

Muslims in Kosovo: A Socio-economic and Demographic Profile: Is the Muslim Population Exploding?

Mughal ABDUL GHAFAR

e-mail: amughal@qu.edu.qa

Abstract

Kosovo has the highest percentage of Muslims of any European country except for Turkey. To our knowledge, there has been no systematic study of the demographic and socio-economic characteristics of the Muslim population of Kosovo. The present study is the first attempt to fill this gap. Ethnicity and religious affiliation are almost synonymous in Kosovo, with ninety seven percent of Albanians, the dominant ethnic group, identifying themselves as Muslim. With the exception of a tiny fraction, the same is true of Turks, Goranis, and Bosnians: their ethnicity and religion are almost synonymous. By the same token, almost all Serbs are Christian Orthodox. As regards the sectarian division among Muslims, most Muslims are Sunni. Other than Muslims and Orthodox Christians, a tiny minority consists of other groups including Roman Catholics, Protestants, Jews, Bektashi Shias, and non-believers. We estimate that in 2009, the population of Muslims in Kosovo was about 1890000 or 93% of the total population of Kosovo. The share of Muslim population is expected to grow but at a decreasing rate. By 2029, the share of Muslim population is projected to increase to 95 percent under a medium fertility scenario. This projection is significant in that it casts doubt on the perception of Muslim demographic exceptionalism – the view that Muslims are culturally resistant to family planning and are disposed to early marriages, resulting in a higher growth rate of Muslims relative to non-Muslims. While not new, the subject of Muslim demographic exceptionalism has been receiving increasing traction in the aftermath of the September 2001 attack on the Twin Towers. We conclude that Muslims are expected to follow the demographic trajectory of other groups albeit with a delayed effect. The projected delayed effect is accounted for by population momentum.¹

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Introduction

It is perceived within many intellectual and policy circles that Muslim societies share some unique cultural characteristics preventing them from duplicating the demographic transition experienced by non-Muslim societies. Muslim demographic exceptionalism is typically defined in terms of certain cultural traits that result in higher growth rate of Muslims relative to that of non-Muslims. These culturally traits include religiously motivated resistance to birth control and the practice of early marriages (Courbage, 1992; Jeffery, R. J, & Jeffery, P., 2005; Jenkins, 2006; Ahmad, 2013).

In the aftermath of 9/11, media is abuzz with concern about the size and nature of Muslim population. A look at the headings in the news media is telling. A widely cited report published by *The Guardian* was entitled, "Muslim Europe: the demographic time bomb transforming our continent."² The recent statements by some European politicians in the wake of the influx of refugees from war-torn Middle East are symptomatic of this attitude. The blunt articulation by the Hungarian Prime Minister of the view that Europe was being 'overrun' by Muslim population was echoed by other eastern European leaders, including Slovakia's Prime Minister Robert Fico who declared that his country would only take in Christian asylum- seekers, and some Polish leaders who also expressed a preference for taking Christian over Muslims. VMRO-People's Party leader of the Republic of Macedonia, Ljubco Georgievski observed that "Macedonia will become the fourth Muslim

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² Michaels, A. (08 08 2009 r.). *Muslim Europe: the demographic time bomb transforming our continent*. Accessed on 02 11 2015 on <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/5994047/Muslim-Europe-the-demographic-time-bomb-transforming-our-continent.html>.

country in Europe after Albania, Kosovo and Bosnia.”³ Nor is the perception of Muslim demographic explosion confined to the West: perceived differences between Hindu and Muslim populations, styled as ‘*Saffron Demography*’ is widespread in India (Jeffery, R. J. & Jeffery, P., 2005; Ahmad, 2013).

Against the backdrop of this controversy, there is great interest among social scientists and policy makers in estimating the Muslim population in the West as evidenced by the increasing number of sponsored studies.⁴ The Pew Research Center in Washington conducted the first-ever nationwide survey of Muslim Americans in 2007. In 2009, The Pew Research Center published its comprehensive study entitled, “Mapping the Global Muslim Population.” It has been regularly monitoring demographic trends of Muslims.

Few stylized observations about demographic patterns apply uniformly to Muslims living in different countries. Both pro and anti-natalist policies are observable among Muslims under heterogeneous socio-economic and political conditions in different countries (Groth and Souza-Posa, 2012). However, detailed country-level studies are rare. To our knowledge, there has been no systematic study of the demographic and socio-economic characteristics of the Muslim population of Kosovo. The present study is the first attempt to fill this gap.

The objectives of the study are three-fold. The main objective is to project the size of Muslim population of Kosovo, including the vital statistics, over the next fifteen years using standard demographic methods. The second objective is to construct a detailed socio-economic and demographic profile of the Muslim population of Kosovo. The third objective is to examine

³ Leo Cendrowicz (2015, September 3). Refugee crisis: EU fault lines revealed as Hungary's PM warns of risk to 'Christian' culture. Retrieved from <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/refugee-crisis-eu-faultlines-revealed-as-hungarys-pm-warns-of-risk-to-christian-culture-10485403.html>; FOCUS News Agency (2015, July 17). *Macedonia will become the fourth Muslim country in Europe after Albania, Kosovo and Bosnia*. Retrieved from <http://www.focus-fen.net/news/2015/07/17/378216/macedonia-will-become-the-fourth-muslim-country-in-europe-after-albania-kosovo-and-bosnia-vmro-peoples-party-leader.html>.

⁴ Ba-Yunus, I., & Kone, K. (2004). Muslim Americans: A Demographic Report. *Muslims' Place in the American Public Square: Hopes, Fears, and Aspirations*, 299-321.

projections of Muslim population of Kosovo within the framework of the controversy concerning Muslim demographic explosion.⁵

The study is organized as follows: The first section presents the demographic trends and trajectories of Muslims in Kosovo. The second section presents estimates of fertility, mortality, marriage, divorce and other relevant demographic indices. The third section focuses upon socio-economic issues, including race, gender, education, occupation, and employment. The final section discusses the population projections within the context of the debate on Muslim demographic explosion and pressure for emigration to advanced countries of Europe.

1. Demographic Trends and Trajectories of Muslims in Kosovo

1.A. Brief Historical Background⁶

A brief historical overview is necessary to illuminate the subject matter of this paper. It has been less than ten years since Kosovo became an independent state. After serving as the center of a medieval Serbian empire, Kosovo came under the domination of the Ottoman Empire after the defeat of the Serbian army in the battle of Kosovo in 1389. During 400 years of Ottoman rule (1455-1912), the demographics of the region changed and the population of predominantly Muslim ethnic Albanians outnumbered the predominantly Eastern Orthodox Serbs. Following the breakup of the Ottoman Empire in the early 20th century, Kosovo was incorporated into Serbia (later part of Yugoslavia) but was given an autonomous status. Kosovo was the least developed and the poorest part of Former Yugoslavia and had received subsidies from the Central government in Belgrade. Following the death of Marshall Tito, and the assumption of power by Serb nationalists Yugoslavia, Kosovo gradually lost its favorable status, resulting in growing ethnic tension during 1980s. Interethnic tensions came to a head with the dissolution of Yugoslavia in 1991 as ethnic Albanians established a parallel government in defiance of Belgrade. Low level conflict escalated into an international crisis in 1998 which resulted in NATO's invasion of Serbia in 1999. After the NATO bombing campaign on Yugoslavia, the United Nations Interim

⁵ We use 'Muslim demographic exceptionalism' and 'Muslim population explosion' synonymously here.

⁶ This section draws heavily upon the following: Kosovo (n.d.). Encyclopedia Britannica. Retrieved from <http://www.britannica.com/place/Kosovo>; and BIRN, ACDC, Internews Kosovo. (2015, December 1).

Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) took over the administration of Kosovo. Kosovo declared its independence from Serbia in February 2008. The independence of Kosovo in 2008 was not welcome by the majority of Serbs. The Albanian-dominated Kosovo government has virtually no control over Mitrovica, which is divided between an ethnic-Albanian-majority south and an ethnic-Serb-majority north. Since the end of the Kosovo War of 1999 its northern part is the de facto capital of the Serb enclave of North Kosovo which has hitherto defied the post-1999 war UN and Albanian led administrations.

