Bosniak community

Community profile

Figures as at the 2011 census; the 2024 census results are at **Kosovo Agency of Statistics (ReKos 2024).**

The profile supplements its 2011 census figures with OSCE data for northern Kosovo.

EUROPEAN CENTRE
FOR MINORITY
ISSUES KOSOVO

COMMUNITY PROFILE : BOSNIAK COMMUNITY

1. POPULATION SIZE AND LOCATION

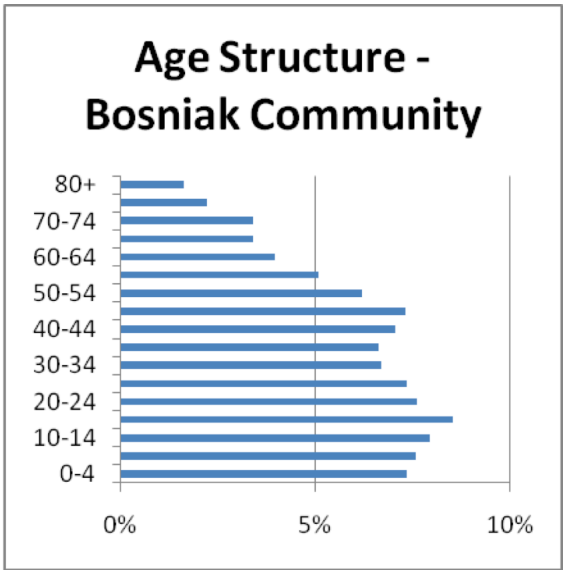
The Bosniak community is the second largest minority community in Kosovo. Based on the 2011 Kosovo census results, supplemented with OSCE data for northern Kosovo, ECMI Kosovo estimates that there are around 28,933 Bosniaks living in Kosovo, making up around 1.54% of the total population. The majority of Bosniaks live in the Prizren municipality, while considerable Bosniak communities are also located in Dragash/Dragaš, Pejë/Peć, Istog/Istok and North Mitrovicë/Mitovica.

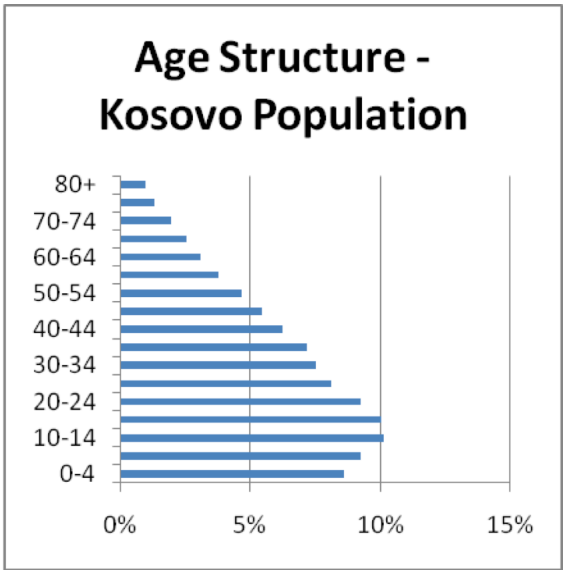
Bosniak community in Kosovo according to the 2011 Census*		
Municipality	**Percentage**	**Number of community members**
Prizren	9.4%	16,896
Dragash/Dragaš	12.11%	4,100
Pejë/Peć	3.89%	3,786
Istog/Istok	2.8%	1,142
Mitrovicë/Mitovica North	3.39%	1,000
Mitrovicë/Mitovica South	0.57%	416
Prishtinë/Priština	0.2%	400
Leposavić/Leposaviq	1.6%	300
Gjilan/Gnjilane	0.13%	121
Ferizaj/Uroševac	0.08%	83
Gjakovë/Đakovica	0.08%	73
Deçan/Dečane	0.15%	60
Obiliq/Obilić	0.02%	58
Hani iElezit/Elez Han	0.45%	42
Lipjan/Lipljan	0.07%	42
Skenderaj/Srbica	0.08%	42
FushëKosovë/Kosovo Polje	0.09%	34
Podujevë/Podujevo	0.04%	33
Vushtrri/Vučitrn	0.05%	33
Viti/Vitina	0.05%	25
Kaçanik/Kačanik	0.06%	20

