

# Immigrants in BURSA

## Huseyin Ozturk

### Turkey

When talking about “international migration” and “immigrants”, most people think only of the immigration flow out of Turkey to Western Europe. However, even though many people do not realize it, recently Turkey has become both “receiving” and transit” country.

The Turkish Academy of Sciences (TUBA) has analyzed the migration flow in Turkey and reported that every year approximately 5000 people ask asylum in Turkey, 100.000 illegal immigrants are being caught and around 100.000 illegal immigrants are moving in and out of the borders without being caught.

Bursa is a city of immigrants. Especially, in XIX. Century, due to the shrinkage of the Ottoman Empire and the immigrations from Rumelia and Caucasia, Bursa has become a real miniature of the Empire. These immigration flows caused real traumas for the social, cultural and economic life of Bursa.

It was only the city of Bursa, which could tolerate such intense immigration flows between 1880 and 1989. The city life, which was maintained through the centuries, had experienced great trauma through the immigrations. However each time, the city managed to build a common city culture. The immigrants speaking different languages and coming from different cultural backgrounds, had managed to adapt to life in Bursa and contributed a lot to the city itself. Neither Bursa itself tried to change the immigrants themselves, nor the immigrants themselves tried to change Bursa itself.

Bursa had received seven large immigration raids and its population increased.

The first raid was after the conquest of Bursa.

Between 1530 – 1570, the second immigration raid was caused by the people escaping from Celalis, who took refuge in Bursa.

The third big immigration took place in the second half of the XIX. Century after the Turkish-Russian War. Immigrants in large masses came from Bulgaria and Dobruca.

The fourth biggest population increase in Bursa was caused by the Immigration through the exchange process. Following the Balkan War in 1912

The fifth immigration raid followed by the agreement signed between the Turkish State and Bulgaria dates back to 1950's.

The sixth immigration raid to Bursa took place after 1969. 1969 Immigration from Bulgaria lasted until 1978.

The seventh immigration flow to Bursa was from Bulgaria in the year 1989. Starting with the establishment of the Turkish Republic, Bursa has always been the center of attraction for immigration.

## Historical background

Bursa is a city established through the process of immigrations. Throughout history, there had been several immigration raids to Bursa. Due to these, several ethnic groups and societies had settled in Bursa. Before the presence of Turks, the inhabitants of Bursa, who were the Mysians and Tynians were also immigrants from Thrace. Following them were the Turks, who came from the Steps of the Central Asia to Bursa. The Turkic immigrants to Bursa were mainly the Kayi, Ekdir, Bogduz and Alkaevli clans of the Gagauz Turks. In between, the Armenians and following them, the Jews from Kutahya had settled in Bursa.