



Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe  
MISSION IN KOSOVO  
Democratisation

**Municipal Profile:**

**Štrpce/Shtërpce**

*29 March 2000*



Map of Kosovo, produced by the HCIC GIS Unit March 2000.  
Boundaries or place names do not imply official recognition by UNMIK or the OSCE.

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### **Appendix: Map of the Municipality**

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but should not be quoted without stating the source.*

## 1. Introduction

The municipality of Strpce covers an area of 247 square kilometres. It is surrounded by Prizren and Suva Reka in the north, Urosevac/Ferizaj and Kacanik in the east, and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) in the south. It has sixteen villages, four of which are inhabited by Kosovo Albanians and twelve of which are inhabited by Kosovo Serbs. The current population is estimated at about 11,000 people.

Before the war, eight villages were mainly Kosovo Serb, four were mainly Kosovo Albanian, while another four were ethnically mixed. The pre-war population of the municipality was about 12,000 people (1991 census), with a Kosovo Serb/Kosovo Albanian population ratio of about two to one. After the war, and mainly as a result of it, there has been about a 20% decline in the Kosovo Albanian population in the municipality. The Kosovo Serb population, on the other hand, has increased by about the same percentage due to influx of Kosovo Serbs from other municipalities for reasons of lack of security in Kosovo Albanian dominated areas.

Strpce is surrounded by mainly Kosovo Albanian populated municipalities. For security reasons, the Kosovo Serb population of this municipality is not able to leave the municipality without a KFOR escort, and the municipality is thus rather isolated. Kosovo Serbs are forced to purchase their articles of daily use from a convoy arriving periodically from Serbia.

There are approximately 1000 internally displaced persons (IDPs) in the municipality, mainly from Prizren and Urosevac/Ferizaj. The IDPs are accommodated in Collective Centres and in private houses.

**Table 1.1: Ethnic Composition, Including IDPs**

Population	K-Albanians		K-Serbs		Others		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
1991	4 125	33%	8 303	66%	158	1%	12 586	100%
September 1999	1 830	16%	9 182	83%	175	1%	11 187	100%

Source: 1991 figures taken from the census of that year, 1999 figures is a UN Civil Administration assessment.

## 2. Civil Administration

The UN-appointed administrator is currently running the civil administration of the Municipality. No Municipal Council or Administrative Board has yet been formed.

The Municipal Council was pretty close to being formed, but on the date of the signing ceremony, the Kosovo Albanian representatives said that they needed to again consult their constituency. Also, although three Kosovo Serbs signed, they were later by central authorities of Milosevic's Socialist Party of Serbia (SPS) forced to take back their appointment letters.

The formation of the Administrative Board has been hampered by Kosovo Albanian demands for additional representation. They demand as much as 50%, which seems unrealistic given their percentage of both the pre-war and the post-war municipal population.

Although there is currently no formal representation of the local population in the municipal administration, the UN Administrator informally consults with members of the pre-war (mainly ethnic Serbian) Municipal Administration and their Kosovo Albanian counterparts.

The prospects for an imminent formation of the Municipal Council and Administrative Board are bleak, primarily because of security concerns of both communities, the isolation of the Kosovo Serbs in the area, and directions from Belgrade and Pristina.

### 3. Political Parties

There are five political parties on the Kosovo Serb side and two political parties on the Kosovo Albanian side. The Kosovo Serb parties are largely dormant for reasons of uncertainty, isolation, lack of access, and because their party headquarters are located in Serbia proper.

The Socialist Party of Serbia (SPS) and the Serb Radical Party (SRS) are the two main political parties of the municipality. The SPS is at the local level led by the President and the Secretary of the former municipal government. The SPS, SRS, and the Yugoslav Left Party (JUL) were the former ruling parties in Kosovo, and are generally pro-Milosevic. Their representatives have in Kosovo united in the Serb National Assembly. The parties present in the municipality that stand in opposition to Mr. Milosevic are the Democratic Party of Serbia (DSS) and the Serb Renewal Movement (SPO), both of which are part of the so-called Serb National Council, a coalition of parties and individuals in opposition to Milosevic.

