

Suharekë/Suva Reka

September 2009

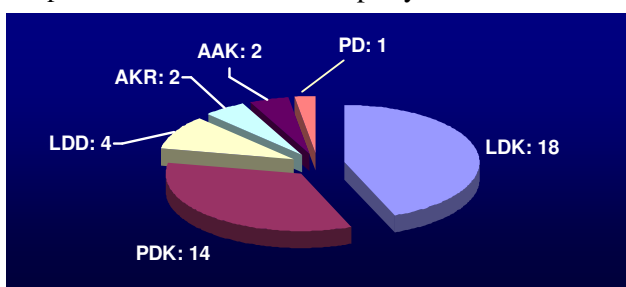
1. Area and population

The municipality of Suharekë/Suva Reka is located in southeast of Kosovo, including 41 villages and the town of Suharekë/Suva Reka itself. The 80,000-big Suharekë/Suva Reka's pre-conflict population included some 3,000 Kosovo Serbs and a small number of Kosovo Roma. Today, no Kosovo Serb lives in the municipality. According to the latest unofficial statistics used by the municipality, at present 535 members of Kosovo Ashkali community live in Suharekë/Suva Reka town and in the villages of Gelac/Geljance, Trrnje/Trnje, and Leshan/Lešane while four Kosovo Roma reside in the town. During the 1999 conflict approximately 90 percent of houses suffered damages and destruction.

2. Governing structures

• Legislative

The municipal assembly has 41 members, elected in November 2007. So far, two main legislative committees were established: policy and finance committee and the communities committee. LDK and LDD have 22 seats in the municipal assembly thus forming the majority. Mr Rexhep Kuqi (LDK) has been elected as the municipal assembly chairperson. The breakdown of party affiliation and seats is as follows:



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

• Executive

The mayor is Mr. Sali Asllanaj (LDK). He was re-elected in November 2007 elections and has appointed Mr. Vitor Markaj (LDK) as his deputy. With the new municipal structure municipal administration is organized into nine directorates. Out of 1,284 civil servants, 156 are employed in the municipal administration, 978 in the education sector, and 150 in the health sector.

• Judiciary

There are seven judges currently employed in Suharekë/Suva Reka courts; four at the municipal court and three at the minor offences court.

• Security presence

On 12 December 2003, control of the police station in Suharekë/Suva Reka was handed over to the Kosovo police, and it is managed by the Kosovo police. Out of 133 Kosovo police officers 115 serve in Suharekë/Suva Reka and 18 in the village of Mushtisht/Mušutište; 120 are male and 13 female. All officers are Kosovo Albanians. The EULEX police branch in Suharekë/Suva Reka town operates currently with 6 international police officers. An Austrian KFOR contingent (AUCON), composed of 450 officers and soldiers, together with Kosovo police is responsible for the security in Suharekë/Suva Reka municipality.

3. Political overview

Eleven parties from Suharekë/Suva Reka participated in November 2007 elections. There was a significant drop in the support for LDK, from 59 percent support in 2002 to 41.8 percent in 2007. Meanwhile, PDK has increased the percentage of its supporters from 30 in 2002 to 34 in 2007. The AKR won 5.4 percent of votes, and AAK managed to keep the 5.5 percent, while the PD is represented for the first time in municipal assembly with one seat. As a consequence of the significant drop in the number of its supporters, LDK branch in Suharekë/Suva Reka was 'forced' to enter into a local coalition with LDD, and now the two parties together hold 22 seats in the municipal assembly. This coalition agreement enabled the LDK candidate to win the second round of mayoral election with a margin of 18 percent (59percent LDK and 41 percent PDK). Recently due to move of Mr. Blerim Kuçi (former Kosovo minister of internal affairs) from LDK to AAK, it is believed that two municipal assembly members have also moved to AAK but they did not express it publicly. Noteworthy, there were 15 candidates on the list of political entities for the Assembly of Kosovo from Suharekë/Suva Reka municipality and two of them, the PDK candidate Enver Hoxhaj and the LDK candidate Bujar Bukoshi, won seats in the Assembly of Kosovo.

4. Economy

The municipality of Suharekë/Suva Reka is known as an industrial area in Kosovo, as it has plenty of natural resources. Private businesses act as the driving force behind the overall economic development. Prior to the 1999 conflict the main enterprises were 'Ballkan' (rubber and chemical industry), the agricultural industrial enterprise 'OBI Suharekë' producing wine and ESD Schweppes, as well as the garment factory 'Nerezina' in Mushtisht/Mušutište village. 'Ballkan' was privatized in 2005 and currently operates under a new name 'Ballkan New Co' and employs over 400 people. 'OBI Suharekë' has been producing wine and alcoholic drinks until 2006. This enterprise has been privatized by an Italian corporation and is in the process of restructuring and adapting to the new market demands. Last year this company presented a plan to use the land they purchased to produce other agricultural products including all types of vegetables. 'Ben-af' company has started production of different meat products (sausages, goulash etc). Milk factory 'Lakto-Theranda' is a joint enterprise of 160 farmers from the municipality and is currently packing the milk for the farmers. Besides viticulture, fruits, corn, poultry and honey production are also produced in Suharekë/Suva Reka.

5. Public services

• Health

There is one main Health Centre in Suharekë/Suva Reka town with an obstetric/gynecologic clinic, which was completely reconstructed with funds provided by the Austrian government. Other 10 smaller Family Health Centers are spread in different villages. Five of them, in the villages of Gjinoc/Gjinovce, Duhël/Dulje, Bukosh/Bukoš, Mohlan/Movlane, and Semetisht/Semetište, were reconstructed with funds provided by the Belgian Red Cross. All communities have equal access to health services.

• Education

The municipality has 23 primary schools with 45 satellite schools and one kindergarten hosting 14,036 students. Two secondary schools are located in Suharekë/Suva Reka town with a total number of 2,770 students. Eleven new schools were built after the conflict, replacing those completely destroyed, and five additional new schools built in the villages of Stravuqin/Staravuçina, Duhël/Dulje (Sopaj mahalla), Vrshec/Vršec, Savrovë/Savrovo and Çadarak/Cajdrak. All communities have equal access to education.

6. Map of the region

