



MUNICIPAL PROFILE

Skenderaj/Srbica

June 2006

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1. Introduction: Area and Population

Skënderaj/Srbica municipality is located in the north centre of Kosovo, south of Mitrovicë/Mitrovica municipality. The territory of the municipality is mostly a high, rolling plateau running westward from the foothills of the Qyqavica Mountains, with its highest peak at 1080 meters. It consists of 52 villages organised in 12 districts (*Bashkia Lokale*). Skënderaj/Srbica town is located on the road leading south to Glogovc/Glogovac and along the main road from Mitrovicë/Mitrovica to Pejë/Peć. The municipality constitutes the core of the Drenica Valley, a region with a long history of Kosovo Albanian defiance to Serbian authority. The Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) was founded in this countryside and Skënderaj/Srbica has since been considered its stronghold.

The military operations that took place in Prekaz i Ulët/Donji Prekaz in March 1998 represents a defining episode in the escalation of armed conflict in Kosovo. The target of the operation was the home of the KLA leader who today is considered a martyr by the Kosovo Albanian population. His home has been turned into a memorial that hosts hundreds of visitors from all over Kosovo. Violence increased considerably during the NATO bombing campaign and the systematic destruction of many villages, including 3,528 houses out of 8,518, according to United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) sources. This resulted in an exodus of people from their homes.

Before the displacement, the municipality's population of approximately 65,000 was 98% Kosovo Albanian. 200 Kosovo Serb residents were located in the main town and in two villages in the northern part of the municipality (about 500 in total). A few Ashkali, as well as Bosniak households were scattered throughout the municipality. At the time KFOR forces entered Kosovo, the majority of Kosovo Serbs left the municipality.

Today, Kosovo Serbs are present only in Suvo Grló/Suhogërlë (129) and Banja/Bajë (197) villages, and in Devicé Monastery (9). Only 12 Ashkali and 3 Bosniak families are still living in the municipality. Currently, 312 internally displaced persons (IDPs) including 186 children are hosted in six collective shelters in Skënderaj/Srbica town.

During the March riots 2004 the Devicé Orthodox monastery was looted, seriously damaged and burned. Some of the objects looted have since been recovered. Also the guesthouse was destroyed and the cemetery desecrated. The nuns who had been evacuated prior to the attack have been returned to the monastery under KFOR protection. No other Serbian villages were targeted during the violence and local authorities do seem to have made an attempt to restrain crowds from doing so.

Within the context of Skënderaj/Srbica municipality the village of Runik/Rudnik is of particular interest. Prior to the conflict some 2900 individuals lived in the village, a number which has hardly changed. During the worst period of the Kosovo conflict Runik/Rudnik was temporarily abandoned. While some 50% of Albanians left in 1998 the second half followed during intensified hostilities and violence in 1999. On the other hand, Runik/Rudnik was also home to 32 Serb who had left in 1999, as well as 8 Ashkali families whose number has decreased to 6¹. At the same time 14 Albanian families from Runik/Rudnik are still displaced in Kosovo.

Table 1.1: Ethnic Composition, Including IDPs

Population	Kosovo Albanian		Kosovo Serb		Ashkali		Bosniak		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Unreliable 1991 census	63,668	98,5	812	1,3	166 ("others"), 0,2%				64,646	100
January 1999	App. 65,000	N/A	291	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	App.65,000	N/A
Current estimated figures	App. 70,000	100%	326	N/A	68	N/A	20	N/A	App.70,000	N/A

Source: UNCA Skënderaj/Srbica

2. Civil Administration

Soon after NATO contingents started to enter the province, a self-styled authority supported by Hashim Thaci's provisional government was in place. The UN Administration took office in August 1999 and appointed the administrative structure as the official Administrative Board. The strong KLA presence, whose hegemonic control over the municipal affairs led to the appointment of the Kosovo Protection Corps (KPC) Commander as Council member and to the anomalous presence of Departments such as "Defense and Mobilization" and of "Public Order", raised several concerns among the international community. The UN Civil Administration (UNCA) abolished the illegal structures.

¹ Community Profile, UNHCR-NCA, October 2004

On 12 May 2001 the Municipal Statute was approved. The new composition of the Administrative Board in January 2002, strongly resembles the previous self-appointed structure, and was further confirmed by the 2000 and 2002 Municipal Elections. The Municipal Assembly (MA) of Skënderaj/Srbica consists of 31 elected members (one seat will remain vacant due to the missing woman candidate in the PDK list) of whom 25 are PDK, four LDK and one PReK. The MA held its inaugural session on 15 November 2002.

