



Fondi për të Drejtën Humanitare Kosovë  
Fond za humanitarno pravo Kosovo  
Humanitarian Law Center Kosovo



FUSHË KOSOVË  
KOSOVO POLJE

# BUS STATION



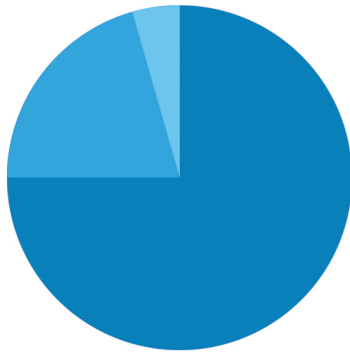
## **BUS STATION**

### **FUSHË KOSOVË/KOSOVO POLJE**

The municipality of Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje is located in the central part of Kosovo and belongs to the Priština/Priština region. It is the center of air and rail traffic in Kosovo. The Airport of Pristina started to operate in 1965 in a village called Slatina e Madhe/Velika Slatina, located in Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje, which is now called "Adem Jashari Airport". This area developed into a settlement after the establishment of the railway station which connects the city with the city of Prishtinë/Priština as well as with other centers such as Peja/Peć, Mitrovica and Skopje in North Macedonia.

Until 1998, the municipality had over 30,000 inhabitants, where about 59% were Albanian, 24% Serb and 17% other communities. Only the city of Fushë Kosova/Kosovo Polje hosted a population of over 16,000 inhabitants of which about 36% Serb, 27% Albanian and 37% other non-majority communities.

Over the period 1998-2000, as a result of the war in Kosovo, 173 victims lost their lives in the territory of this municipality, of which 130 were Albanian, 35 Serb and 8 from non-majority communities. 78 victims were killed and/or disappeared, only in the city of Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje as a result of the war, while among the tragic events there is the case of the Mirena family in the village of Nakaradë/Nakarade where 16 members of this family were killed.



- 130 albanians,
  - 35 serbs,
  - 8 non-majority communities
- 173 TOTAL**



Murders and disappearances of people started happening in Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje as early as June 1998. The situation worsened almost immediately after the withdrawal of the OSCE Observation Mission from Kosovo in March 20, 1999. The abuses, looting, forced expulsions and murders became even more frequent and a large number of residents of Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje were expelled from the city. They were forced to leave to Macedonia or Albania. The railway station in Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje was the place from where most Albanians left by train in the direction of Macedonia.



However, the railway station was not the only place in the city of Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje where serious violations of human rights occurred. The bus station is in the same building as the railway station. During the war this place was also used by Serbian military and paramilitary forces to detain Albanian population and mistreat and abuse them.



One such a event happened at the bus station on March 26, 1999. On Friday morning, at around 11:00, over 100 Albanian civilians, men, women and children, had gathered at the bus station in the municipality of Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje to get to the bus, in an attempt to leave Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje to Pristina Priština for security reasons. After a while, a group consisting of at least ten members of mixed Serbian forces arrived at the place in a military vehicle, some wearing masks.



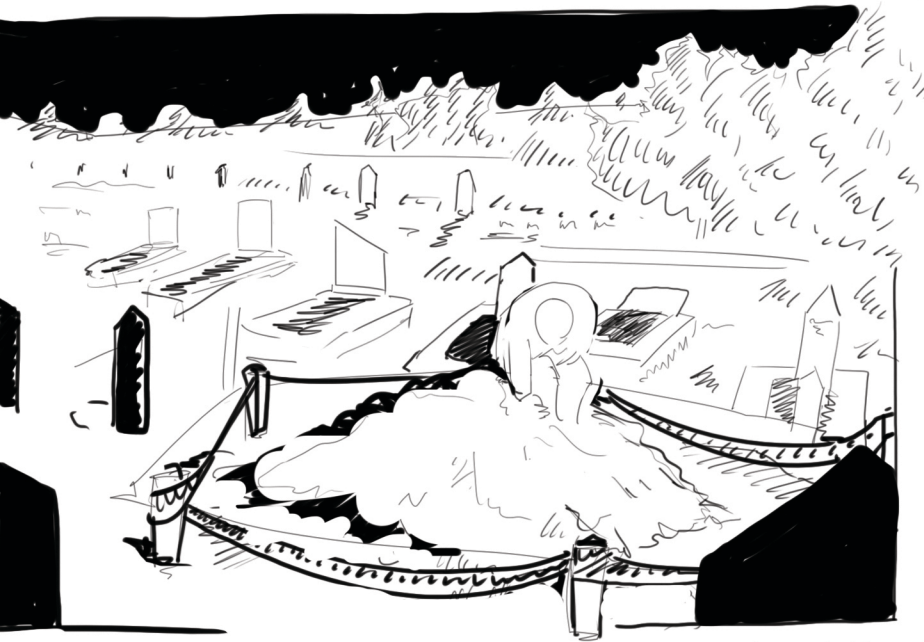
The armed group of Serbian forces stopped the civilians from getting on the bus or leaving the station, while those already on the bus were forced to get off. After gathering them, they separated the men from the women and children, pushing them with the barrels of their guns and kept control over them at gunpoint.

According to eyewitnesses, who were at the scene and who also testified in the two court proceedings related to this event, the women and children were forced to turn their backs so as not to see the mistreatment of the men.

First, the men were forced to kneel with their hands behind their heads and sing Serbian nationalist songs, then they were beaten with rubber and wooden sticks. One of the witnesses testified that a member of this group had taken the crutch of an elderly person and hit the men with it until it broke.



