

Citizens of Bosilovo, as well as the citizens of neighbouring municipalities, are concerned about the potential impact of ore mining on their health and the prosperity of their agricultural region.

Bosilovo citizens in southeastern Macedonia held a referendum on the construction of Ilovica mining complex in that municipality.

12,301 people have the right to vote.

Citizens of Bosilovo are voting for or against the construction of the mine.

Citizens of this as well as other neighbouring municipalities are concerned about the potential impact of ore mining on their health, environment and the prosperity of their agricultural region.

“There will be pollution, and that is why we are voting against the mine. We are against the opening the mine in our region us,” says Boris Stojkov, a Bosilovo resident.

“I do not think the opening of a mine is a good idea. As far as we are concerned it does not matter, our time has passed, but I think about our future, our children,” adds Nevena Stojkova.

According to their fellow citizen Spira Malinov, “the mine should not be constructed as it will be harmful for the whole Strumica region”.

“It will certainly contaminate soil, water and air, and future generations will be endangered,” says Trajko Velkov.

“The source of food is here. If the mine is opened, agriculture will collapse, and our fields are the best in Macedonia,” points out Vasil Kotev.

Four more referendums

So far, four referendums have been held in southeastern Macedonia, in municipalities where people mostly live from agriculture.

The first referendum was held in the municipality of Gevgelia in April, when 99 percent of people voted against the opening of a gold mine on the nearby Kozuf Mountain.

Investor, the Canadian company Reservoir Minerals, subsequently abandoned the project. After the announcement of the possible opening of Kazandol Copper and Gold mine, three more referendums were held in the municipalities of Bogdanci, Dojran and Valandovo.

In Bogdanci municipality, in June, 98 per cent of residents voted against the opening of a mine, while 96 per cent of people in Dojran also voted against.

The only municipality where the referendum failed was Valandovo because less than 50 percent of eligible voters participated. Otherwise, 95 percent of people were against the opening of copper and gold mine.