The level of politicization of the municipal Civil Administration appointment is high as the President of the Municipality, his Deputy and the Chief Executive Officer as well as all municipal Directors are PDK affiliated. The Local Community Office is located in Banja/Baje village and the Head of Office was appointed in August 2004. With the establishment of the Directorate of Inspection and Civil Preparedness and Emergency, the Board of Directors has nine directorates. In the Municipal Assembly meeting in January 2005, it was decided to establish a new Directorate on Public Procurement following the instruction of the Ministry of Economy and Finance. In June 2005, the Directorate of Procurement was transformed into a procurement office by decision of the Assembly.

The three mandatory Committees (Policy and Finance, Communities and Mediation) have been established. The Communities Committee are meeting on regular (monthly) and rotating basis (Skenderaj/Srbica-Banja/Bajë). Mediation Committee has not met despite some efforts by the municipality; thus, the chairperson and deputy chairperson have not been elected.

Table 2.1: Composition of the Municipal Assembly

Name of Municipal Assembly Member / Professional Background	Political Affiliation
Mr. Ramadan Gashi, Jurist	PDK / President
Mr. Ismet Salihu, Teacher	PDK / Vice-President
Ms. Ardita Bejta, Student	PDK
Mr. Aslan Osmani Teacher,	PDK
Mr. Bajram Rukolli, Teacher	PDK
Mr. Beqir Beqiri, Teacher	PDK
Ms. Dinore Dajaku, Teacher	PDK
Mr. Elheme Hetemi, Agronomist	PDK
Mr. Emin Halimi, Economist	PDK
Mr. Faruk Hoti, Teacher	PDK
Mr. Fetije Ismajli Engineer	PDK
Mr. Fidajje Veseli, Teacher	PDK
Mr. Hajriz Koci, Student	PDK
Mr. Hidajete Beqiri, Economist	PDK
Mr. Imer Duraku, Teacher	PDK
Mr. Murat Dauti, Teacher	PDK
Mr. Musa Derguti, Teacher	PDK
Mr. Nuredin Dajaku, Teacher	PDK
Mr. Ragip Çollaku, Teacher	PDK
Mr. Rifat Bejta, Teacher	PDK
Mr. Salih Gashi Teacher	PDK
Ms. Sebahate Veliu, Teacher	PDK
Mr. Sherif Tahiri, Engineer	PDK
Mr. Shaban Zyhrani, Teacher	PDK
Mr. Sylë Dervishi, Engineer	PDK
Vacant	PDK
Mr. Jetullah Behrami, Teacher	LDK
Mr. Sejdi Koci, Teacher	LDK
Ms. Shukrije Tahiraj, Teacher	LDK
Mr. Xhafer Murtezaj, Teacher	LDK
Mr. Rushit Haliti, Engineer	PReK

Source: OSCE Regional Centre Mitrovicë/Mitrovica

Table 2.2: Municipal Assembly Committees

Committee	Chairperson / Affiliation	Vice-chairperson / Affiliation
Policy and Finance	Mr. Ramadan Gashi/PDK	Mr. Emin Halimi/PDK
Mediation	Not appointed	Not appointed
Community	Mr. Dejan Tomasevic/K/Serb	Ms. Elheme Hetemi/K/Albanian

Source: OSCE Regional Centre Mitrovicë/Mitrovica

Table 2.3: Chief Executive Officer, Board of Directors and Municipal Departments

Director / Professional Background / Affiliation (if any)	Municipal Department (Incl. Community Office, if any)
Ahmet Latifi, Engineer, PDK	Chief Executive Officer
Abedin Geci, Jurist, PDK	Directorate of Cadastre, Geodesy and Property
Hazir Lushtaku, Teacher, PDK	Directorate of Civil Preparedness and Emergency
Beqir Beqiri, Teacher, PDK	Directorate of Culture, Youth & and Sport
Muhamet Bajraktari, Teacher, PDK	Directorate of Education & Science
Mehmet Berisha, Economist, PDK	Directorate of Finance and Economy
Nasuf Shabani, Jurist, PDK	Directorate of General Administration
Nazif Goxhuli, PDK	Directorate of Health and Social Policy
Afrim Hetemi, Economist, Independent	Directorate of Inspection
Avdyl Imeri, Engineer, PDK	Directorate of Planning & Rural Development
Hashim Meha, Jurist, PDK	Directorate of Urbanism, Reconstruction & Environmental Protection
Nedeljko Kovacevic, Teacher, Kosovo Serb	Community Office
Imer Ahmetaj	Municipal Election Officer (MEO)

Source: OSCE Regional Centre Mitrovicë/Mitrovica

3. Political Parties

The rise of the KLA in 1998 and its transformation into a political force (PPDK, later PDK) modified the political scene in Skënderaj/Srbica following the end of a decade-long LDK leadership.

