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NUMBER OF ARMENIANS IN THE US

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It is believed that the political role of Armenians in the US is based on owning votes in some areas in amounts which could change the outcome of the elections. The Armenian organizations in the US support this idea by arguing that 1, 5 or even 2 million Armenians exist within the country. Some news published recently has shown that the number of Armenians in the US is much lower than mentioned. The Armenian National Committee of America (ANCA), an affiliate of the Dashnak Party, stated that in 2010 a census will take place in the US and emphasized the importance of individuals of Armenian origin to declare themselves as Armenian during this census. It was also announced that they will grant donations to some Armenian organizations which would be used in a campaign organized for this purpose. The reason for putting such emphasis on this subject was said to be the possibility of Armenians to benefit from some official funds proportional to the plurality of their numbers. In the US, a census takes place once every ten years. In the last census of 2000, the number of those declaring themselves as Armenian has been 385 thousand which is way lower than the alleged 1, 5 or 2 million. The number of Armenians in the country can actually be much more. However, it could be understood that some individuals are of Armenian origin, but declare themselves as American. The reason for this is some Armenians assimilating into the American community over time or not regarding themselves as Armenian. This situation, especially in the US, is very normal. It should be noted that the origin of all Americans is foreign. An American society has emerged as a result of a cultural melting and integration. There are also some political consequences of the number of individuals regarding themselves as Armenian being very low. The most important is Armenians not being able to elect a senator, nor a member of the House of Representatives despite having an active role within the political sphere of the country. The number of Armenians in the state parliaments is also quite low. Taking this into consideration, it could be seen that the widespread belief in Turkey that Armenians influence US presidents, ministers or congress members with the number of votes they possess is not true. The only place where Armenian votes are influential is some neighboring areas of Los Angeles. On the other hand, it is true that Armenians are politically influential in the US. This is not a result of the voting potential, but of Armenians actively participating within US to political parties in states or at a federal level. These create the suitable atmosphere for the Armenians to put forth and gain support on subjects such as genocide allegations, the Karabakh conflict and aid to Armenia.

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