Klinë/Klina	0.05%	20
Shtime/Štimlje	0.07%	20
Suharekë/Suva Reka	0.02%	15
Malishevë/Mališevo	0.03%	15
Gračanica/Graçanicë	0.06%	15
Gllogovc/Glogovac	0.02%	14
Rahovec/Orahovac	0.02%	10
Kamenicë/Kamenica	0.02%	9
Novo Brdo/Novobërdë	0.05%	5
Štrpce/Shtërpcë	0.02%	2
Mamuşa/Mamushë/Mamuša	0.02%	1
Ranilug/Ranillug	0.02%	1
Total	**1.54%**	**28,933**

** The 2011 Kosovo census did not cover northern Kosovo. Therefore the 2013 OSCE Municipal Profiles were used as source for the data on the northern municipalities with Bosniak communities. For all southern municipalities, the official 2011 Kosovo census was used as a source.*

Based on the 2011 Kosovo census data, the Bosniak community has an average age slightly higher than the general population. The mean age of the Bosniak community is 34 years old, while the Kosovo average is 29.5 years old.





2. CULTURE AND RELIGION

Bosniaks are a predominantly Muslim Slav community, descendent from the Slav tribes that migrated to South-Eastern Europe in the sixth and seventh century AD. Generally, like the Albanian community, they practice Sunni Islam, the largest branch of Islam. In Kosovo today, Bosniaks can be divided into two groups. The first consists of those who migrated to Kosovo at various times from Bosnia, Montenegro and, mostly, from Sandzak, especially after the end of Ottoman rule in the region. This group is concentrated around the Pejë/Peć,

Istog/Istok and Mitrovicë/Mitrovica regions and, to a lesser extent, in Prishtinë/Priština. The second group comprises those who traditionally lived predominantly in the regions of Prizren, Dragash/Dragaš and Zupa.

Kosovo recognises the International Day of Bosniaks, 28 November, as an official Memorial Day.

3. LANGUAGE

The Bosniak community in Kosovo uses the Latin script and speaks the Bosnian language; a Slavic language closely related to Serbian, Croatian and Montenegrin. Out of the two official languages of Kosovo, Bosniaks speak Serbian fluently, and often also speak Albanian. The Kosovo public education system offers education in the Bosnian languages in several municipalities. The Bosnian language is recognised as an official language in the municipalities of Dragash/Dragaš, Pejë/Peć and Prizren and as a language in official use in the municipality of Istog/Istok.

4. POLITICAL REPRESENTATION

The Bosniak community has three (3) seats guaranteed in the Kosovo Assembly,[1] and nominates three (3) members of the CCC.[2]

Bosniaksare politically well organised. Theyare regularly a member of the governing coalition at the central level, and in the four municipalities with the largest number Bosniaks (Prizren, Dragash/Dragaš, Pejë/Peć, and Istog/Istok) the community is regularly represented in the Municipal Assembly.

Over the past few years, 'KoalicijaVakat' has been the largest political subject representing the interests of Bosniaks. Other parties, such as 'Nova DemokratskaStranka' (NDS), 'StrankaDemokratskeAkcije' (SDA), and 'BosnjackaStrankaDemokratskeAkcijeKosova' (BSDAK), also serve the Bosniak community. In 2010, with the establishment of the NDS and BSDAK, there was an increase in Bosniak political parties, resulting in a split of the Bosniak vote.

Total number of votes for main Bosniak political parties in Kosovo elections since 2007 (local and general)

	2007 (Gen.)	2007 (Mun.)	2009 (Mun.)	2010 (Gen.)	2013 (Mun.)
VAKAT	5,428	5,269	4,168	5,296	4,833
NDS	/	/	/	2,478	2,949
BSDAK	/	/	400	1,818	534
SDA	3,661	2,468	1,973	1,602	1,177

[1] Constitution, Article 64.2.
[2] Law on Communities (03/L – 047), Article 12.6.