PDK, whose local branch was founded in October 1999, installed its own trusted men at the head of the local administration and excluded at any level the LDK and the other old parties from local governance. The October 2000 Municipal Elections consolidated the power PDK gained after the war and sanctioned, with a remarkable 84 percent of votes, the near-total dominance of the municipal governance. In 2002 the Municipal Assembly organized village elections and new village headmen were elected. The standing of local political party branches within municipality has been continuously reflected by the all elections held up to date, 2000, 2001, 2002 and lastly 2004.

PDK is far the strongest political party in the municipality and thus it holds vast majority seats within the Municipal Assembly. The continuous efforts of the LDK to restructure and improve its presence in the municipality have not shown many results at the elections to date. This is also reflected in the work of the Municipal Assembly, where the LDK members appear to be weak in their opposition role. The other political parties, most of which had been acting underground for years, ceased their political activity following the escalation of the events in 1999. Although they participated in both Municipal Elections and Kosovo Assembly Election, they did not win sufficient votes to be represented either in the MA or the Kosovo Assembly, with the exception of PReK which gained one seat in the Municipal Assembly elections.

In general, since the 2002 elections, opposition parties are very passive including parties represented in the Municipal Assembly.

Table 3.1: Political Parties

Party	Municipal Branch Leader	Kosovo-wide Leader	Vote in 2002 Mun. Elect.	Seats in MA
Democratic Party of Kosovo (PDK)	Mr. Ramadan Gashi	Mr. Hashim Thaci	15,601 (81.6%)	26 (7 women)
LDK (Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK)	Mr. Fadil Geci	vacant	2,352 (12.3%)	4
Albanian Unification Party (UNIKOMB)	Mr. Agim Rushiti	Mr. Ukshin Hoti	84 (0.4%)	0
Albanian National Democratic Party (PNDSH)	Mr. Ferat Imeri	Mr. Rexhep Abdullahu	47 (0.3%)	0
Liberal Party of Kosovo (PLK)	Mr. Naim Meha	Ms. Gjergj Dedaj	114 (0.6%)	0
National Front (BK)	Mr. Ilaz Ahmeti	Mr. Kajtaz Fazlia	135 (0.7%)	0
Alliance for Future of Kosovo (AAK)	Mr. Hajzer Ahmeti	Mr. Ramush Haradinaj	194 (1.02%)	0
New Party of Kosovo (PReK)	Mr. Rushit Haliti	Mr. Bujar Bukoshi	529 (2.8%)	1

Source: OSCE Regional Centre Mitrovicë/Mitrovica

4. Local and International NGOs

Since the end of 2003, no international NGO is based within the municipality. Those few operating in Skënderaj/Srbica are mainly based in Mitrovicë/Mitrovica or Prishtinë/Priština. NGO activities in Skenderaj/Srbica go beyond the traditional understanding of non-profit NGOs. Some aim at the mutual benefit of their members while others have an unofficial political affiliation (the Kosovo Protection Corps – KPC, Friends' Association, and the Association of War Invalids). All

these NGOs contribute to the creation of a pluralistic environment within and also outside the municipality's borders in one way or another.

Although most local NGOs face difficulties including a lack of training and limited access to donors, their role in nurturing an otherwise low level of citizen self-organization is at times remarkable. Particular attention should be paid to the local Youth Council (registered as a local NGO in late 2002), that has demonstrated its enthusiasm and commitment on many occasions through a series of initiatives. Four women groups which demonstrate a relatively high degree of lobbying capabilities are active in the municipality. It is worth mentioning that these women NGOs, particularly NGO *Prehja*, have spread their activities and cross-community programs to the mixed enclaves in Suvo Grlo/Suhogërlle and Banja/Bajë. In their programmes they are also involving Ashkali women from Runike/Rudnik. Local NGO's are also involved in return projects preparing the ground and facilitating the contacts between the IDP's and host community. Youth NGOs are also quite active in terms of organising various activities and projects related to the youth.