Following the culmination of the Kosovo war, Kosovo came first under UN, and then under EU, supervision, and developed the structures of an independent country for a decade before declaring its independence from Serbia on February 17, 2008. Many Slavic states, including Serbia and Russia, and a significant number of other countries—including several EU members do not recognize Kosovo as an independent sovereign state. Although in 2010, the International Court of Justice ruled that Kosovo's declaration of independence did not violate international law, Serbia did not accept that decision. However, push by international community combined with the bid on the part of both Serbia and Kosovo to join the EU has facilitated peaceful reconciliation with Kosovo, resulting in the 2013 Brussels deal between Serbia and Kosovo. Under this deal, all of the Republic of Serbia's institutions in Kosovo should be abolished. Both countries now have official representatives in each other's capital. As of 23 June 2015, 108 countries had recognized the Republic of Kosovo as a sovereign independent state. Relationship between the Albanians and the Serbian minority, as well as between the governments of Serbia and Kosovo continue to be tense. Only four of 16 agreements between Serbia and Kosovo reached in Brussels since 2011 have been fully implemented (BIRN, ACDC, Internews Kosovo, 2015).

1. B. Current Estimates of the Size of the Muslim Population by Ethnicity

Kosovo has the highest percentage of Muslims in the total population of a country in Europe except for Turkey. As of 2009, we estimate the Muslim population of Kosovo to be about 93%.

Reliable data on the size and trajectory of Kosovo's Muslim population has been extremely hard to find. The political disorder in Kosovo that ensued in 1989 led to the gradual destruction of the demographic system of statistics in the country. The 1991 census was boycotted by the majority of the Albanian population. The Kosovo war of 1999 resulted in the total collapse of

the system of statistics in Kosovo. Many registry offices were destroyed and /or were robbed; many registers were withdrawn to Serbia (in some municipalities including the register books from 1900) (KAS. 2009a).⁷

We rely on two main sources of information on the size of Muslim population: the 2000 Kosovo Living Standards Measurement Survey (henceforth, **LSMS 2000**), and the 2003 UNDP Kosovo Mosaic Survey sponsored by UNDP for their Kosovo Mosaic report (henceforth, **KMS 2003**). Both the Kosovo Mosaic Report survey 6000 and LSMS 2000 were based on large representative samples (6000 and 2880 respectively). It should be noted that unlike the 1991 census which was largely boycotted by Albanians, KMS 2003 and LSMS 2000 were not marred by such boycotts on the part of ethnic communities. Based upon the religious self-identification of respondents from the later, and using the latest estimates of the proportion of ethnic groups in Kosovo from the Kosovo Agency of Statistics, about 92 percent of the Kosovo population in 2003 is estimated to be Muslim.

Drawing upon KMS 2003, Table 1 presents the estimates of Muslim population by ethnicity. Two points are worth noting in interpreting the figures in Table 1. First, 97 percent of the Albanian population identified itself as Muslim. Second, some of the ethnic groups are almost entirely mono-religious - 100% of Turks and Romas in the sample identified themselves as Muslims. Similarly, all Serbs in the sample identified themselves as Orthodox Christians. Some ethnic groups included in the category of others are also almost 100% Muslim. These are: Goranis, Bosnians/Muslims, Egyptians, and Ashkaelia.⁸ There is clearly an unknown degree of sampling error in the estimates, because, according to LSMS 2000, about 7% of the Romas had reported to be non-Muslim (Orthodox and others). Thus, these estimates should be taken as broadly representative rather than exact.

⁷ Kosovo Agency of Statistics (KAS) resumes its work on August 2, 1999, after nine years of interruption. In the interregnum, the Kosovo Statistical Office (KSO) served as the official agency. Statistics published by KAS typically exclude the Serb-controlled areas: North Mitrovica, Leposaviq, Zubin Potok, and Zveqan. ILO. Kosovo Population Census 2011. Retrieved from <http://www.ilo.org/surveydata/index.php/catalog/931/study-description>

⁸ See the section 3.A on *Race, Ethnicity, and Gender* in the report to get a proper perspective on the ethnic and racial identification of respondents.

Table 1. Share of Muslims and Non-Muslims by Ethnic Origin in Kosovo, 2003 (Percent)

Ethnicity / Religion		Muslim	All Non-Muslim	Percentage Share of Non-Muslims by Faith					
				Christian Orthodox	Catholic	Protestant	Other	Non-believers	Refused
Albanian	N=5,519	96.88	3.12	0.00	2.60	0.02	0.17	0.26	0.06
Serb	N=318	0.00	100.00	100.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Turk	N=24	100.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Romas	N=66	100.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Others	N=72	93.10	6.90	5.17	0.57	0.00	0.57	0.57	0.00
All Ethnicities	N=5,999	91.75	8.25	5.36	2.40	0.02	0.17	0.25	0.06

Source: Author's calculations based on UNDP survey of Kosovo Mosaic, 2003 (KMS 2003).

Notes: The estimates were weighted by the ethnic composition in 2006 as estimated by KAS: 92% (Albanian), 5.3% (Serbs), 0.4% (Turks), 1.1% (Roma), and 1.2% (others). Even if the weights are based on the 2000 LSMS, the share of total Muslim population is about 91%. The category of others includes the following: Roma, Egyptians, Gorani, Bosnians, Turks, Croats, Ashkaelia, and all others. Albanians are estimated to be 88%. The remaining 12% is equally shared by Serbs and Others.

The Living Standards Measurement Survey 2000 (LSMS 2000) included a question on the religious affiliation of the respondent households. As shown in Appendix Table 1, according to this survey, about 86% of the population of Kosovo in 2000 identified itself as Muslim. The 2003 survey shows an increase of 5-6 percentage points in the share of Muslims in the total population. This is too large an increase over a 3 year period to be plausible. This is even more puzzling considering the fact that both KMS 2003 and LSMS 2000 were based on large representative samples (6000 and 2880 respectively). How can one reconcile these estimates?

Although the increase in the share of Muslim population appears to be too large over a 3 year period to be credible, three observations make the apparently implausible increase in the population of Muslims credible. First, the Muslim population which is predominantly Albanian is reported to have a fertility rate which is almost twice that of the non-Muslim population. KAS estimated that the total fertility rate of Muslims in 2004 was 2.59 while that of

non-Muslims was only 1.41 (See Table 6 below). Second, and perhaps more importantly, the major non-Muslim group, that is, the Serbs, is known to not only have a very low total fertility rate,⁹ but has also shown high degree of propensity to leave Kosovo in the aftermath of the Kosovo war which ended in the defeat of the Milosevic government and assumption of power by Albanians. According to some estimates, 200,000 Serbs and thousands of Roma fled from Kosovo during and after the NATO invasion.¹⁰ Third, LSMS 2000 estimates of Albanians may have been downward biased because of the exclusion of the large Diaspora that had left the region during the Milosevic administration and many of whom had subsequently returned. This is corroborated by an independent census conducted by Hivzi Islami in 1994 which estimated the following population by ethnicities: Albanians - around 1,360,000 (89.9%); 1,960,000 with the diaspora: Serbs - around 140,000 (6.3%); Muslims - around 40,000 (1.9%); Roma - around 40,000 (1.9%); Turks - around 8,000 (0.3%); Montenegro - around 7,000 (0.3%); others - around 5,000 (0.2%).¹¹

Table 2 shows the regional distribution of the population *by religion*. One fifth of the country's population is concentrated in Pristina and Urosevac

⁹ Total fertility rate or TFR is a measure of the fertility of an *imaginary* woman who passes through her reproductive life subject to *all* the age-specific fertility rates for ages 15–49 that were recorded for the population under consideration in a given year. Alternatively, TFR is the average number of children that would be born to a woman over her lifetime if:

1. she were to conform to the exact current *age-specific fertility rates* (ASFRs) through her lifetime, and
2. she were to survive from birth through the end of her reproductive life (assumed to be age 49).

¹⁰ To quote, “In the new Kosovo state, smaller minorities suffer from lack of access to information or tertiary education in their own languages, and discrimination due to association with the former Serbian majority. Together with a bad economy, these conditions mean that many members of minority communities are now leaving the new Kosovo state altogether. Unless reversed, this trend will see the steady migration of minority groups who have other states to migrate to, such as Bosniacs and Turks, who have lived in Kosovo for hundreds of years. For Ashkaelia, Gorani and Roma, who have no such options of escape, these trends are likely to lead to ingrained poverty and further marginalization for generations to come” (Stevens, 2009, p.6).

