

Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje

April 2008

1. Area and Population

- Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje Municipality is located 8 km southwest of Prishtinë/Priština. The municipality consists of 17 villages and the town. Three villages are populated by Kosovo Serbs (Ugljare/Uglar, Kuzmin and Batuše/Batushë), whereas Bresje village and Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje town are ethnically mixed. The main road from Prishtinë/Priština to Pejë/Peć and the train route from Leposavić/Leposaviq to Skopje, the capital of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, run through the town.

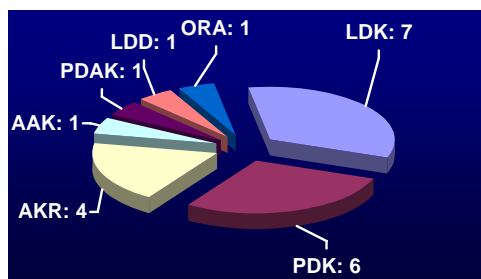
- The estimated total population is 50,000. The majority are Kosovo Albanians (85%). A substantial number of minority communities include approximately 3,800 Ashkali, 2,800 Kosovo Serbs, 600 Roma, 200 Egyptians, 40 Bosniaks and 30 Gorani. Prior to the 1999 conflict, Kosovo Serbs constituted 25 percent of the population. However, their number is now estimated at 8 percent.

- According to UNHCR, since 2000, 888 Ashkali and Egyptian, 382 Kosovo Serb and 182 Roma internally displaced persons (IDPs) returned to the municipality. The March 2004 riots not only stopped the process of returns but also forced a large number of Kosovo Serbs to leave their homes.

2. Governing Structures

● Legislative

The Municipal Assembly comprises 21 members elected in the November 2007 Municipal Elections. As a contrast to the previous mandate when the Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK) had a majority, no political party holds the majority in the municipal assembly any longer. There is one Ashkali member, while Kosovo Serbs and other communities are not represented at the assembly. The Municipal Mayor is Mr. Burim Berisha from LDK. He was holding the post of Chief Executive Officer in the same municipality, since 2000.



LDK - Democratic League of Kosovo
PDK - Democratic Party of Kosovo
AKR - New Kosovo Alliance
AAK - Alliance for the Future of Kosovo
LDD - Democratic League of Dardania
PDAK - Democratic Ashkali Party of Kosovo
ORA - Reformist Party

● Executive

The Board of Directors is composed of five politically nominated Directors, all belonging to LDK.

● Judiciary

Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje does not have its own court facility but falls under the jurisdiction of the Prishtinë/Priština Municipal Court. Municipal authorities have been addressing the issue of opening a municipal court at the central level.

● Security Presence

There are 62 Kosovo Police Service officers (55 Kosovo Albanians, five Kosovo Serbs and two Bosniaks) and two UNMIK Police officers working in Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje. Finnish KFOR troops, stationed in Lipjan/Lipljan, operate in the municipality.

3. Political Overview

LDK was the major political power in the municipality. After losing 5 assembly seats in the 2007 Municipal Elections, LDK holds one seat more than the Democratic Party of Kosovo (PDK). Two recently established political party branches achieved to get representation at the municipal assembly. The New Kosovo Alliance (AKR) with four seats and the Democratic League of Dardania (LDD) with one seat.

4. Economy

Agriculture is a potential base for the local economy in the municipality. Sixty percent of the municipal land is arable and there are 522 hectares of pasture. In addition, agro-processing industries also exist, such as a flourmill, bread factory, dairy plant, although few are currently operational. Aside from the agriculture, there are a number of small shops, café, restaurants and other businesses thriving, yet unemployment remains high.

Along the main road from Prishtinë/Priština to Pejë/Peć a number of warehouses and super markets are built. A large business park will be constructed in the vicinity of the Prishtina Airport situated in the municipality.

5. Public Services

• Health

Despite the municipality's efforts, health facilities remain divided. Kosovo Albanians, Ashkali and Egyptians use the Family Health Centre in Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje town and 11 health points in the surrounding villages. Kosovo Serbs and Roma use the Ugljare/Uglar Health House, as well as health points in Kuzmin and Batuse/Batushë. Discussions to open the Bresje Health House remain ongoing between the municipality, the Kosovo Serb community and UNMIK. [Source: Director of Health, Municipal Assembly President, CEO and Municipal Community Officer]

• Education

The education system in the municipality is also divided. There are one pre-primary school, six primary schools and three secondary schools, which are mainly attended by Kosovo Albanians, Ashkali and Egyptian children. The Serb-run parallel system consists of one pre-primary school and five primary schools, which are run and financed by the Serbian Government. Kosovo Serb and the Roma communities attend these schools. The multi-ethnic school in Bresje, which was destroyed during the March 2004 riots but reconstructed, serves all communities. [Source: Director of Education and Municipal Community Officer]

6. Map of the Region

Fushë Kosovë / Kosovo Polje

