

Kamenicë/Kamenica

September 2009

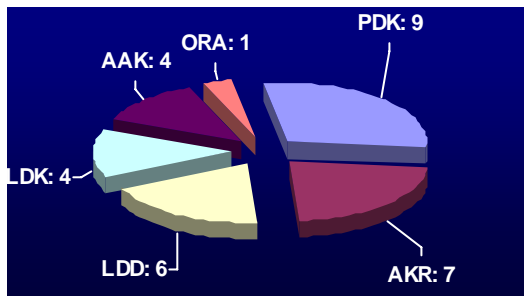
1. Area and population

Kamenicë/Kamenica municipality is the most eastern municipality and borders with the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM). The municipality covers an area of 523 square km and consists of a town and 76 villages. The roads are generally in bad condition and less than 25 per cent of the population is connected to the public water supply. The total population is estimated at 63,000, with approximately 82 percent Kosovo Albanian, 17 percent Kosovo Serb and a small number of Kosovo Roma (approximately 500). Kosovo Serbs mostly live in three areas in the municipality: eight villages south of Kamenicë/Kamenica town with some 5,000 inhabitants, and two other areas around and to the north of Kamenicë/Kamenica town with some 6,000 inhabitants. According to the UNHCR, since 2000, approximately 500 Kosovo Serbs and Roma have returned to the municipality. However, many appear to have departed the municipality due to economic hardship. [Source: UNHCR and municipality community office]

2. Governing structures

• Legislative

The municipal assembly is comprised of 31 members elected in the November 2007 municipal elections, out of which nine are women. Even though a few Kosovo Serb political parties and citizens' initiatives were registered to run for the last elections, the elections were massively boycotted by the Kosovo Serb community. As a consequence there are no Kosovo Serb representatives in the municipal assembly. However, in January 2009, the municipal assembly elected the deputy chairperson for communities and appointed three non-majority community member "observers" to the municipal assembly.



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

• Executive

The leadership of the executive branch consists of the mayor, Mr. Begzad Sinani, the deputy mayor for communities, Mr. Gradimir Mikić, and deputy mayor, Mr. Bajram Dërmaku, the head of administration and personnel, five directors (all Kosovo Albanians) and the head of the municipal community office (Kosovo Serb). Out of 198 municipal employees, 154 are Kosovo Albanians, 41 Kosovo Serbs, one Kosovo Roma and one Kosovo Macedonian -, 13 Kosovo Serbs and one Kosovo Roma work in the municipal communities office. Mr. Rexhep Vranja (PDK) is the chairperson of the municipal assembly and Mr. Dragisa Savić (Kosovo Serb) is the municipal assembly deputy chairperson for communities.

• Judiciary

Kamenicë/Kamenica municipality has a municipal court (two Kosovo Albanian judges) and a minor offences court (one Kosovo Albanian judge).

• Security presence

The Kosovo police in Kamenicë/Kamenica municipality is comprised of 133 officers (101 Kosovo Albanian, 30 Kosovo Serb, one Kosovo Turk and one Kosovo Roma; 111 are male and 22 female). Ethnically-mixed police patrols are operational. The station commander is a Kosovo Serb. There are five EULEX police staff working in the station (three police officers and two local language assistants) who are in charge of monitoring, mentoring and advising. United States KFOR is the international military presence responsible for Kamenicë/Kamenica.

3. Political overview

After eight years of LDK dominance, the party split at the central level to LDK and LLD and establishment of solid LDD base at the local level, brought PDK into the lead in the municipal assembly in the November 2007 elections. A surprising result at the local level was also achieved by AKR. Namely, PDK received 30 percent of the votes, AKR 22 percent, LDD 18 percent, LDK 14 percent, AAK 11 percent, and ORA two percent. Eleven political entities, among them four representing the Kosovo Serb community, were certified to run for the November 2007 municipal elections in Kamenicë/Kamenica. However, the Kosovo Serb community did not participate in the elections and remains unrepresented in the municipal assembly, apart from three appointed “observers”. Over 35 percent of the registered voters in the municipality cast their ballots. There is a political agreement between PDK and AKR to govern together during this mandate. Other political parties left in opposition, such as LDD, LDK, AAK and ORA that altogether have 15 members, represent a solid basis for a lively democratic debate in the Municipal Assembly and its bodies.

4. Economy

Most of the socially-owned enterprises no longer function and some are in the process of privatization. The brick factory was put up for 10-year lease in 2002 and began production in 2003 with 76 employees (50 percent Kosovo Albanian and 50 percent Kosovo Serb). Hugo’s Brewery is another fairly successful business with 16 employees and investment from Sweden.

5. Public services

• Health

The primary family health care centre is located in Kamenicë/Kamenica town and provides first aid and general assistance. In addition, there are four family health care centres located in the villages of Hogosht/Ogošte, Rogoçicë/Rogačica, Ranilug/Ranillug and Kamenicë/Kamenica (Kosovo Serb populated suburb in the vicinity of the Church). There are also 20 *ambulantas* serving the population: one in Kamenicë/Kamenica town, ten in Kosovo Albanian villages, eight in Kosovo Serb villages and one in the mixed village of Strezoc/Strezovce. The closest hospital is in Gjilan/Gnjilane, but for serious cases, most Kosovo Serbs go outside Kosovo. Due to bad road conditions, access to health facilities still remains a major problem for all communities, despite recent investments in road infrastructure made by the municipality and Kosovo ministry of transport. [Source: municipal department of health and social services]

• Education

There are 25 schools in the municipality. Nineteen are primary schools (14 Kosovo Albanian and five Kosovo Serb with Kosovo Roma students), four secondary schools (one Kosovo Albanian and three Kosovo Serb), two technical high schools (one Kosovo Albanian and one Kosovo Serb) and three kindergartens (one Kosovo Albanian and two Kosovo Serbs). The educational system in the municipality is divided into schools administered by the Kosovo ministry of education and a parallel system following Serbian curricula [Source: municipal department for education]

6. Map of the region