¹¹ Kosovo: Stimmt diese demografische Entwicklung? (n.d.) Retrieved November 2, 2014 <http://www.balkanforum.info/fl6/kosovo-stimmt-diese-demografische-entwicklung-208088/index2.html>

regions each. All regions of the country with the exception of Mitrovica are predominantly Muslim with 90 percent or more population identifying itself as Muslim. Besides Mitrovica, the only other regions where Christians are a significant minority are Gnjilane (9%), Djakovica (7.78%), and Pec (7.37%). Orthodox Christians are concentrated in Mitrovica (approximately 23%) and Gnjilane (approximately 9%), and Catholics are concentrated in Djakovica (about 8%) and Pec. Djakovica is unique in having a concentration of minority denominations, including Shia Muslims. Almost all Protestants are found in Djakovica as are about 40% of non-believers and Catholics.

Table 2. Regional Distribution of Kosovo's Population by Religion in 2003 (Percent)

Ethnicity / Religion	Sample Size	Muslim	All Non-Muslim	Share of Non-Muslims by Faith and Region					
				Christian Orthodox	Catholic	Protestant	Other	Non-believers	Refused
Pristina	N=1218	96.98	3.03	2.63	0.2	0	0	0.2	0
Mitrovica	N=829	77.16	22.84	22.84	0	0	0	0	0
Prizren	N=655	98.72	1.28	0	0.55	0	0.18	0.55	0
Djakovica	N=713	89.99	10.02	0	7.78	0.17	1.23	0.84	0
Gnjilane	N=461	90.62	9.38	8.86	0	0	0	0	0.52
Pec	N=957	92.38	7.62	0	7.37	0	0	0.25	0
Urosevac	N=1166	93.74	6.26	5.09	1.03	0	0	0.04	0.1
Total for Kosovo	N=5999	91.75	8.26	5.36	2.4	0.02	0.17	0.25	0.06

Source: Kosovo Mosaic Survey, 2003 (KMS 2003).

Table 3 presents the distribution of Muslim population *by region*. The table shows that the percentage share of Muslims in five of the seven regions more or less corresponds to the percentage of Kosovo's population in the

regions. Only Pristina and Mitrovica have more than one percentage point lower share of Muslims than the share of the region in the total population.

Table 3. Distribution of Muslim and Non-Muslim Population by Region in Kosovo in 2003

Region	% Share of the Region in the Total Population of Kosovo	% Share of the Region in the Total Muslim Population
Pristina	20.3	21.45
Mitrovica	13.83	11.63
Prizren	10.92	11.76
Djakovica	11.88	11.65
Gnjilane	7.68	7.59
Pec	15.95	16.06
Urosevac	19.44	19.86
Total	100	100

Source: Kosovo Mosaic Survey, 2003.

Table 4 presents the estimated and projected changing share of Muslim population in Kosovo since the Kosovo war. Based on a median fertility scenario, we estimate that the population of Muslims in Kosovo was about 1,890,000 or 93% of the total population of Kosovo in 2009. Most of the increase in the number of Muslims between 2000 and 2009 is accounted for by the increase in the share of Albanians at the expense of Serbs. In 2000, Albanians accounted for 95% of all Muslims while in 2003, they accounted for 97% of all Muslims in Kosovo.

A good measure of demographic change of a group is *the ranking index* which represents the measure of each reporting size relative to the previous size as a base. According to the KAS (Kosovo Agency of Statistics) estimate, the ranking index of Serbs fell down to 57.3 between 1991 and 2006 while that of Albanians increased to 121 over the same period. This trend is expected to continue over the foreseeable future (KAS, 2008a).

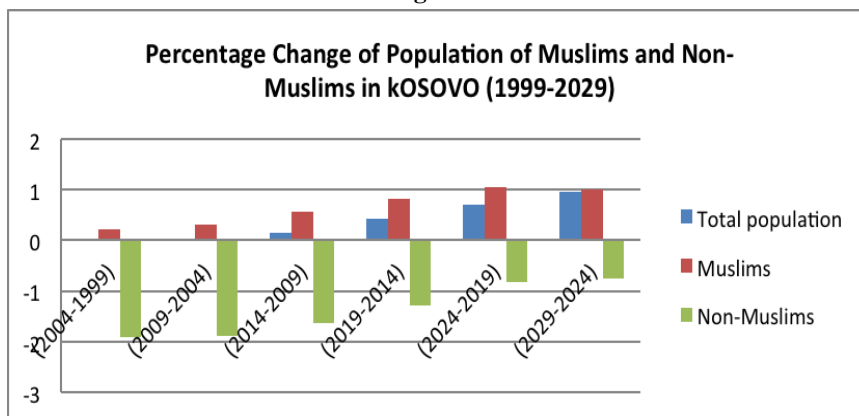
Table 4. Changing Share of Muslims in the Total Population of Kosovo (2003-2029)

	2000*	2003**	2009 (Est.)	2009 (Projected.)	2029 (Projected.)
Total population	1922954	1932000	2043748	2102850	2284100
Muslims	1653740	1777440	1890743	1974703	2168802
Non-Muslims	269214	154560	153005	128147	115298
Percentage of Muslims	86	92	93	94	95

Sources: *Kosovo, LSMS 2000; **Kosovo Mosaic Survey, 2003. Author's calculated projections for 2009, 2019, and 2029. Total population estimates for 2000 to 2003 are taken from IMF, 2004.

Figure 1 shows the projected growth rates of Muslim and non-Muslim population from 1999 through 2029 under median fertility transition. The contrast in the growth trajectory of the two groups cannot be starker. It shows that the entire growth of the population in Kosovo is accounted for by Muslims while the share of non-Muslims decreases albeit at a decreasing rate.¹²

Figure 1



Source: author's projections. See the Methodological Note.

¹² Technologically inclined readers are directed to the Methodological Appendix.

1.C. Sectarian Composition of Muslims

As in Macedonia, the vast majority of Kosovo Muslims are Sunni Muslims, belonging to the Hanafiyya school of thought, the dominant Sunni school of thought in the Balkans. While the total number of Muslims in the country can be estimated and projected over time, the same is not true of the sectarian composition of Muslims. The exact percentage of the Muslim population that adheres to various Shi'a sects, as opposed to the majority Sunni group, is indeterminate. No Sunni-Shi'a breakdown is available in any published source. Most of the Shia's belong to the Bektashi order.¹³

Lack of sectarian information notwithstanding, it should be pointed out here that the sharp Shia Sunni categorization may not accurately reflect the heterodoxy that characterizes religious affiliation in the Balkans. According to Miller, the Sufi or dervish orders in Kosovo are distinguished from the orthodox Sunni Islam in various respects. Sufi orders that elsewhere in the Muslim world are strictly Sunni show in Kosovo a mixture of Sunni and Shia belief (Miller, 2000). In the southern area the vast majority of the rural population either belong to or sympathize with one of the numerous (dervish) orders (Miller, 2000). "The Sufi orders have historically maintained a separate institutional structure from that of the official Islamic Community of Kosovo. They were seen by some Albanians as a more-religious and more nationally-minded counterweight to the state-sanctioned clergy in the official Islamic structure" (ICG, 1999, p.4).

A good idea of the sectarian picture can be had from the 2005 OSCE report on the old town of Gjakovë/Đakovica which was built in the 15th century and developed around the Hadumi Mosque, and is now a UNESCO World Heritage Site (OSCE, 2005). In such towns as Djakovica, the majority of observant Muslims are said to be associated with Sufi orders. (ICG, 1999, p. 114). As shown in Tables 2 above, although Catholicism still has a strong following amongst the Kosovo Albanians in the municipality (app. 30%), the majority of inhabitants is Muslim (app. 70%).¹⁴ The so-called 'Taricates' (Arabic *tariqat* - Dervish or Sufi orders), are

¹³ No published source to our knowledge reports the true size of the Bektashi community. Given the widely reported antipathy of the majority Sunni religious establishment, the Bektashi tend to keep a low profile. Despite concerted effort, we were unable to get information from the Bektashi leadership about the size of their population in Kosovo.

