

## Novobërdë/Novo Brdo municipality

April 2008

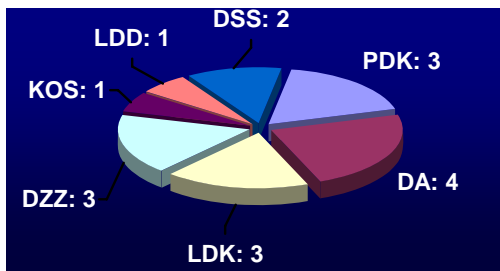
### 1. Area and Population

- Novobërdë/Novo Brdo is a small, entirely rural municipality located southeast of Prishtinë/Priština. Lacking basic infrastructure and with few employment opportunities, it is one of the poorest municipalities in Kosovo. The Municipality consists of 10 villages and dozens of “mahallas” – small neighbourhoods. In general, the roads are in poor condition and systems for distributing water and electricity are inadequate. While in several villages access to water and electricity has improved due to recent investment, many areas of the municipality still lack running water, plumbing and electricity. Telephone cable has not yet been laid in all villages; however, most of the municipality is now covered by a mobile network.
- The population has been decreasing since the 1999 conflict and is currently around 3,900. While the population was always thought to be 50/50 between Kosovo Serbs and Kosovo Albanians, municipal officials from both communities estimate that the population currently residing in the municipality is now approximately 61 per cent Kosovo Albanian and 39 per cent Kosovo Serbian. There are ten Roma families living in the village of Bostan/Bostane. A total of 284 Kosovo Serbs, 57 Kosovo Albanians and 13 Roma returned between 2000 and 2007. Most of these returns were of a spontaneous nature.
- Compared to other ethnically-mixed areas, there is a relatively low level of tension between the different communities with full freedom of movement throughout the municipality.

### 2. Governing Structures

#### • Legislative

After the boycott of November 2007 municipal elections by the Kosovo Serb community, the United Nations’ Special Representative to the Secretary General issued Executive Decision No. 2007/63 on the Establishment of the Municipal Government in Novobërdë/Novo Brdo municipality. The decision appoints ten Kosovo Serb Municipal Assembly members and confirms election results, including seven Kosovo Albanian Municipal Assembly members. The Mayor became Mr. Bajrush Ymeri from the Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK). The Municipal Assembly currently has only seven Kosovo Albanian members due to the fact that Kosovo Serb appointed members did not take the inaugural oath. UNMIK Regulation 2007/30 (Section 14.1) stipulates that in a situation where 17 members are entitled to be present and vote, the quorum is nine. Nevertheless, Novobërdë/Novo Brdo Municipal Assembly sessions take place regularly with seven Municipal Assembly members. However, no mandatory committee has been established. Furthermore, the Mayor has requested a replacement of two appointed Municipal Assembly members from the LDK who resigned from their positions due to their appointment to supervisory positions in the municipality. The UN Special Representative of the Secretary General should appoint two new Municipal Assembly members from the LDK.



PDK - Democratic Party of Kosovo 3  
DA (former KP) - Coalition Return 4  
LDK - Democratic League of Kosovo 3  
DZZ - Let's Live Together 3  
DSS - Democratic Party of Serbia 2  
KOS - Kosovo's Objective Party 1  
LDD - Democratic League of Dardania 1

#### • Executive

There are three Kosovo Albanian Heads of Departments and one Kosovo Serbian Head of Department. The Board of Directors is composed of three Kosovo Albanian Directors and one Kosovo Serbian Director, together with the Head of Administration and Personnel and the Municipal Community Office. For the time being all Kosovo Serbian Directors and Heads of Departments, together with several other Kosovo Serbian civil servants do not report to work.

#### • Judiciary

The municipality has no court of its own. Gjilan/Gnjilane Municipal and District Courts handle all cases for Novobërdë/Novo Brdo. The Department of Justice has established a Court Liaison Office with two staff to

serve the local population that appears to be functioning well. There is no plan to establish a municipal court for Novobërdë/Novo Brdo.

#### ● Security Presence

Novobërdë/Novo Brdo has a Kosovo Police Service Station which is staffed with 27 officers (17 Kosovo Serbs, seven Kosovo Albanians, one Kosovo Turk, one Kosovo Bosniak and one Kosovo Roma; 26 males and one female). There are also two UNMIK police officers working in the station. US KFOR Liaison Monitoring Teams are active in the municipality.

### 3. Political Overview

The boycott of the November 2007 elections by the Kosovo Serb community brought on a transfer of power in the municipal leadership. After the SRSG's Executive Decision No. 2007/63, dissatisfaction remained within both communities. The Serbian community is not satisfied with the transfer of power and the Albanian community does not find it reasonable to give Municipal Assembly seats to Kosovo Serbs as they boycotted elections. As mentioned above, Municipal Assembly sessions are convened with only seven sworn-in members.

### 4. Economy

Prior to the 1999 conflict, the local economy was dependent on agriculture, a mining complex and other Gjilan/Gnjilane-based industries. Since the conflict, all of these industries have shrunk and unemployment and poverty have become prevalent. Today, the main employer is the municipality with a total of 171 employees.

### 5. Public Services

#### ● Health

A Health House is located in the village of Novobërdë/Novo Brdo and three health clinics function in the villages of Prekovce/Prekoc, Jasenovik and Llabjan/Labljane. Only two doctors (one full-time and one part-time) work in all these facilities. For hospital care, Kosovo Albanians go to Gjilan/Gnjilane or Prishtinë/Priština. As Kosovo Serbs are reluctant to travel to Gjilan/Gnjilane, they generally go to Serbia proper or to Gračanica/Gračanicë for major medical treatment.[Source: Village leaders, municipal staff]

#### ● Education

There are five primary schools in the municipality with 507 students (358 Kosovo Albanian and 149 Kosovo Serbs) and 55 teachers (28 Kosovo Albanian and 27 Kosovo Serbs). The school in the village of Jasenovik is used by both Kosovo Albanian and Kosovo Serbs, although they attend in separate shifts. As there are currently no functioning secondary schools in the municipality, Kosovo Albanians attend schools in Gjilan/Gnjilane municipality while Kosovo Serbs go either to Gornje Kusce/Kufcë e Epërme in Gjilan/Gnjilane municipality or to Gračanica/Gračanicë in Prishtinë/Priština municipality. There is a new school building being funded by the British government to create a multi-ethnic secondary school in the municipality. However, delays at the central level have postponed the opening of the school until September 2008. [Source: Municipal Department of Education]

### 6. Map of the Region

Novobërdë / Novo Brdo

