

# POLICY MONITORING REPORT

## Ethnic Representation In Pre-University Education

Municipality of Prizren

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# **Ethnic Representation in Pre-University Education**

## Prizren Municipality - Case Example



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## Introduction

Ethnic representation in schools is a fundamental element for creating an inclusive and equal educational environment. In the municipality of Prizren, where various communities such as Albanians, Turks, Roma and others coexist, ensuring equal access to education is vital for building an integrated and harmonious society.

This monitoring report aims to analyze the current state of ethnic representation in Prizren's schools, evaluating whether existing policies are clear and how they are implemented in practice. In addition, the report will identify existing challenges and gaps and offer concrete recommendations for improving ethnic representation and strengthening interethnic cooperation in the municipality's education system.

The results of this monitoring will be an important resource for schools, the Municipal Directorate of Education (DE), policymakers, and civil society organizations, helping to take more effective measures to ensure a fair, inclusive and harmonious educational environment for all communities.

## **Analysis of Existing Laws and Policies**

### **Law No. 03/L-047 on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Communities in the Context of Ethnic Representation in Education**

- This law is a key instrument for protecting and promoting the rights of communities in Kosovo, including in the field of education. The legal framework guarantees educational rights for non-majority communities through several key provisions. Article 8.1 ensures the right to education in one's mother tongue for community members, even if that language is not official. If there are not sufficient classes in the communities' language, Article 8.2 prescribes alternatives such as subsidized transportation or distance schooling. Article 8.8 requires that teachers be trained in the communities' languages to ensure quality in education. The representation of communities in school management is regulated by Article 8.9, which stipulates that school leaders and teachers must reflect the ethnic composition of the community and recognize its cultural identity. According to Article 8.10, students who attend classes in a non-official language must learn at least one of Kosovo's official languages. To promote tolerance and diversity, Article 8.12 requires inclusion of the culture and history of communities in the school curriculum.

### **Law No. 02/L-37 on the Use of Languages in Education**

- This law guarantees citizens the right to be educated in their chosen official language and aims to ensure equal access to education for communities speaking different languages. According to Articles 19.2 and 19.3, every person has the right to choose their preferred language of instruction and to enroll their child in a school that offers that language as the language of learning. In cases where no schools provide education in a community's language, Article 19.4 stipulates that the Ministry of Education must take measures to ensure appropriate education, including subsidized transportation, distance learning, or the opening of new classes. This law aims to protect and promote linguistic diversity in Kosovo's educational system.

### **Local Action Plan for the Inclusion of Rom, Ashkali and Egyptian Communities in the Municipality of Prizren (2019–2023)**

- This plan addresses the main challenges in education for these communities. It notes the low participation in pre-school education, with only 65 children enrolled, emphasizing the need for awareness-raising and logistical support. In primary education, 950 students are enrolled, whereas in secondary education, 280 students are enrolled, with a high dropout rate, especially among girls due to early marriages and economic factors. The plan also highlights the importance of Learning Centers, where 247 children receive academic assistance, as well as challenges in higher education, where only 40 students have completed university. The document underlines the need for financial support, better access to education, and special policies to reduce school dropout and improve the academic success of these communities.

## Analysis of ethnic representation of students and teachers in the Municipality of Prizren

We analyze the changes between the 2022–2023 and 2023–2024 school years regarding the representation of students and teachers by ethnicity in the municipality of Prizren. The comparison is based on official data published for each year and aims to highlight key trends, numerical changes, and their impact on the municipality's education system.

In the 2022–2023 school year, the total number of students at the upper secondary level was 5,825, whereas in 2023–2024 this number fell to 5,643. This represents a decrease of 182 students.

### Students in gymnasiums and vocational schools:

**Vocational schools:** The number of students declined from 3,730 in 2022–2023 to 3,643 in 2023–2024, marking a decrease of 87 students.

**Gymnasiums:** The number of students fell from 2,095 to 2,000, a decrease of 95 students.

These data show that the decline in enrollment is more pronounced in gymnasiums, suggesting that more students may be entering the labor market after completing primary school or facing economic and social difficulties that prevent them from continuing their education.

### Representation of students by ethnicity:

Regarding the ethnic background of students in upper secondary education, several changes were observed between the two years:

- **Albanian students:** The number of Albanian students dropped from 5,056 in 2022–2023 to 4,858 in 2023–2024, a decrease of 198 students.
- **Turkish students:** This community's enrollment increased from 298 to 345 students, an increase of 47 students.
- **Bosniak students:** Their number decreased from 440 to 430, a drop of 10 students.
- **Gorani students:** Increased slightly from 1 to 4 students, a symbolic but meaningful change for this small community.

- **Ashkali students:** In 2022–2023 there were 7 Ashkali students, whereas in 2023–2024 data shows none from this community, suggesting a decline in their inclusion.
- **Roma students:** In 2022–2023 there were 23 Roma students, whereas in 2023–2024 not a single Roma student is recorded — a drop that indicates the need for more inclusive measures.
- **Egyptian students:** In 2022–2023 there were no Egyptian students enrolled in upper secondary education, whereas in 2023–2024 there is 1 student from this community.

