



EUROPEAN CENTRE
FOR MINORITY
ISSUES KOSOVO

Baseline Study

*Delivery of Education to Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Communities in
Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje Municipality*

Funded by:



Working Towards a
Stable Multi-Ethnic Kosovo



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ECMI Kosovo

ECMI Kosovo is the principal non-government organisation engaged with minority issues in Kosovo, with the overarching aim to develop inclusive, representative, community-sensitive institutions that support a stable multi-ethnic Kosovo.

ECMI Kosovo contributes to the developing, strengthening and implementation of relevant legislation, supports the institutionalisation of communities-related governmental bodies, and enhances the capacity of civil society actors and the government to engage with one another in a constructive and sustainable way.

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Table of Contents

1. List of Abbreviations and Acronyms	4
2. List of interviewees	4
3. Preface	5
4. Introduction	6
5. Methodology	8
6. Availability.....	9
6.1. Pre-school education	9
6.2. Primary and Lower Secondary School Education:	10
6.3. Upper Secondary School Education.....	14
6.4. Tertiary Education.....	15
6.5. Adult basic and literacy education.....	15
6.6. School Infrastructure	16
7. Accessibility.....	16
7.1. Physical obstacles	16
7.2. Economic obstacles.....	17
7.3. Administrative obstacles.....	18
7.4. Gender obstacles	19
7.5. Children out of School.....	19
8. Acceptability	21
8.1. Skills.....	21
8.2. Qualification of teachers.....	22
8.3. Tolerance	22
9. Adaptability.....	23
9.1 Child Labour	23
9.2 Minority communities.....	24
9.3 Children with disabilities.....	25
10. Summary and Conclusions.....	26
11. Recommendations.....	29
Appendix A: Preliminary list of indicators.....	30

1. List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

BSF: Balkan Sunflowers

ECMI: European Center for Minority Issues Kosovo

HFA: Health for All

IDP: Internally Displaced Person

IT: Information Technology

MAP: Municipal Action Plan

MED: Municipal Education Directorate

MEST: Ministry of Education, Science and Technology

MOCR: Municipal Office for Communities and Return

NGO: Non Governmental Organization

TDH: Terre des Hommes

TIP: The Ideas Partnership

2. List of interviewees

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3. Preface

This baseline study of the Delivery of Education to Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities in Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje was conducted as part of the project “Improving the Delivery of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Education in the Municipality of Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje”, funded by UNICEF and implemented by ECMI Kosovo.

The project aimed to improve the education of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities by strengthening the capacity of municipal officials to deal with Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian education and to implement the Municipal Action Plan (MAP) on Integration of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Communities in Fushë Kosovë / Kosovo Polje 2010 – 2012, with a focus on the education component as part of the Strategy for the Integration of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Communities in Kosovo 2009-2015.

Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje contains approximately 11% of the national Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian population.¹ It was the first municipality in Kosovo to endorse a Municipal Action Plan (MAP) for the Integration of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Communities as a result of the engagement of the local civil society. However, limited efforts have been made by the Municipality to implement the plan and monitor its implementation. Besides which, the evaluation of the delivery of education to Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian pupils and the impact of initiatives to improve their education is being hindered by the lack of consistent data on minority community pupils.

Hence, there was a need to collect data on the education of pupils from Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities. The objective of the report is therefore to provide a baseline study about the current delivery of education to Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptian communities in order to allow for evidence-based monitoring and evaluation of the project as well as to provide municipal officials with indicators for evaluating the delivery of education to minority communities in their municipality. The report is based on data collected during research conducted in two periods between October and November 2011 and September and October 2012 to compare the development in the situation of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian education.

¹ Kosovo Agency of Statistics: Kosovo Population and Housing Census 2011, Final Results, http://esk.rks-gov.net/rekos2011/repository/docs/Final%20Results_ENG.pdf

4. Introduction

Under Kosovo legislation, all persons in Kosovo have equal right to quality education. Special laws are in place to guarantee that minority communities enjoy among other requirements, full access to education in their own language, which aims to ensure equal opportunity vis-à-vis the majority. However, despite the strong legal basis, children from minority communities – in particular Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities – continue to face significant challenges in their education. Around to the UNDP Kosovo Human Development Report from 2010, around 25% of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children in Kosovo do not attend primary school, with the situation further deteriorating for secondary school levels.² There are comparatively higher drop-out rates, lower registration rates and poor levels of academic performance amongst students from these communities. Students from the three communities thus face significant challenges in their integration into Kosovo's education system.

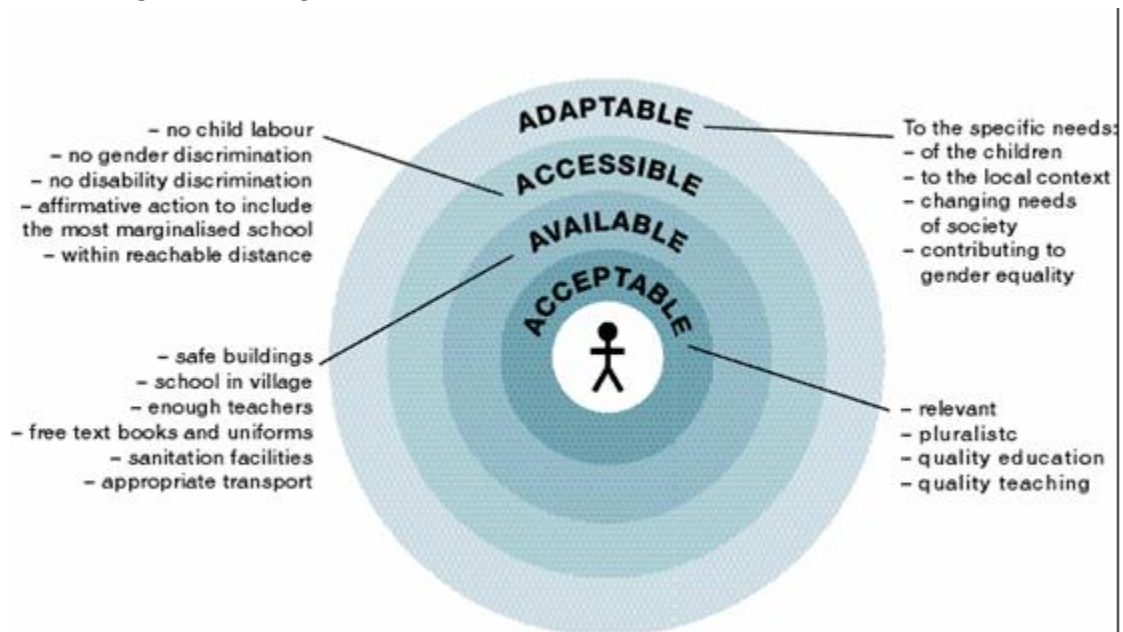
The present report provides a baseline study about the status of the delivery of education to Roma, Ashkali, Egyptian communities comparing data for two periods 2011 and 2012 in the municipality of Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje. Taking into account that Balkan Sunflowers conducted a household survey about the education of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities in the Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje municipality, to be published in 2012, the present baseline study aims at assessing the right to education of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children in Kosovo, using the 4A framework developed by Katarina Tomaševski, former UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education Project.

The 4A framework proposes a set of indicators which evaluate the availability, accessibility, acceptability and adaptability of education. It is argued that “states must ensure that education is available to the same extent for the whole of the population, removing physical, economic, administrative, and socio-economical barriers to make sure that marginalised groups can attend school. Their education should be of a good quality and be acceptable in terms of language, participation and religion, while it should also be adapted to those categories that are particularly marginalised, such as ethnic minorities and disabled people.”³ The application of the 4A framework enables to obtain a full picture of the state of the realization of right to education of marginalised groups and those most vulnerable to discrimination.

² *UNDP Kosovo Human Development Report (2010)*, p.31, available at <http://www.kosovo.undp.org/repository/docs/HDR-2010-English.pdf>

³ *De Beco, Gauthier, Hyll-Larsen, Peter and Ron Balsera, Maria (2009)*. The Right to Education: Human Rights Indicators and the Right to Education of Roma Children in Slovakia. Paper commissioned for the EFA Global Monitoring Report 2010, Reaching the marginalized. UNESCO. Retrieved from <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0018/001866/186604e.pdf> (accessed in September 26, 2011).

The education rights circle diagram below illustrates the four As:



Source: 4 As diagram © Action Aid, <http://www.right-to-education.org/node/231>

The report is divided into four main chapters, corresponding to each main field of indicators assessed in the study. Availability will give an overview of the student numbers at all levels of education. Accessibility assesses the economic, administrative and other obstacles to Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children in terms of education and the support provided in this respect by the municipality and other relevant stakeholders. Acceptability deals with the problems that Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children are facing in terms of learning difficulties, their achievements and their relationship with other children and the school in general while Adaptability deals with child labour, programme suitability and the access of members from the communities to teachers and assistants positions. The last part of the report will summarize the findings and present recommendations for the Municipality on improving the situation for Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian education.

