Egyptian 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: EGYPTIAN COMMUNITY

1. POPULATION SIZE AND LOCATION

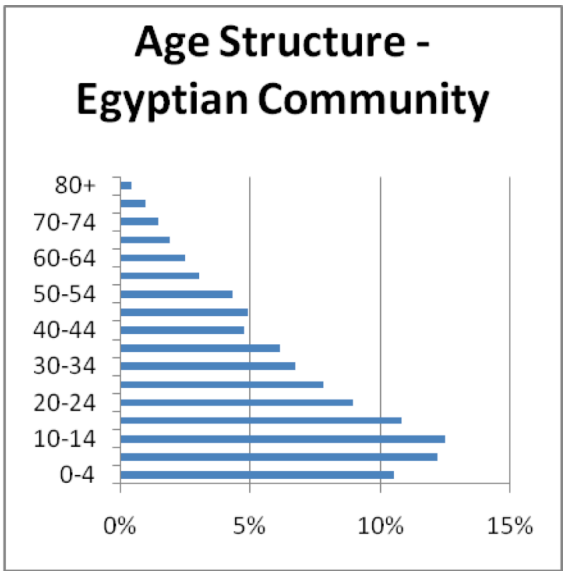
Based on the 2011 Kosovo census results, supplemented with OSCE data for northern Kosovo, ECMI Kosovo estimates that there are around 11,524 Egyptians living in Kosovo, making up around 0.61% of the total population. Over 90% of Egyptians live in Western Kosovo; almost half of all Egyptians live in Gjakovë/Dakovica, and there are sizable Egyptian communities in the municipalities of Pejë/Peć, Istog/Istok, and Klinë/Klina. Smaller Egyptian communities can be found in other regions of Kosovo, with the exception of northern Kosovo and Eastern Kosovo where there are no significant Egyptian communities.

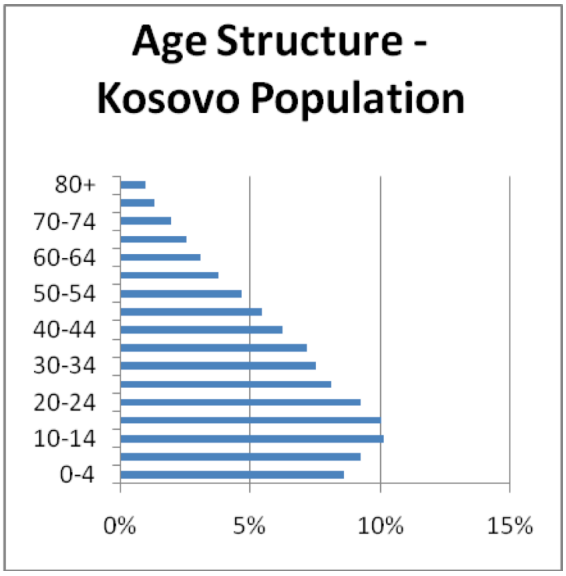
Egyptian community in Kosovo according to the 2011 Census*		
Municipality	**Percentage**	**Number of community members**
Gjakovë/Dakovica	5.42%	5,117
Pejë/Peć	2.77%	2,700
Istog/Istok	3.78%	1,544
Klinë/Klina	2.39%	934
Deçan/Deqani	0.98%	393
Rahovec/Orahovac	0.52%	299
FushëKosovë/Kosovo Polje	0.79%	282
Prizren	0.09%	168
Obiliq/Obilić	0.11%	27
Ferizaj/Uroševac	0.02%	24
Prishtinë/Priština	<0.01%	8
Mitrovicë/Mitrovica South	<0.01%	6
Suharekë/Suva Reka	<0.01%	5
Lipjan/Lipljan	<0.01%	4
Dragash/Dragaš	<0.01%	3
Gračanica/Graçanicë	<0.01%	3
Gllogoc/Glogovac	<0.01%	2
Podujevë/Podujevo	<0.01%	2

Vushtrri/Vucitrn	<0.01%	1
Skenderaj/Srbrica	<0.01%	1
Gjilan/Gnjilane	<0.01%	1
TOTAL	**0.61%**	**11,524**

** The official 2011 Kosovo census was used as source for data on the southern municipalities.Other sources indicate that there are no Egyptians living in northern Kosovo.*

Based on the 2011 Kosovo census, the Egyptian population is considerably younger than Kosovo's general population, with an average age of 26.1, compared to the Kosovo average of 29.5. It is the third youngest community, after the Ashkali and Roma communities.





2. CULTURE AND RELIGION

The Egyptians consider themselves an ethnic group whose ancestry can be traced back to ancient Egypt. In the Yugoslav census of 1991 the Egyptians were, for the first time, recognized as a separate ethnic group, although the results for Egyptians in Kosovo were never published. Also, it was in the 1990s that the Egyptian community started to organize itself into political and civil society organisations.

The Egyptian community shares cultural similarities and socio-economic issues with the Roma and Ashkali communities in Kosovo, but consider themselves a distinct and separate community. Correspondingly, Kosovo, through its institutions and legislation, recognises the Egyptian community's distinct identity and treats them as such. They are concentrated mainly, but not exclusively, in Kosovo, Albania and Macedonia. They are nominally Sunni Muslim, sedentary and urban, and often enjoy a relatively high standard of living in comparison to the Roma and Ashkali communities.

3. LANGUAGE

Egyptians are native Albanian speakers. Egyptians, particularly older generations educated under the Yugoslav system, occassionally also speak Serbian as a second language.

