



Kullan, arařtır, paylař, geliřtir!

Free software for minorities in Turkey

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March 15, 2020; Boston, MA





Introduction

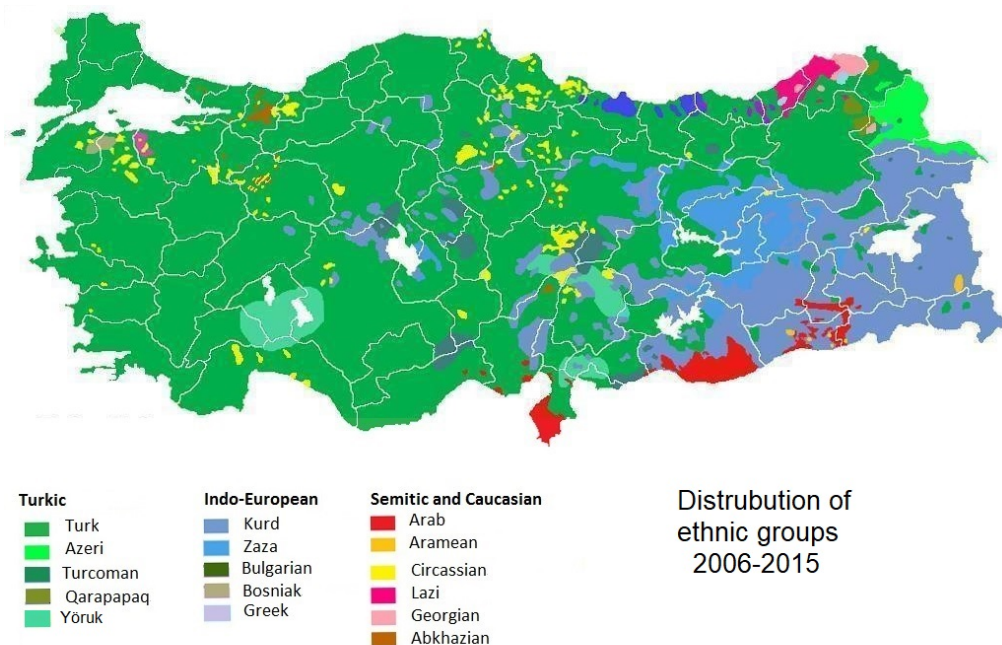


Turkey, is a transcontinental country located between Asia and Europe. Asian and European parts of Turkey are split by Bosphorus and Dardanelles, and Turkey is bordered by Greece and Bulgaria to its northwest, the Black Sea to its north, Georgia to its northeast, Armenia, the Azerbaijani exclave of Nakhchivan and Iran to its east, Iraq and Syria to its southeast, the Mediterranean Sea to its south, and the Aegean Sea to its west.

The largest city of Turkey is *Istanbul*, and the capital is *Ankara*.



Demographics of Turkey



The population of Turkey is 82 million and its growth rate is 1.39% per annum.

Turkey is a country with a lot of ethnic diversity, major ethnic groups are Turks and Kurds, also Zazas, Lazs, Armanians (also Hemşin), Romanis, Ladinis, Albanians, Jews, Arabs, Pomaks, Chechens, Abazas, Assyrians, Greeks, Azerbaijanis, Bosniaks, Crimean Tatars, Georgians, Persians, and so much minor ethnic groups are exist.

Figure: Minority map of Turkey, CC BY-SA 4.0 Nonemansland (Commons)



