Turkish 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
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COMMUNITY PROFILES: TURKISH COMMUNITY

1. POPULATION SIZE AND LOCATION

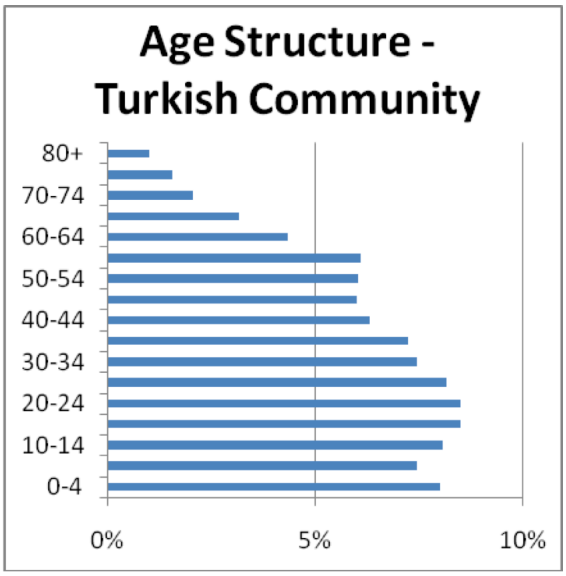
Based on the 2011 Kosovo census results, supplemented with OSCE data for northern Kosovo, ECMI Kosovo estimates that there are around 18,948 Turks living in Kosovo, making up about 1.01% of the total population. There is one municipality, Mamuşa/Mamushë/Mamuša, wherethe Turkish community is the numerical majority. However, the largest numbers of Turks reside in the Prizren municipality. The Prishtinë/Priština municipality also has a considerable Turkish population. Smaller Turkish communities can be found throughout the rest of Kosovo.

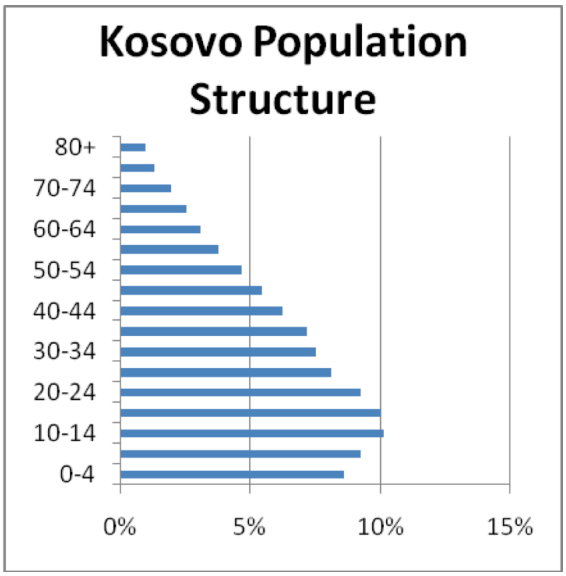
Turkish community in Kosovo according to the 2011 Census*		
Municipality	**Percentage**	**Number of community members**
Prizren	5.06%	9,091
Mamuşa/Mamushë/Mamuša	92.35%	5,128
Prishtinë/Priština	1.08%	2,156
Gjilan/Gnjilane	1.03%	978
Mitrovicë/Mitovica South	0.72%	518
Vushtrri/Vučitrn	0.38%	278
Mitrovicë/Mitovica North	0.71%	210
Dragash/Dragaš	0.6%	202
Lipjan/Lipljan	0.22%	128
FushëKosovë/Kosovo Polje	0.17%	62
Pejë/Peć	0.06%	59
Ferizaj/Uroševac	0.05%	55
Gjakovë/Đakovica	0.02%	16
Gračanica/Graçanicë	0.06%	15
Istog/Istok	0.02%	10
Novo Brdo/Novobërdë	0.07%	7
Gllogovc/Glogovac	0.01%	5
Kamenicë/Kamenica	0.01%	5
Podujevë/Podujevo	0.01%	5

Suharekë/Suva Reka	0.01%	4
Viti/Vitina	0.01%	4
Klinë/Klina	0.01%	3
Kaçanik/Kačanik	0.01%	2
Obiliq/Obilić	0.01%	2
Rahovec/Orahovac	<0.01%	2
Skenderaj/Srbica	<0.01%	1
Shtime/Štimlje	<0.01%	1
Kllokot/Klokot	0.02%	1
Total	**1.01%**	**18,948**

** 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 Turkish communities. For all southern municipalities, the official 2011 Kosovo census was used as a source.*

The Turkish population is slightly older than the general population, with an average age of 32.6 years old, while the Kosovo mean age is 29.5.





2. CULTURE AND RELIGION

There has been a significant Turkish community in Kosovo ever since Ottoman rule was established in Kosovo in the fourteenth century. Generally, like the Albanian community, they practice Sunni Islam, the largest branch of Islam. So-called *tarikats,* Sufi brotherhoods – a religious branch originally deriving from Sunni Islam – are also active in Kosovo and foster strong relations with their counterparts in Turkey.

For the most part, this community has been stable, integrated within Kosovar society, and active in all aspects of cultural, social and political life. Ottoman contributions to cultural and religious diversity in Kosovo are significant, and are embraced by both the Turkish and other

communities in Kosovo. There remain a considerable number of Ottoman heritage sites in Kosovo, particularly mosques and bath houses.

The protection and conservation of these sites remains challenge. They are exposed to vandalism, damage and destruction due to construction in their vicinity. There is a lack of co-operation among the interested municipal authorities and the responsible governmental bodies to protect the sites, while there is also a lack of public awareness on the importance of their preservation.

Turkey's National Sovereignty Day, 23 April, is recognised in Kosovo as the Day of the Turks and as an official Memorial Day.