During that day, two male Albanian civilians were forcibly kidnapped, one of whom was then released, while the other, Haki Bajrami, is unaccounted for since the critical day and was considered missing. However, later his body was found in a mass grave in the



Dragodan neighborhood, in Pristina, while his remains were identified in 2000.

From the many mistreatments of that day, one of the people who suffered that day, who was 70 at the time, testified that he never managed to fully recover from the injuries he suffered.

Two court proceedings

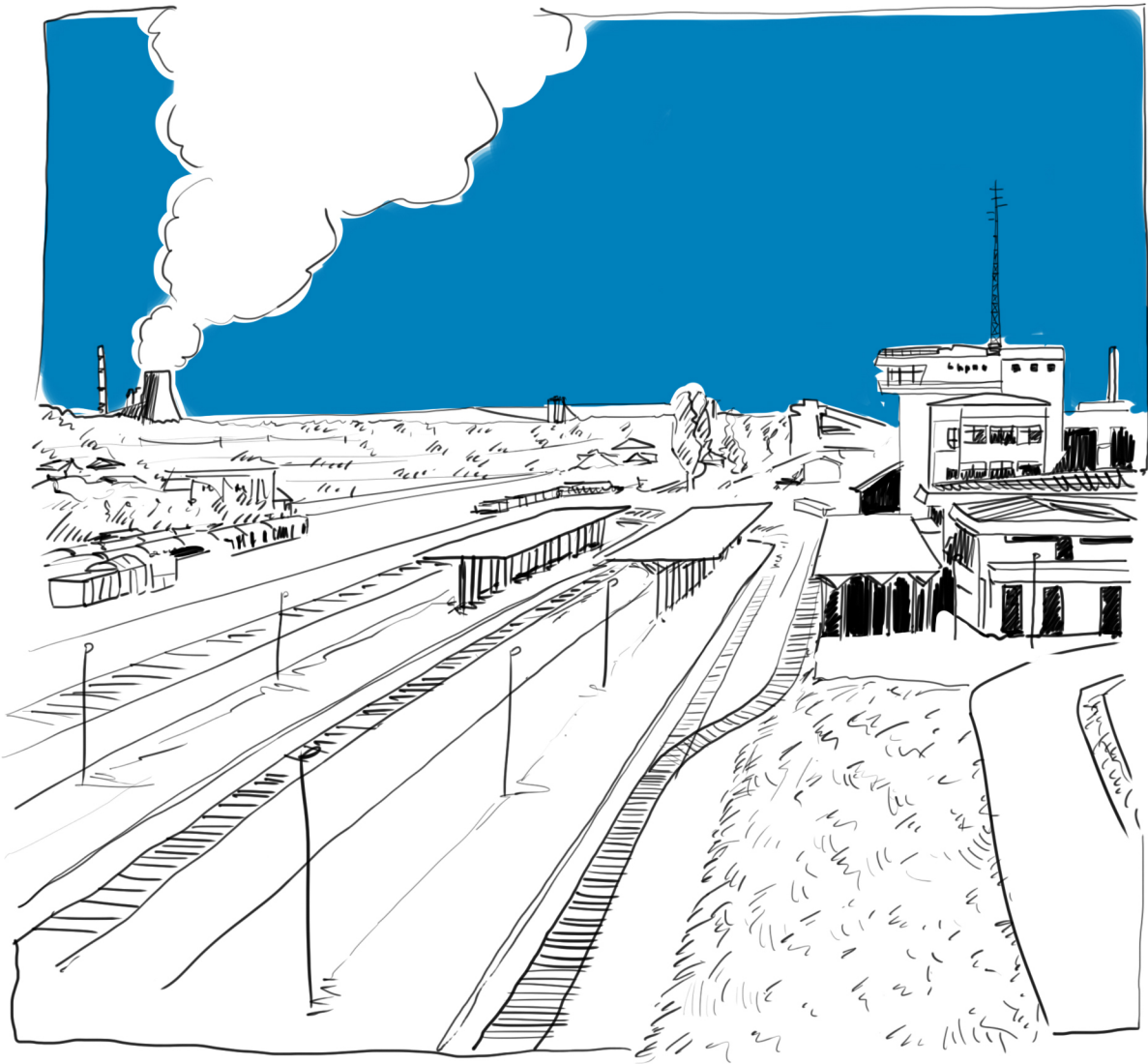


have been held in Kosovo in relation to this case, in which Ivan Radivojevic, a former member of the Serbian reserve police forces and Skender Bislimi a former member of the Serbian paramilitary forces were convicted of war crimes against civilian population. The court found that defendants had inflicted fear and terror, violated the bodily integrity and health of at least 40 Albanian civilian men. For this reason, Ivan Radivojevic was sentenced to 6 years in prison, while Skender Bislimi was sentenced to 10 years in prison.

## BUS STATION

# WHAT WAS IT?

The railway station of Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje was built during the 1870-1874. Much later, after the Second World War, the space in front of this station was also used as a departure and stop point for buses that went on the route Prishtinë-Fushë Kosovë.







## BUS STATION

# WHAT IS IT USED FOR TODAY?

The same space is still used for as bus station in Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje, as before.

This station lacks a recollection mark of the events of 1999. Despite the fact that there is abundant information about the events and the fact that there were many witnesses who gave their testimonies in court proceedings and final decisions were issued about the events that occurred at the bus station in Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje, this place is still not marked as a crime scene. Marking this place as such in the future, would contribute to the collective memory and would serve to inform citizens about the events that occurred at the bus station in Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje.

# BUS STATION MAP







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