

## OIL WRESTLING

*Fair „Panayır“*

A view from the fairground. Turkish oil wrestling, *yağlı güreş* in Turkish, is the gutsy national sport of the greatest fighters in the world. The history of the oil wrestling tournaments links back to the Persian Era, a period starting from 1065 BC according to Ferdowsi's Shahnameh.



### ANNUAL FAIR EVENT

The wrestlers wear tight short leather trousers called "Kispet", made of water buffalo leather weighing approximately 13 kilograms, and they cover themselves with olive oil. In the entertainments, belly dancing is accompanied by Turkish traditional musical instruments "davul" (drum) and "zurna" (a type of flute) and singings.

#### ABTTF

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## LINE-UP OF TOBACCO

A view from the Turkish peasantry lining up tobacco leaves they cultivate in their lands.



Western Thrace is a home to tobacco production and the majority of the Turkish minority works in agriculture and has a long tradition in the growing of labour-intensive varieties of tobacco, making up over 90 per cent of its producers in the region.

They are active in 'their own' segregated section of the local market occupied by minority suppliers (tradesmen, producers, etc.) and customers, and they largely operate within the confines of their community.



### TURKISH COFFEE

The production of Turkish Coffee succeeds by repeatedly grinding and roasting the beans. It is cooked with water and served in tiny, traditional coffee cups.

Housewives meet some day around 9 and 11 am with friends, neighbours or relatives for coffee break and enjoy it with cookies and cracker.



## AN OLD HOUSE

*in Komotini*

A view from an old and historic house in Komotini, where the Turkish minority is densely populated.



### THE VILLAGE OF KEZIREN

A view of the Keziren village, which is only 50 meters away from the Bulgarian border.



For a special event at school Children are dressed up in their traditional costumes. Cultural events and festivals like this help children to identify themselves with their heritage.

### „NARLIKÖY“

View of an other typical Turkish village. Narliköy (*Polianthos*), Rhodope.



*Turkish Minority | Western Thrace | Greece*

## Land and Folk



ABTTF

Federation of Western Thrace Turks in Europe

NGO in Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations  
Member of the Federal Union of European Nationalities (FUEN)

## Welcome

The Turkish Minority of Western Thrace, which is traditionally settled in the north eastern region of Thrace in Greece, highlights the distinct characteristics and qualities of the Turkish culture and its contributions to human work and thought.

Kurban, or sacrifice, Bayram is an important affirmation of one of the key tenets of Islam, that is shared social responsibility. The Turkish minority has a long tradition of sacrifice in Western Thrace. Families, who can afford to sacrifice an animal, will do so and there is a complex code stipulating how the carcass should be distributed amongst friends, family and charitable concerns.

Turkish folk music is a part of daily life. A folk song usually deals with things of daily life, be it a work song, a story-telling ballad, a love song, or a dance song. The subject of the song usually reflects the way people live and work, the language they speak, the instruments they play. Horn and drum is widely used in folk music, and Turkish oil wrestling cannot be thought without the company of horn and drum.

Land is a component of the daily life and culture in Western Thrace. The region is mainly based on agriculture and tobacco production, which is a part of social life and tradition in Western Thrace. The land is identical in the daily life in Western Thrace and tobacco production describes the way the Turkish minority has lived for long centuries, and still does.



## City

A sight of Dimetoka, a town located in the eastern part of the prefecture of Evros. It had been the capital of the Ottoman Empire, which conquered the city in 1361.



The Ottoman Empire built the great mosque and the baths situated at the city square, both of which are the first of their kind in the European continent. The city densely populated by the Turkish minority is a place, where old customs and folk memory have been kept alive for centuries.

## FOLKLORE

A view of the folklore performance of the Turkish girl with traditional costume. The tradition of folklore is very rich, and is incorporated into everyday life and events.



## „Kurban Bayramı“

At the Feast of Sacrifice, young people of the village organize a special event at night attire in "Bride and Bridegroom", and visit country houses while playing drum and horn. The householder offers meat and give money as a gift to young people. After visit to country houses, young people of the village are gathered in the youth room of the village, and make a night of fun. Young people give money, which is made them a present of the feast to poor people who are in need of assistance.



A view of three old men in traditional Turkish clothing which is still used today in Western Thrace, Greece.

## of Xanthi

A view from the marketplace, the Bazaar in Xanthi, a city in northern Greece, in the East Macedonia and Thrace periphery. One should not miss the Bazaar every Saturday in Xanthi, the city known as the "city of the thousand colours".



## TALIKA

A view of talika, a carriage which has on each side two circular openings without glasses, and a donkey or horse in front to haul freight. Peasantry in villages use talikas mostly to carry tobacco, which is mainly produced in Western Thrace.