Languages of Turkey

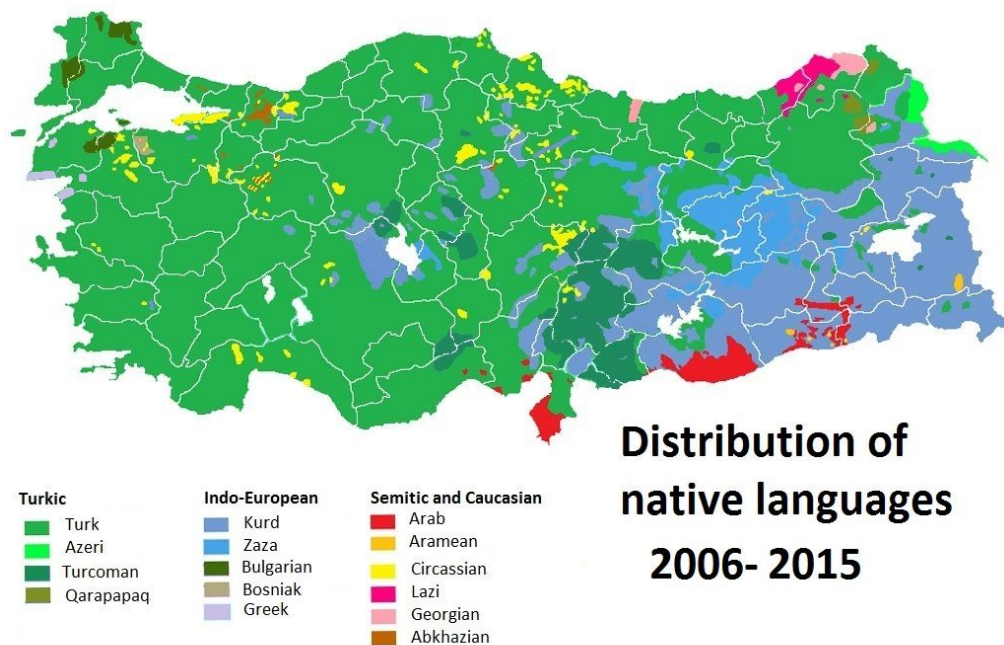


Figure: Language map of Turkey, CC BY-SA 4.0 Nonemansland (Commons)

In Turkey, more than **25 languages** are spoken. But unfortunately, only Turkish is the *official language* of Turkey.

Some of the languages natively spoken are Turkish, Kurdish, Zazaki, Lazuri, Homshetsi (an Armanian dialect), Arabic, Kabardian, Azerbaijani, Romani, Domari, Bulgarian, Gagauz, Adyghe, Greek, Romeika (Greek dialect), Georgian, Crimean Tatar, Albanian, Armanian, Abkhaz, Ossetian, Tatar, Aramaic, Ladino, Turkmen, Bosnian, Uzbek, Kyrgyz, Uyghur, Pomak, Chechen, Persian, Serbian, Abaza; also German, French, English, Italian, Russian are spoken by migrants.



Oppressions over these languages

Cumhuriyet

Yayın Tarihi : 21.05.1936

Sayfa : 6

Gönende herkes türkçe konuşacak

Gönen (Hususî) — Gönende türkçeden başka dil ile konuşulması Gönen belediyesinin kararile yasak edilmiştir. Çerkesçe, gürcüce, arnavudca, pomakça gibi yabancı dillerle konuşanların cezalandırılacakları tellâlla halka ilân edilmiştir. Çarşıda, pazarda, kahvehanelerde yabancı dil ile konuşanlar Gönen belediyesinin tam yerinde verdiği bu karar üzerine bundan böyle türkçe konuşacaklardır. Gönen halkı bu karardan çok memnun olmuştur.

In Turkey, more than **25 languages** are spoken. But unfortunately, only Turkish is the *official language* of Turkey. Republic of Turkey was oppressing minority languages starting from very beginning.



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In 1982 constitution, at Article 42; education in any language other than Turkish is prohibited. Also, in original text, at Article 26; speaking in any "banned language" is prohibited.

Also, in the Law about Publications in Languages other than Turkish, at article 2 says; speaking and publishing in languages other than the first official languages of the states which are recognized by Turkey is prohibited. "The first official language" cast is remarked because Kurdish is the second official language of Iraq.



Mother tongue bans in Turkey



Figure: Speak Turkish, speak a lot!

In addition, for the law's third article; every Turkish citizen's mother tongue is Turkish and using other languages as mother tongue is strictly prohibited.

Because of these policies, minorities in Turkey was oppressed by government and they couldn't use their own languages even for talking to each other publicly.



