EUROPEAN CENTRE FOR MINORITY ISSUES KOSOVO

Socioeconomic Conditions in Northern Kosovo
Factsheet on Mitrovica/Mitrovicë North

This municipality factsheet seeks to provide a specific overview of the findings reported in the recent survey on the "*Socioeconomic Conditions in Northern Kosovo*". The full comprehensive narrative of the report, issued by ECMI Kosovo in collaboration with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland and the British Embassy in Prishtinë/Priština, is available in pdf on ECMI Kosovo official webpage, under our "Publication" section: https://ecmikosova.org/publications/.
The objective of this report, based on the perceptions and subjective opinions of the respondents, is to spotlight issues encountered by northern Kosovo residents in their daily lives, to voice their needs, concerns and aspirations. The report shows a quantitative and qualitative analysis of answers from a questionnaire administered to a sample of 721 respondents living in the four municipalities of Mitrovica/Mitrovicë North, Leposavić/Leposaviq, Zubin Potok and Zvečan/Zveqan. When analysing and comparing responses between municipalities, it is very important to remember that the questionnaire addresses perceptions and not necessarily the objective reality of the current situation.
For the sake of clarity, all the data and figures published in the following factsheet refer to the abovementioned report – where not otherwise specified.

Area and Population

In the northern part of Mitrovicë/Mitrovica, there are approximately 29,460 inhabitants[1], of which (in estimated figures):

- 22,530 Kosovo Serbs, of which 5,000 to 7,000 are persons displaced from elsewhere in Kosovo;
- 4,900 Kosovo Albanians;
- 1,000 Kosovo Bosniaks;
- 580 Kosovo Gorani;
- 210 Kosovo Turks;
- 200 Kosovo Roma;
- 40 Kosovo Ashkali.

Education

- 11 primary schools with 2,754 pupils;
- 4 secondary schools with 1,740 students;
- 587 employees in primary and secondary schools;
- 1 kindergarten with 600 pupils and 58 employees;
- 1 public university offering lectures in Serbian language;
- Other specialized schools.[2]

The majority of the students are Kosovo Serb with a small number of Kosovo Bosniaks; Kosovo Gorani and Roma also attend.

[1] OSCE Municipal Profiles, November 2011. Available at: http://www.osce.org/kosovo/38678
[2] Ibid.

I.General Perceptions

Perceptions about the delivery of formal education are generally neutral in Mitrovica/Mitrovicë North, where 32% of respondents are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.
Moreover, in Mitrovica/Mitrovicë North the 37% of respondents was dissatisfied with the level of teaching. Respondents were also critical about school equipment, with 35.09% somewhat dissatisfied or dissatisfied. Although Mitrovica/Mitrovicë North receives negative reviews, it remains an important centre for education in northern Kosovo with a public university, large numbers of primary and secondary schools, and even private educational institutions; the negative perceptions in Mitrovica/Mitrovicë North could be considered as affected and could also be attributed to better-informed and more critical respondents.

II.Transition from Education to Employment

The transition from education to employment remains very difficult. In Mitrovica/Mitrovicë North 48% of respondents see no opportunity, or few (26%) for work within their field of study. Conversely, many respondents in this municipality declared that there were many employment opportunities after graduation. The fact that 29% see many opportunities for employment in Mitrovica/Mitrovicë North, while 301% still see none, can be explained by the local economy. Although people with a university degree have job prospects, it is often outside their field, in non-governmental and other institutions, or even shops. The labour market in Mitrovica/Mitrovicë North is only able to provide jobs to certain types of skilled workers. Still, perceptions are better in this area because of its urban environment, which draws many young people from rural towns. Nevertheless, social science and humanities students are likely to be one group of university graduates who find difficulties finding employment within their field.

III.Informal Education

Informal education, as a way to bridge the gap between education and employment, it's considered a plausible way to acquire the skills necessary for the labour market according to 75% in Mitrovica/Mitrovicë North. Language courses and IT skills - mostly provided by local NGOs (according to the 53% of the respondents)- are here the most popular forms of informal education.

IV.Inclusive Education

Discriminatory practices are generally perceived to exist to varying degrees; the majority of respondents in Mitrovica/Mitrovicë North reported discrimination towards people with disabilities, in relation to other students: 38% saying "often" and 29% "very often".
Even respondents who considered the quality of teaching as relatively good (48%), perceived the equipment as far less satisfactory for people with disabilities: 32% of respondents said it to be poor, and another 32% defines it "very poor". The presence of discriminatory practices, and the poor quality of equipment might be the reason for the strong dissatisfaction (55%) of respondents in this municipality towards the overall quality of education for people with disabilities.

Healthcare

The healthcare system in the northern part of Mitrovica/Mitrovicë consists of:

- 1 regional hospital;
- 1 health house operating under the Serbian Ministry of Health; the hospital serves as the main health institution for Kosovo Serbs from across Kosovo;
- 1 policlinic that provides health care services for students within the university complex.[3]

I. General Perceptions

Mitrovica/Mitrovicë North has ranked generally positive reviews when it comes to the quality of healthcare: around 60% of respondents said to be somewhat or totally satisfied.

[3] OSCE Municipal Profiles, November 2011. Available at: http://www.osce.org/kosovo/38678

However, perceptions were significantly less positive in terms of satisfaction with medical equipment. No more than 5% of respondents gave the highest rating; 35% respondents said it is average, 23% found it good, while the same number of interviewees defined it as poor. According to the majority of respondents, the quality of medical personnel is average (40%) or good (24%), as it is the quality of service provided by the hospital and other structures. Finally, for the majority of people (around 83%) it's easy or very easy to access to healthcare services.