¹⁴ The report mentions that "it is not uncommon to find both religions represented in the same family and, in general, the unifying element (as ethnic Albanians) clearly prevails over a possible dividing one (religious affiliation)" (ibid., p.9).

prominent in Gjakovë/Đakovica municipal life. What distinguishes the Dervish orders is that they usually congregate in family houses to discuss local problems and give both practical advice and spiritual inspiration to those in need. As the report points out, the Dervish orders stem from a religious heritage of active members in society giving protection and assistance to others in the community (ibid. p.9). Formerly made up of all ethnicities, today only Kosovo Albanian members remain (Miller, 2000). There are seven such active groups in the town (Bektashi, Qadiri, Helveti – pronounced as ‘Khelveti’ -, Nakshipendi, Rufa’i, Saadi, Shazeli). However, there is no information about the true size of these groups. The Helveti, Qadiri, Rufa’i, and Naqshbandi are Sunni and the Bektashi are Shia albeit Muslim observance in the region has had a heterodox character because the Sufi orders or ‘Taricates’ had taken hold in Kosovo very early.

A 2006 UNDP survey of the Roma community sheds some light over the sectarian composition of the Kosovo population that lives in close proximity to the Roma communities. Almost all of the population surrounding Roma communities is Albanian and 7% of them are reported to be Shiites, as shown in Table 5. All Muslim Romas are Sunni (95%). (A caveat is in order here. While Table 5 suggests that there is a significant minority of Shia Muslims in Kosovo, the numbers are relevant only for areas of Roma concentration and should not be generalized to the whole country).

Table 5. What is the dominant religious identity of the residents in the village/town you live?

	Majority living in proximity to Roma		Roma		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Base: All households	354	100%	354	100%	708	100%
Catholic	12	3%	18	5%	30	4%
Muslim Sunni	318	90%	336	95%	654	92%
Muslim Shiite	24	7%	0	0%	24	3%

Source: UNDP. 2006. <http://vulnerability.undp.sk/>

1. D. Fertility, Mortality, and Selected Demographic Indicators

A population pyramid is the standard tool used by demographers to highlight the distribution of a population by age and sex. Figure 2 depicts the projected change in the age sex distribution of the Muslim population of

Kosovo between 2009 (non-colored) and 2029 (colored). The projection is based on the assumption of medium level fertility transition. (Alternative assumptions and procedures adopted are presented in the methodological note in the appendix).

The following points are worth noting. The pyramid consists of 18 layers or bands. Each band represents a 5 year age group except for the top band which represents age group 85+. The band at the bottom of the pyramid represents infants in the age group 0-4, and the second represents age group 5-9, and so on. A comparison of the colored and the non-colored bands gives a visual picture of the changed age distribution expected to take place over the two decades between 2009 and 2029. The shrinkage in the population between 0-24 years (represented by the bottom 5 bands) is noticeable, as is the corresponding expansion of the working age population between ages 25 to 64 (bands 6-13). The shrinkage in the bottom 5 bands reflects reduced fertility. The share of the population under age 25 is still very large in 2029 *due to the population momentum – large proportion of young population today will grow into adulthood by 2029 and are likely to contribute to population growth even if the overall fertility rate falls.* We conclude that *Muslims are expected to undergo the demographic transition historically experienced by advanced societies of Europe, albeit with a delayed effect.*

Figure 2

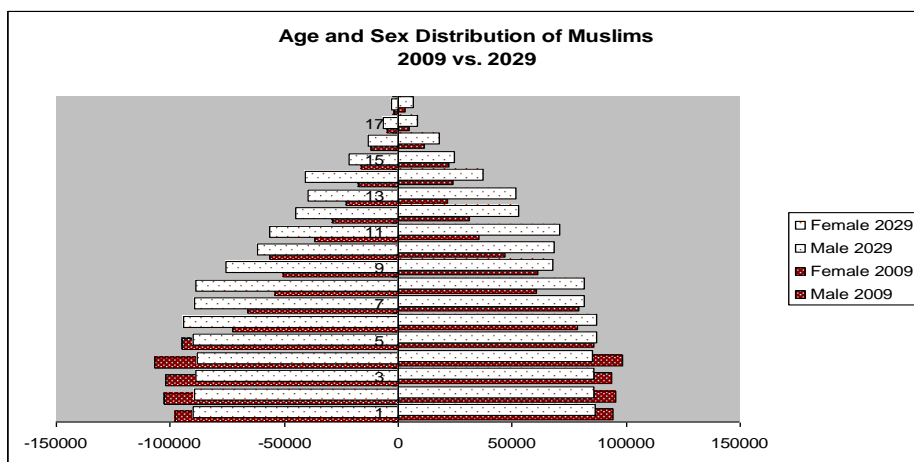


Figure 3 juxtaposes the age sex distribution of the Muslims and non-Muslims populations in Kosovo in 2029. The Pyramid embedded in the larger

pyramid (represented by yellow and green colors) depicts the shape of the age distribution of the *non-Muslim* population. The overall shape of the population pyramids of the two groups could not be more dissimilar. If the top three bands of the inner pyramid are chopped, the inner pyramid appears to be inverted. The shrinkage of the young and the working age groups (represented by the bottom and the middle bands of the pyramid) of the non-Muslim population is clear from the picture. The non-Muslim population is projected to have a much greater proportion of older people than the Muslim population. (See section 2.D below for further details of the cohort analysis).

Figure 3

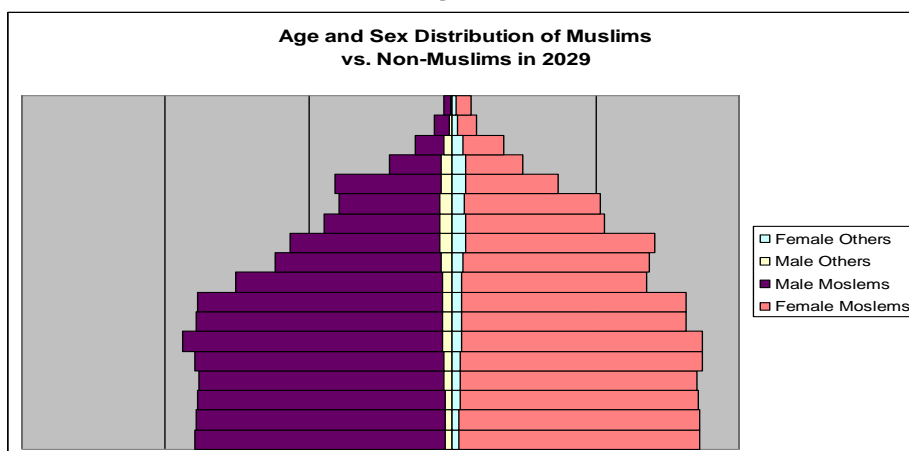


Table 6 below projects key demographic indicators of the Muslim, non-Muslim, and total population in the country through 2029. According to the table, the total population of Muslims in 2009 is estimated to be 1890000 and is projected to grow at an increasing rate until 2024. The growth rate is projected to fall slightly but by 2029 the population of predominantly Muslim ethnicities will have risen by 15% of the 2009 level.

The table shows that while the growth rate of non-Muslim population is negative throughout the period of projection, the non-Muslim population is expected to fall at a decreasing rate under the assumptions of medium fertility (See the Methodological Appendix). By 2029, the non-Muslim population would be about three fourth of the current level.