5. Methodology

In preparation for conducting the study, the existing information on educational deficiencies and needs of Roma, Ashkali, Egyptian communities in Kosovo was reviewed. The documents that were reviewed include the “Strategy for the Integration of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Communities in the Republic of Kosovo 2009-2015”⁴ and “The Republic of Kosovo Action Plan on the Implementation of the Strategy for the Integration of Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptian Communities, 2009-2015,”⁵ published by the Office of Good Governance (Office of the Prime Minister), the KFOS Baseline study on the position of Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptian Communities in Kosovo⁶ and the Municipal Action Plan for the Integration of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities in the Municipality of Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje.”⁷ Following that, a list of preliminary indicators for the right to education was developed on the basis of those developed by the *Right to Education Project*.⁸ This list can be found in Appendix A.

Data for this study was gathered through direct interviews, meetings, forms and questionnaires with relevant stakeholders. These included the Director and Officials of the Municipal Education Directorate, two school directors, three teachers and several active NGO representatives. Interviews were conducted during October and the beginning of November 2011 in Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje and Prishtinë/Priština. The follow up research was conducted during September and the beginning of October 2012. The data received from all stakeholders was then categorized so as to correspond to the 4 aspects of availability, accessibility, acceptability and adaptability. The data was then evaluated and carefully analyzed to offer a reliable picture of the situation in the field. Each section presents the situation in 2011, followed by the data received for 2012 in italics.

In cases where data was not available, estimates were calculated⁹. Reliable data provided by the 2012 census which became available in September 2012, improved the calculation of enrolment rates in primary school. It should also be noted that sometimes the data from the different stakeholders were contradictory, such as for school dropouts.¹⁰ In these cases, ECMI Kosovo had to rely on the data that it judged to be most up to date and realistic. ECMI Kosovo has fully referenced interviewees, except for some sensitive issues in which only their position is cited.

⁴ Office of Good Governance – Office of the Prime Minister of Republic of Kosovo (2009). “Strategy for the Integration of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Communities in the Republic of Kosovo 2009-2015.

⁵ Office of Good Governance – Office of the Prime Minister of Republic of Kosovo (2009). “The Republic of Kosovo Action Plan on the Implementation of the Strategy for the Integration of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Communities, 2009- 2015”.

⁶ COMPASS Research and Consulting Company for the Kosovo Foundation for Open Society. “Baseline Survey: The Position of Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptian Communities in Kosovo”. 2009

⁷ Action Plan for the integration of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Communities in Fushë Kosovë / Kosovo Polje 2010 – 2012. INPO and Fushë Kosovë / Kosovo Polje Municipality, supported by KFOS (2009)

⁸ Right to Education Project (2010), Beyond statistics. Measuring Education as a Human Right – A Consultative Workshop on Indicators for the Right to Education. Available at http://www.right-to-education.org/sites/r2e.gn.apc.org/files/Full%20list%20of%20indicators_9%20July.pdf

⁹ For example, there was no data based on nationality regarding the 9th grade national exam. The average success rate of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian students was calculated by asking the school staff to identify these students in the student lists.

6. Availability

This section presents the data on the availability of pre-school, primary, secondary and tertiary education to Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian students. With Availability it is understood that education is free and government funded and that there is adequate infrastructure and trained teachers able to support education delivery. While researching, the focus was on gathering as much data as possible regarding the number of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian students attending schools in Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje as well as their gender and ethnic division. Where there was lacking population statistics population estimates provided by OSCE or the recent Balkan Sunflowers Education Survey were used.

6.1. Pre-school education

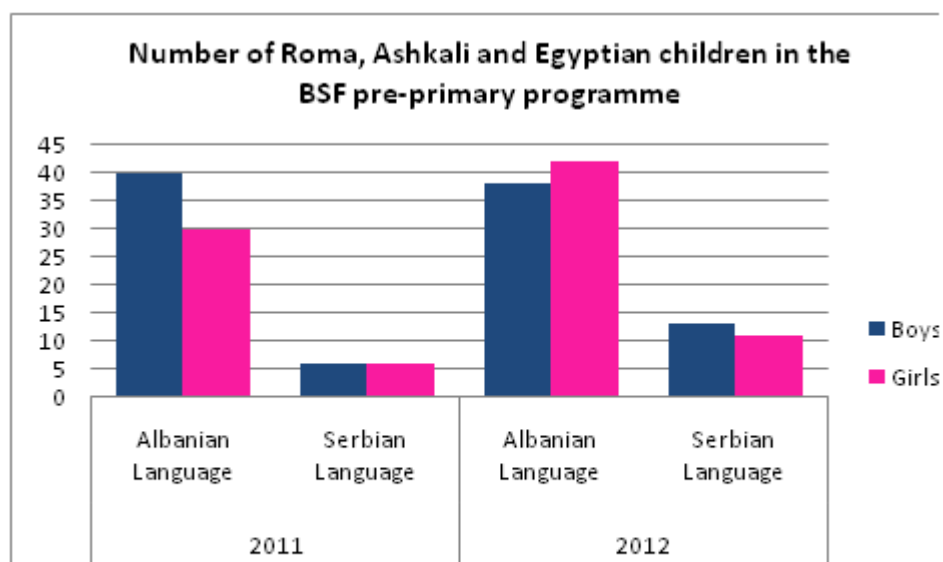
Number of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian students in pre-school education

According to information on 2011 received from the Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje MED, **none of the 170 children** attending the pre-school institutions functioning under the auspices of the Municipality came from the Roma, Ashkali or Egyptian communities. According to the municipal Director for Education, this was due to economic obstacles as parents must pay a fee for children to attend pre-school education. The MED was not providing any specific financial support for Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children to attend pre-school education.¹¹ According to the Balkan Sunflowers (BSF) Centre Coordinator,¹² there were 82 Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children attending the pre-school programme in their centre. 70 Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children were attending the Albanian language programme (40 boys and 30 girls), while 12 Roma children were attending the programme in Serbian language (6 boys and 6 girls).

The 2012 research found that there are still no children from the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities attending the municipality's pre-school education programme according to data from the MOCR. The BSF pre-education programme has seen an increase to 104 children from these communities; with 80 attending the Albanian programme (42 girls and 38 boys), and 24 children attending the Serbian programme (11 girls, 13 boys). Furthermore, according to 2012 BSF data, 95% of the children that attended this programme in 2011 registered in school, while 5% did not register as they are still not 6 years old (3 children did not have the relevant documents, and are expected to register).

¹¹ Interview with the Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje MED, Mr. Shabani on October 7, 2011 in Fushë Kosovë / Kosovo Polje.

¹² Interview with Mr. Rrahmon Stollaku from the BSF on October 17, 2011 in BSF Center in Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje.



Graph 1: The numbers of children from Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities attending the Albanian and Serbian Language BSF pre-school education programmes according to gender

Estimation of Enrolment Ratio in pre-school education

	2011	2012
Estimated number of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children of preschool age (0-5) in the municipality of Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje according to OSCE Community Profiles 2010	530	
Estimated Enrolment Ratio of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children in public pre-school education	0%	0%
Estimated Enrolment Ratio of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children in BSF pre-school programme	15.5%	19.6%

6.2. Primary and Lower Secondary School Education:

Number of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian students in primary and lower secondary school education

According to data gathered from the MED in 2011, within the Municipality of Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje there were approximately¹³ **627 Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children** enrolled in primary education.¹⁴ Out of the 487 Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children enrolled in the school with the largest number of Ashkali and Egyptian children in the municipality (Selman Riza School Primary and Lower Secondary School), 206 of them were girls and 281.¹⁵ In Mihail Grameno School, the school with the second largest number of Ashkali students, there was a total of 46 Ashkali pupils attending this school

¹³ That is the data available at the MED, which is consistent with the school data. The term 'approximately' was specifically used by the MED since student numbers constantly change with new enrolments or drop-outs in schools.

¹⁴ Interview with the Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje MED, Mr. Islam Shabani on October 7, 2011 in Fushë Kosovë / Kosovo Polje.

¹⁵ Interview with the Selman Riza School Director, Mr. Sabit Dragusha on October 10, 2011 in Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje.

(21 girls).¹⁶ In Daut Bugujevci School there were 17 students (14 Ashkali and 3 Egyptian), 8 boys and 9 girls.¹⁷ The MED data showed students only in the schools mentioned above. It was difficult to obtain data for the Serbian school Aca Marovic as they work within the Serbian parallel system. The data for Aca Marovic is based on the data provided by MED and BSF. This data showed that the school was attended by 72 Roma students, 28 girls and 44 boys.