II.Reproductive Healthcare

In Mitrovica/Mitrovicë North respondents are somewhat dissatisfied of the quality of reproductive healthcare services: only 26% of the respondents define it as "average", while 58% perceive it as "poor" or "very poor". Such results, however, could reflect a low level of awareness about reproductive healthcare among respondents.

III.Substance abuse

In this municipality, 41% of respondents above 25 years old, and 32% below that age admitted to substance abuse[4]. Mitrovica/Mitrovicë North presents an impressively high rate of nicotine addiction (91%)[5], among those respondents who declared to be dependent on substances.

Social Welfare

I.General Findings

A very small percentage of respondents reported being among the beneficiaries of social welfare programmes: only 10% in Mitrovica/Mitrovicë North.
The most popular answer was the neutral "neither satisfied nor satisfied" (with 33%) when it comes to the quality of such programmes in the municipality, while 43% reported to be somewhat or totally dissatisfied.
Beneficiaries of cash value schemes in this municipality are strongly dissatisfied (86%).
The majority of respondents (61%) from this municipality believe that CSOs do not have adequate financial resources to implement social welfare programmes.

II.Public Programmes and Services

In Mitrovica/Mitrovicë North 35% of respondents are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied by the general quality of the services provided, while 30% are somehow satisfied. Interviewees are mostly dissatisfied with the delivery of services as well as with the number of services provided.
Programmes and services targeting older people are far from satisfactory; the 1% satisfied in Mitrovica/Mitrovicë North comes exclusively from those aged between 15 and 24; indeed, 53% of respondents are somewhat or completely dissatisfied. Proportions in this municipality are more spread out, but it is generally clear that much more can be desired from programmes for the older population. In fact, 82% of 50-70 year olds respondents answered negatively when asked whether they thought their income is able to meet their basic requirements. Social development services for people with disabilities also seem far from satisfactory: 32% of respondents declared to be somewhat dissatisfied, while 25% is neither satisfied nor dissatisfied by such services. Moreover, 66% of people think that people with disabilities are able to meet their needs thanks to social service.
Perceptions about cultural events are also generally negative; satisfaction is very low in Mitrovica/Mitrovicë North, where the 50% are dissatisfied, and 21% somewhat dissatisfied. Amongst them, young people (aged 15 to 24) were the main contributor to these negative results.

III.Safety

The Kosovo police station in the north has 96 police officers:

- 71 Kosovo Serbs;
- 18 Kosovo Albanians;

[4] The term "substance abuse" is used synonymously with harmful or hazardous use; for the purposes of this survey, addiction was considered use of a substance more than once a week.
[5] For comparison, smoking rates among adults are estimated to less than 20% in OECD countries.

- 4 Kosovo Bosniaks;
- 2 Kosovo Turks;
- 1 Kosovo Croat;
- International military presence: multinational KFOR troops are in charge of the area.[6]

When asked to report their perceived degree of safety, the least amount of respondents (8%) in Mitrovica/Mitrovicë North declared that they felt completely unsafe. The majority of them declared to be somehow or completely safe (57%).
The municipality's respondents didn't give overall positive responses, mainly because of the condition of divided city that Mitrovica/Mitrovicë North still has to face.
Perceptions regarding local authorities' and civil societies' capacities to respond to violence have shown dissatisfaction: only 9% in Mitrovica/Mitrovicë North are actually satisfied with the quality of response to violence, and 37% are totally dissatisfied.

Employment and Local Economy

The economy in the northern part of the town partly relies on assistance from the Serbian government: the health and education sectors are the main employers, followed by the local administration, and publicly owned enterprises. The Serbian Ministry for Kosovo and Metohija also makes efforts to support small and medium size enterprises through incentive grants.[7]

I.Labour Market

Mitrovica/Mitrovicë has a very high rate of temporary[8] workers (63%), in comparison to permanent ones (27%); furthermore, 39% of respondents in Mitrovica/Mitrovicë North reported that their employment income is insufficient or almost sufficient (36%). Even more strikingly, the 62.24% of respondents in the municipality did not report holding a job in a field related to their education; this answer was given by 70% of young people between 15 and 24 years of age. Moreover, around 49% of respondents reported their job being below or much below the level of their education.

II.Economic Development

Employment:
In Mitrovica/Mitrovicë North more people have reported to be employed in the private sector and SMEs than in the public, or 67% versus 32%; only 1% of respondents are employed in the agricultural sector. According to more than 85% of the respondents, SMEs and the private sector are most likely to generate employment opportunities, while only 61% believes it with regards to the agricultural sector.
Income:
From the three sectors, income of agriculture is deemed least satisfactory (54% perceives it as almost sufficient or insufficient), followed by SMEs – where 72% perceived income as "almost sufficient". On the contrary, the public and private sector receive positive rates - respectively, 72% and 61% - regarding the likelihood of generating sufficient or very sufficient income. Although some regard income generation in this sector as strong, this is mostly because of positive perceptions in this municipality, where 27% of respondents think income from agriculture is very sufficient.
Infrastructure:
Perceptions about infrastructure are particularly negative in Mitrovica/Mitrovicë North northern Kosovo, particularly with regards to the agricultural sector, with 50% finding it outright dissatisfactory and only 1% as satisfactory. On the other hand, both the public and private sector are deemed somewhat or completely satisfying by, respectively, 53% and 49% of respondents; these sectors have also ranked a high number of neutral ("neither satisfied nor dissatisfied") responses. Infrastructure in the SMEs sector receives an equal percentage of positive (40%) and neutral (39%) answers.

[6] OSCE Municipal Profiles, November 2011. Available at: http://www.osce.org/kosovo/38678
[7] Ibid.
[8] In the context of the survey, temporary work was considered as either occasional, short-time or part-time employment.