

Viti/Vitina

September 2009

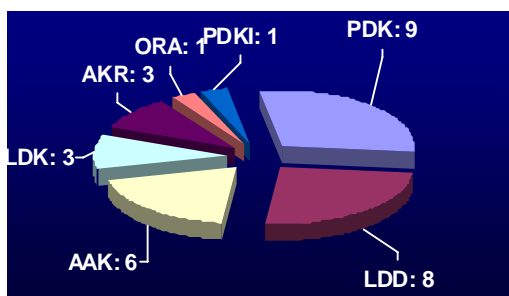
1. Area and population

Viti/Vitina municipality lies in southeastern Kosovo and borders the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (fYROM) to the south. 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. Conditions of the basic infrastructure are generally poor. Only around 30 percent of the population has access to an adequate water supply and sewage system. The estimated total population is around 59,800. The majority is Kosovo Albanian followed by approximately 3,300 Kosovo Serbs, 60 Kosovo Croats and 20 Kosovo 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). According to the 1991 census, 7,002 Kosovo Serbs, 4,331 Kosovo Croats and 373 Kosovo Roma lived in the municipality; many of them fled in 1999. As for return figures, according to the UNHCR, from 2000 to mid-2009, 358 Kosovo Serbs, 19 Kosovo Roma and 18 Kosovo Ashkali have returned to the municipality. Moreover, after the conflict in fYROM in 2001, about 20,000 refugees fled to Viti/Vitina, and to date, around 300 persons are still residing there. All Kosovo Serbs displaced during and after the March 2004 riots have returned to the municipality. There is, however, a high rate of non-Albanian communities' departures from the municipality. [Source: municipality of Viti/Vitina; UNHCR (un-official) estimates August 2009]

2. Governing structures

• Legislative

The municipal assembly is comprised of 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. Jakup Jahiri (AAK), while the deputy chairperson is Mr. Enver Ukshini (AKR). Thus far, there are two standing committees established – policy and finance committee and communities committee.



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

• Executive

The mayor is Mr. Nexhmedin Arifi (PDK). A deputy mayor for communities, Mr. Saša Mirković, was appointed from within the Kosovo Serb community. The municipal administration is divided into nine departments: health and social welfare; education, culture and youth; economy, finance and development; urban planning, cadastre and environmental protection; public and emergency services; inspection; agriculture; administration and personnel; and municipal community office. The municipal board of directors is composed of seven appointed directors plus the heads of administration and personnel department and the municipal community office, who serve 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 station in Viti/Vitina municipality has 115 officers: 84 Kosovo Albanians, 29 Kosovo Serbs, and two Kosovo Croats; 103 male and 12 female. In July 2007, two police sub-stations were opened in Vrbovac/Vërboc and Pozheran/Požaranje. There are also four EULEX police monitors. As for the international military presence, United States KFOR is in charge of the area.

3. Political overview

As the main political force in the municipality, PDK is the ruling party in coalition with AKR, PDKI and ORA. LDD is the main party in the opposition. In the November 2007 municipal elections, over 38.4 percent of the registered voters casted their ballots. The majority of Kosovo Serb community members did not participate in the November 2007 elections; however, like in other parts of the region, Kosovo Serbs in Viti/Vitina participated in the general elections organized by Serbia on 11 May 2008. Based on the results of that election, parallel municipal structures were formed and are located in Vrbovac/Vërboc village. The current coalition running the municipality deriving from the May 2008 elections is the Serbian Radical Party and the Citizens' Initiative "Vidovdan".

4. Economy

Viti/Vitina is mainly a rural municipality and its economy is primarily dependent on agriculture. Most businesses are owned and operated by Kosovo Albanians. The largest employers in the municipality are the Klokot water bottling plant and two spa resorts located in Klokot/Klllokot. The only business owned by a Kosovo Serb is the Aqua Sana Mineral Water bottling company, which employs three workers.

5. Public services

● Health

The main medical facility located in Viti/Vitina town is a basic health care centre with a 32-bed capacity, which employs a total of 142 workers, including 12 Kosovo Serbs. In addition, there is a network of 13 outpatient facilities in the villages which provide basic health care and first aid services to the residents. The Kosovo Serb health care facilities operate solely under the authority of the Serbian authorities and employ 26 staff (only Kosovo Serbs). [Source: Viti/Vitina municipality; municipal communities office in Vrbovac/Vërboc]

● 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 kindergarten (Kosovo Albanian). The Kosovo Serb schools operate under the Serbian education system. The total number of education staff members on the payroll of the department of education is 821. 149 Kosovo Serbs and one Kosovo Roma receive salaries from Belgrade. [Source: Viti/Vitina municipality; municipal communities office in Vrbovac/Vërboc.]

6. Map of the region

Viti / Vitina