The data for 2012 showed a slight increase in the number of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian pupils enrolled in primary and lower secondary schools in Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje. The comparative data for 2011 and 2012 is presented in the table below:

	Selman Riza		Mihail Grameno		Daut Bugujevci		Aca Marovic		Totals	
	2011	2012	2011	2012	2011	2012	2011	2012	2011	2012
Roma pupils	4	10 (3F; 7M)	0	0	0	0	72	58 (20F; 38M)	76	68 (23F; 45M)
Ashkali pupils	446	442 (200F; 242M)	46	52 (18F; 34M)	14	19 (11F; 8M)	0	0	506	513 (229F; 284M)
Egyptian pupils	37	45 (12F; 33M)	0	0	3	0	0	0	40	45 (12F; 33M)
Totals	487	497	46	52	17	19	7	58	622	626

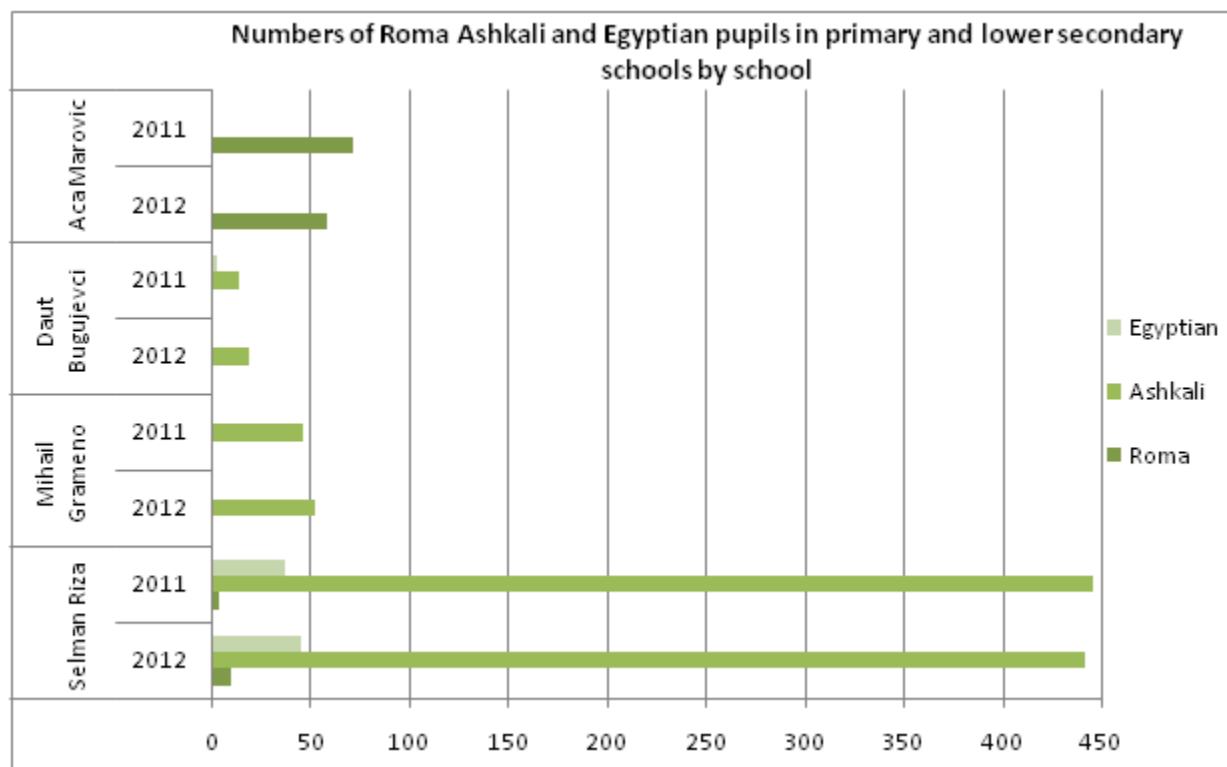
Table 1: Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian pupils studying in schools of the Municipality of Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje (Note: F = female, and M = male). There is no gender disaggregated data for communities for 2011.

Although there is no concrete evidence explaining high attendance of Roma children at the Aca Marovic School operated under the system of the Republic of Serbia, one interlocutor indicated that the financial incentives given by the Serbian Government such as school allowances motivate parents to send their children to the Serbian parallel education system. Also, while their native language is Romani, they, particularly returned families, prefer schooling in Serbian over Albanian.¹⁸

¹⁶ Interview with the Mihail Grameno School Director, Mr. Ismet Gashi on October 12, 2011 in Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje.

¹⁷ Interview with the Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje MED, Mr. Islam Shabani on October 7, 2011 in Fushë Kosovë/ Kosovo Polje.

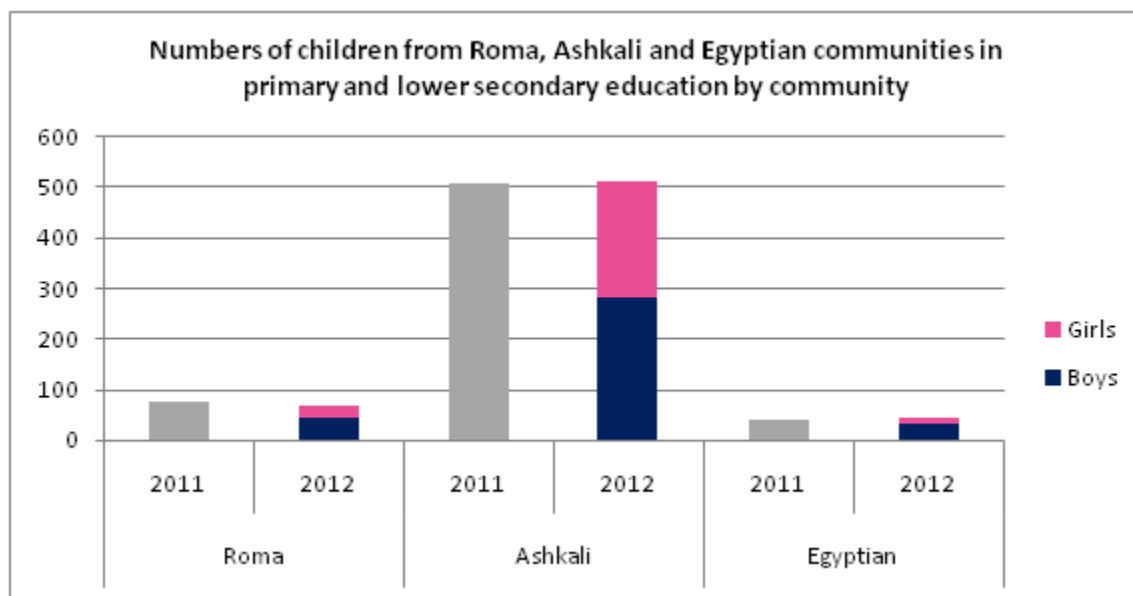
¹⁸ Interview with Mr. Rrahmon Stollaku from the BSF on October 17, 2011 in BSF Center in Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje.



Graph 2: Numbers of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian pupils studying in schools of the Municipality of Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje

The BSF provided data regarding other children from Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities attending **schools in the two villages of Kuzmin and Uglare**, which fall within the municipality of Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje. In the Kuzmin village **3** boys from Roma communities attended the primary school, while the Uglare primary school is attended by **2** children (1 girl).

Information provided in 2012 by BSF and MED indicates a marginal increase in numbers, 5 children from the Roma community (2 girls and 3 boys) attending school in Kuzmin village and 7 boys in Uglare village.



Graph 3: Numbers of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian pupils in the Municipality of Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje in primary education including lower secondary school (grades 1-9). There is no gender disaggregated data for 2011.

Estimation of Enrolment Ratio in primary education (primary and lower secondary school)

	2011	2012
Estimated percentage of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children of primary school age (6-15) according to Balkan Sunflowers 2011 Education Survey, conducted on a sample of 12,711 people throughout Kosovo	24 %	
Estimated rough numbers of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children of primary school age (6-15), for 2011 using the numbers from the 2011 Kosovo Population and Housing Census by the Kosovo Agency of Statistics http://esk.rks-gov.net/rekos2011/?cid=2,1	104 Roma 775 Ashkali 67 Egyptians	
Estimated rough enrolment ratios of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children in primary education (primary and lower secondary school)	79% for Roma community; 65% for Ashkali community; 60% for Egyptian community	77% for Roma community; 66% for Ashkali community; 67% for Egyptian community

The numbers above, although based on estimates, indicate that there is still a considerable number of children from the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities who are outside of the compulsory school system. While there has been an increase in the enrolment of Ashkali and Egyptian children, the number of children from the Roma community, who mostly attend the Serbian system of schooling, has decreased.

Primary-school repetition rates

According to the information received in 2011, **only 1 student repeated the class** in the school year 2010/2011. However, this fact is overshadowed by the high dropout rate affecting these communities.

Information received in 2012 showed that for the academic year 2011/12, 22 students repeated (3 girls and 19 boys). This increase in school repetitions is probably the result of increased practice by schools to have students repeat the class.

Primary-school drop-outs

Both the Selman Riza School Director and the BSF Coordinator estimated that around 95% of the pupils make it to the 5th grade, however there were no exact statistics¹⁹ since there was no continuous monitoring system for school drop-outs or pupils missing classes at a given point in time, which could also take into account those pupils returning to school through the Ideas Partnership (TIP) initiative.