Table 4.1: Local NGOs active in the Municipality

Name	Main focus	Contact Person (phone / fax / e-mail)	Headquarters (phone / fax/ e-mail)
'AGRO REZALLA'	Agriculture	Muhamet Rukolli, 038 584 707, 044/ 340 085	Village Rezallë,Skenderaj/Srbica
Antigona	Professional training for women.	Raba Rrustemi, 044/192 232, 028-82375, 028-82211	Skenderaj/Srbica (Cultural Centre)
Association of Former Detainees	Economic support to former detainees	Rrustem Hoti Skenderaj/Srbica	N/a
Business Association "Bashkimi" Skenderaj	Encouragement of economic development in SE ,registration of businesses, organization of trainings and seminars	Ismet Mustafa, Skenderaj/Srbica 028 82 166, 044 503 032	N/a
Committee for the Protection of Children's' Rights in Skenderaj (CPCR) / Komiteti per Mbrojtjen e te Drejtave te Femijeve ne Skenderaj	Awareness campaigns/activities on Children Rights	Hajriz Hajdini 044 228 667 kmdf_skenderaj@hotmail.com	Culture Center, Skenderaj/Srbica
Co-operators In Development Association(CDA) / Shoqata e Bashkepunetore-ve ne Zhvillim	Economic Development and Infrastructure	Zymer Veliu, Ilaz Kodra 13, Qendra Zejtare , Skenderaj/Srbica 028 82 135, 044 192 148	N/a
Council for the Defence of Human Rights and Freedoms (CDHRF) / Keshilli per Mbrojtjen e Lirive dhe te Drejtave te njeriut	Human Rights	Murat Musliu 028/82522	Pajazit Nushi 038/549 006/7(fax) (kmdluj@albanian.com)
Economists' Association	Studies of marketing and economic development, training of cadres, establishment of small business organizations, counselling on projects	Sabit Hoxha 028/82024 (sabithoxha@hotmail.com)	N/a
'Ecopartner"	Environmental Protection	Murat Dauti 044 194 755	Village Suvo Grlo/Suriganë,,Zona Kadastrale, Skenderaj/Srbica
Farmers Association of Skenderaj 'Gruri' / Shoqata e Bujqeve te Skenderajt 'Gruri'	Agricultural	Sabit Ferizi, 044 215 098, 028 82 124	Cultural Center,Skenderaj/Srbica
Handikos	Social assistance and educational programs for persons with limited abilities.	Ibrahim Hetemi, 28 Nentori, Fidanishtja Skenderaj/Srbica 028/38338 044/192 541	Halit Ferizi, 038/543843 (phone) 038/548327(fax) handikos@ipko.org
Association of Lawyers	Studies of international law in relation to Kosovo.	Hajrije Daiaku 028/82124; 028/ 82 119; 028/ 82 027	N/a
Association for Children and Youth 'Curley' / Shoqata per femije e rini 'Kaurrela'	Sport and cultural activities for students and children	Beqir Qerimi Rr.Bekim Berisha 33, Skenderaj/Srbica 028 82 140	N/a
Kosovo Red Cross	Humanitarian aid and non- food items distribution.	Ukshin Lushtaku Municipality Building, Skenderaj/Srbica 044/164 130	Jusuf Dedushaj 038/41431(phone) 038/42618 (fax)
KPC Friends' Association	Providing assistance on humanitarian bases and fundraising for TMK	Halim Isufi	Cultural Centre, Skenderaj/Srbica
Mother Theresa Society	Humanitarian aid and food distribution (CSW).	Bajram Gashi Cultural Centre Skenderaj/Srbica, 044 /192 174	Gani Demolli, 038/532752 (phone/fax) ntereze@eunt.yu
NGO 'Flutura'	Women empowerment and capacity building for women	Minire Gashi Rr.Azem Bejta ,Skenderaj/Srbica, 044 157 292, 063/ 8144 460	N/a
NGO Forum Skenderaj / Forumi I OJQ-ve te Skenderajt	Civil Society Development	Shaqir Mecinaj Rr.Ilaz Kodra nr.13, Skenderaj/Srbica	N/a

		044 196 256, 028 82 135	
NGO Jovanka	Women empowerment	Jovanka Tomasevic, 064/279 2389	Suvo Grló/Suhogërlë
NITI	Community development	Fixhirije Kadriu 044 152 238	Skenderaj/Srbica
Painters Association Skenderaj (SHAFS) / Shoqata e artisteve figurativ ne Skenderaj	Professional Organization of Painters	Gazmend Hamiti 044 196 167, 028 82 019	Cultural Centre,Skenderaj/Srbica
Beekeepers' Association 'Podrimqarja'	Support to honey production,trainings for bee-keepers	Avdyl Gucati 044 214 861	Cultural Centre, Skenderaj/Srbica
Prehja	Gender issues , women empowerment cross--community projects	Ajnishahe Halimi 044 195 301 qgprehja@hotmail.com	Skenderaj/Srbica
Semi-professional city theatre 'Naser Kodra' / Teatri gjysem-profesional I qytetit 'Naser Kodra'	Preservation and development of cultural and national values, theatre performances	Bilall Koci 044 196 243, 028 82 030	Cultural Centre, Skenderaj/Srbica
United Farmers Association 'Eko-Fshati' / Shoqata e Bujqeve te Bashkuar 'Eko Fshati'	Agriculture	Selim Citaku 044 189 995 044/189 995; 044/ 345 710	Skenderaj/Srbica
War Invalids Association / Shoqata e invalideve te Luftes	Assistance to war-invalids	Sami Aruqi	Cultural Centre, Skenderaj/Srbica
Youth Eye/ 'Syri Rinise'	Public awareness campaigns, citizen participation initiatives.	Burim Haxhiu 044/273 102 ngo_ey@hotmail.com eye_of_youth.4t.com	Cultural Centre, Skenderaj/Srbica
Youth Vision/ Organizata Vizione Rinore Banja	Youth and social issues	Ivana Zdravkovic,	Village Banja/Bajë, Skenderaj/Srbica
Youth Vision 'Visioni Rinor' Skenderaj / Organizata Vizione Rinore te Skenderajt	Youth activities – educational, cultural, sport etc.	Mehmet Qollaku 044 272 782	Cultural Centre, Skenderaj/Srbica