Table 6. Key Demographic Indicators of Kosovo (2004-2029)

Muslims						
	Base yr.	Projected				
	2004	2009	2014	2019	2024	2029
Total Population	1871043	1890743	1919985	1974703	2057124	2168802
Annual pop % growth rate	0.21	0.31	0.56	0.82	1.06	1.01
Average annual increase	3940	5848	10943	16484	22336	22428
Total Fertility Rate (TFR)	2.59	2.41	2.33	2.26	2.18	2.11
Net Replacement Rate (NRR)	1.19	1.12	1.10	1.07	1.04	1.01
Male life expectancy at birth	66.48	68.22	69.81	71.25	72.56	73.76
Female life expectancy at birth	70.83	72.83	74.6	76.16	77.53	78.75
Annual net migration (incl. deaths)	-21442	-18547	-13135	-7399	-1275	0
Annual births	39735	37491	36518	36086	35898	35448
Annual deaths	14353	13096	12440	12203	12287	13020
Annual natural increase	25382	24395	24078	23883	23611	22428
Crude Birth Rate (CBR)	21.13	19.68	18.75	17.90	16.99	15.93
Crude Death Rate (CDR)	7.63	6.87	6.39	6.05	5.82	5.85
Non-Muslims						
Total Population	168411	153005	139183	128147	120148	115298
Annual pop % growth rate	-1.90	-1.88	-1.64	-1.28	-0.82	-0.75
Average annual increase	-3081	-2764	-2207	-1600	-970	-851
Total Fertility Rate (TFR)	1.40	1.45	1.50	1.55	1.60	1.65
Net Replacement Rate (NRR)	0.64	0.67	0.70	0.73	0.76	0.78
Male life expectancy at birth	66.48	68.22	69.81	71.25	72.56	73.76
Female life expectancy at birth	70.83	72.83	74.6	76.16	77.53	78.75
Annual net migration (incl. deaths)	-1928	-1668	-1181	-665	-115	0
Annual births	1482	1285	1122	1030	1004	1001
Annual deaths	2635	2381	2148	1965	1859	1852

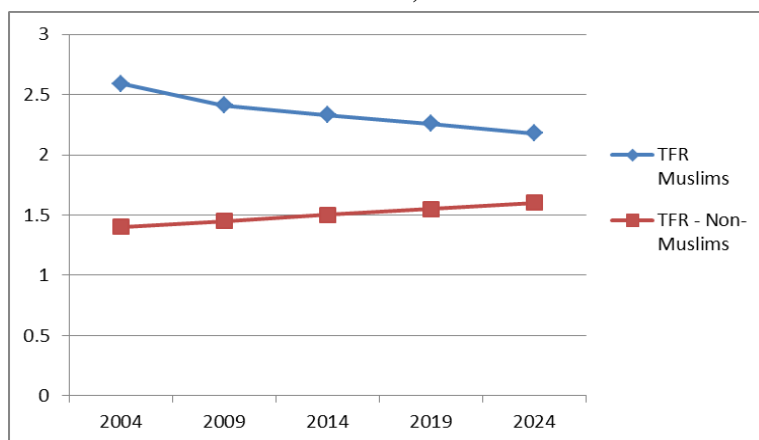
Annual natural increase	-1153	-1097	-1026	-934	-855	-851
Crude Birth Rate (CBR)	9.22	8.79	8.39	8.30	8.53	8.84
Crude Death Rate (CDR)	16.40	16.30	16.07	15.82	15.80	16.36

Source: Author's calculations. KAS. 2008b. Demographic change of the Kosovo population 1948-2006; IDB, US Census; .

Note: The projections are based on the medium scenario. See the appendix for details.

Fertility rate of Muslims is expected to fall over the next 20 years, but will remain above replacement level while that of non-Muslim population is expected to show a slightly upward pattern, as shown in Figure 4 below.¹⁵

Figure 4. Total Fertility Rate of Muslims and Non-Muslims in Kosovo (2004-2009)



Source: Author's projection

Despite this turnaround in the non-Muslim TFR, crude birth rate (CBR)¹⁶ of the Muslim population will remain higher than that of the non-

¹⁵ Our projections are based on a median fertility transition assumption. If we assume low fertility, fertility will fall below replacement rate. This is consistent with the latest figures on fertility from KAS. A recent report from KAS has indicated below replacement rate of 1.9 for Kosovo in 2012. (KAS, 2015). However, it is not clear if this number is downward biased because of inclusion of low fertility non-Muslim population.

Muslim population throughout the period of projection because of relatively higher proportion of younger cohorts in the current Muslim population. However, the gap in the CBR will shrink by approximately 50% (from $12(=21.13-9.22)/1000$ to $8(=15.93-8.84)/1000$). The crude death rate (CDR)¹⁷ of Muslims will continue to decline through the projection period (from 7.63 to 5.85) but that of non-Muslims is expected to show a U-shaped pattern. Given the large proportion of the young in the Muslim population, the CDR of Muslims would still be much lower than that of the non-Muslim population after 20 years. The higher death rate of non-Muslims simply reflects the higher proportion of very old people in the non-Muslim population.

1. E. International Migration

Outmigration is a structural feature of small landlocked economies at a low level of economic development, *ceteris paribus*, and Kosovo is no exception. International migration does not only have socio-economic consequences, but also affects the reproductive aspects of the Kosovan population. Thus, analysis of international migration in and out of Kosovo is of particular interest.

Unfortunately, no data on international migration by religious affiliation is available to date. However, given the close correspondence between religion and ethnicity, some patterns can be discerned. It should be borne in mind that as a result of the conflict between the Serbian authorities and the Albanian population, Kosovo has been subjected to massive population displacements in the 90s but information about emigration or immigration flows by ethnicity is sporadic and conflicting.¹⁸

¹⁶ Crude birth rate is defined as the number of live births per 1000 people per year.

¹⁷ Crude death rate is defined as the total number of deaths per 1000 people per year.

¹⁸ More than one decade after the Balkan wars concluded, Kosovans uprooted by fighting then continue to face serious challenges in returning home and local integration. Walter Kälin, the Secretary-General's Representative for the Human Rights of IDPs. "Kosovars displaced by war face reintegration obstacles, says UN rights expert." 7 July – <http://www.unmikonline.org/news.htm#0707>.

Table 7. Estimated Stock of Kosovans Living Abroad (1981 vs. 2003)

Population Group	1981	2003
Albanians resident in Kosovo	1,220,000	1,700,000
Albanians living abroad	20,000	217,000
Kosovar Albanians living abroad as a Percentage of the 'Resident' population	1.6	12.8
Sub-total Albanians	1,241,000	1,918,000
Other ethnic/national groups resident in Kosovo	364,000	232,000
Other ethnic/national groups from Kosovo living abroad	6000	250000
Non-Albanian Kosovans living abroad as a Percentage of the 'Resident' population	1.6	107.8
Sub-total other ethnic/national groups	371,000	482,000
Total Kosovar population	1,611,000	2,400,000
Source: IMF (2004) staff estimates, based on Population Census for 1981, and an assumed population growth rate of 2 per cent for ethnic Albanians and 1.2 percent for other groups to 2003		

Table 7 compares the estimated stock of Kosovar living abroad in 1981 and 2003. It shows about 217000 (13%) population of Albanian ethnicity living abroad in 2003. However, more non-Albanian population (including the predominantly non-Albanian Muslim ethnicities) lived abroad than in the country (about 108% of the resident population).¹⁹ In 1999, over 700,000 ethnic Albanians and around 100,000 ethnic Serbs were forced out of the province to neighboring Albania, Macedonia, Montenegro, Bosnia and Serbia, and to Western countries after the United Nations took over the administration of Kosovo following the war, the vast majority of the Albanian refugees returned. The largest diaspora communities of Kosovo Albanians are in Germany and Switzerland.

Many Serbs and Romas fled or were expelled, mostly to the rest of Serbia at the end of the war, with further refugee outflows occurring as the result of sporadic ethnic violence.

¹⁹ See footnote 10 and the associated discussion concerning the incidence of in- and outmigration of different groups.

For our purpose, the relevant question is: in the post-independence Kosovo, is there any significant difference between the predominantly Muslim and non-Muslim ethnicities in terms of their intentions and prospects of emigration?

Drawing upon a customized post-independence survey (1367 face-to-face interviews) on emigration intentions in Kosovo, carried out in June 2008, Ivlevs and King (2009) suggest an answer to this question. They note that emigration intentions have again risen to their pre-independence peak. Substantial proportions of Kosovo's population intend to emigrate: 30 % of the Albanian-speaking-majority respondents have taken concrete steps to move abroad. Strikingly, in contrast with the earlier waves of mostly low skilled emigration from Kosovo (Rinvest 2007, ESI 2006), Ivlevs and King note a distinct shift to the higher skill and higher incomes individuals. The high unemployment rate goes far to explain the emigration pressure from Kosovo. As the intentions to emigrate survey makes clear, the number of people of Muslim ethnicities that intend to emigrate remains very high in the post-independence Kosovo.