There was no precise data available on numbers of dropouts at the time of research in 2012. However, according to the preliminary data collected by the municipal officials from schools and NGOs active in the municipality, the number of children who dropped out or had irregular attendance in the school year 2011/2012 was 123.

Lower Secondary School Completion

Estimation for completion of the Lower Secondary School level (6th – 9th grade) is currently between **60%-70%**. Only **8 students** (6 Ashkali and 2 Egyptians) finished the 9th grade in 2011.²⁰ Based on the BSF data,²¹ **all of them have continued to the Upper Secondary School** in the Kosovo system of education.

In 2012, Selman Riza School estimated that 88.97% of students had completed the lower secondary school. 129 students had completed the 9th grade; of which there were 0 Roma, 22 Ashkali, and 4 Egyptian children, all 26 students continued to Upper Secondary School according to Selman Riza School and the MED.

6.3. Upper Secondary School Education

Number of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian students in Upper Secondary School Education

In 2011 there were a total of **51 Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian students** enrolled in secondary schools teaching in Albanian of which only 20 are girls. According to available BSF data,²² 15 students attended secondary schools in Prishtinë/Priština, mainly because of greater opportunities available for students. Most of the 51 students attended public schools teaching through Albanian, 3 of them attended a private secondary school, namely the Don Bosco Secondary School. There were also **8 students in**

¹⁹ Interview with the Selman Riza School Director, Mr. Sabit Dragusha on October 10, 2011 and Mr. Rrahmon Stollaku from the BSF on October 17, 2011 in Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje.

²⁰ Interview with the Selman Riza School Director, Mr. Sabit Dragusha on October 10, 2011 in Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje

²¹ Interview with Mr. Rrahmon Stollaku from the BSF on October 17, 2011 in Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje.

²² Ibid.

secondary schools teaching in Serbian. 25 students were attending schools in Prishtinë/Priština. Neither the gender nor the ethnicity of the 8 students within the parallel Serbian education system was known to the BSF.

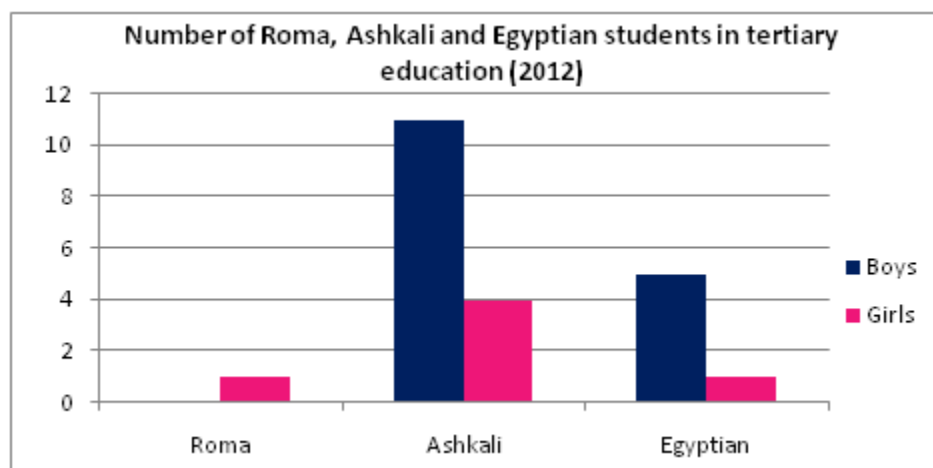
For the academic year 2012/2013, there were 36 students registered in high schools.

6.4. Tertiary Education

Number of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian students in tertiary education

Based on data from the BSF Centre in Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje, in 2011 there were **16 Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian students** enrolled in tertiary education (5 girls and 11 boys). They were studying Law, Economy, Biology, IT and Agriculture.

In 2012, according to the BSF, there were 18 students from these communities enrolled in tertiary education: 1 girl from the Roma community, 11 students from the Ashkali community (4 girls and 7 boys), and 6 students from the Egyptian community (1 girl and 5 boys).



Graph 4: The numbers and gender of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian students in tertiary education in 2012

6.5. Adult basic and literacy education

Number of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian adults enrolled in basic and literacy education programmes

According to the information provided by the MED,²³ there were **5 Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian students** enrolled in informal secondary school education in 2011. These students did not have to pay academic fees, which would cost 150 Euros per year. The BSF representative said that 10 people were enrolled in informal education last year, mostly travelling to Prishtinë/Priština.

2012 data from the BSF showed an increase in numbers of adults enrolled in informal secondary school education (18 students only from the Roma community).

²³ Interview with the Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje MED, Mr. Islam Shabani on October 7, 2011 in Fushë Kosovë / Kosovo Polje.

6.6. School Infrastructure

Support provided to Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children with difficulties

There was arguably no specific support offered by schools in 2011 specifically for Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian pupils to help them overcome learning, social or behavioural difficulties, since school directors claimed not to have any budget for special care for minority community pupils.²⁴ Meanwhile, school teachers claimed to be aware of the difficulties faced by the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian pupils. Furthermore, according to teachers, they did not hesitate to provide these children with all necessary support and attention at any time.²⁵ Finally, NGOs such as BSF and HFA were providing these pupils with more generous support. The BSF Centre in Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje offered Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians pupils help with homework, healthcare, hygiene and behavioural education. Over 300 pupils are also being served hot food at this centre.²⁶

In 2012, while there was still a lack of budget to provide special support for minority community pupils with learning difficulties, the Selman Riza school, with support of donors, organised in July supplementary classes for children with difficulties in learning Albanian language and mathematics. Besides that, Selman Riza School teachers insist that these pupils are provided with all the support and attention needed.

BSF continued in providing after school support to children from the three communities. Around 340 children attend the BSF centre during the day, where they receive school materials and warm food as well as teaching. BSF support to these communities includes: practical homework support, Albanian language for Ashkali and Egyptian children and Serbian language for Roma since most attend Serbian schools in the absence of education in Roma language.

7. Accessibility

Accessibility requires the education system to be non-discriminatory and accessible to all, and that positive steps are taken to include the most marginalised.²⁷ This chapter will assess the economic, administrative and socio-cultural obstacles to accessing education and the various support provided to overcome such obstacles.

7.1. Physical obstacles

School-house distance and transportation

In 2011, it was estimated that in Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje most Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian students travelled 1 - 3 km to go to school. Most children from these communities live in neighbourhoods 28 and

²⁴ Interview with two school directors in Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje schools during October 9-14, 2011.

²⁵ Interview with three school teachers in Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje schools during October 9-14, 2011.

²⁶ Interview with Mr. Rrahmon Stollaku from the BSF on October 17, 2011 in Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje.

²⁷ Right to Education, What is it? Education and the 4 As Extract. Available at: <http://www.right-to-education.org/node/226> (accessed September 26, 2011).

29, over one kilometer away from the nearest school. The municipality did not provide any transportation due to lack of funds.²⁸ Until 2010, the Municipality provided transport for Roma children attending the Serbian language school programme in Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje. However, this service was stopped as it was deemed unnecessary and caused “a lot of criticism from other communities.”²⁹ Private transport would cost around 10 Euros per month. Free transport (monthly travel cards) is offered to students attending secondary schools outside of Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje, (usually Prishtinë/Priština).

According to information received from the MED for 2012, children from communities do not travel more than 1.5 km to go to school, and since the school is not far, there is no need for transport. Furthermore, whilst transport used to be offered, the municipality now lacks the necessary funds. Unfortunately, monthly travel cards are now no longer offered to students attending secondary schools outside of Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje.

7.2. Economic obstacles

Indirect cost for education

In 2011 all the pupils attending primary education in Kosovo were receiving **textbooks for free** from the MEST. However, Elizabeth Gowing from the NGO *The Ideas Partnership* mentioned a case in which students registered at a school through her program were offered used books, and only received new books after the NGO's intervention.³⁰ Also, parents were often required to provide **additional contributions such as money for excursions**.

Secondary school costs included books, and school materials, averaging **50-60 Euros per year**. The costs were higher if studying a vocational programme requiring working materials. There were also additional costs identified such as clothing, food and fees for excursions, etc.

In 2012 according to the MED, children are continuing to receive textbooks for free, however, it has been noted that children from Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities sometimes receive textbooks 2-3 times since they are not careful enough with the books. Whilst parents normally need to contribute for excursions, those families receiving social assistance are exempt from paying for excursions. The introduction of school uniforms in the Selman Riza school at 6 EUR per uniform brought an additional financial burden to the families, however, BSF and TIP secured uniforms for around 560 children with support from donors. At secondary school level according to the MOCR, there are expenses for clothing, books and excursions. Some pupils who were consulted said that they would spend around 300-400 Euros in one academic year.

