

Gjakovë/Đakovica

April 2008

1. Area and Population

- Gjakovë/Đakovica Municipality covers an area of 521 km² consisting of the main town and 84 villages. It is situated 360 meters above the sea level at a strategic position between the Albanian border and the heartland of Kosovo. It is connected to other centers through four major regional roads, including to Pejë/Peć, Prizren, Prishtinë/Priština, and to the Albanian border crossing Qafë Morinë/ Čaf Morina or Qafë Prush/Čaf Pruš.
- Approximately 150,000 people live in the municipality; 90,000 in the town and 60,000 in the villages. However, there are no exact figures of inhabitants and the true number is likely to be higher. Besides Kosovo Albanians there are approximately 60 Bosniaks living in the town of Gjakovë/Đakovica. All speak some Albanian and they are well integrated. The Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptian communities, numbering all together about 8,600 represent the biggest minority communities in the municipality.
- During 2007, approximately 35 families (94 people) belonging to the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities have returned to the municipality and they face no security related problems. The Municipal leadership has been crucial in supporting and facilitating it. However, more remains to be done with reference to employment and education of these communities in order to fully integrate them at all levels of society. To date no Kosovo Serb IDPs have returned to Gjakovë/Đakovica. Negative reactions on behalf of the local population, political parties and associations representing families of missing persons and victims of the 1999 conflict followed the first step undertaken in 2005 by the municipality towards their potential return.

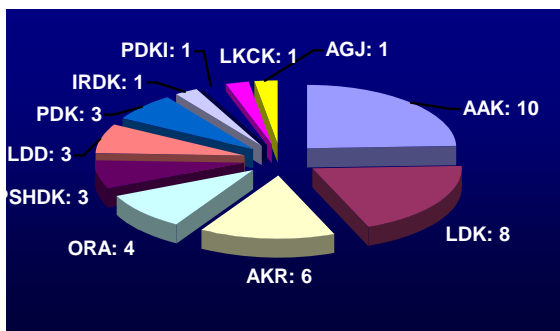
2. Governing Structures

• Legislative

The Municipal Assembly consists of 41 members. The municipal Assembly has already established the commission to work on the new municipal statute in accordance with the new UNMIK Regulation 2007/30. On 7 March, in accordance with UNMIK Reg. 2007/30 – section 21, the Municipal Assembly established three standing committees, namely the Policy and Finance Committee, the Communities Committee and the Mediation Committee. The other compulsory committees are expected to be established after the approval of the municipal statute.

The Mayor of the municipality is Mr. Pal Lekaj from the Alliance for the Future of Kosovo.

The Political Party allocation of seats in the Municipal Assembly is as follows:



AAK - Alliance for the Future of Kosovo
LDK - Democratic League of Kosovo
AKR - New Kosovo Alliance
ORA - Reformist Party
PSHDK - Albanian Christian Democratic Party
LDD - Democratic League of Dardania
PDK - Democratic Party of Kosovo
IRDK - New Democratic Initiative of Kosovo
PDKI - Demo Christian Party of Kosovo-Integrated
LKCK - National Movement for Liberation of Kosovo
AGJ - Alternative for Gjakovë/Đakovica

• Executive

To date four directors have been appointed: Health and Social Welfare; Education and Culture; Finance, Economy and Development; and Urban Planning, Cadastre and Environmental Protection; while other directors are pending Municipal Assembly approval. However, the executive currently continues to function with the previous 13 municipal departments.

• Judiciary

Gjakovë/Đakovica has a Municipal Court for penal and civil cases. The Public Prosecutor's Office consists of the Chief Prosecutor and three prosecutors. All three sections began working on 21 January 2001.

• Security Presence

The police station was transitioned in April 2005, which means that International Police Officers mainly, nowadays, only have a monitoring role. There is one local police station and one regional border police station. Currently, the local police station is staffed with Kosovo Police Service and 7 international police officers whilst the regional border police station has 270 Kosovo Police Service and 19 international police officers. Italian KFOR is present in Gjakovë/Đakovica municipality.

3. Political Overview

For the 2007 Municipal Elections, 15 political entities were certified in Gjakovë/Đakovica. AAK gained the majority of votes with 23.24% followed by LDK, 18.74%. The new political party AKR gained 14.08%. The Reformist party ORA gained 10.04% which is 6% less in comparison with the general election results in 2004. The only minority party IRDK gained 1 seat down from 2 seats in previous Municipal Assembly. The AAK has formed a coalition with PSHDK and ARK, while PDK, LDK and ORA decided to remain in opposition. So far the AAK has not reach an agreement with LDD, which would be crucial for AAK in obtaining a majority in the Municipal Assembly. In these elections only AAK and PDKI succeeded in sending their representatives from Gjakovë/Đakovica to the Assembly of Kosovo.

4. Economy

Gjakovë/Đakovica used to be a major industrial centre in Kosovo until the end of 1988. Since then, around 3,000 private businesses have been registered with the municipality, employing approximately 7,000 people. Of these, about 95% are small or medium-size enterprises with the principal sectors including textiles, metal processing, warehousing and transportation. Nevertheless, 30,000 people have been registered with the municipality as unemployed, although most observers estimate the real figure to be much higher at around 80%; the economy continues to be the biggest problem for local administration. There are 60 socially owned enterprises, that fall under the administration of the Kosovo Trust Agency and are pending privatization.

5. Public Services

• Health

There is a functioning General Hospital and a Mental Health Center in the town, as well as seven family health centers and 14 ambulantas in the surrounding villages. An emergency unit was set-up in the general hospital by an Italian NGO. Minority communities (Roma, Ashkali, Egyptians and Bosniaks) enjoy full access to the health care system.

• Education

There is one main municipal kindergarten with 6 units, with a total of 711 children enrolled for the year 2007-2008. The municipality has a total of 19,381 children attending primary education. All primary schools offer 9-grades education, introduced to the Kosovo curriculum in 2002. There are nine secondary schools teaching 5197 children. Currently 1,256 teachers and 303 support staff are employed in the municipal public schools. The town also hosts a pedagogical faculty, as part of Prishtinë/Priština University, training primary school teachers. From 1999-2001 there was a Bosniak class of six to seven pupils, but this was cancelled due to the low number of pupils and a lack of funding to pay the teachers. There are a large number of children from the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities who do not attend compulsory education. Social, economical, and cultural restraints prevent their full integration of into the education system.

6. Map of the Region

