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Refugee Documentation Centre (Ireland)
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Information on the Treatment of Ashkali in Kosovo

A report published in May 2012 by the *United States Department of State* commenting on events of 2011 notes:

“Significant numbers of additional IDPs, particularly Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptians, remained unregistered and uncounted by authorities, according to the Internal Displacement Monitoring Center (IDMC). Of the 4,100 persons displaced by riots in 2004, approximately 1,000 remained IDPs. Most IDPs remained in areas where their ethnic group was a numerical majority, according to the IDMC. An estimated 4,000 IDPs continued to live in collective centers under poor conditions and with intermittent assistance, according to the IDMC. Many unregistered displaced Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptians lived in informal settlements lacking electricity and other basic services” (United States Department of State (24 May 2012) *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2011, Kosovo*, Section 2d Freedom of Movement, Internally Displaced Persons, Protection of Refugees, and Stateless Persons/Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)).

This report also states:

“Ethnic minorities, which included Serb, Romani, Ashkali, Egyptian, Turkish, Bosniak, Gorani, Croat, and Montenegrin communities, faced varied levels of institutional and societal discrimination, in areas such as employment, education, social services, language use, freedom of movement, IDPs' right to return, and other basic rights. Members of the Romani, Ashkali, and Egyptian communities were subject to pervasive social and economic discrimination; often lacked access to basic hygiene, medical care, and education; and were heavily dependent on humanitarian aid for survival. An OSCE report in May found that, despite steps taken by the government to implement an action plan for the integration of Romani, Ashkali, and Egyptian communities, governmental institutions had fallen short of fulfilling their commitments to create appropriate conditions for their integration. Reports of violence and other crimes directed at minorities and their property persisted” (ibid, Section 6. Discrimination, Societal Abuses, and Trafficking in Persons/National/Racial/Ethnic Minorities).

A report issued by *Freedom House* in August 2012 commenting on events of 2011 points out that:

“Kosovo's Roma, Ashkali, Gorani, and other minority populations face difficult socio-economic conditions” (Freedom House (22 August 2012) *Freedom in the World 2012 - Kosovo*).

A report released in October 2012 by the *European Commission* notes:

“With regard to Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians who still live in very poor conditions, Kosovo needs to demonstrate progress on implementation of the strategy and action plan, including through allocation of the necessary resources” (European Commission (10 October 2012) *Communication From The Commission To The European Parliament And The Council, on a Feasibility Study for a Stabilisation and Association Agreement between the European Union and Kosovo**).

The *International Crisis Group* note in a report issued in September 2012 that:

“Other minorities, notably the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian (RAE) face discrimination in hiring” (International Crisis Group (10 September 2012) *Setting Kosovo Free: Remaining Challenges*).

A report issued in September 2012 by the *Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe* notes:

“In general, health and social affairs is a sector where much remains to be done, and where the specific needs of the Kosovo Roma, Kosovo Ashkali and Kosovo Egyptian communities do not appear to have been taken into account in recent policy-making” (Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (September 2012) *Contribution to the Progress Review of the Action Plan of the Strategy for the Integration of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Communities in Kosovo, 2009–2015*, p.19).

An article written in *Koha Ditore* published in September 2012 notes that:

“Kosova [Kosovo] Ombudsman Sami Kurteshi said on Wednesday [19 September], during the presentation of findings about the human rights situation in Kosova during 2011, that the judiciary was the biggest violator of these rights...Kurteshi also mentioned the violation of property rights, complaints about destruction of environment, security situation, use of firearms, problems with the freedom of movement in the north, and structural isolation of RAE [Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptian] community in Kosova as other great problems for the country” (*Koha Ditore* (25 September 2012) *Kosovo ombudsman says judiciary biggest violator of human rights*).

In July 2012 a report published by the *Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe* states:

“The Strategy for the Integration of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Communities, 2009– 2015 (Strategy) and its accompanying Action Plan for the Implementation of the Strategy for the Integration of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Communities, 2009–2015 (Action Plan), detail the challenges faced by the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities in Kosovo. The Action Plan proposes concrete measures to be taken by relevant central- and local-level institutions in order to address those challenges, coupled with a timeline and budgetary estimates for the implementation of appropriate measures to combat discrimination and support integration. Despite these far-ranging policy documents, Kosovo institutions fall short in fulfilling their commitments to create appropriate conditions for the integration of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities in Kosovo” (Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (July 2012) *Community Rights Assessment Report, Third Edition*, p.9).

This report also notes the:

“...general discrimination faced by Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities in Kosovo” (ibid, p.11).

It is also pointed out in this document that:

“Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities remain among the most vulnerable groups in Kosovo” (Ibid, p.14).

References

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This response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Refugee Documentation Centre within time constraints. This response is not and does not purport to be conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum. Please read in full all documents referred to.

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