Economic support for education

No free meals were provided by schools in 2011, although, **NGOs** active in Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje **provide support** to Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian students. The BSF Centre was providing daily hot food to

²⁸ Interview with the Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje MED, Mr. Islam Shabani on October 7, 2011 in Fushë Kosovë / Kosovo Polje.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Interview with Elizabeth Gowing, Ideas Partnership on November 16, 2011 via skype.

every student,³¹ while essential learning materials such as notebooks, pens, bags etc. were provided to Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian pupils by both TDH³² and the BSF Centre.³³

Students attending **secondary education** were encountering more expenses while receiving less economic support. According to HFA officials, it is crucial to increase the financial support given to secondary education students; otherwise many students will drop out and not continue beyond primary education.³⁴

All 16 Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian students attending **tertiary education received a grant of 100 Euros per year** from the **BSF Centre**. The Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje MED stated that the Municipal Assembly did not allocate grant funds for Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian university students due to the lack of funds.

The financing situation has improved for 2012 according to the MOCR and BSF. Nonetheless, the support comes principally from families and NGOs. Positively, in the school year 2011/2012, the MED supported 2 students from Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities with 50 Euros per month. Support to Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian pupils is being provided by an individual Mr. Karl Helmrich (previously Austrian NGO Diakonia) in form of books, shoes; financial support of 70-90 Euros for secondary school students and clothing and school bags for primary school pupils.

7.3. Administrative obstacles

Enrolment procedure

Schools would provide parents the necessary information to enable school enrolment. **A parent's oral consent is sufficient** for the child to be enrolled. However a child could not be registered without a **birth certificate**. In order to facilitate enrolment, school directors claimed that even the presence of an adult family member (not necessarily a parent) would be considered sufficient for enrolment.³⁵ Whilst NGOs consider the enrolment procedure to be quite simple, the TIP reported that people have encountered difficulties enrolling children older than the age required by law. These difficulties will be discussed in chapter 7.5.

Sometimes parents were enrolling their children after September (when the academic year starts).³⁶ Teachers commented that a child starting school a month or more late makes it difficult for him or her to catch up.³⁷

There has been no change to the enrolment procedure in 2012; nevertheless, new cases have been reported of people encountering difficulties enrolling children older than the age required by law. NGOs including BSF, TIP and HFA help parents to register children not registered in time, and BSF, HFA, TIP and TDH organized various activities to raise parents' awareness for registering children in school.

³¹ Interview with Mr. Rrahmon Stollaku from the BSF on October 17, 2011 in Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje

³² Interview with Sofia Hedjam and Bukurie Breznica, of Terre Des Hommes, on October 17, 2011 in Prishtinë/Priština.

³³ Interview with Mr. Muhamet Arifi, Coordinator of BSF on October 14, 2011 in Prishtinë/Priština.

³⁴ Interview with Gezim Hoti, NGO Health for All, on October 14, 2011 in Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje

³⁵ Interview with the Mihail Grameno School Director, Mr. Ismet Gashi on October 12, 2011 in Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje

³⁶ Interview with Selman Riza School Director and confirmed by Rrahmon Stollaku from BSF.

³⁷ Interview with three school teachers in Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje schools during October 9-14, 2011.

Enrolment of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian forced returnees or IDPs

There were no accurate statistics for returnee numbers in 2011. Rough BSF statistics indicated that **in 2010 there were 10 returnees** enrolled in school, and **in 2011 there were 2**.³⁸ There was general consent among the stakeholders interviewed that forcibly returned children or IDPs present sensitive and sometimes difficult cases. Many do not speak local languages, or have never attended school. According to the director of the Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje Education Directorate, the municipality had limited financial and human resources to provide additional classes for returnees.

In 2012 a higher number of returnees (18 children), were enrolled in school according to the MED. Language was highlighted as the main problem facing returnees. Yet, no improvement has been reported regarding funding, with no additional funds allocated by the municipality to provide additional classes for returnees.

7.4. Gender obstacles

Measures to provide support to girls to attend school

No activity or effort by the MED or schools to reach out to girls out of school was found in 2011. Instead, schools would contact parents via different announcements, community leaders or the Parent-School Councils. NGOs appear more active in this respect. BSF was supporting schools through their community mediator programmes reaching out to Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian families and convincing them to send their children in school. It also provided a literacy programme for women who are also taught about issues such as hygiene, raising children, behaviour etc.³⁹ HFA representatives stated that each of their campaigns specifically targeted women. However, HFA affirmed that as long as parents are reluctant to change their own attitude, the results of such campaigns would be dubious.⁴⁰

At all levels of education in 2012, there are significantly more boys than girls in education from the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities. For instance, in primary education only 264 of 638 pupils are girls, less than 50%, and a difference of approximately 17%; and for tertiary education only a third of students are girls. No measures that would target specifically girls have been undertaken by the municipality.

7.5. Children out of School

Measures to encourage school attendance and to reduce drop-out rates

In 2011 the MED in Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje **did not possess a database** on out-of-school children.

Two NGOs, The Ideas Partnership (TIP) and Terre des Hommes (TDH) have been working with out of school children. Both of them have their own databases of out of school children identified through work addressing needs for vaccination and clothing (TIP) and identifying child labour (TDH).

³⁸ Interview with Mr. Rrahmon Stollaku from the BSF on October 17, 2011 in Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje

³⁹ Interview with Mr. Rrahmon Stollaku from the BSF on October 17, 2011 in Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje

⁴⁰ Interview with Gezim Hoti, NGO Health for All, on October 14, 2011 in Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje

The NGO TIP has been running preparation classes for out of school children (see box), which were attended by 105 children. Its advocacy efforts lead to a change in policy regarding the acceptance of out of school children, and consequently TIP registered 61 Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children in school.⁴¹

Additionally, TIP identified a further 97 children aged 6 - 16 through its house-to-house visits. Adding to that figure are the 45 children who came to TIP classes at least once, but did not then register for school, TIP data states that at least **142 children** from neighbourhoods 28 and 29 were out of school.⁴² In the 93 families visited by TIP there were 97 children out of school, therefore it could be estimated that on average, **more than 1 child of school age per family** in these communities did not attend school.⁴³ Interestingly TIP found that 60% of the 97 children are boys, challenging the perception that it is mainly girls in these communities who are excluded from education.

Returning out of school children back to school

“Having identified a large number of children who wanted to go to school but whom we were told could not be accepted at school because they did not register in the first two years (before they turned 9), we started classes for these children to prepare them for going to school. At the same time we started lobbying to change the policy which prevented these children being accepted into school. We did not actively recruit for our classes, but allowed news to spread by word of mouth. We did not turn away any child who fulfilled the following criteria: a) aged between 9 and 16 b) not registered at school c) from neighbourhood 29 or nearby neighbourhood 28.”

Elizabeth Gowing, Head of the NGO TIP

According to information obtained from TIP, in 2012 there were 52 ‘out of school’ children in Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje. MED initiated a process of sharing of information on school dropouts, including out-of-school children, with NGOs active in the municipality with the aim of establishing a consolidated list for whole municipality. However, precise data is still lacking, as sometimes only basic data is available. In July and August, intensive catch-up classes were organised in Selman Riza school for out-of-school children with the support of ECMI Kosovo and UNICEF. 31 children participated in the daily classes, and all of them were subsequently placed into regular classes in the new school year 2012/2013.

Measures to ensure that previously out of school children remain in school

The NGO TIP was providing support to and monitoring the attendance of the 61 children returned to school in 2011/2012 through its project. However, by the end of 2011 only 22 children from the registered children were still attending school regularly (11 boys and 11 girls).⁴⁴ There are various hypotheses as to why there are so many school drop-outs. Elizabeth Gowing gave some examples “we’ve lost some because they wear headscarves and won’t remove them, we’ve lost others because they say the teachers hit them, we’ve lost others because they say the teachers laughed at them and told them that they are too old to be making the mistakes they’re making. We’ve lost others because

⁴¹ Interview with Elizabeth Gowing, Ideas Partnership on November 16, 2011 via skype.

⁴² This number does not comprise children attending the Balkan Sunflowers pre-school classes, as according to Elizabeth Gowing these are very likely to lead to a child’s registration at school soon.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ TIP is working with 16 children to return to school, or waiting for information on their attendance. 16 have dropped out of school and seem unwilling to return (10 of these are boys, 6 girls), 4 girls wearing headscarves refused to remove them and the school would not allow them to come to school in their headscarves, 2 are waiting for class tests in January, without which the school will not allow them to start in class and 1 was referred to the Balkan Sunflowers women’s literacy programme because she was 14.

they 'can't get up in the morning' and there obviously isn't a parental figure that will make them get up."⁴⁵

On the other hand, according to ECMI Kosovo's data from both the MED and NGOs, it is clear that some of the older children were illiterate which is believed to have caused problems both for teaching and learning. The NGOs appreciated MED's positive attitude in accepting these students into regular classes.⁴⁶

In 2012, according to information from the Selman Riza School, 18 children from the 61 children returned to school in the school year 2011/2012 continued to attend school regularly. In addition, 30 other children from the three communities have been integrated into school following intensive catch-up classes in summer 2012. While the Selman Riza school organised field visits to children's families to motivate them to attend the catch-up classes in the month of July, additional support to the children who were integrated into regular schooling is being provided mostly by NGOs. The integration of children who have passed the age limit for starting primary school continues to pose practical problems, as there is still no precise regulation provided by MEST and funding for alternative intensive catch up classes is lacking.