Total number of votes for Bosniak political parties per municipality since 2007 (local elections only, covering the five municipalities with the largest Bosniak communities)

	2007 (Mun.)	2009 (Mun.)	2013 (Mun.)
Dragash / Dragaš	1,982	2,046	1,722
Istog / Istok	333	440	252
Mitrovicë/Mitovica South	71	/	200
Pejë / Peć	803	1,322	1,409
Prizren	4,548	2,533	5,593
Leposavić/Leposaviq	/	80	70
Priština/Prishtine	/	120	77
Mitrovicë/Mitrovica North	/	/	170

5. RETURNS

Exact numbers on the Bosniak community before the 1999 conflict are unavailable, as previous censuses did not include Bosniaks as a group, but instead referred to 'Muslims', a typification which would have also included the Gorani community (but not Albanians). The 1991 Yugoslav census estimated there to be 66,189 Muslims, the majority of who would now identify as Bosniaks.

During and after the 1999 conflict, many Bosniaks fled Kosovo for security reasons. Returns within the Bosniak community have been limited, and Bosniaks continue to leave Kosovo for economic reasons.

From January 2000 until June 2013, 1,793 Bosniaks returned voluntarily and 91 were forcibly returned between January 2011 and June 2013.[3] Only 8 Bosniaks are displaced within Kosovo.[4]

Voluntary and forced returns of the Bosniak community, Jan. 2000 – June 2013 (UNHCR, June 2013)

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Voluntary	57	0	149	393	479	250	93	89	39	43	49	60	84	8
Forced	*No Data Available*											37	44	10

6. SECURITY AND FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT

[3] UNHCR Office of the Chief of the Mission, Pristina, Kosovo, 'Statistical Overview: Update at end of June 2013'.
[4] *ibid*

Generally, the Bosniak community does not face serious security concerns or restrictions in freedom of movement. Although there are incidental reports of inter-ethic incidents, the community,by and large, feels safe within their area of residence and feels free to travel through Kosovo with private vehicles, as well as public transport.

Some security concerns exist within the Bosniak community in Mitovica/Mitrovicë North, reflecting the overall tense security situation.

7. ECONOMY

According to UNDP (2012), the Bosniak unemployment rate is 37.68%, which is lower than the general unemployment rate of 45% in Kosovo, but is nonetheless substantial.[5]

According to the OCA, the percentage of Bosniaks in the Kosovo civil service (1.5%) approximately reflects their proportion of the Kosovo population (1.54%),[6] although this number hides underrepresentation within central government institutions, where Bosniaks make up only 0.9% of civil servants. Moreover, within publically owned enterprises, some of the biggest employers in Kosovo, the community makes up only 0.4% of empoyees.[7]
Besides linguistic barriers, the Bosniak community faces many of the same problems in relation to employment and economic opportunities as the majority community.

8. EDUCATION

The Bosniakcommunity mostly makes use of the Kosovo education system. Municipalities with larger Bosniakcommunities offer public education in the Bosnian language at the pre-school, elementary and high-school levels. Some tertiary public education in the Bosnian language is also available in Kosovo, but many Bosnian students attend universities in outside of Kosovo.

In general terms, the main issues facing community members in accessing education are:

- Limited availability of textbooks for upper-secondary education;
- A shortage of good school books at all levels of education;
- A lack of proper transport, and;
- Poor educational infrastructure.

9. ACCESS TO OTHER PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS

In general, the Bosniak community faces no substantial obstacles in accessing public institutions, and concerns regarding public services (e.g. regarding the quality of health care and expense of medication) largely reflect those of the majority population. However, the lack of compliance with the *Law on the Use of Languages*, both with regard to the use of Serbian at all levels and Bosnian at the municipal level,creates difficulties in communication,

[5]UNDP, 'Kosovo Human Development Report 2012: Private sector and employment'.
[6]Office of Community Affairs, 'Assessment on the employment of members of non-majority communities in the Kosovo civil service and publicly owned enterprises', May 2013.
[7]*ibid*

although, the good command of the Albanian language of many Bosniaks ameliorates the situation.