### Teachers by ethnicity:

The total number of teachers in the municipality of Prizren experienced a slight decrease, from 2,286 in 2022–2023 to 2,277 in 2023–2024 (9 fewer teachers in total). The changes by ethnic affiliation are as follows:

- **Albanian teachers:** Their number decreased from 1,901 to 1,855, which is 46 fewer Albanian teachers.
- **Turkish teachers:** This community saw an increase from 110 to 126 teachers, a rise of 16 teachers.
- **Bosniak teachers:** The number rose from 265 to 345, a significant increase of 80 teachers, indicating an improved representation of this community in the teaching staff.
- **Gorani teachers:** Remained the same in both years, with 3 teachers each year.
- **Ashkali and Roma teachers:** In 2022–2023 there were 7 teachers from these communities combined, whereas in 2023–2024 none are recorded, highlighting a lack of representation for these ethnic groups.
- **Croatian teachers:** In 2022–2023 there were 2 Croatian teachers, whereas in 2023–2024 there are none.



## Identification of challenges in ethnic representation in education in the Municipality of Prizren

Based on the analysis of data on the ethnic representation of students and teachers in upper secondary education in the municipality of Prizren, several gaps and key challenges have been identified that affect the implementation of policies for ethnic diversity and inclusion in education. The main issues are:

**Lack of representation of some communities in education** – The data show a significant decline in the representation of Rom, Ashkali, and Egyptian communities, both among students and teachers. In particular, the absence of Rom and Ashkali students in upper secondary education indicates that strategies to keep them in school are not working as intended.

**Mismatch between policy goals and reality on the ground** – Although funds and programs exist to support education for marginalized communities, the number of students who actually benefit from scholarships or other financial support is low.

**Lack of monitoring and reporting mechanisms** – There is no complete data available from the Municipal Directorate of Education (DE) on the academic performance of students from minority communities. This lack of information makes it difficult to evaluate the progress of education policies and to develop new strategies for improving the situation.

**Learning Centers as a tool for inclusion** – In Prizren there are 11 Learning Centers that assist Rom, Ashkali, and Egyptian children with supplemental lessons. However, these centers are supported primarily by non-governmental organizations, indicating limited institutional support.

**Inclusion of teachers from minority communities** – Teachers are a key factor in promoting diversity and creating an inclusive environment. However, the absence of Rom and Ashkali teachers in the school system in the 2023–2024 academic year, as well as the lack of Croatian teachers, shows that there is no effective strategy to encourage the representation of small communities within school staff.

**Lack of intercultural activities** – In the majority of schools, activities that promote the culture and history of minority communities are missing, causing students from these communities to feel excluded or without space to express their identity.