8. Acceptability

The Acceptability indicators require education to be relevant, non-discriminatory, culturally appropriate, and of quality; that the school itself is safe and teachers are professional.⁴⁷ This chapter addresses the problems facing Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children in terms their learning difficulties and their relationships with other children and the school in general, as well as the efforts made by the authorities responsible such as the schools and the MED to tackle these issues.

8.1. Skills

Academic achievement

There was no data on students' academic success in 2011 based on ethnicity available at any of the schools in Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje. The same is true for the Matura exam results. However, the School staff were asked to identify students from Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities, after which the average exam results were calculated based on individual results. Children from these communities (8 in total) **scored 58.28 points on average**, a quite high result comparable with the school average of 65.52.

There is still no ethnically disaggregated data in 2012 on the academic success of students from these communities.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Right to Education, What is it? Education and the 4 As Extract. Available at: <http://www.right-to-education.org/node/226> (accessed September 26, 2011).

8.2. Qualification of teachers

Provision of training of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian teachers or assistants

Whilst, there are currently no teachers or assistants from the Roma, Ashkali or Egyptian communities in Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje schools, in 2011, Balkan Sunflowers organized training for school mediators for people belonging to Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities, who were awarded the *Certificate of Mediator*.⁴⁸

Research in 2012 did not result in any new information.

8.3. Tolerance

Provision of trainings to teachers on tolerance, prejudices and discrimination

With regard to training, school directors claimed that most of the teachers **had attended courses specifically about Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian culture, history and discrimination**⁴⁹. However, they lacked data on the number of teachers that attended such courses, as well as the organizations that ran the courses. In 2010, **ECMI Kosovo** organized courses for teachers of 3 schools in Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje on Building Sensitivity for Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Education. Also, since December 2011 the **Finish Support to Inclusive Education System** has provided teacher training on working with students with special needs in four municipalities, including the municipality of Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje. This training aimed to promote the rights of groups risking exclusion, such as ethnic minorities.⁵⁰

Alongside a campaign promoting integration in 2012, 20 teachers received training on the culture and history of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities, children's rights, anti-discrimination, how to provide quality education for these communities. Trainings have been organized on inclusive education (i.e. children with special needs) by the NGO Tema.

Discrimination and harassment at school

NGOs insist on a need to train teachers in particular about prejudice and reporting discrimination. NGOs expressed concern at teachers making **Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian pupils sit at the back of the class**; this could have been due to a lack of knowledge on the teacher's part or just a negligent attitude towards Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian pupils.⁵¹ This finding was backed up by a focus group with several students. They accepted that the teachers' attitude had improved in recent years, but there were still complaints that teachers were asking them to sit in the back rows or were sometimes aggressive towards them this could also be a general attitude of teachers towards children, regardless of ethnicity).⁵² On the other hand, school directors revealed that they would sometimes receive complaints from parents about the hygiene of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian students and asked for better support in this area, since it is believed to have caused prejudice.⁵³

⁴⁸ Interview with Mr. Rrahmon Stollaku from the BSF on October 17, 2011 in BSF Center in Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje.

⁴⁹ Interview with two school directors in Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje schools during October 9-14, 2011.

⁵⁰ Data from Shäde Osmani, Team Leader at Finish Support to Inclusive Education System on November 21, 2011 via email.

⁵¹ Different NGO Representatives.

⁵² Focus group with Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje school children.

⁵³ Interview with two school directors from Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje.

According to the information obtained from the Selman Riza School, teachers' attitude towards Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children has improved, and children from these communities no longer sit at the back of the class, and now sit in mixed groups.

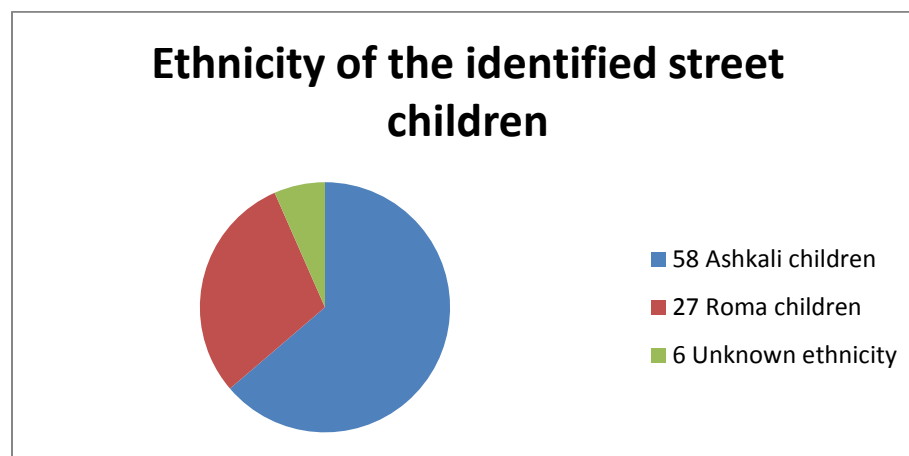
9. Adaptability

Adaptability refers to education able to evolve with the changing needs of society and contribute to challenging inequalities, such as gender discrimination, and able to adapt locally to suit specific contexts.⁵⁴ This chapter will therefore assess issues of child labour, returnees, programme suitability, integration, the availability of teaching staff from the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities and the access of teachers and assistants from the communities.

9.1 Child Labour

Measures to combat child labour

In the municipality of Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje, only 3% of the 6 000 Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian citizens are employed.⁵⁵ This is a worrying figure and a major factor contributing to the huge number of children on the streets. There was no strategy at municipal level found in 2011, to tackle the issue of child labour and the MED referred ECMI Kosovo to the NGOs working in the field. The most active NGO, Terre Des Hommes, identified 91 street children (48 boys and 43 girls) in the municipality of Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje. Most of these children were of Ashkali ethnicity, the others were Roma, whilst the ethnicity of a few children was hard or impossible to be established.⁵⁶ According to TDH data, most (40) of these children were 6-12 years old. However, there were also children younger than 5 years old (16).



Graph 5: Ethnicity of the identified street children; Source: Data from TDH

⁵⁴ Right to Education, What is it? Education and the 4 As Extract. Available at: <http://www.right-to-education.org/node/226> (accessed September 26, 2011).

⁵⁵ Interview with Elizabeth Gowing, Ideas Partnership on November 16, 2011 via skype.

⁵⁶ Interview with Sofia Hedjam and Bukurie Breznica, of Terre Des Hommes, on October 17, 2011 in Prishtinë/Priština.

These identified children were being constantly monitored by TDH and are given clothing, education in hygiene and counselling where necessary. A course in 2011 educated parents about child trafficking, and there were efforts in place to work with parents and encourage children to abandon child labour.

TIP had started a small soap-making microfinance initiative with five of the mothers of children who have come to TIP classes; and a recycling initiative with some of the parents to increase employability; in addition to supporting families by distributing clothing and providing some emergency medical support.⁵⁷

No information was available on the number of street children in 2012. The Municipal Task Force on Preventing Abuse and Protecting Children from Exploitation established in 2010 with the support of TDH continued to monitor and manage cases of child labour. The NGO TDH also organised summer camps for vulnerable children from the three communities (401 children attended).

Measures to include Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian child laborers in education

TDH was cooperating with TIP to include street children in their programme and register them in schools. TIP was working with the families of these and other out-of-school children, running adult literacy classes and English classes (see chapter 7.5 on Out of School children).

In 2012, activities have been organized for children working on the streets by TIP and MED (supported by TDH) so as to encourage their return to school. According to the Prevention and Response Team Towards Abandonment and Non-Registration (PRTAN) of Selman Riza School, important effort is still required to integrate these children back to school, since they lack basic conditions for life.

9.2 Minority communities

Number of classes with over 50% of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian pupils

Most children from Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Communities were concentrated in Selman Riza School due to its proximity in comparison to other schools. **10 of the 48 classes in this school had more than 50% of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children** in their composition, while every other class had at least one student from the communities, according to the Director.⁵⁸ In the Mihail Grameno and Daut Bogujevci schools this was not the case, due to smaller number of students from these communities.

In 2012 the situation had improved according to Selman Riza School Director, and only 1 of the 48 classes has 50% of its pupils from the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities, enabling greater integration.

Number of Roma, Ashkali or Egyptian teachers/assistants in educational institutions

As mentioned previously, there were **no teachers or assistants** from the Roma, Ashkali or Egyptian communities in Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje schools. NGOs claimed that there was reluctance by schools to accept Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian teachers or assistants.⁵⁹ Furthermore, the Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje MED said that there had been only one active qualified teacher who retired and that there have

⁵⁷ Interview with Elizabeth Gowing, Ideas Partnership on November 16, 2011 via skype.

