

Viti/Vitina

April 2008

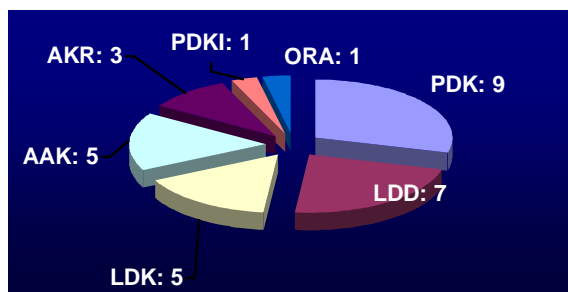
1. Area and Population

- Viti/Vitina Municipality lies in the south-east of Kosovo with the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) on the southern border. The municipality covers an area of 300 km². Whereas the central part of the municipality is flat and rolling, the northern and southern areas are mountainous. Basic infrastructure is not in good condition: roads are generally poor; less than 20% of the population has an adequate water supply system, and approximately 10% have access to sewage.
- The estimated total population is around 59,800. The majority is Kosovo Albanian (approximately 56,400) with small numbers from minority communities: approximately 3,300 Kosovo Serbs, 60 Kosovo Croats and 20 Roma. There are two entirely Kosovo Serb villages (Vrbovac/Vërboc and Grnčar/Gernqarë) and three ethnically mixed villages (Mogillë/Mogilla, Binçë/Binaç and Klokot/Kllokot). After the conflict in FYROM in 2001, about 20,000 refugees fled to Viti/Vitina municipality, and today 171 persons (29 families) are still residing there. As for the return to the municipality, according to UNHCR, since 2000 until March 2006, 352 Kosovo Serbs, 18 Roma and 18 Ashkali have returned. All Kosovo Serbs displaced during and after the March 2004 riots have also returned. There is, however, a high rate of minority departures from the municipality. [Source: UNHCR Updated progress-report for Gjilan/Gnjilane Area of Responsibility, February 2000, OSCE Field Office, June 2001, UNMIK Gjilan/Gnjilane August 2003 (un-official). It is noted that the 1991 census was highly politicised and is thus unreliable.]

2. Governing Structures

• Legislative

The Municipal Assembly comprises 31 members elected in the November 2007 Municipal Elections. There are no Kosovo Serb representatives in the Municipal Assembly. The Chairperson of Municipal Assembly is Mr. Nexhmedin Arifi of PDK, while the Vice-Chairperson is Mr. Enver Ukshini of AKR. Since minority communities do not have a Member in the Municipal Assembly, a second Vice-Chairperson, Mr. Saša Mirković, is selected from within the minority community. Thus far, there are three standing committees established: Policy and Finance Committee, Communities Committee and Mediation Committee.



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

• Executive

The mayor is Mr. Nexhmedian Arifi of Democratic Party of Kosovo (PDK). There are nine departments: Health and Social Welfare; Education, Culture and Youth; Economy, Finance and Development; Urban Planning, Cadastre, Environmental Protection; Public Services and Emergency; Inspection; Agriculture; Administration and Personnel and Community Office. The Board of Directors consists of seven appointed Directors. The Head of Department of Administration and Personnel is Mr. Daut Xhemajli, while Mr. Saša Marinković is the Head of the Community Office, both serving as ex officio Board members.

• Judiciary

Viti/Vitina municipality has a municipal court (three Kosovo Albanian judges) and Minor Offences Court (three Kosovo Albanian judges).

• Security Presence

The Kosovo Police Service station in Viti/Vitina municipality comprises 111 officers. The ethnic composition of the police force is as follows: 80 Kosovo Albanians, 29 Kosovo Serbs, and two Kosovo Croats. In terms of the gender make-up, there are 99 males and 12 females. In July 2007, two Kosovo Police Service substations were opened in Vrbovac/Vërboc and Pozharan/Pozaranje. The police station was transferred from UNMIK to Kosovo Police Service in July 2004. With six international police officers based

at the Viti/Vitina police station, UNMIK Police continues to monitor the work of the Kosovo Police Service. As for the international military presence, US KFOR is in charge of the area.

3. Political Overview

As the main political power in the municipality, the Democratic Party of Kosovo (PDK), formed the municipal government in a coalition with LDD, PDKI and ORA. The Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK) is the principle party in the opposition. In the November 2007 Municipal Elections, over 38.4% of the registered voters cast their ballots. The majority of members from the Serb community opted to boycott the elections.

4. Economy

The area is rural and agrarian, yet the local economy is basically depressed. Most business is owned and operated by Kosovo Albanians. The largest employer is the “Klokot Bottling Plant & Spa” with 230 employees (28 Kosovo Serbs).

5. Public Services

• Health

There is a Health House located in Viti/Vitina town, which is primarily a basic health care outpatient clinic with 149 staff including 15 Kosovo Serbs and one Roma. It also has a few hospital beds for a long term care and provides gynaecological treatments. In addition, there is a supporting facility for people with disabilities run by the local NGO *Handikos* and 12 *ambulantas* providing villagers with basic health care and first aid. [Source: Department of Health and Social Welfare /Viti/Vitina Municipality]

• Education

Viti/Vitina municipality has 17 primary schools (14 Kosovo Albanian and three Kosovo Serb), three high schools (two Kosovo Albanian and one Kosovo Serb) and one pre-primary school (Kosovo Albanian). The Kosovo Serb schools are working under the Serbian Ministry of Education and do not accept the supervision from the PISG. The Kosovo Serb employees receive their salaries only from the Serbian authority. In reality, however, little supervision is received from Belgrade, and according to some teachers the quality of teaching is degrading. The Kosovo Serbs in some mixed villages used to attend a few mixed classes (gymnasium and art), but since the March 2004 riots, they have been reluctant to do so. Total number of employees in education is 841 including 55 Kosovo Serbs on the PISG payroll. [Source: Department of Education/Viti/Vitina Municipality]

6. Map of the Region

Viti / Vitina

