



Republika e Kosovës – Република Косово – Republic of Kosovo

Qeveria – Влада – Government

Zyra e Kryeministrit – Канцеларија премијера – Office of The Prime Minister

*Zyra e Komisionerit për Gjuhët – Канцеларија повереника за језике –
Office of the Language Commissioner*



INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LANGUAGE COMMISSIONERS

Language Accommodation and Stabilization in Post-Conflict Environments

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Introduction

“Once upon a time there were two countries, at war with each other. In order to make peace after many years of conflict, they decided to build a bridge across the ocean. But because they never learned each other’s language properly, they could never agree on the details, so the two halves of the bridge they started to build never met. To this day the bridge extends far into the ocean from both sides, and simply ends half way, miles in the wrong direction from the meeting point”

Vera Nazarian, Writer

Albanian and Serbian language status in the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia

- 1969 – Constitutional amendments
- 1970 – University of Pristina establishment – bilingual education system
- Constitution 1974 – Equal status of Albanian and Serbian language
- Proper implementation of linguistic equality

Albanian and Serbian language status in the Socialist Republic of Serbia

- Language equality collapse
- Serbia's abolition of Kosovo's autonomy during Milošević regime
- Linguistic oppression - seized teaching of Albanian language in schools
- Establishment of a parallel education structure to protect Albanian language and culture
- Albanian – language of resistance

Albanian and Serbian language in post-conflict Kosovo

- 1999 – Inter-ethnic conflicts
- Reverse power relations between Albanian and Serbian language – dominance of Albanian
- Tense situation – inability to use Serbian language outside Serb enclaves
- Language as a victim of conflict - June, 1999 murder of a Bulgarian UN police officer in Pristina

Albanian and Serbian language in post-conflict Kosovo

- March 2004 Events – Further suppression of Serbian language
- Violations of the language laws – non compliance of Kosovo administrative authorities in the implementation of language standards (UN Administration).
- Sings – only in the language of the locally dominant group (either Albanian/Serbian)
- Official documents – only in the locally dominant language

Albanian and Serbian language in post-conflict Kosovo

- 2006 – Kosovo legal framework – Law no.02/L-37 on the Use of Languages
- Establishment of the Language Commission – inefficient due to budget and staff restrictions
- Meeting the minimum technical level of language compliance
- 2008 – Declaration of Independence - Kosovo Constitution – Article 5 equal status of the Albanian and Serbian language
- Gradual improvement of conditions for the use of community languages

Albanian and Serbian language in post-conflict Kosovo

- Language Commission Reform
- 2012 – Regulation no.07/2012 on the Office of the Language Commissioner – supported by the Government of Kosovo and International Community
- 2013 – Monitoring and Evaluation of Language Rights – Report
- Shortcomings in the implementation process – need to strengthen the legal compliance in Kosovo

Albanian and Serbian language in post-conflict Kosovo

- Challenges:
 - Insufficient human capacities for translation
 - Insufficient budget
 - Lack of qualified profiles for recruitment
 - No University degree for translation nor a certification system for translators and interpreters
 - Increasing mono-lingualism among civil servants and society in general
 - Parallel education system