On the Kosovo Albanian side, contrary to the situation in many other municipalities there is an atmosphere of relative co-operation between the PPDK and LDK, given the many common interests in reconstruction of houses, economic development, and in presenting a united front against the Kosovo Serb representatives. The LDK further has a forum specifically for women, the LDK Women's Forum, which in Strpce is headed by Ms. Xhevahrie Dervishi-Rexperi.

**Table 3.1: Kosovo Serb Political Parties**

<b>Party</b>	<b>Local Party Leader</b>	<b>Serbia-wide Leader</b>
SPS (Socialist Party of Serbia)	Mr. Jovica Buduric	Mr. Slobodan Milosevic
SRS (Serb Radical Party)	Mr. Zarko Redzic	Mr. Vojislav Seselj
JUL (Yugoslav Left Party)	Mr. Dragisa Kuzmanovic	Ms. Mirjana Markovic (the wife of Mr. Milosevic)
DSS (Democratic Party of Serbia)	Mr. Sokol Djordjevic	Mr. Vojislav Kostunica
SPO (Serb Renewal Movement)	Mr. Predrag Grbic	Mr. Vuk Draskovic

**Table 3.2: Kosovo Albanian Political Parties**

<b>Party</b>	<b>Local Party Leader</b>	<b>Kosovo-wide Leader</b>
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PPDK (Party of Democratic Progress in Kosovo)	Mr. Hazin Ahmeti	Mr. Hashim Thaci
LDK (Democratic League of Kosovo)	Mr. Hamdi Haliti	Mr. Ibrahim Rugova

#### 4. Local and International NGOs

There are three humanitarian and public welfare organisations in the Kosovo Serb part of Strpce. These organisations are similar to NGO's in their focus, but they are headed by former political office bearers who are still active in politics. The three organisations include the Yugoslav Red Cross, the public welfare wing of the Serb National Assembly, and the National Church Board. The formation in Strpce of the Serb National Assembly, an organisation supportive of current Belgrade authorities, is probably an answer to the National Church Board, which is generally anti-Milosevic. The National Church Board has, however, temporarily frozen its activities in the municipality. The Yugoslav Red Cross is very active in the community and provides important outreach services. In the Kosovo Albanian part of the municipality (Brod), the LDK-dominated Mother Theresa Society (MTS) is the only major local provider of humanitarian services.

There are a number of international NGOs operating in Strpce municipality, although they are mostly based in Urosevac and in Prizren. They include: the International Committee for the Red Cross (Urosevac), Die Johanniter (Prizren), Catholic Relief Services (Prizren), Malteser (Urosevac), Nuova Frontiera (Prizren), Polish Caritas, German Red Cross, Cap Anamur (Brod), Medicens Sans Frontieres, and the Committee for Protection of Human Rights (Strpce).

**Table 4.1: Main local NGOs based in the municipality**

Name	Main focus	Local Leader	Kosovo-wide Leader
Yugoslav Red Cross	Humanitarian	Milan Djurinac	Dr. Rade Dubajic
Mother Theresa Society	Humanitarian	Idriz Hyseni	Don Lush Gjergji

#### 5. Other Civilian International Presence

The UN Civil Administration arrived in Strpce in September 1999. It is currently represented by the UN Administrator, the Deputy Administrator, and two Civil Affairs Officers. In addition, the OSCE Field Office, which currently employs five international and 20 local staff, became operational in September 1999.

The UNHCR is not based in the municipality but operates from Urosevac/Ferizaj. Other governmental agencies operating in Strpce but not based there include the International Organisation for Migration and the US Agency for International Development both based in Urosevac. Thus, the only governmental organisations based in Strpce are UN Civil Administration and the OSCE.