Free software in Turkey



Free software movement in Turkey is begun at 1993 by the e-mail list created by Mustafa Akgül.

TR started to develop a GNU/Linux distribution called **Pardus** in 2007, so many individual met with GNU/Linux and free software first time via Pardus. And now, there are several NGOs and communities all over Turkey about software and related topics.

Figure: Mustafa Akgül, the de facto leader of free software movement in Turkey

The project: Anadilinde Bilişim



Figure: Mother tongue

As **Özgür Yazılım Derneği**, we wanted to translate our website and project sites into Anatolian languages, just as a stance. When we communicate with minority associations such as Laz Institute and Hemşin Culture Association, they said they even can't use computers with their own languages.

We decided to make computers usable for them, by translating free software into minority languages. Non-free software has no option for it, but free software *give them freedom to use their languages.*

Main goals of project

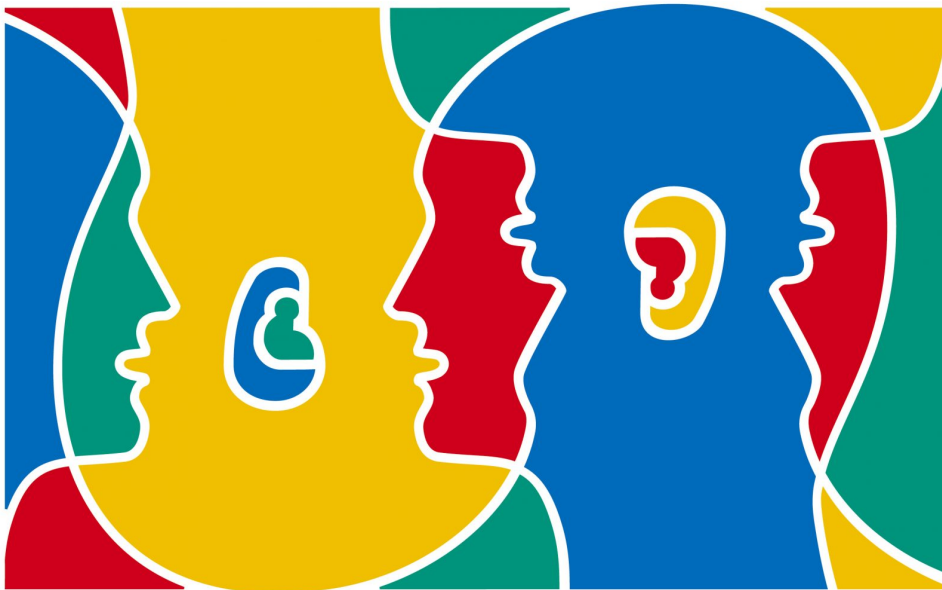


Figure: Mother tongue

First of all, we want to create a **computing terminology** in these languages. Because most of them even doesn't have the word *computer*.

Next step, starting from **GNU/Linux**, **GNOME**, **Firefox**, **LibreOffice**; we want to translate the essential desktop software into these languages by co-working with culture associations. In the further stages, **Android/Replicant** and **F-Droid applications** will be included.

Also we will make documentations of these software in these languages.



Is that necessary?



Figure: Wikimedia Incubator

Of course not!

To keep these languages alive, we will scan and enroll dictionaries of the languages to **Wiktionary**, also the literature to **Wikisource**. If it doesn't exist, we will attempt to create **Wikipedias** in the languages.

We started with **Lazuri Wiktionary** in *Wikimedia Incubator*.



Furthermore



At the next stages of project, we want to publish computing books in the languages, organizing educational works locally in the areas of the languages mainly spoken. Also via collaboration with local municipalities, solving their local IT needs with free software is planned within the project.

Figure: Localization



Why we are doing this?



Figure: Free Software Association in Turkey

Starting from the motto "*Free software, free society*", it is important for us to spread the freedom struggle in every base that needs freedom.

As Free Software Association in Turkey, we want to give a ray of hope that we got from free software and freedom philosophy to the Anatolian minorities. We want to keep these languages alive, and "**free their future**" by the project.

Thank you!



Figure: Ozcan and Alper

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