They also find that ethnic Serbs (except for the ethnic Serbs living in the South-Eastern enclaves of Kosovo) are less likely to emigrate than Kosovo's ethnic majority. The prospect of annexation of the northern Kosovo Serb enclaves is kept alive by Serbian authorities. This accounts for the unusually low propensity of migration of Serbs in the Serb controlled enclaves relative to the Serbs in the South Eastern part of Kosovo who have no such prospect.

2. Family, Fertility, Mortality, and Maternal and Infant Health²⁰

The higher current total fertility rate of Muslims compared with non-Muslims in Kosovo has been well documented, as supported by data in Table 5 above. In this section, we focus upon the main factors that affect population growth, in general, and fertility, in particular.

²⁰ This section is largely based on data provided in KAS. 2009b. As the report makes clear, "Vital events which occur in the settlements with Serb majority are not registered in the Civil Status offices of Kosovo. Therefore, the DPS of KAS does not have information on that part of the Kosovo population. Thus, most of the information applies to the non-Serb population which is largely Muslim but contains a minority of Catholics, and other groups. There is tiny minority of non-Muslims in Kosovo but there number is so small that it should not affect the overall conclusions about the trends.

2. A. Current Fertility Levels and Its Correlates

Kosovo currently has the youngest and the fastest growing population in Europe. Persons aged 0 to 18 years are estimated to be 46 percent of the total population. As shown in Table 6, total fertility rate of Muslim women was about 85% higher than that of non-Muslims in 2004 (2.59 vs. 1.40), and in 2009, it is estimated to have been still one percentage point higher than that of non-Muslim women.

It is easier to describe the proximate determinants of fertility than to explain its deep causes. Several hypotheses can be invoked to explain the higher fertility of Muslim women. The following proximate determinants of fertility are worth consideration:

Rustic Environment: Kosovo is a rather small country where people live predominantly in rural area (61.9% as of 2011).²¹ Not only is the opportunity cost of bearing and rearing children lower in rural areas, but also socialization in the rural setting reinforces the high fertility norms.

According to the 2000 LSMS, about 57% percent of the predominantly Muslim households lived in rural areas which is higher than the percentage of rural Serb households. As in Macedonia, the overwhelming majority of population of Albanian and other predominantly Muslim ethnicities is rural. However, in contrast with the Republic of Macedonia, where twice as many Albanians lived in rural areas as people of Macedonian ethnicity - two in three as opposed to one in three - (Mughal, 2009a), the majority of non-Muslim/Serb population in Kosovo is also rural albeit less rural than the Muslim population.

Average time spent in school: Time spent in school is negatively correlated with fertility. Lower age at marriages of the Albanians is closely associated with shorter duration of completed schooling. For instance, 74.8% of men and 63.5% of women had secondary level of education at marriage in 2008 (KAS 2009c).

²¹ KAS Census Table: Population by sex, type of area (urban/rural) and age 2011. Retrieved from <https://ask.rks-gov.net/ENG/pop/tables>. As of 2008, rural population in Kosovo was estimated by KAS to be 55% (KAS, 2009a), 6% lower than the proportion of rural population based on 2011 census. The reported increase in the proportion of rural population is puzzling and warrants further investigation.

Education and the Use of Contraceptives: Education is expected to induce a taste for quality rather than quantity of children. Women with no education are less likely to have demand for contraception satisfied, than women with secondary education. In 2003 usage of traditional contraceptive methods was 32% (UNFPA, 2003) and in 2006 it was 29.7% (RC, 2006). Contraceptive Prevalence Rate in 1999 was 32%; in 2003 was 55% (UNFPA, 2003), and in 2006 it is 63.3% (RC, 2006). In 2003 usage of modern contraceptives was 23% (UNFPA, 2003), while in 2006, it was 26.2% (RC, 2006).²²

Education and Son Preference: Women with higher education are less likely to demonstrate son preference. Most recent figures published by KAS show an increase in the ‘masculinity coefficient’ to 112 births of boys to each 100 births of girls (KAS, 2015).²³

Participation of women in the labor force: Women participating in the labor force are expected to have a lower fertility rate because of high opportunity cost of bearing and rearing children. They are also expected to postpone marriage given the high opportunity cost of bearing and rearing children in terms of lost income and attrition of skills. In Kosovo, the proportion of women in the labor force is about half that of men. During the last five years this percentage has been reduced from 35 to 28 for women and from 72 to 65 for men (KAS, 2009c).

Rentier Economy: Courbage (2002) examines the hypothesis that the persistently high fertility of the Albanians is related to the particular nature of their economic system, which is a form of Rentier economy in which income is unrelated to productive work.

In our view, two factors go far to explain the low labor force participation rate of Albanians in the labor force. While a higher propensity of rent-seeking is well-documented, it may be a minor factor compared with the simple statistical artefact, that is, the extremely low labor force participation rate of female population. The same is true of Romas: Romas’ lack of access to formal employment due to ‘statistical discrimination’ is highly probable and is well-documented.

²² Ilir Hoxha, Ariana Qosaj - Mustafa, Amir Haxhikadrija (2009, June). UNFPA: TEN YEARS OF ICPD IMPLEMENTATION IN KOSOVO Assessment report on Achievements. Retrieved from <http://www.unfpakos.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/ICPD10yearsReport.pdf>.

²³ A previous publication of KAS had reported a lower son preference: for each 100 births of girls in Kosovo there are 109 births of boys (KAS, 2014d).

The ‘exceptional’ fertility of Albanians (the predominant Muslim ethnicity in Kosovo) has long been a subject of Controversy (Courbage, 2002). Although formal independence was achieved only in 2009, since the defeat of the Milosevic regime in 1999, the Kosovo Albanians find themselves in a majority position vis-à-vis the Serbian population which has not only lost its privileged position but has also been dwindling in size as noted above. As observed by Courbage, in both Serbia and Kosovo higher fertility of the predominantly Muslim Albanians was considered to be an important political issue. Thus, it is reasonable to ask whether this majority status per se affects fertility. The political factor notwithstanding, we agree with Courbage that “Albanians living in Kosovo, Turks and Roma as well, possess a set of socio-economic characteristics which in synergy almost invariably induce high fertility” (ibid., p. 435).

To summarize the main hypotheses:

- i. A greater percentage of Albanians resides in rural areas which is associated with a lower opportunity cost of bearing and rearing children, *ceteris paribus*;
- ii. Based on qualitative information, we suspect that average age at marriage for Serbians is higher;
- iii. Lower age at marriages of the Albanians is closely associated with shorter duration of completed schooling. Based on historical and qualitative information, we suspect that educational attainment of Serbs in Kosovo is higher;
- iv. Women with no education are less likely to have demand for contraception than women with secondary education; given the higher level of educational attainment of Serb women, we expect Serb fertility to be lower, *ceteris paribus*;
- v. Women who spend more time in school and postpone marriage are also more likely to be participating in the labor force; based on qualitative information we suspect that Serbian women have a higher labor force participation rate, and, thus, are expected to have a lower fertility rate because of high opportunity cost of bearing and rearing children.

In the next section , we discuss marriage and divorce patterns as these have significant bearing on fertility.

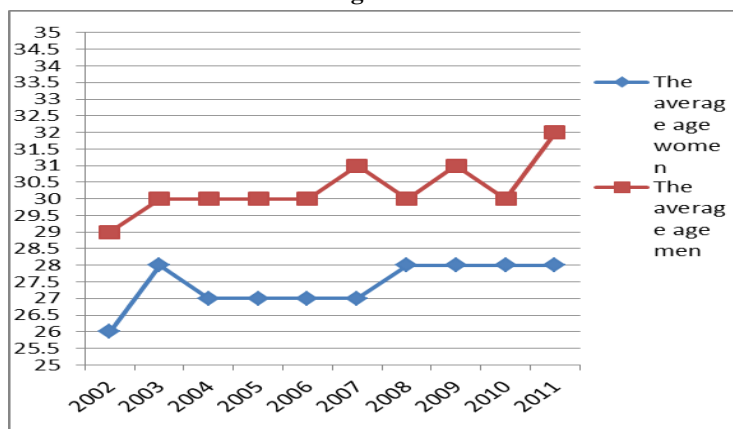
2. B. Life Course Development - Marriage and Divorce²⁴

Marriages

We have no published information on the differences in the marriage patterns of Muslims and non-Muslims in Kosovo. However, we believe that the vital statistics published by KAS by and large represent the patterns and trends observed among the predominantly Muslim ethnic groups. Statistics published by KAS typically exclude the Serb-controlled areas of Kosovo.