**Table 5.1: The Four Pillars**

Name	Number of staff (nat.+int.)	Contact Person	Title	Contact Number
UN Civil Administration	4 international and 1 national	Hafeez ur Rehman	UN Administrator	7912 (UNMIK satphone)

OSCE	5 international, 20 national	William Egar	HFO	00873 762 138 676
UNHCR	Not based in Strpce	Brita Helleland	Field Officer	N/A

## 6. Religion, Places of Worship, and Cultural Institutions

Since the majority of the population in Strpce is Kosovo Serb, the main religion in the municipality is Christian Orthodox. In Kosovo Albanian areas, the population is Muslim. There are sixteen Orthodox churches in this municipality. The main one is in Strpce town. All of these churches were built in 13<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup> century, except the one currently being built in Brezovica. Each of these churches is celebrated on a specific day of the year, which also bears the name of a saint to whom the church is dedicated. In charge of all these Churches is the Serb Orthodox priest, who is based in Strpce town. All Serb Orthodox churches are more or less functioning, except for the one in the village of Brod in the Kosovo Albanian part of the municipality, which is damaged.

There are three mosques in the municipality, two of which are functioning. The third one is located in the Kosovo Serb part of the municipality in the town of Bitinja, where no Kosovo Albanians are currently living.

**Table 6.1: Major Mosques, Churches, etc.**

Location(s)	Type of Building
Strpce(2), Brod, Vica, Drajkovce, Gotovusa(2), Donja Bitinja (2), Gornja Bitinja, Berevce, Vrbestica, Jazinec, Sevce (2), Brezovica	Orthodox Churches
Firaja, Bitinja, Kostanjevo	Mosques

Source: Orthodox priest and Albanian community leaders

There is a 'House of Culture' in Strpce town, but it mainly serves as a local discotheque on Saturday nights. There are no other cultural institutions in the municipality and hardly any major cultural events take place there.

## 7. Media

Most newspapers are brought from Serbia with the twice-weekly convoy, which arrives on Tuesdays and Fridays. The publications generally include Politika, Novosti, Blic, and Glas. US KFOR on 30 November 1999 set up an information office in Strpce town with foreign and KFOR/UNMIK publications. No newspaper correspondents are based in the municipality.

To provide the local community with a greater variety of news sources, the OSCE Field Office has since mid-March been providing Serb opposition newspapers, including Danas, for the entire municipality on an almost daily basis. The reaction has been very positive. About 600 newspapers are delivered daily, and the project seems to have raised the public image of the OSCE in the municipality considerably.

The TV transmitter in Strpce is not operational at the moment. However, approximately 5% of the municipality's inhabitants own a satellite dish. Recently, a radio station was set up, under license from the OSCE.

**Table 7.1: List of Major Newspaper, TV/Radio Stations, etc.**

Name of media	Type of Media	Editor	Ethnic Affiliation
Radio "Sirinicka Zupa"	Radio	Slavisa Ljubisavljevic	Kosovo Serb

## 8. Judicial System

Presently, there is no judicial system functioning in the municipality. Although it was hoped to interview three Serb lawyers for the posts of judge and prosecutor, they ultimately rejected US-KFOR transport. Kosovo Serbs have also rejected to serve in the court in Urosevac, and dispensation of justice from there would thus be difficult. Due to these problems, a separate Municipal Court and a Court for Minor Offences in Strpce are under serious consideration.

Source: UN Civil Administration

## 9. Police, Civil Protection, and Military Presence

A total of 11 Police Officers represent UN Civil Police. They are assisted by 11 Serb Kosovo Police Service (KPS) officers. There is no Kosovo Protection Corps (TMK) presence in the municipality.

The Polish KFOR contingent is generally responsible for law and order, although there is also US Military Police presence. Ukrainian and Lithuanian KFOR are also based in the municipality.

**Table 9.1: Police and Military Presence**

Name	Local Commander	Number of Police Officers, Soldiers, etc.	Ethnic Composition, Nationality
KPS	N/A	11	Kosovo Serb
UN Civil Police	Jerzy Szczytynski	11	International
KFOR	N/A (confidential information)		Polish/Ukrainian/ Lithuanian

Source: UNMIK Police

## 10. Economics

The economy in Strpce is virtually at a stand still. The Serbian population survives on the food and other requirements that are brought in with the weekly convoy from Serbia proper and on the humanitarian donations provided by the above-mentioned humanitarian organisation that are active in the municipality.