Source: OSCE Regional Center Mitrovicë/Mitrovica

Table 4.2: International NGOs active in the Municipality

Name	Main focus	Contact Person (phone/fax/e-mail)	Headquarters (phone / fax/ e-mail)
CSME	Psychosocial programs	Majel Kamorlmaz	CSMEkosovo@hotmail.com
Community Building in Mitrovica(CBM)	Cross-community cooperation and facilitation of returning process	Valdete Idrizi valdeteidrizi@hotmail.com 044 176 480	cbmitrovica@yahoo.com 028 30 335 Mitrovica
Lutheran World Federation(LWF)	Sustainable Return and Reintegration of the Serb Community in Runik/Rudnik	Ben Marr, LWF Regional Finance Manager +387 61 898 131 Ismet Nazifi Project coordinator for Kosovo +377 44 120 071	Mitrovica Ulqinit nr.74 tel.028 30 308 lwf-kosovo@hotmail.com
Qatar	Humanitarian aid distribution/training courses	Korab Shehu	Ihab Maz'har, Skënderaj/Srbica

Source: OSCE Regional Centre Mitrovicë/Mitrovica

5. Other Civilian International Presence

Currently, UNMIK representation for the municipality has been “clustered” at the Regional HQ in Mitrovicë/Mitrovica due to the UN mission reorganization with their presence in Skenderaj/Srbica being on a daily or as needed basis.

Table 5.1: UNMIK Civil Administration

Name	Number of Staff (nat.+int.)	Contact Person	Title	Phone / Fax / E-mail
UN Civil Administration	2 Internationals	Mr. Abdourahmane Diacko	UN Representative	038 504 604 ext. 7355 044 192 117
UN Civil Administration		Mr. Joseph Lemor	Civil Affair Officer	038 504 604 ext. 2474

Source: OSCE Regional Centre Mitrovicë/Mitrovica

The OSCE maintains its presence in the Municipality through a Municipal Team Structure.

Table 5.2: OSCE Municipal Team

Name	Number of Staff (nat.+int.)	Contact Person	Title	Phone / Fax / E-mail
OSCE	2 Internationals and 2 Nationals	Mr. Guido Oestereich	Human Rights Officer (Municipal Team Coordinator)	028/33 944
OSCE		Ms. Aya Idemitsu	Democratization Officer	028/33 944
OSCE		Mr. Sevdije Buqinca	Senior Democratization Assistant	028/33 944
OSCE		vacant	Senior Human Rights Assistant	028/33 944
OSCE		Ms. Sebiha Pllana	Democratization Assistant	028/33 944

6. Religion, Places of Worship, and Cultural Institutions

The Islamic and Serbian Orthodox religions are present in Skënderaj/Srbica. Although severely damaged during the conflict, the mosques are being reconstructed, with three out of nine rebuilt. A major temple is functioning in Skënderaj/Srbica main town, where the Imam is also President of the Islamic Union.

A Serbian Orthodox Church serves the two enclaves of Banja/Bajë and Suvo Grlo/Suhogërlë, but the main religious place in the municipality is the Dević Monastery. Located five kilometres south of the main town, the 14th century Monastery, partially damaged during the conflict, is guarded by the KFOR. The small community consists of approximately ten nuns and one priest who live isolated and far from any Serbian Orthodox congregation. The Monastery was burnt down and badly damaged by violent crowds during the events of March 2004. So far, a dormitory has been built and Monastery has been partly reconstructed

Table 6.1: Main Religious Leaders

Name	Title	Religious Organization
Nexhmi Maksuti	Imam	Islamic Union (President)
Jetullah Xani	Imam	Islamic Union (Secretary)
Anastasia Bilic	Mother Superior – Dević Monastery	Serbian Orthodox Church

Source: UNCA Skënderaj/Srbica

Table 6.2: Primary Mosques, Churches, etc.

