

Mitrovicë/Mitrovica

April 2008

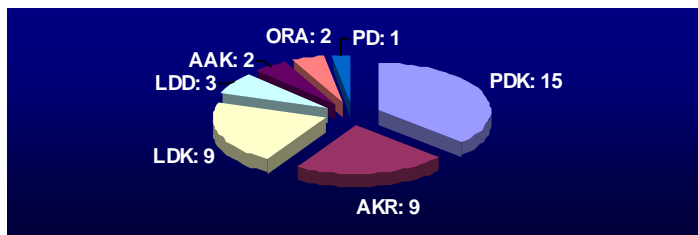
1. Area and Population

- The municipality of Mitrovicë/Mitrovica lies approximately 40km north of Prishtinë/Priština, with a total area of 350 square kilometres. It contains one town and 49 villages. Since the 1999 conflict, the town has been divided along the Ibër/Ibar River and in March 2004 it saw some of the worst violence. Today, the overall situation in the town is less tense, although restricted freedom of movement, a lacking return process and related property issues are still the main problems of Mitrovicë/Mitrovica.
- A total population figure is very difficult to obtain and is the subject to much controversy. In the southern part, the overall population is approximately 110,000, predominantly Kosovo Albanian with the presence of Bosniak, Turkish, Roma, Ashkali (about 40 families), Egyptian and Gorani communities. In the northern part, there are approximately 20,000 inhabitants: 17,000 Kosovo Serbs (of whom between 5,000-7,000 are internally displaced persons) and 3,000 members of other communities (Kosovo Albanians, Bosniaks, Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian). The number of Bosniaks has significantly reduced and appears to be between 2,000 and 3,000, living on both sides of the Ibër/Ibar. Several Turkish families live on both sides of the river and one third of the Gorani community remains in the south.
- The pre-1999 Roma population (approximately 8,000) of south Mitrovicë/Mitrovica has been displaced to the northern municipalities, Montenegro, Serbia proper and several countries in Europe. Through the multi-stakeholder Return Project to the Roma Mahala, up to date, 462 people have returned and more returns are expected. The reconstruction process of the former ethnically mixed village of Svinjarë/Svinjare, which was destroyed in March 2004, was finalised at the beginning of 2007, but up to date only two Kosovo Serb internally displaced persons (IDPs) have returned.
- Municipal website: www.mitrovica-komuna.org

2. Governing Structures

• Legislative

Last municipal election of 17 November, for the first time since 2000, brought changes to the political forces in Mitrovicë/Mitrovica municipality. LDK, after being a leading party for several years is now in the opposition. The composition of the Assembly is indicated in the chart below. The Municipal Mayor, Bajram Rexhepi (former Kosovo Prime Minister), is from PDK.



PDK - Democratic Party of Kosovo
AKR - New Kosovo Alliance
LDK - Democratic League of Kosovo
LDD - Democratic League of Dardania
AAK - Alliance for Future of Kosovo
ORA - Reformist Party ORA
PD - Party of Justice

The division of the town has complicated the provision of public services and the non-participation of Serbs in municipal elections led to the creation of separate facilities for north and south. In order to integrate the “parallel” municipality established in the North, UNMIK established its administrative authority over the northern part of the municipality in 2002. The elected Municipal Assembly does not have any competencies over the administration of north Mitrovica/Mitrovicë.

• Executive

Pursuant to the UN Regulation 2007/30, the Mayor has appointed 9 Directors of Departments (as political appointees), while the appointment of the Head of Administration and Personnel Department is ongoing. The UNMIK Administration in the northern part is not politically competent, it only provides services. An Advisory Board, composed of local political representatives from the North, was established to assist UNMIK in managing the town.

• Judiciary

District, Municipal and Minor Offences Courts are in the northern part of Mitrovicë/Mitrovica town, as well as District and Municipal Prosecutors’ Offices. Lawyers and the public have access to the courts. Parallel to the UNMIK Courts, a Serbian Municipal Court of Mitrovicë/Mitrovica also operates in the north of the town.

• Security Presence

The municipality has two Police Stations and one Regional Police Headquarters. For both Stations, all operational competencies have been handed over to the KPS and UNMIK Police only maintains a monitoring function. As to the international military presence, French KFOR covers the municipality.

3. Political Overview

At present, there are 14 Kosovo Albanian political parties in Mitrovicë/Mitrovica. Bosniak community is politically represented through the Party for Democratic Action (SDA), Turkish community through the Kosovo Turkish Democratic Party (KTDP) and Kosovo Ashkali Democratic Party (PDAK) represents the Ashkali community. Fifteen Serb/Serbian political parties have municipal branches in Mitrovicë/Mitrovica municipality. The Serb National Council (SNC Mitrovica), a political group that bring together non-party affiliated persons and also exercises an unofficial security role in northern Kosovo , has become an important interlocutor for the international community in Mitrovicë/Mitrovica.

4. Economy

With the closure of the “Trepça” complex, the influx of refugees and IDPs and the lack of investment, unemployment (estimated at approximately 77%) has been prevalent among all communities in Mitrovicë/Mitrovica municipality.

5. Public Services

• Health

The Health House in the south of Mitrovicë/Mitrovica town provides outpatient services while in-patients are sent to Prishtinë/Priština Hospital. The Health House runs eight other centres in the town and 13 ambulantas, three of them located in the Kosovo Albanian populated villages in the northern part of Mitrovicë/Mitrovica. [Source: Municipal Directorate of Health and Social Welfare in Mitrovicë/Mitrovica].

In the northern part of Mitrovicë/Mitrovica there is a regional hospital and one health house that function under the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Serbia. The hospital serves as the main health institution for the Kosovo Serb community in the entire province.

• Education

In the southern part, 19.707 students attend the 27 primary schools, five high schools, one kindergarten, one primary musical school and one specialized school. They are attended by Kosovo Albanian, Bosniak, Turk and Ashkali students. The schools employ Kosovo Albanian, Bosniak and Turk teachers. In the north side, 5,040 students attend the 11 primary schools, four high schools, one kindergarten and other specialized schools. Majority of the students are Kosovo Serb with small number of Bosniaks and Roma. The schools in the north are supported by the Municipality (UNMIK administration) but working with a curriculum from the Republic of Serbia. [Source: UAM Department of Education].

As to the higher education, four faculties of Prishtinë/Priština University are based in the south Mitrovicë/Mitrovica [Source: Municipal Directorate of Education in Mitrovicë/Mitrovica].

In 2001, the Kosovo Serb university (the pre-conflict University of Prishtinë/Priština) returned from central Serbia where it was relocated after the 1999 conflict to the northern part of the city. Today, more than 8,000 students attend the university. The appointment of the Rector by the Serbian Ministry of Education in 2004 caused the suspension of the accreditation by UNMIK and more then two years of international isolation. In December 2006, with the appointment of the new Rector in accordance with the University Statute, UNMIK reaccredited the University. [Source: OSCE Higher Education Unit]

6. Map of the Region

Mitrovicë / Mitrovica