⁵⁸ Interview with the Selman Riza School Director, Mr. Sabit Dragusha on October 10, 2011 in Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje

⁵⁹ Interviews with several NGOs. identity is not revealed for privacy issues.

been no requests for teaching positions from the communities since.⁶⁰ The MED did not have in place a strategy or special policy to recruit or train teachers from the communities.

The situation regarding the absence of teachers/ assistants from the communities remained the same in 2012.

Availability of language courses for Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian returnees

Language courses in Albanian and Serbian for returnees as well as for illiterates were being offered by BSF Center in Fushë Kosovë.⁶¹ As previously mentioned, the municipality was reported to lack financial and human resources to provide additional classes for returnees.

According to TIP information, the number of returnees in schools in 2012 was about 30. In June 2012, the Selman Riza school provided supplementary Albanian language courses for returnee children from Ashkali, Egyptian and Roma communities. According to the MOCR 18 returnee children attended the supplementary classes. Besides that, BSF continued to provide its language support programme.

Inclusion of cultural particularities of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians into the school programmes

Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian culture were notably absent from school curricula. The Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje MED claimed that there have been some minor interventions but recognized that it is limited to organizing cultural events and activities.⁶²

In addition to the general lack of literature in the language of Roma community pupils lack textbooks in the Romani language. Furthermore, teachers lack any knowledge of Romani language, so struggle to provide explanations or clarifications when Roma pupils do not understand due to language difficulties. It should be noted that the Ashkalis' and Egyptians' native language is Albanian.

No change to the situation was indicated in the 2012 research.

9.3 Children with disabilities

Number of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children with special education needs

Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children with disabilities, both being members of these vulnerable communities as well as being persons with disabilities within this group, are considered the most marginalized. There is no integrated environment in regular schools in Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje, which can accommodate children with disabilities. Currently, none of the 5 children identified from within these communities are covered by any of the provisions specified by *The Strategic Plan for Inclusive Education for children with special educational needs in pre-university education in Kosovo (2010 – 2015)*. Instead, 3 of them have chosen to attend the BSF Centre; however the Centre does not fully meet the criteria for educating children with disabilities. There is absence of an Individual Education Plan for these children, which should be prepared by municipal assessment teams (which are yet to be

⁶⁰ Interview with the Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje MED, Mr. Islam Shabani on October 7, 2011 in Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje.

⁶¹ Interview with Mr. Rrahmon Stollaku from the BSF on October 17, 2011 in BSF Center in Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje.

⁶² Interview with the Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje MED, Mr. Islam Shabani on October 7, 2011 in Fushë Kosovë / Kosovo Polje.

formed). These teams would plan, recommend and monitor the education of children with special needs; their non-existence hampers any systematic improvement in conditions for these children.

According to MOCR, in 2012, 10 children out of 52 children with special needs were from the communities (9 Ashkali: 6 boys and 3 girls and 1 Roma girl). There are still no children with special needs attending regular schools in 2012 according to MED. 4 children were reported attending the BSF Learning Centre.

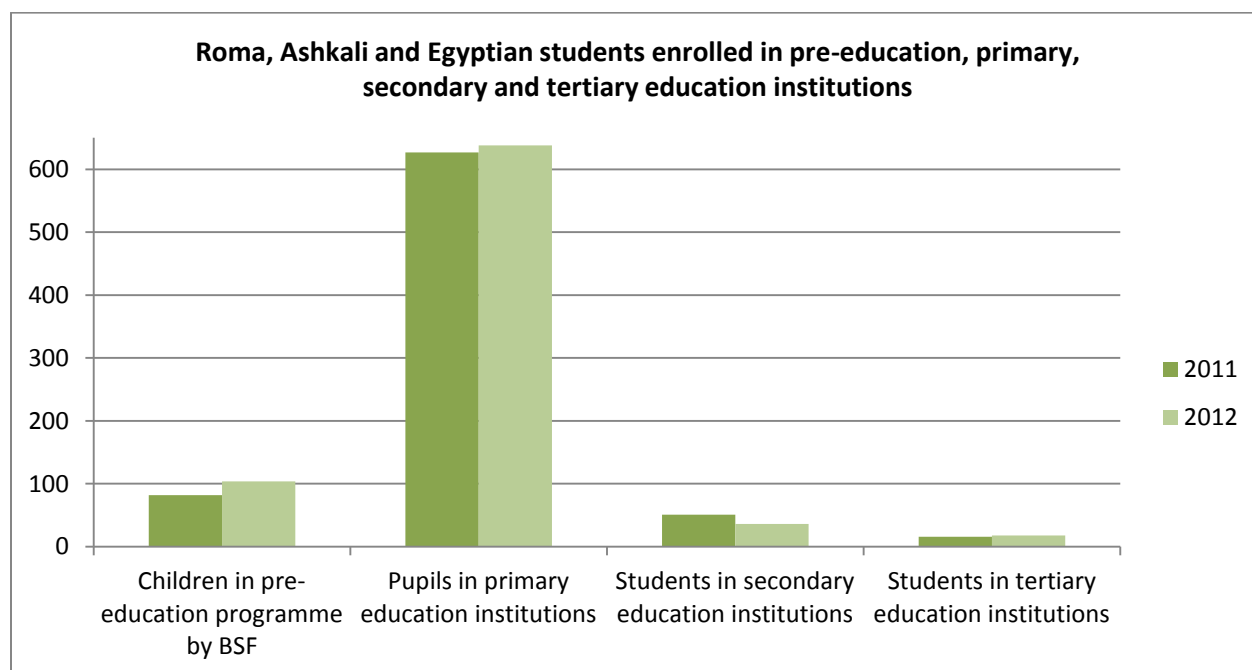
10. Summary and Conclusions

The research in the Municipality of Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje on **pre-school education system** showed that no Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian attend the public kindergartens, while there were 81 children (104 in 2012) attending the pre-school programme offered by the BSF Centre in Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje. Most children attending this programme are then registered in the public primary school. The absence of Roma, Ashkali or Egyptian students in the public pre-school education can be explained by the limited number of places generally available in Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje public pre-school programmes, by the financial obstacles as the BSF Centre offers its programme for free, or just because children and parents feel more comfortable sending their children there because it is usually closer to home. However this is an indication that children in their early years do not socialize with other non-Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children, which might have consequences in the future.

As for the **primary education** (including lower secondary school), the research identified a total of 627 pupils in 2011 and a slight increase of 11 pupils (638) in 2012 from Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities which attend schools of Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje. The drop-out rates start to increase from the 6th grade onwards with only 8 students finishing the lower secondary school (grade 6-9) in Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje in 2011. While there has been a significant increase in lower secondary school completion in 2012 (26 pupils), which probably reflects the ongoing concerted efforts of actors working with school age children in the municipality, the number of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian pupils in lower secondary school is still very low and there is still a need for greater support to help reduce the number drop-outs and to bring more out-school children back to school. The research indicated that the principal reasons for dropping out of school were a lack of interest by parents and language difficulties. A particularly worrying trend that needs to be addressed is the decrease in enrolment of Roma children, who mostly attend the Serbian system of schooling.

In the **secondary education system** (upper secondary school), the number of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian pupils is already proportionally lower than in primary education (51 students in 2011, and only 36 in 2012). A positive development is that all Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian pupils who graduate from the Lower Secondary School, continue to the Upper Secondary School (8 students in 2011 and 26 students in 2012.).

Finally in the **Universities**, the number of students from these communities seems to be considerably low (only 16 students in 2011, and 18 in 2012, from Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje) considering the total number of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian population living in Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje.



Graph 6: Overall number of students at all levels; Source: Data gather from the MED, schools and the Balkan Sunflowers.

Until 2011, the overwhelming majority of **support to Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian pupils** came from NGOs rather than the municipality or schools. In 2012, there have been improvements in the support provided by schools since the schools initiated a number of activities aimed to help students from these communities to overcome particular learning difficulties, such as organising supplementary classes in Albanian language and mathematics. However, the margin of action of the municipality remains limited due to a lack of specific budget targeting returnees, children with special needs, or in general for children from the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities. The support provided by NGOs to Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian students includes that of BSF Centre which supports students with their homework and provides daily food and of TIP which identifies and helps out-of-school children to enrol in schools, as well as that of other NGO's such as TDH and HFA who distribute school materials, clothes and hygiene. The free books given by the Ministry are also acknowledged and appreciated. Further training and support needs to be given to teachers regarding cultural differences, reporting cases of discrimination and working with children with learning difficulties.

Concerning the **accessibility of education**, according to MED most of the schools are very close, meaning that children travel less than 1.5 km to get to and from school. While in 2010 the Municipality provided transport for Roma children attending the Serbian language school programme in Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje, this service was stopped as it was deemed unnecessary and caused criticism from other

communities. On the other hand, the MED no longer provides transport support for students attending secondary schools outside of Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje, which might present an obstacle to their education.

The **school registration procedure** is simple, yet there continue in 2012 to be problems registering children older than the required age. There are no clear guidelines for schools provided by MEST how to deal with this issue, leaving the decision at the discretion of the school director. There is a need for greater communication with parents to increase the efficiency of new student enrolment in the first grade as sometimes parents only go and register their children after the school year has already started which led to conflicts between the students and the teachers and eventually to drop-outs.