Type of Building	Towns/Places
Mosque	Skënderaj/Srbica,
Mosque	Polac
Mosque	Llaushe
Mosque	Broje
Mosque	Klinë e Epërme
Mosque	Kllodërnice
Mosque	Syriganë
Mosque	Plluzhinë
Mosque	Qirez
Mosque	Runikë
Mosque	Marinë
Serbian Orthodox Monastery	Devi
Serbian Orthodox Church	Banja

Source: UNCA Skënderaj/Srbica

In common with many small towns in Kosovo, Skënderaj/Srbica has a large and centrally located Cultural Centre, which has been partially rehabilitated by TRIANGLE G.H. The building provides space for the local Youth Centre and an office for a number of local NGOs. Throughout the past year, several citizen participation initiatives have been held in the Centre, but due to the lack of a heating system, the venue remains almost unused during wintertime.

7. Media

There are no local newspapers published in Skënderaj/Srbica. However, six journalists are working as local correspondents for Kosovo-wide newspapers and one of them is also a Radio Television Kosovo (RTK) correspondent. Radio Drenica is the only K/Albanian radio station in the area. A K/Serb station is located in the Serbian enclave Suvo Grlo/Suhogërlë.

Table 7.1: List of Prominent Newspaper, TV/Radio Stations, etc.

Name of media	Type of Media (newspaper, radio, etc.)	Editor/Correspondent	Language of Programmes/News
RTK (temporarily)	Radio/Television	Sabit Istogu	Albanian
Radio Drenica	FM Radio – 107.6 Mhz	Murat Musliu	Albanian
Radio Tri Srca	FM Radio – 87.8 Mhz	Dejan Tomasević	Serbian
Rilindja	Newspaper	Sabit Istogu	Albanian
Bota Sot	Newspaper	Isa Fejzullahu	Albanian
Koha Ditore	Newspaper	Adem Meta	Albanian
Daily Zëri	Newspaper	Kajtas Gecaj	Albanian
Epoka e Re	Newspaper	Emine Rushiti	Albanian

Source: OSCE Regional Centre Mitrovicë/Mitrovica

8. Judicial System

There is a Municipal Court and a Minor Offences Court in Skënderaj/Srbica. The first two judges were appointed to the Minor Offences Court on 29 December 1999, however due to the initial utilisation of the courthouse as a police station, the courts started working on 12 March 2000. The judges from the Municipal Court were sworn in on 11 August 2000 and started to work on 1 September 2000. The courts are functioning without significant problems.

Table 8.1: Judges

Name	Title	Ethnicity
Rrahim Gashi	President of Municipal Court	Kosovo Albanian
Abdullah Mecini	Municipal Court Judge	Kosovo Albanian
Ferit Osmani	Municipal Court Judge	Kosovo Albanian
Gani Avdiu	Municipal Court Judge (civil judge)	Kosovo Albanian
Gani Veseli	President of Minor Offences Court	Kosovo Albanian
Halim Derguti	Minor Offences Court Judge	Kosovo Albanian
Mihrije Behrami	Minor Offences Court Judge	Kosovo Albanian

Source: OSCE Regional Centre Mitrovçë/Mitrovica, May 2006

9. Police, Civil Protection, and Military Presence

The Police Station has 125 KPS Officers and 4 International UNMIK Police officers (1 KPS S/CLO, 1 KPS OPS LO, 1 Station investigation liaison officer, 2 Shift leader monitors). The police station and all operational competencies were handed over to the KPS on 31 March 2005. UNMIK Police only maintains a monitoring function. The police has also moved into a new building. It was renovated according to the needs of KPS.

The AoR is covered by Danish, French and Lithuanian KFOR Troops. Devic monastery is now permanently secured by French KFOR soldiers. The Kosovo Serbian enclaves of Banja/Bajë and Suvo Grlo/Suhogërlë belonging to the municipality no longer have permanent check points providing protection. Instead they are covered by mobile patrols. Danish KFOR carries out frequent random patrols in the area. CIVPOL Community Base Station has been closed in Banja/Bajë and Suva Grlo/Suhogërlë. A new Danish military monitoring structure LMT (Liaison Military Teams) now works in the AOR.

The local Kosovo Protection Corps (KPC/TMK) are based in Protection Zone I. The Command is located in Skënderaj/Srbica town. The PZ I covers also the region south of Skënderaj/Srbica municipality into Prishtinë/Priština region. (Strength in Protection Zone I: 285 active, 147 reservists.) In Skënderaj/Srbica municipality itself there are 203 active KPC/TMK members and 50 reservists.

