

Vushtrri/Vučitrn

September 2009

1. Area and population

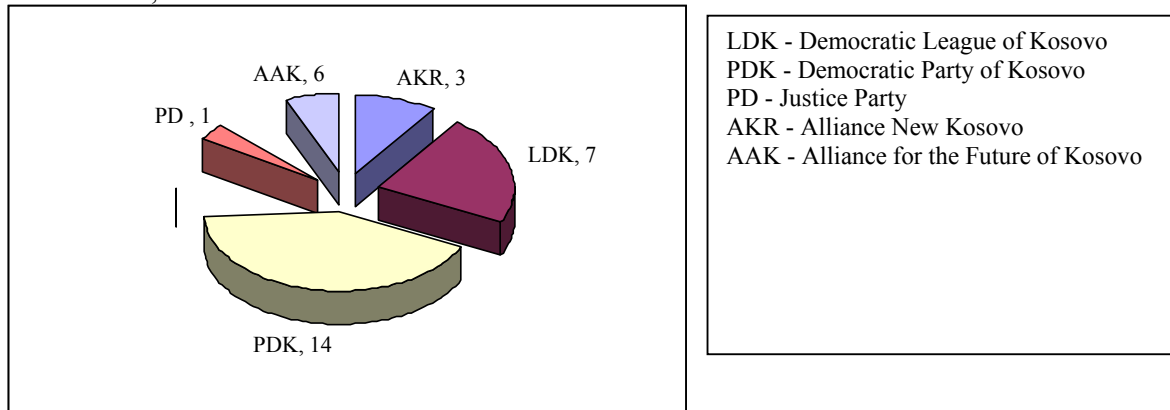
Vushtrri/Vučitrn municipality is located north of Prishtinë/Priština and south of Mitrovicë/Mitrovica with a total area of 344 km². The municipality consists of a town and 66 villages. The road network is in good condition with a number of secondary roads asphalted recently. Shortages in water and power throughout the municipality have been a major problem for residents since 1999. The water supply situation is expected to improve once a €3,000,000 European Commission-funded water plant is built.

The estimated total population is 102,600. Kosovo Albanians account for 95 percent. The remaining five percent are mostly Kosovo Serbs. About 4,000 of them live in the villages of Gojbulje/Gojbulë, Prelluzhë/Priluzhje, and Grace/Gracë. Kosovo Albanians and Kosovo Serbs live together in Banjska/Bajskë village. Other communities include Kosovo Turks, Roma, Ashkali, Egyptians and Circassians.

2. Governing structures

• Legislative

The current municipal assembly has 31 members from five political parties (please see chart below). The mayor, elected in 2007, is Bajram Mulaku. Xhevahire Izmaku is the deputy mayor, while Ferit Idrizi serves as chairperson of the municipal assembly. All three come from the PDK. The two mandatory committees (policy and finance, communities) meet regularly. The communities committee is composed of all communities residing in the municipality and they participate in its regular work. The chairperson is a Kosovo Serb, Mr. Bratislav Kostić.



• Executive

The civil administration is composed of twelve directors appointed by the mayor and the municipal communities officer. Eleven directors are PDK-affiliated, and one comes from the AKR. At the request of the residents of the village Prelluzhë/Priluzhje, the Kosovo ministry of internal affairs in cooperation with Vushtrri/Vučitrn municipality has established a civil registration office in the village. This enables Kosovo Serbs inhabitants of Prelluzhë/Priluzhje to receive personal documents without having to travel to Vushtrri/Vučitrn town.

• Judiciary

Vushtrri/Vučitrn has a municipal court and a minor offences court. The municipal court has four judges: a Kosovo Albanian male court president and one judge, a Kosovo Albanian female judge, and a Kosovo Serb female judge. The minor offences court has a Kosovo Albanian male president and two Kosovo Albanian male judges. The municipality falls under the jurisdiction of the Mitrovicë/Mitrovica district court and district and municipal public prosecutors' offices, that were following 17 February 2008, relocated to Vushtrri/Vučitrn municipal court premises and now function with limited capacities. A parallel Serbian court exists but only in name.

• Security presence

The police station has 144 Kosovo police (KP) officers. In February 2005, the police station and all operational competencies were handed over from UNMIK to the KP. After the departure of UNMIK police, three EULEX police officers were deployed to the station and work in monitoring, mentoring, and advising capacity. There is a sub-station in the Kosovo Serb village of Prelluzhë/Priluzhje with eight Kosovo Serbs and seven Kosovo Albanian officers. French KFOR is covering the municipality.

3. Political overview

From 2002 to 2007, LDK was the leading party in the municipality. In the November 2007 elections, PDK emerged as the strongest party forming a ruling coalition with AKR to rule the municipality. The

composition of the municipal assembly was as follows: PDK 13 seats, LDK seven seats, AKR three seats, AAK two seats, LDD two seats, Democratic Union two seats, ORA one seat, and PD one seat. In early 2009, Democratic Union elected representatives joined LDK only to switch allegiances to AAK a few months later. The LDD elected representatives switched allegiances joining the ranks of AAK. Muharrem Shabani, the former municipal assembly president with LDK, has been nominated as the AAK mayoral candidate for the forthcoming 2009 local elections. He also acts as the AAK local branch leader.

The Kosovo Serb Independent Liberal Party (SLS) has been active in the region and has formed a close cooperation with the municipal authorities during 2009. Its representatives regularly attend municipal assembly sessions and participate in the work of the consultative committees on education and health. There is also a parallel Vushtrri/Vučitrn municipality deriving from the 11 May 2008 Serbian elections and is seated in Prelluzhë/Priluzhje village.

4. Economy

Vushtrri/Vučitrn is predominantly agriculture-oriented. Due to a lack of capital investment and slow privatization process, little economic development has been achieved, contributing to an 80 percent unemployment rate. Recently there have been improvements in the agriculture sector; an irrigation expansion project for 1,300 hectares will be implemented soon, funded by the ministry of agriculture, forestry and rural development. The economy primarily consists of small enterprises such as family-owned shops and restaurants. Apart from these small businesses, the municipality is the main employer; 1556 people work in the municipal administration.

5. Public services

• Health

The main health facility in Vushtrri/Vučitrn, the “Sheik Zayed” hospital, is under the competences of the Kosovo ministry of health. The main centre for family medicine employs 210 people, 37 doctors and 173 nurses and administrative staff. The centre also has health care units located in 13 villages and provides wide range of primary care services while town hospital provides secondary care. For tertiary care, patients go to hospital in Prishtinë/Priština. Health services in the Kosovo Serb villages are provided at the health house in Prelluzhë/Priluzhje. It also has outreach health points in Banjska/Bajskë, Grace/Gracë, and Gojbulje/Gojbulë villages. (municipal department of health and social welfare.)

• Education

In the 2008/2009 school year, 28 primary schools operated in the municipality, with 838 teachers and technical staff and attended by 13,552 students. Three secondary schools with 203 professors and technical staff with 4,080 students are located and operate in the town. There is a kindergarten operating under the municipal department of education with 168 children and 28 personnel. The Kosovo Serb village of Prelluzhë/Priluzhje has one secondary and one primary school. There are also primary schools in Graca/Gracë and Gojbulje/Gojbulë and a lower primary school (first to fourth grades) in Banjska/Bajskë. Altogether they have 54 teachers and technical staff and around 540 pupils. (municipal department of education.)

6. Map of the region

Vushtrri / Vuçitrn