Age at marriage: Average age at marriage is inversely related to fertility. As noted earlier, average age at marriage for women has been showing an upward trend suggesting more women are postponing marriages. The most frequent marriage age group for men is 25-29 (31%), while for women the most frequently reported age at marriage falls within the 20-24 year range (35.2%). The average age at marriage has been showing a slow but steady upward trend: for women from less than 26 in 2002 to 28 in 2011; for men from 29 in 2002 to 32 in 2011. See Figure 5.

Figure 5



Source: Source: Kosovo Agency of Statistics.

²⁴ After the destruction of the statistical institutions through 1999, data collection for marriages started again in August 2001; collection of data on divorces began in January 2004 (KAS, 2009b).

Table: Number of Marriages and Age at Marriage in Kosovo - 2002-2013. Retrieved from <https://ask.rks-gov.net/ENG/pop/tables>

As shown in Table 8, in 2008, there were 17,950 marriages registered in the non-Serb controlled areas of Kosovo in 2008 (8.3 per 1000 population).

Table 8. Marriages and Divorces in Kosovo

Year	Total Number of Marriages	Total Number of Divorces	Divorced in '1000' marriages
2004	16989	1293	76.1
2006	15825	1480	93.5
2007	16824	1558	92.6
2008	17950	1026	57.2

Source: For 2007 figures, SOK. Series 1: General Statistics Kosovo in Figures 2008; SOK, 2008a for 2008 figures; for 2003 and earlier years, SOK. Kosovo Vital Statistics 2002-2003

Divorces: The rate of divorce in Kosovo has been low by European standards. “[T]he social and cultural context makes it hard for women to divorce,” (Sida, 2005). However, it has been showing a slightly increasing trend. Thus, in 2000, 325 divorces are reported to have taken place in Kosovo; by 2003, the number increased to 1385.²⁵ There are several explanations for the increasing rate of divorce: the civil war and turmoil of 1999 caused major disruption in the lives of people. Thus, although the figures for 2008 are lower than those for 2007, it is showing a tendency to increase over a longer time horizon. The explanation lies in high unemployment rate, poverty, long absences due to displacement or working outside the country, and stresses of living in extended families. Experience of living abroad during and after the 1999 crisis made women aware of their rights and possibilities. With greater exposure to European norms and increased interaction with the largely European expat community following the UN mandate, it is also becoming socially more

²⁵ Mechthild Henneke. Divorce – cutting both ways. Retrieved December 12, <http://www.unmikonline.org/pub/focuskos/feb04/focusksocaffair3.htm>.

acceptable. Thus, it is not surprising that more and more couples tend to dissolve their marriage with mutual consent.²⁶ Empowerment of women and their increasing participation in the labor force, has also given Kosovo's women a new self-confidence in recent years. Divorces – as bitter as it may seem – are also seen by many women as a sign of empowerment.

In terms of age at divorce, 25-29 years is the most frequently reported range for women (26.3%) in 2007, while for men it is 30-34 years (25.9%). The difference in the age at divorce closely corresponds to the difference in the age at marriage between the two sexes.

Almost seven out of 10 divorces in 2007 take place between couples without children. Divorce rate falls with the number of children: 10.2% with two children, 8.6% with three children, and so on.

A recent report based on the 2011 census data reconfirms the above findings (KAS, 2015a).

2. C. Infant and Maternal Health

Health statistics in Kosovo are not reliable. Nevertheless, the figures available point to health indicators among the worst in Europe, despite improving trends since the UN takeover of the administration in 2000. The United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF) reports the infant mortality rate for Kosovo to be between 35 and 49 per 1,000 live births. For maternal mortality, UNDP reported a rate of 6.9 per 100,000 births in 2005. As for life expectancy at birth, in 2003, it was estimated by KAS to be 71 for women and 67 for men. Infant mortality of children less than one year old indicates that boys' immunity is lower and unstable compared with that of girls. As emphasized by KAS, in the absence of reliable data, no deep analysis of the causes of higher deaths among male infants can be carried out (KAS, 2009a).

2. D. Cohort Analysis of the Young and the Old

Table 9 presents projection of the Muslim population of Kosovo by working and dependent age cohorts. Several points are worth noting here. First, the cohort of young (0-14) dependents (both male and female) is expected to decline in a secular fashion through 2034 under the medium fertility scenario. Second, the size of 65+ cohorts in 2029 will be almost double the size of this cohort in 2009 – an increase of about 91%!

²⁶ Personal communication with Igballe Rexha from the NGO "QMGF" (Centre for Protection of Women and Children)

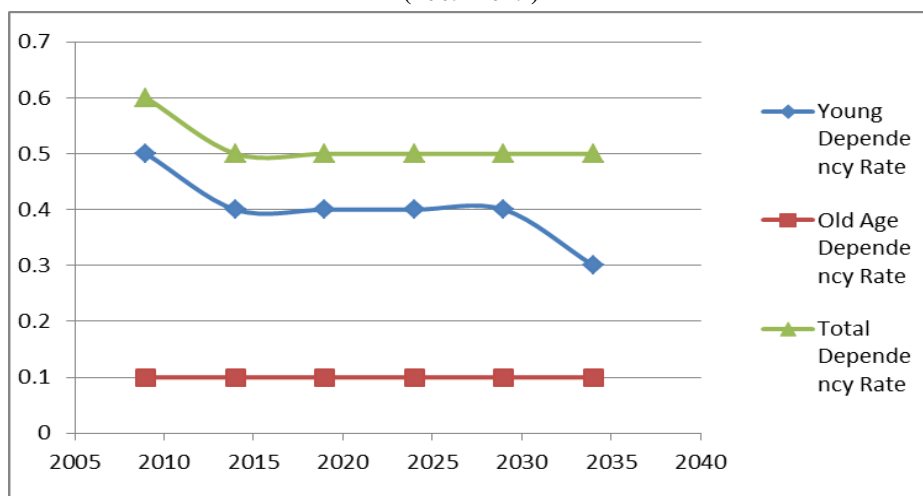
Table 9. Working Age and Dependent Cohorts of Muslims (2009-2029)

<i>Total %</i>	2009	2014	2019	2024	2029	2034
0-14	31.0	29.6	28.3	27.8	27.8	27.8
15-64	62.8	65.9	69.7	73.7	77.4	81.0
65+	6.2	6.0	6.4	7.3	9.5	11.9
15-29	28.4	28.6	28.9	28.3	28.2	27.7
15-49	53.5	54.6	56.5	58.8	60.6	62.7
60+	8.6	8.8	9.6	11.8	14.4	16.9

Source: Author's projections

The increase in the dependent old would be offset by the decrease in the dependent young, resulting in a slightly lower total dependency ratio in 2029 compared with 2009 (Figure 5).

Figure 5. Dependency Ratio of Population of Predominantly Muslim Ethnicities (2009-2029)



Source: Author's projections

3. Socioeconomic Issues

3. A. Race, Ethnicity, and Gender

The ethnic and racial identity remains very strong in Kosovo. Interethnic marriages are an index of social inclusion and integration. Traditionally, there were few mixed marriages in Yugoslav, recording one of the lowest rates in the former Yugoslavia.²⁷ Romas were the only group that mixed freely with other groups, consistent with the tendency among some Romas to identify with other 'higher status' nationalities (Gaber, pp. 104-105). While 93% of the Romas are Muslim by faith, socially, the Romas have been historically looked down upon by members of both Muslim and non-Muslim ethnicities alike, their religious affiliation with Islam notwithstanding.²⁸

The Ashkaelia are Albanian-speaking and live close to the Kosovo Albanians with whom they have always been identified. Other Muslim minorities include, Goranis. This community consists of persons of Slav ethnicity and Islamic faith from Gora/Dragash municipality in the south of Kosovo (the term Goran roughly translates as "Highlander"). A survey conducted jointly by UNHCR and the OSCE found that "Despite their shared religion, their relationship with [Kosovo] Albanians is not always easy given their ethnic and linguistic links with the Serbs, as well as their political attitudes. . . . Today it is very difficult to speak about the exact number of the Gorani community because a considerable part left Kosovo and one part is identifying themselves as members of the Bosniac" (OSCE, 2005, p.31).