Table 9.1: Police, Civil Protection, and Military Presence

Name	Phone/fax/e-mail	Number of Police Officers, Soldiers, etc.	Ethnic Composition, Nationality
UNMIK Police	VSAT2477	4	2 US, 1 Germany, 2 Zimbabwe
KPS	028 82478	125	123 Kosovo Albanian, 2 RAE
KPC/TMK	028 82130	253	Kosovo Albanian
KFOR	038 507 4194 + 381 28 30 178 + 381 28 30 178	2175 (AoR) 282 (AoR) 103 (AoR)	French Danish Lithuanian

Source: OSCE Regional Centre Mitrovçë/Mitrovica, KFOR, UNMIK Police

10. Economics

Skënderaj/Srbica is historically the poorest municipality in Kosovo. Virtually all the inhabitants suffered heavy damage under the conditions of economic underdevelopment during the decade 1980-1990 when little investments have been made. Agriculture represents the major economy but, despite the economic potential of its 3,000 hectares of fertile land, Skënderaj/Srbica did not develop the arable land. As a result of the poor yield, domestic consumption traditionally prevailed over commercialisation. Livestock, including cows and poultry, represent a big part of the traditional food economy.

The area partially benefited from the investment resources allocated during the 1970-80s by the central authorities. The major factories established in this period were a brick factory, an ammunition factory, and a textile factory. Together, with

the publicly owned enterprise Drenica Company, they employed over 1,000 persons. In the early 1990s almost all the factories were closed or relocated. Only the ammunition factory continued its production until 1998, when it was turned into a military base. With the progressive expulsion of almost 1,900 public employees unemployment was high in the late 1990s.

Today, the town's economy consists of basic areas including small family-headed enterprises and their employees. The first area includes activities in trade, including small shops and services, restaurants and car washes. Although there is an absence of a regulatory framework, these quick-profit commercial enterprises constitute the backbone of the municipality's internal market.

The other area of employment is composed of the municipality's civil service, where approximately 1,300 individuals are employed.

During 2001, while a number of government organizations and NGOs were scaling down their activities, the overstuffed municipality decided to downsize the local civil service in an attempt to introduce more transparency in the municipal hiring system. Several former Social Owned Enterprises today are in the process of privatization, other factories are already privatized, e.g. the bricks factory "Perparimi". The major means for processing primary produce is a privatized mill. An "Economical Development Strategy" including a "Business Park" has been drafted and will provide many job opportunities in different businesses on 20 ha of land.

10.1 Prominent Employers in the Region

Employer	Service/Products	Production ongoing?	Size of Workforce
Municipality	Service, Education, Health	Yes	1,300
Perparimi	Bricks	Yes	150
Mill	Agriculture products	Yes	N/A

Source: Municipality of Skënderaj/Srbica, Regional Employment Centre Mitrovicë/Mitrovica

11. Infrastructure

Within the municipality, only 60 kilometres of main roads are paved. The secondary roads outside the town are in such poor condition that in winter a number of villages can be reached only with 4x4 and military vehicles, only 96 km are paved. The situation is even more difficult for the two Kosovo Serb populated areas, which are linked to the neighbouring municipality Zubin Potok/Zubin Potok only through a bumpy gravel road. Inside Skënderaj/Srbica, 5.5 km of the main streets are paved, 17 km still need to be repaired and paved.

Electricity supplies are reasonably stable, although disturbances occasionally occur. In 2000, the repairs of power lines started and with support of UNDP, a powerful cable system throughout the town was installed.

During the period 1999 until 2003 the water supply system, constructed in 1963, was renovated with the length of 7.5 km financed by an Austrian donor. The water supply in rural areas is poor, villages use mainly rudimentary wells due to the geographic condition not having a sufficient underground water circulation throughout the municipality. Only a small number of villages do have the water supply from the regional waterworks in Mitrovicë/Mitrovica, which provides as well the municipalities of Mitrovicë/Mitrovica and Vushtrri/Vučitrn.

According to the Urban Plan the municipality possesses a sewage system in the length of seven km, which has been renovated with the support of different donors as well as with contributions from the municipal budget. Regarding the sewerage plant, the municipality has a non-sufficient approach. Not all parts of the municipality are connected to the municipal sewage system.

The Telecommunication system is very underdeveloped, in particular the landline system. Landlines exist only in Skënderaj/Srbica town. 600 hundred households are connected and no village can be reached by landline. The mobile system in Skenderaj municipality is wider, there are some 5000 distributed numbers. The Alcatel Mobile network began operating in March 2001. Except some local internet connections, until today the newest telecommunication technology has not reached the municipality.

12. Social Services, Health, and Education

The Centre for Social Work (CFW) provides social assistance and services for the residents, including orphans, elderly and disabled persons. About 2,100 children lost parents during the conflict and 70 are orphans. There is no orphanage in the municipality and cases of adoptions are very rare.

