree for their family member to marry a member of a different ethnic group.

As far as ethnic affiliation is concerned, there are differences between surveyed Macedonians and Albanians. 71% of ethnic Albanians disagree for a family member to marry a member of a different ethnic group, whereas this percentage is 61% with ethnic Macedonians.

The respondents were also asked: "Do you agree for your child to attend the same class with children of Albanian, Macedonian and Roma ethnic groups?" High 95.1% of respondents agree for their child to be part of a school class with children from Macedonian ethnic affiliation; 79.5% agree for the children to attend classes with children from the Albanian ethnic group, and 77.3% have no problem to have their children attend the same class as Roma children.

Analysis has shown that the Albanians are larger in percentage (81.1%) to agree for their children to be part of a school class with children from Macedonian ethnic

affiliation; whereas 74.4% of Macedonians agree for their children to attend classes with children from the Albanian ethnic group.

The question: "Have you noted hate speech towards members of different ethnic groups in public?" was positively answered by 55.9% of all respondents, whereas 44.1% said they hadn't noticed any hate speech in public.

The analysis of the following several questions covers only the respondents who answered to have noticed hate speech in public aimed at members of different ethnic groups in the country. Namely, 36.6% of these respondents said they only occasionally noted statements in the public implying hate speech; 26.7% of them said they often note such statements; 25.6% answered they sometimes note hate speech in public, and 10% said they rarely notice public statements related to hate speech towards members of different ethnic groups in the country.

The next question put to the respondents reads as follows: "Which ethnic groups is hate speech mostly aimed at?" According to the majority of respondents (65.9%), the most frequent victims of hate speech are the members of the Albanian ethnic community; 22% of them said that hate speech is aimed at members of the Macedonian ethnic group; 8% of respondents believe that the Roma community members are victims of hate speech; 1.6% believe that hate speech was aimed at ethnic Turks, whereas 3.5% believe that victims of hate speech are members of other ethnic groups in the country. High 64% of Macedonian ethnic group members believe that hate speech is aimed at ethnic Albanians. Members of the Albanian ethnic group are only a little more (70%) to share the same opinion.

Hate speech towards members of different ethnic groups is the most widely noted on television (74.1%), on wall graffiti (69.1%), on social networks (Facebook, Twitter, etc.) (56.7%), on various internet sites (54.5%), in newspapers and magazines (44.8%), whereas 32.9% of all respondents have noted hate speech through personal contacts.

Similarly to the results of the previous survey on religion and hate speech in that respect, a large portion of the respondents who have noted hate speech in public (62.6%) believe that hate speech towards members of different ethnic groups has been increasing in recent years; 18.3% believe it has been at the same level as before, and only 12.2% said it has been decreasing. Most of the respondents who believe that hate speech has been on the rise belong to the age group of 18-29 years (89%). There is no surprise when high 97.4% of all respondents in the survey answered they do not approve of hate speech in public aimed at members of different ethnic groups.

### **Conclusions:**

- **In summary, citizens believe that hate speech towards members of various ethnic groups in the country has been on the rise and it has been most widely noted on television. Both members of the Macedonian and Albanian ethnic groups believe that hate speech in public is more aimed at ethnic Albanians.**