4. POLITICAL REPRESENTATION

The Egyptian community has one (1) seat guaranteed in the Kosovo Assembly,[1] and one (1) additional seat is awarded to the Roma, the Ashkali or the Egyptian community with the highest overall votes. The community also nominates two (2) members of the CCC.[2]
The 'Iniciativa e re Demokrarike e Kosovës' (IRDK) was the only political party representing the Egyptians until the 2010 general elections, when the 'Lidhja e EgjiptianëvetëKosovës'(LEK) participated for the first time in the elections. The competition resulted in a split of the vote between the two parties, but the IRDK managed to retain its hold on the Egyptian community's guaranteed seat in the Assembly.

In the 2009 municipal elections, four Egyptians were elected to Municipal Assemblies (in Gjakovë/Dakovica; Pejë/Peć; FushëKosovë/Kosovo Polje; and, Istog/Istok), while in 2013 only one Egyptian was elected to the Municipal Assembly ofPejë/Peć.

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

	2007 (Gen.)	2007 (Mun.)	2009 (Mun.)	2010 (Gen.)	2013 (Mun.)
Iniciativa e re Demokrarike e Kosovës (IRDK)	2,121	2,135	2,306	1,690	1,830
Lidhja e EgjiptianëvetëKosovës(LEK)	/	/	/	1,010	/

Total number of votes for Egyptian political parties per municipality since 2007 (local elections only)

	2007	2009	2013
Gjakovë/Dakovica	739	940	461
Istog/Istok	283	310	330
Klinë/Klina	146	82	88
FushëKosovë/Kosovo Polje	165	381	159
Rahovec/Orahovac	101	73	45
Pejë/Peć	586	490	734
Prizren	115	30	13

[1]Constitution, Article 64.
[2]Law on Communities (03/L-047), Article 12.6.

5. RETURNS

Official data on the pre-1999 Egyptian population in Kosovo is hard to come by. Yugoslav censuses before 1981 did not include Egyptians as a separate ethnic group, and although the 1991 census did include 'Egyptian' as a separate category, the results for Egyptians in Kosovo were never published. The 2010 OSCE Communities Profile estimates the pre-war population of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities at 150,000 people. Other sources estimate these three communities at more than 200,000 before the 1999 conflict.[3]

There is no disaggregated data regarding voluntary returns of the Egyptian community, but according to UNHCR (June, 2013) estimations, around 6,633 Egyptian and Ashkali have voluntarily returned to Kosovo from 2000 to June 2013, 17 Egyptians were forcibly returned between January 2011 and June 2013, and there remain 206 Egyptian community members displaced within Kosovo.[4]

Voluntary returns of the Egyptian and Ashkali communities, Jan. 2000 – June 2013 (UNHCR, June 2013)

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Voluntary	0	533	882	1182	593	727	466	312	195	281	718	395	305	44

Egyptian forced returns, Jan. 2011 – June 2013 (UNHCR, June 2013)

	2011	2012	2013
Forced	9	3	5

6. SECURITY AND FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT

The Egyptian community generally does not report significant security concerns or obstacles to their freedom of movement.

7. ECONOMY

Together with members of the Roma and Ashkali communities, Kosovo Egyptians are strongly hit by Kosovo's overall difficult economic situation, suffering from low levels of income and limited employment opportunities. Significantly, comparisons of the average incomes and unemployment rates among communities reveal their particularly vulnerable position: [5] according to UNDP, the Egyptian communityhas the highest rates of unemployment in Kosovo, peaking at 80%. Furthermore, despite the lack of reliable data and the widespread participation of Egyptians in unregistered income generating activities

[3] Human Rights Watch, 'Rights Displaced: Forced Returns of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians from Western Europe to Kosovo', 2010.

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

[5] UNDP, 'Kosovo Human Development Report 2012: Private sector and employment'. – As terms for comparison in the framework of Kosovo, consider: average monthly salary per person in Kosovo in general is 260€, the lowest in the region after Albania; unemployment among Albanians is rated 47.02%

and informal commerce, the Egyptian families' average total income is estimated at around €128.31 a month.[6]

Poor levels of education and insufficient professional skills are commonly worsened by widespread exclusion policies and entrenched inequalities in the working environment, directly and often overtly linked to community members' ethnic belonging.[7]

Besides the scarce employment opportunities in the private sector, the Egyptian community also faces considerable obstacles in accessing employment in the public sector. The 2013 OCA's assessment of employment of non-majority communities within the Kosovo Civil Service reveals the almost complete absence of Egyptians in the Kosovo civil service, with Egyptians making up 0.1% of all civil servants, while the community makes up 0.66% of the total Kosovo population.[8] The same source reports that there are no Egyptians employed in Publicly Owned Enterprises.[9]

8. EDUCATION

The education situation facing the Egyptian community largely reflects the situation of the Ashkali community, and the 'Education' section under the Ashkali community's profile can therefore also be considered as representative for the Egyptian community.

9. ACCESS TO PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS

With regards to issues in accessing public institutions, the situation facing the Egyptian community largely reflects the situation of the Ashkali community, and the 'Access to Public Institutions' section under the Ashkali community's profile can therefore also be considered as representative for the Egyptian community.

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[6] Kosovo Foundation for Open Society (KFOS–SOROS), 'The Position of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Communities in Kosovo', 2009, p. 20.
[7] European Roma Rights Centre, 'The Glass Box: Exclusion of Roma from Employment', February 2007.
[8] 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, p. 22.
[9] *ibid*, p. 30