3. LANGUAGE

Turks in Kosovo speak a local dialect of the Turkish language and use Standard Turkish for formal communication, but usually also speak Albanian and/or Serbian as a second language. During the Ottoman rule, the Turkish language was spoken by much of Kosovo's elite and today some members of non-Turkish communities (e.g. Albanian, Roma and Bosniak communities) still speak the Turkish language, particularly in the Prizren region.

In the 1974 Yugoslav Constitution, which granted Kosovo an autonomous status, Turkish was named one of the official languages in the province. However, in the first year of the UNMIK administration this official status was not recognised. Today, Turkish is recognised as an official language in the municipalities of Prizren and Mamuşa/Mamushë/Mamuša and has the status of a language in official use in the municipalities of Gjilan/Gnjilane, Prishtinë/Priština, Vushtrri/Vučitrn and Mitrovicë/Mitrovica. However, compliance by municipal authorities with the corresponding legal obligations is often limited.

4. POLITICAL REPRESENTATION

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

The Turkish community is well organised politically, with the Turkish-majority municipality Mamuşa/Mamushë/Mamuša regularly seeing some of the highest turn-out rates in Kosovo (over 60%). Moreover, Turkish political parties usually gain seats in the Municipal Assemblies in municipalities with significant Turkish communities (Prizren; Mamuşa/Mamushë/Mamuša; Prishtinë/Priština; Gjilan/Gnjilane;Mitrovicë/Mitovica South; and, Vushtrri/Vučitrn).

The main political subjects representing the Turkish population in Kosovo are the 'KosovaDemokratikTürkPartisi' (KDTP), the 'TürkAdaletPartisi' (KTAB) and the 'Kosova Turk

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

Birligi' (KTB). The KTB was established during the 2010 elections and has not been able to accumulate as much support as KDTP, as is shown in the chart below.

KDTP remains well supported in the Prizren and Mamuşa/Mamushë/Mamuša localities. Since its establishment in 2005 up to the 2013 municipal elections, the municipal administration of Mamuşa/Mamushë/Mamušawas led by the KDTP. In Prizren, the KDTP is regularly represented in the Municipal Assembly and a part of the governing coalition.

However, in the 2013 municipal elections this status quo was challenged by a newly established KTAB, which received a considerable number of votes in a number of municipalities, with their candidate winning the Mayoral elections in Mamuşa/Mamushë/Mamuša and the party gaining the majority in the Municipal Assembly.

At the central level, until the present, the KDTP has dominated Turkish community politics, with the KTB failing to gain any seats in the Kosovo assembly through the 2010 elections and the KTAB not yet having participated in any general elections.

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

	2007 (Gen.)	2007 (Mun.)	2009 (Mun.)	2010 (Gen.)	2013 (Mun.)
KDTP	4,999	5,184	7,497	8,548	7,004
KTB	/	/	/	1,364	281
KTAP	/	/	/		3,764

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

	2007 (Mun.)	2009 (Mun.)	2013 (Mun.)
Gjilan / Gnjilane	404	565	1,432
Lipjan / Lipljan	114	202	316
Mamuşa/Mamushë/Mamuša	/	1,134	2,070
Mitrovicë/Mitovica South	154	373	398
Prishtinë / Priština	624	772	1,430
Prizren	3,756	4,022	4,941
Vushtrri / Vučitrn	132	429	599

5. Returns

Unlike other minority communities, there are few reports of Turks migrating due to the 1999 conflict. However, there has been some emigration following the conflict for economic reasons. Due to the low number of displaced Turks, the issue of returns is generally not a concern for the Turkish community.

From January 2000 until June 2013, 3 Turks returned voluntarily and 25 were forcibly returned between January 2011 and June 2013.[3] There are no Turks displaced within Kosovo.

Voluntary and forced returns of the Turkish 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	1	1	0	1
Forced	No data available											9	10	6

6. SECURITY AND FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT

No major security concerns have been reported by the Turkish community. In general, the community feels safe to travel with private vehicles and public transport throughout Kosovo. Members of the Turkish community feel safe in their neighbourhoods of residence and are satisfied with the performance of Kosovo security institutions.

Mitrovica/Mitrovicë North is an exception to this positive picture; the tense security situation in this municipality adversely affects the small Turkish community living there.

7. ECONOMY

According to UNDP (2012), the Turkish unemployment rate is 37.98%, which is lower than the general unemployment rate of 45% in Kosovo, but remains substantial.[4] The Turkish community makes up 1.2% of all civil servants in Kosovo, which means that the Turkish community is proportionally represented within the Kosovo civil service. However, Turks are more likely to be represented at professional and administrative positions than at the managerial level.[5] Within publically owned enterprises, some of the biggest employers in Kosovo, the Turkish community makes up only 0.5% of empoyees and is underrepresented when compared to their share of the overall population.[6]

Besides linguistic barriers, the Turkish community faces many of the same problems in relation to employment and economic development as the majority community.

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

[4]UNDP, 'Kosovo Human Development Report 2012: Private sector and employment'.
[5]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.
[6]*ibid*

8. EDUCATION

The Turkish community makes use of the Kosovo education system. Municipalities with a larger Turkish community offer public education in the Turkish language at the pre-school, elementary and high-school levels. Some private schools also offer Turkish language education. Some tertiary public education in the Turkish language is also available in Kosovo, but many Turkish students attend universities in Turkey.

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 PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS

In general, the Turkish community faces no substantial obstacles in accessing public institutions. However, municipalities where the Turkish language has an official status regularly fail to comply with their obligations under the *Law on the Use of Languages*, creating difficulties in communication with municipal institutions, although the good command of the Albanian language of many Turks ameliorates the situation.