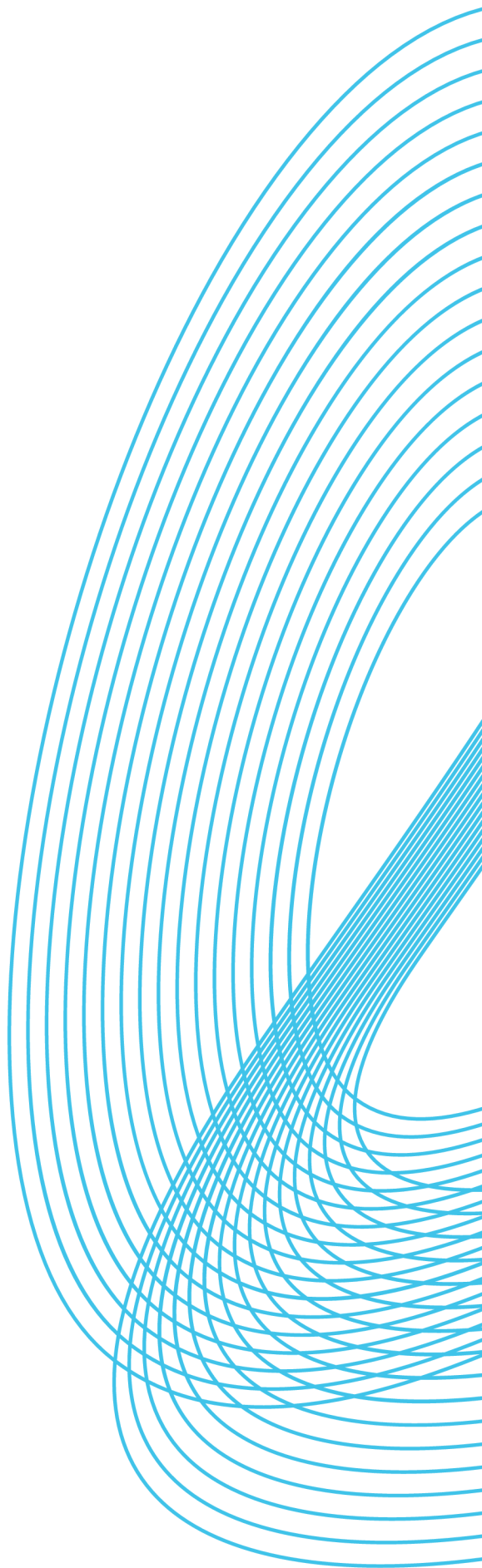
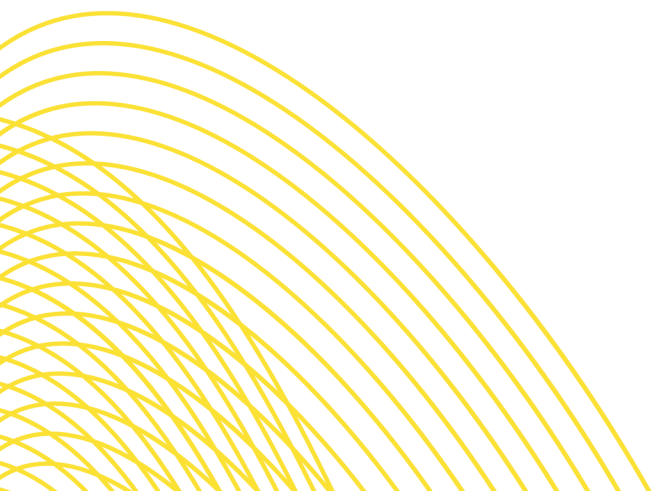
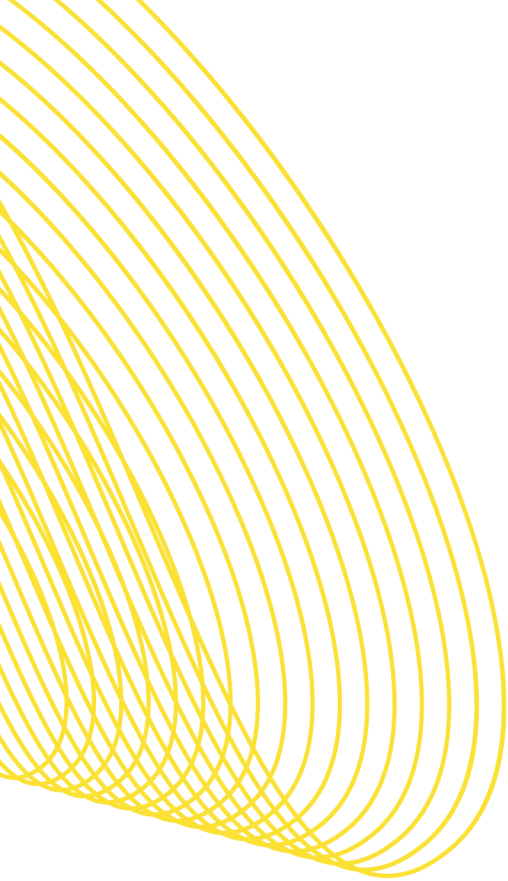
**Economic difficulties** – A large proportion of families from the Rom, Ashkali, and Egyptian communities face severe economic hardships, which affects their children's school attendance. The lack of sufficient financial support for students of these communities increases the risk of school dropout, especially among girls, who constitute 80% of those who do not continue to upper secondary education.

**Discrimination and stigmatization** – Some students from minority communities may face prejudice from their peers or even from school staff, which can negatively impact their motivation and success at school.

**Lack of adapted teaching materials for minority communities** – In many cases, the curriculum does not reflect the history and culture of the various ethnic communities, causing those students to feel unrepresented in the education system.

## Recommendations

- **Improvement of monitoring and reporting mechanisms** – A regular data collection system should be established to track the attendance and academic success of students from minority communities, with the aim of assessing the impact of educational policies.
- **Increase the number of scholarships for students of marginalized communities** – Scholarships should be more numerous and easily accessible to Rom, Ashkali and Egyptian students, in order to prevent school dropout and ensure equal opportunities in education.
- **Engage more teachers from minority communities** – A policy should be formulated to encourage the hiring of teachers from small ethnic communities, ensuring fair representation and a better learning environment.
- **Develop intercultural activities in schools** – Organize festivals, educational programs, and class lessons that promote the culture of different communities, which can help foster better integration and respect for cultural diversity.
- **Offer classes in community languages and increase the number of qualified teachers** – The number of classes providing instruction in community languages should be increased, and it must be ensured that teachers are qualified to teach in those languages.
- **Integrate the history and culture of communities into the curriculum** – Develop modules on the history and culture of various communities to help students understand and respect diversity.
- **Create special programs for teachers from small ethnic communities** – Define flexible criteria for opening classes in community languages and provide scholarships for students who wish to become teachers in their community's language.
- **Provide support and training for teachers on cultural diversity and inclusion** – Organize training for educators on the importance of cultural diversity and inclusiveness, ensuring that all ethnic groups have equal opportunities in education.
- **Increase monitoring by institutions** – Oversight by the responsible institutions should be strengthened to ensure that all communities have equal opportunities and that educational policies are implemented fairly and effectively.



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