Montenegrin community

Community profile

Historical population estimates; the 2024 census results are at **Kosovo Agency of Statistics (ReKos 2024).**

The 2011 census did not list the Montenegrin community separately. The profile gives an ECMI Kosovo estimate based on OSCE reports and estimates from community representatives.

EUROPEAN CENTRE FOR MINORITY ISSUES KOSOVO

COMMUNITY PROFILE: MONTENEGRIN COMMUNITY

1. POPULATION SIZE AND LOCATION

The Montenegrin community is the second smallest community in Kosovo, after the Croat community. There are no exact numbers on the Montengrin community, as they were not included as a separate ethnic group during the 2011 census. From all communities in Kosovo, numbers on the Montenegrin community are perhaps the most uncertain, with Montenegrin community representatives themselves having no clear estimates. ECMI Kosovo estimates, based on OSCE reports and estimates by community representatives, places the total number of Montengrins in Kosovo around 265, or 0.01% of the Kosovo population,[1] with the largest Gorani communities in Istog/Istokand FushëKosovë/Kosovo Polje. However, due to the lack of reliable data, these numbers should be seen as rough estimates, even more than with other communties.

Montenegrin community in Kosovo according to OSCE Reports		
Municipality	**Percentage**	**Number of community members**
Istog / Istok	0.27%	110
FushëKosovë/Kosovo Polje	0.28%	100
Pejë/Peć	0.03%	30
Prishtinë / Priština	0.01%	20
Deçan/Dečane	0.01%	3
Klinë / Klina	0.01%	2
Total	**0.01%**	**265**

**Sources: Data on municipalities not affected by the decentralisation are based on the 2010 OSCE Community Profiles (OSCE field teams estimations), while the data on municipalities affected by the decentralisation process and municipalities in northern Kosovo are based on the 2013 OSCE Municipal Profiles.*

Due to the lack of disaggregated data on the Montenegrin community, no exact data is available on the age structure of the community. However, reports indicate that the Montenegrins have a higher average age than the Kosovo average.

[1] For more information on the methods used for data selection please check section III. Communities in Kosovo, p.12.

2. CULTURE AND RELIGION

The Montenegrin community is an ethnically Slav group, descendending from the Slav tribes that migrated to South-Eastern Europe in the sixth and seventh century AD. The community is culturally closely related to the Serb community; they are predominantly Christian Orthodox and share many of the same cultural heritage sites. The community was officially recognised by the Kosovo Government in 2011 through the amendment of the *Law on the on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Communities and Their Members in the Republic of Kosovo*.

3. LANGUAGE

The Montenegrin community speaks the Montenegrin language, closely related to the Serbian language and other Slavic languages spoken in Kosovo. Out of the two official languages of Kosovo, Montenegrins speak Serbian fluently, but only occassionally speak Albanian. Due to the small size of the community, the Montenegrin language has not achieved an official status in any of Kosovo's municipalities, nor is education offered through Kosovo's public education system in the Montenegrin language. As a consequence, the Montenegrin community faces many of the same challenges in communicating with public institutions as the Serb community.

4. POLITICAL REPRESENTATION

The Montenegrin community does not have any assigned seats in the Assembly of Kosovo, but is entitled to nominate two (2) members of the CCC.[2] The lack of guaranteed seats is a consequence of the lack of recognition for the community when the Constitution of Kosovowas adopted in 2008. The amendment to the *Law on the on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Communities and Their Members in the Republic of Kosovo* in 2011 provided the community with representation in the CCC, but did not change the situation in the Assembly. The amendment of this law was achieved through strong advocacy by the community in Kosovo, supported by the Montenegrin State.

The Montenegrin community has been represented by community-specific political parties since 2009. The main political parties representing the interests of the Montenegrin community are the 'CrnogorskaDemokratskaStranka' (CDS), the 'NarodnaCrnogorskaPartijaKosova' (NCPK), and the 'CrnogorskaLiberalnaStranka' (CLS).

The Montenegrin community is represented in the Municipal Community Committees in a number of municipalities and the CDS gained one seat in the Municipal Assembly of FushëKosovë/Kosovo Polje through the 2009 elections, however, in 2013 no Montengrins were elected in any Municipal Assemblies.

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

[2]Council Statute, Article 6(e).

	2007 (Gen.)	2007 (Mun.)	2009 (Mun.)	2010 (Gen.)	2013 (Mun.)
CDS	/	/	470	771	/
NCPK	/	/	92	/	166
CLS	/	/	/	/	439

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

	2007 (Mun.)	2009 (Mun.)	2013 (Mun.)
Deçan/Dečane	/	15	/
Gjakovë / Đakovica	/	6	/
Gračanica/Graçanicë	/	28	171
FushëKosovë / Kosovo Polje	/	377	150
Lipjan / Lipljan	/	55	92
Obiliq / Obilić	/	/	83
Pejë / Peć	/	22	109
Prishtinë / Priština	/	59	/

5. RETURNS

According to the 1991 Yugoslav census there were 20,365 Montengrins residing in Kosovo. The vast majority of Montenegrins fled Kosovo during and following the 1999 conflict, particularly to Montenegro and other regional countries, and most community members have not returned since. According to the UNHCR, 12 members of the Montenegrin community voluntary returned to Kosovo between 2000 and 2013, and no data is available on forced returns.

Voluntary returns of the Montenegrin community, Jan. 2000 – June 2013 (UNHCR, June 2013)

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Voluntary	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	9	1	0

6. SECURITY AND FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT

The Montenegrin community shares many of the security concerns with the Serb community. Generally, community members feel safe to travel through Kosovo with private vehicles, but do not use Kosovo public transport. They feel safe in their areas of residence, but do not always feel safe to move freely in Albanian-majority areas.

7. ECONOMY

There is limited information available on the economic situation of the Montenegrin community; economic and employment data is usually not disagregated to cover the Montenegrin community. However, as a whole, the Montenegrin community frequently encounters similar problems to the Serb community, which are listed as follows:

- Lack of employment opportunities;
- Limited knowledge of Albanian language;
- Limited freedom of movement.

8. EDUCATION

There is no education available in Kosovo in the Montenegrin language. The Montenegrin community predominantly attends the education system financed and managed by the Serbian Ministry of Education. As a consequence, they face many of the same issues as the Serb community in relation to education, including:

- A lack of qualified teachers;
- An absence of high-quality school infrastructure;
- A lack of equipment (school books, computers, etc).

9. ACCESS TO PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS

The Montenegrin community continues to make use of many of the public services provided by the Serbian state in Kosovo, particularly for health care. No significant barriers exist in accessing these services.

Since the Montenegrin community predominantly uses the Serbian language in communication with Kosovo public institutions, they face many of the same difficulties in accessing Kosovo public services as the Serb community, particularly linguistic barriers, due to a lack of compliance of public institutions with the *Law on the Use of Languages*. Due to the fact that the Montengrin community mostly resides in Albanian-majority municipalities, they are in some ways more affected by these linguistic barriers.

