

Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje

September 2009

1. Area and Population

Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje municipality is located 8 km southwest of Prishtinë/Priština. The municipality consists of a town and 17 villages. Three villages are inhabited by Kosovo Serbs (Ugljare/Uglar, Kuzmin and Batusë/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.

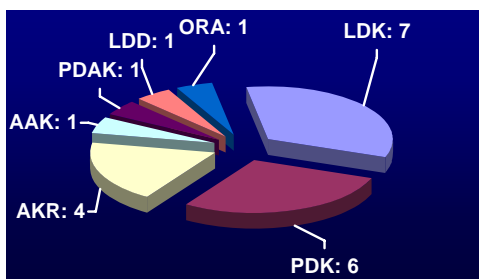
According to local authorities, the estimated total population is 50,000. The majority are Kosovo Albanians (85%). A substantial number of non-Albanian community members approximately includes Kosovo Ashkali (3,800), Serbs (2,800), Roma (600), Egyptians (200), Bosniaks (40) and Gorani (30). Prior to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

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

2. Governing Structures

• Legislative

The municipal assembly consist of 21 members elected in the November 2007 municipal election. Apart from Kosovo Ashkali, represented by PDAK that won one seat, no other non-Albanian community is represented in the municipal assembly. The elected municipal mayor, Mr. Burim Berisha (LDK), was previously the municipal chief executive officer (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 nine politically nominated directors. After the 2007 municipal election, Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje established the directorate of communities and directorate of European integration; both are chaired by women.

• Judiciary

Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje falls under the jurisdiction of the Prishtinë/Priština municipal court. Municipal authorities have been requesting the establishment of a Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje municipal court.

• Security Presence

There are 62 Kosovo police officers (55 Kosovo Albanians, five Kosovo Serbs and two Kosovo Bosniaks) and two EULEX police officers working in Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje police station. Finnish KFOR troops, stationed in Gillogc/Glogovac, cover the municipality.

3. Political Overview

LDK is the leading party and it has been for 3 consecutive mandates with decreasing power from one election to another. In 2007 election, due to a low turn out and the emergence of new political parties, AKR, LDD, LDK lost five seats in the municipal assembly. LDK holds 7 out of 21 seats in the municipal assembly. It formed a strong coalition with AAK (1), LDD (1), PDAK (1) and ORA (1), in order to maintain the power. LDK and its coalition group called G-4, represent a total of 11 seats, against the remaining 10 seats held by a fragmented opposition in the municipal assembly, PDK (6) and AKR (4). In regards to political parties representing non-Albanian communities, only the Ashkali political entity, Democratic Ashkali Party of Kosovo (PDAK), was able to maintain one seat. The Kosovo Serb political party, Coalition Return, did not reach the threshold to enter the municipal assembly.

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.

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 care units in the surrounding villages. Kosovo Serbs and Roma use the Ugljare/Uglar health centre, as well as health care units in Kuzmin and Batuse/Batushë. Bresje health house was reopened by the municipality after 2007 election. It is used by all communities residing in the municipality, except for Kosovo Serbs.

• Education

The education system in the municipality is also divided. There are one pre-primary school, six primary schools and three secondary schools, mainly attended by Kosovo Albanian, Ashkali and Egyptian children. The Serb-run parallel education system consists of one pre-primary school and five primary schools, which are financed by the Serbian Government. Kosovo Serb and Roma communities attend these schools. The multi-ethnic school “Sveti Sava”, which burnt during the March 2004 riots, was reconstructed in 2005. It serves Kosovo Serb and Roma pupils during the morning shift, and Kosovo Albanian, Ashkali and Egyptian during the afternoon shift. [Source: director of education and municipal community officer]

• Public Utilities

Due to the rapid increase of the population, the municipality faces challenges with regard to water, garbage collection and electricity supply.

6. Map of the Region

Fushë Kosovë / Kosovo Polje