There are 11 state enterprises, which used to have 860 employees, all of which are now unemployed. In addition, there are approximately 1000 government employees, 1800 farmers and 100 shops.

The municipality is famous for its ski resort in Brezovica. The facilities exist to re-open the tourist industry, but a major problem is a lack of power to operate the ski-lifts. An additional problem is the security situation, which would prevent Kosovo Albanians from using the resort, but the hope is to open the ski resort at least for the use of the many international staff employed in Kosovo, many of which are already visiting the resort simply for its scenic beauty.

#### 10.1 Major Employers in the Region

Employer	Service/Products	Production on going?	Number of Workforce
Inex Ski Centre- Brezovica	Hotels; Restaurants	Yes	239
Building Firm " Gradjevinar"	Building Material	No	152
" Sar-Drvoexport"	Furniture	No	62
Metal factory- Lola	Metal products	No	105

Source: UN Civil Administration

## 11. Infrastructure

The roads in the municipality are not in a good shape, and it would require a special effort by the international community to repair these roads, since funds are not available locally. There are hardly any roads in the Kosovo Albanian part of the municipality due to serious neglect in the past.

There are no telephone facilities in the municipality. About 70 percent of the houses in the Kosovo Albanian part of the municipality are destroyed. Cap Anamur, an international NGO, has repaired 113 houses so far.

The water supply in the Kosovo Serb part of the municipality is good. The water is generally considered potable, particularly after the repair of the chlorination plant with the help of US KFOR, which took place in October 1999. The Kosovo Albanian part of the municipality, however, has no water supply system. People are forced to draw water from wells and the water is not potable.

Limited garbage pick-up is available for four out of the 16 villages. Sanitary conditions are generally satisfactory, although only 50% of the population is connected to sewerage lines. Most of the sewerage runs into a 7000 litre septic tank made of rocks.

Source: UN Civil Administration, KFOR, and the UNMIK-run 'New Public Utilities Company'

## 12. Social Services, Health, and Education

UNMIK started an Emergency Social Welfare Assistance Program last December to assist individuals falling in three categories: pensioners over 70; single parent households; and persons with disabilities.

Strpce has one Health House, two ambulances (Drajkovce and Jazince) and five health clinics (Vrbestica, Sevce, Gotovusa, Brod, Brezovica). Health facilities are quite good in Strpce Health House, although only Kosovo Serbs go there. Except for surgery, the UN Civil Administration health department and the WHO provide for several facilities there. A number of other international organisations are also taking care of this facility. Kosovo Serbs in need of hospital care generally travel to Vranje in Serbia proper.

On the Kosovo Albanian side there are, however, no health facilities present. Instead, doctors from Urosevac pay visits to Albanian villages. For more specialised medical care, Kosovo Albanians have to go to Urosevac/Ferizaj.

There are 14 primary schools in the municipality, of which five are Kosovo Albanian and nine are Kosovo Serb. KFOR has recently been renovating one of the Kosovo Albanian schools. There are three secondary education facilities, one Kosovo Serb and two Kosovo Albanian, in which 187 Kosovo Serb teachers and 77 Kosovo Albanian teachers provide education. The schools are attended by a total of 1994 students, of which 1597 are Kosovo Serb and 397 are Kosovo Albanian.

Education facilities are quite good in the Kosovo Serb part of the municipality. On the other hand, the situation in the Kosovo Albanian part of the municipality is not that good. Had it not been for a generous US KFOR grant for the school in Firaja, the school there would still have been in very bad condition. Both in the Kosovo Serb and the Kosovo Albanian part of the municipality, the quality of teachers is not that good, and most teachers generally do not hold a university degree.

Source: UN Municipal Administration, Head Doctor of the Health House, Head of Education Department (former municipal structure).

# STRPCE \ SHTERPCE