Families traditionally assist the elderly. About 250 physically-challenged persons and about 40 persons with mental disorders were registered before the conflict but the number of those permanently injured by conflict-related damage reaches 6,000.

A total of 2,918 families receive assistance from the CSW in the Municipality: 1,715 are in category I (1,679 K/A and 36 non-K/A families) and 1,203 are in category II (1,184 K/A and 19 non-K/A families). Of 55 non-Albanian that are receiving social assistance, 51 are Kosovo Serb, 2 Ashkhal, one Roma, and one Montenegrin. Out of the 2,918 families that get social support, 609 of them (which represent 21 %) are headed by a female. Overall a total of 14,074 persons that are supported by the CFW.

A Health House in Skënderaj/Srbica is comprised of 175 employees, 22 doctors, 79 nurses and attendants, and support staff. It provides first aid and general assistance for the majority of the population and includes a maternity hospital. The building is in very poor condition and for urgent cases, patients are sent to the hospitals in Mitrovicë/Mitrovica and in Prishtinë/Priština. A network of 13 Health stations (*ambulantas*) serves 52 villages of the municipality. The local doctors visit patients twice a week. In the two Kosovo Serb villages, health care is provided by the hospital from northern part of Mitrovica, there is a doctor working 5 days a week in a small ambulance in village of Suvo Grlo/Suhogërlle

There are 19 Albanian primary schools functioning in the municipality, with two main high schools (Gymnasium and Technical school) located in the main town, and two other in Runik/Rudnik and in Turiqevc/Turičevac. Pre-school education classes are present in the main villages, while the only kindergarten is in Skënderaj/Srbica town attended by 72 children.

The total number of the teachers employed in Skenderaj/Srbica municipality is 733. From this number 154 are teachers working in high schools. While the number of administrative staff is 182

The total number employees in education is 915

In high schools the number of Kosovo Albanian students is 2880 and in primary schools the number of Kosovo Albanian students is 1260 students

A primary school, located in the village of Banja/Bajë provides education for 15 Kosovo Serb children and there are 36 students attending 2 high schools in the village of Suvo Grlo/Suhogërlle.

13. Return Issues

Returns to the municipality have been slow and have taken place only to the enclave villages of Banja/Bajë and Suvo Grlo/Suhogërlle. However, increasingly the municipality is showing genuine efforts to attract returns of both Kosovo Serb and other minority former inhabitants. With an increasing number of go-and-see visits which are well received by both prospective returnees and their former neighbours.

The displaced Kosovo Serb families have been in the centre of attention and have shown strong interest in return. During 2004 two successful Go-and-See visits (GSVs) were implemented by UNHCR Mitrovica and Norwegian Church Aid (NCA), following consistent requests of residents of Runik/Rudnik displaced in North Kosovo. In total 29 IDPs have participated in the visits. These GSVs have resulted meeting between the Municipal structure and five IDPs representatives. According to the overall opinion in Runik/Rudnik return of Serbs to the village is not a problem, except those who are accused of having committed crimes during the conflict. Another encouraging observation refers to the readiness to welcome Serb customers from neighbouring villages as Banja/Bajë and Suvo Grlo/Suhogërlle to do their daily shopping in Runik/Rudnik, which indicates that the basis for successful reintegration can be laid.

In view of this favourable basis for multi-ethnic coexistence in Runik/Rudnik, Municipal Authorities and LWF developed a concept paper and consider this village a place where all former residents can find a durable solution. Considering the impact of the violent conflict as well as the constant progress made over the last years the opportunity to re-establish the

social network has emerged. This opportunity shall be supported with appropriate multi-sectoral and properly balanced assistance so all displaced people from Runik/Rudnik who can finally return to their homes. The revitalized right of IDPs of Runik/Rudnik to life in peace and in the place of their origin acts as an important returns project for the region due to the specific characteristics of the municipality.

Municipal Working Group

The MWG is held on a monthly basis. Participation fluctuates; normally the Deputy President attends. While the K/Albanian Municipal Return Officer attends regularly, neither the Kosovo Serb Head of the Local Community Office or K/Serb members of the Communities Committee usually attend the meetings.

Return Projects

No.	Community	Location	No. of returnees	Amount (€)	Donor	Implementing partner
1	Ashkali	Dashevc/Dashevac	Under discussion – no concept paper		/	LWF
2	Serbs and Albanians	Rudnik/Runik	48 IDP families (approx. 100 potential returnees) concept paper developed – cost: 1.8 million €		pending	LWF.,CBM

Source: Mitrovicë/Mitrovica UN RRU