There are several initiatives to identify the **children in the street** (TDH) and **children out of school** (BSF through its mediators programme) and prepare them for return to school (TIP). In 2011 there were approximately 60 students that enrolled in the school as part of the TIP project of which 18 continued regularly attending school. In 2012, 30 out of school children were integrated into regular classes following their participation in intensive catch-up classes organised by the Selman Riza School. Nevertheless, there is a long way to go with work targeting out of school children and children working in the streets, taking into account their difficult situation and their lack of basic needs. Specific outreach efforts to encourage girls to attend school will also be needed.

The main concern that the research identified in 2011 regarding the support given to the students is the **attitude of teachers towards Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian students**. Nevertheless, according to 2012 information, teachers' attitudes appear to be improving with signs that teachers have been receiving training specifically on these communities. Moreover, in 2011 students from these communities were been asked to sit at the back of the class, whereas in 2012 this was no longer the case, indicating improved integration and tolerance. There are **no teachers or assistants from the communities** in the Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje schools.

In 2011, the researchers identified there was a **lack of coordination** between the many active projects and NGO's in the field. With the introduction of regular meetings of the Municipal Task Force on Education of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities in 2012, the coordination and communication has improved.

The main obstacle for **data collection** in 2011 was the lack of a database of overall numbers of school age students from the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities. The publication of the detailed Census 2011 data should provide the general statistics needed for estimation of enrolment ratios. Another difficulty was that there was a lack of data on children who dropped out. This should also be addressed by the municipality's efforts to compile a database of school drop outs at municipal level with the support of NGOs. There remains a lack of precise data particularly about the academic achievement of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian students. In light of the educational challenges faced by the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities, it is necessary to improve the collection of data so as to provide a clear picture of the educational situation and provide basis for evaluation of policies and measures aimed at improving the situation.

11. Recommendations

Based on the results of the baseline data collected for the Municipality of Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje, it is recommended that the Municipality undertakes following measures to improve the education of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities:

- The Municipality and the BSF should increase their cooperation in view of providing a more inclusive pre-school education to Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children.
- It is recommended that the municipality takes a more active role in providing support services to Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian students since there is currently an over reliance on NGO actors. MED should ensure adequate funding in order to be able to implement strategies regarding Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities' education in a meaningful, effective and sustainable way. Specific affirmative measures, such as financial assistance, should be undertaken to increase the participation of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian in education, particularly in higher education.
- Further institutional support to dropout or out of school children from the MED would be desired. It is recommended to ensure the organisation of intensive catch up classes for school dropouts or out of school children in order to integrate them in regular schooling. MED should request from MEST clear guidelines on how to secure the right to education of children who are older than the age required for registration.
- A communication campaign with parents would be desired to increase the efficiency of new student enrolment in the first grade as sometimes parents only go and register their children after the school year has already started which led to conflicts between the students and the teachers and eventually to drop-outs.
- The MED should improve the current database and monitoring system on out-of-school children. Furthermore, there should be improvements to the data collection system for disaggregated data based on ethnicity and gender for school attendance and academic success. Data collection should also be systematically improved regarding returned Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children and children with disabilities. The data should be collected in such a way that respects the rights and privacy of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian people.
- It is recommended to change and adopt the Administrative Instruction which would allow teacher assistants in the classes as well as a Strategy/Policy at MED level for increasing the number of education personnel from these communities in the Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje and Kosovo education system in general.
- It is recommended to enhance coordination efforts between the different actors with the aim of increasing the efficiency of delivering education for Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian students in Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje, desirably with the Municipality taking the lead.

As the situation in Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje reflects the problems or issues encountered in many Kosovo municipalities, the recommendations are valid also for other municipalities seeking to improve their delivery of education to the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities.

Appendix A: Preliminary list of indicators

1. Availability

Indicator
Early childhood care and education
Enrolment Ratio⁶³ in pre-school education – Kindergarten and Pre-school (average⁶⁴ and by Roma, Ashkali, Egyptian⁶⁵, by Roma, Ashkali, Egyptian gender)
Primary education
- Enrolment ratio in primary education (average and by Roma, Ashkali, Egyptian, and by gender) % Survival Grade to 5 (average and by Roma, Ashkali, Egyptian, and by gender) - Primary Completion Ratio (average and by Roma, Ashkali, Egyptian, and by gender) - Repetition rates (average and by Roma, Ashkali, Egyptian, and by gender) - Drop-out rates (average and by Roma, Ashkali, Egyptian, and by gender) - Transition rate from primary to secondary school (average and by Roma, Ashkali, Egyptian, and by gender) - Rates of attendance - Completion rates
Secondary Education
- Enrolment ratio in lower secondary education School (average and by Roma, Ashkali, Egyptian, and by gender) - Enrolment ratio in upper secondary education (average and by Roma, Ashkali, Egyptian, and by gender) - Enrolment in vocational education training programmes (average and by Roma, Ashkali, Egyptian, and by gender) - Gross Secondary Completion Ratio (average and by Roma, Ashkali, Egyptian, and by gender) - Repetition rates (average and by Roma, Ashkali, Egyptian, and by gender) - Drop-out rates (average and by Roma, Ashkali, Egyptian, and by gender) - Rates of attendance
Tertiary Education
Number of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian students (by gender) from Fushe Kosove Municipality enrolled in tertiary education
Adult basic and literacy education
Number Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Adults (by gender) enrolled in basic and literacy education programmes
Number of certified learners from Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian
School infrastructure
% Schools providing individual support to Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children with (learning, behavioural or social) difficulties

⁶³ Initial data availability assessment will assess whether it is will be feasible to collect data as ratios or as numbers

⁶⁴ For the purpose of this research, “average” shall be interpreted as the value of the indicator for Fushe Kosove/Kosovo Polje municipality

⁶⁵ The data will be collected separately for each community, provided that the data is available

2. Accessibility

Physical obstacles
% Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Population for which school-house distance is: < 1 km, > 1 and 5, > 5 km
Is transportation provided? What is its cost?
Economic obstacles
Indirect costs for primary education: textbooks, teaching materials, coaching classes, compulsory parental contributions (in money or by providing services), other payments necessary to effectively access education (eg. payment for water)
Are subsidies for primary education available for Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians? Are free meals provided at primary school? Are clothes and bags provided? Are schoolbooks offered for free?
Are subsidies for education available for Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians? Does the municipality offer grants to Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian students for education? If yes, # Roma, Ashkali, Egyptian students who benefited (per gender, per levels of education)
Administrative obstacles
Are Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian parents given assistance to enrol their children? Are enrolment formalities reduced to the minimum? Can parents enrol their children by oral consent?
Number of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians forced returnees or IDP children enrolled in schools
Do children have to present a birth certificate to enrol in schools?
Gender obstacles
Are there campaigns to convince parents to send their girls to school? Are there measures to provide support to girls of low-income families?
Is the municipality taking steps to identify girls currently not in education, to encourage their school attendance and to reduce their drop-out rates?
Are there programmes for women to continue their education?
Socio-cultural obstacles
Does the municipality take measures to combat hatred, racism or discrimination at school?
Are there cooperation and referral mechanisms in place with the relevant stakeholders working with minority groups (eg. Centre's for Social Work, Health Sector, NGO's)?
Are there campaigns to inform parents about the importance of their children being educated?
Out-of-school Children
Is the municipality taking steps to identify out-of-school Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children, to encourage school attendance and to reduce drop-out rates?
Are schools (through parent-teacher associations and/or pupils or in association with the government) endeavouring to reach out-of-school Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children in the communities where they live in order to encourage their school attendance?
Are steps taken to ensure that previously out-of-school children remain in school? Are there measures taken to adapt education to their situation to prevent further drop-outs?
Are there second chance education programmes offered? If yes, # of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children registered, completed, continued regular education? Are the second chance programmes recognized(accredited, certified)

3. Acceptability

Skills
Academic achievement (average and by Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian, by gender)

Qualification of teachers
Are trainings in place to train Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian teachers and assistants?
Tolerance
Are trainings offered to teachers on prejudices and on recognising and reporting cases of discrimination?
Do Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children experience discrimination and harassment at school?

4. Adaptability

Child labour
Have measures been taken to combat child labour? Are these measures addressed to parents, other?
Are there special measures to include Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian child labourers in education?
Are there special measures in place to find solutions for working children and their families?
Minorities
Number of classes with over 50% Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian pupils
Numbers of classes with less than 50% Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian pupils in total
Number of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian teachers/assistants in educational institutions (pre-school, primary and secondary schools)
Ratio of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian teachers/assistants in educational institutions (pre-school, primary and secondary schools)
Are parents from Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities represented in school parents councils and school boards?
Number of teachers (not belonging to Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian groups) trained in minority culture or languages
Availability of language courses for Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian returnees?
Do school programmes take into account the cultural particularities of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities?
Persons with disabilities
Ratio of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children attending special schools