As for gender, there are significant differences between men and women within the population of Muslim ethnicity.

While men are engaged in all types of professions, the scope of women's participation at professional levels is limited to technicians or

²⁷ Botev (1994) argues that the patterns of ethnic assortative mating in the former Yugoslavia were consistent with the ethnic rifts that tore that country apart. Specifically, he finds that the perception of widespread interethnic marriage was erroneous, and that clearly discernible social barriers hindered interactions (and intermarriage) among members of different religions. In 1962-64, 9.4% marriages in Kosovo were exogamous, in 1987-89, only 4.7 % were exogamous indicating intensified ethnic segregation.

²⁸ According to the 2000 LSMS, about 7% of the Romas are estimated to be non-Muslim (Orthodox and others). In pre-1998 Kosovo, participation in the (dervish) orders was virtually limited to Albanians and Romas, with almost no participation by Turks or Slavic Muslims; this offers one example of a common Albanian-Roma cultural phenomenon (Miller 2000).

qualified jobs. Women are working more in education, agricultural, trade, and health sectors. Women have 29 percent of the parliamentary seats. The gender distribution at local government gives them 25 percent of the total representation. In 2006, of all the people who reported being subject to violence, 77% were women and 23% were men.²⁹

3. B. Educational Attainment by Gender

In Kosovo, men have a significant advantage over women in educational attainment and access to tertiary education (KAS, 2009a). Table 10 presents main indicators of education in Kosovo based on the 2011 census.

Table 10: Main Indicators of Education 2011 (Percent)

% of graduates on population aged 10 years and over	8.2
% of women among graduates	3
% of population with upper secondary school degree on population aged	29.94
% of women among population with upper secondary school degree	10.7
% of population with lower secondary school degree on population aged 10 years and over	35.1
% of women among population with lower secondary school degree	20.14
% of population with primary school degree on population aged 10 years and over	17.18
% of women among population with primary school degree	9.98
% of population with no formal education/no completed education level	5.75
% of women among population with no formal education/no completed education level	3.06
% of illiterate on population aged 10 years and over	3.85
% of women among illiterate	79.7

Source: Kosovo Agency of Statistics. Table: Main Indicators of Education. Retrieved from <https://ask.rks-gov.net/ENG/education/tables>

Table 11 presents the rate of literacy by gender among members of predominantly Muslim ethnicities. As late as 2009, more than 7 out of 100 people in Kosovo were illiterate. As expected, rural and female illiteracy rates remain higher through the entire 11 year period covered. There has been no significant change in women's illiteracy during this period but surprisingly,

²⁹ KAS, 2009a

twice as many men in 2009 were illiterate as in 1999! While there has been some improvement in the literacy rate of urban women, for men, it has become worse. The percentage of illiteracy among urban women remains high even though it shows some decline.

Table 11. Kosovo illiteracy Rates 1999-2009

	1999	2003	2009
Urban	4.3	6.5	5.4
Rural	8.8	8.7	8.4
	6.5	8.1	7.3
Female, Urban	13.7	13.4	11.3
Female, Total	10.2	12.5	9.9
Male Urban	1.2	2.3	3.3
Male, Rural	3.7	3.8	5.5
Male, Total	2.3	3.4	4.7
Source: Kosovo Agency of Statistics			

The 2003 Demographic and Reproductive Health Survey sheds additional light on the rate of illiteracy in Kosovo (Table 12). The survey confirms the overall higher rate of illiteracy among women. For instance, the survey revealed that illiteracy rate in 2003 was three times higher among women age 64 and above than among men of comparable age. In the age group 55-64, illiteracy rate of females is six times that of men!

Table 12. Illiteracy Rate of Predominantly Muslim Ethnicities by Sex and Age-groups (%), 2003

Age-groups	Both Sexes	Women	Men
Total	8	13	3
15-24	1	2	1
24-34	2	2	2
35-44	4	7	1
45-54	5	10	1
55-64	14	24	4
64+	50	72	25
Source: Demographic & Reproductive Health Survey - March 2003 UNFPA, IOM and Kosovo Office of Statistics			

Dropping out from basic education is a typical phenomenon for both sexes. Table 13 presents the dropout rates by gender. It appears that the dropout rate among women has been consistently higher than among men in recent years. The 2003-2004 difference between men and women is unusual. As mentioned in KAS 2009a, this phenomenon was largely a statistical artifact and was the result of the introduction of nine years school during 2003/2004 brought the girls dropout percentage up to 81 percent of all drop-outs because there used to be a sharp decline in the enrolment of girls past 8 years of schooling due to early marriage. Contrary to the common pattern, in 2002/2003 the dropout rate of boys was higher than that of girls. The following year the balance shifted in favor of boys and has remained so ever since.

Table 13. Dropout Rates of students of Predominantly Muslim Ethnicities in basic education by sex

	# of Dropouts (Women)	# of Dropouts (Men)	(%) Dropouts (Women)	(%) Dropouts (Men)
2002 / 2003	2 200	2 800	45	55
2003 / 2004	2 400	600	81	19
2004 / 2005	1 600	1 400	52	48
2005 / 2006	1 556	1 432	52	48
2006 / 2007	1 249	946	57	43

Source: KAS, Education statistics, 2002/2003- 2006/2007

3. C. Occupation, Unemployment and Economic Development

The relative size of the working age population (ages 15 to 64) is an important labor market indicator roughly reflecting the potential of available workforce. As noted above, this ratio is comparatively low for Kosovo, presumably because Kosovo has a relatively large “young” population as shown above, with almost one third being less than 15 years of age.

Table 14 presents recent data on labor market indicators of Kosovo. A quick glance at the table reveals some striking facts. First, the overall labor force participation rate is very low, and the Labor force participation rate of women is shockingly low - almost 4 out of 5 women are out of the labor force. Previous labor force surveys conducted by KAS The practice of early marriage and cultural restrictions on their participation in the labor force go far to explain this phenomenon.

Table 14. Key labour market indicators 2012-2014

	Labour force participation rate			Unemployment rate		
	2012	2013	2014	2012	2013	2014
Male	60.2	55.4	61.8	26.9	28.1	33.1
Female	21.1	17.8	21.4	38.8	40	41.6
Total	40.5	36.9	41.6	30	30.9	35.3
	Inactivity rate*			Youth unemployment rate (15-24 years)		
	2012	2013	2014	2012	2013	2014
Male	39.8	44.6	38.2	50.4	52	56.2
Female	78.9	82.2	78.6	68.4	63.8	71.7
Total	59.5	63.1	58.4	55.9	55.3	61
	Employment-to-population ratio (employment rate)			Share of vulnerable* in total employment		
	2012	2013	2014	2012	2013	2014
Male	44	39.9	41.3	25	18.1	26.7
Female	12.9	10.7	12.5	18.9	11.6	18.9
Total	28.4	25.5	26.9	23.6	16.8	24.9
Source: Kosovo Agency of Statistics						
Notes: Inactive: People who were neither employed nor unemployed during the reference period; there is a twin mirror relationship between the labor force participation rate and the inactivity rate.						
Vulnerable: persons who are self-employed without employees and those who work unpaid in a family business						

As expected, Table 14 shows that females have a higher unemployment rate than males in the working age group. As expected, Table 14 shows that unemployment rate is higher among the youngest (15-24) but is still higher among women relative to men (65 percent versus 79 percent for women; Table 14). The unemployment *rate* decreased with age even as the number

of unemployed persons as a whole has shown a slight tendency to increase each year.

Table 15 shows that about 10% women in the labor force who are employed are self-employed as opposed to about 28% men in the labor force that are working.

A recent report shows no abatement in the rate of unemployment – it remained 30% in 2013 (KAS, 2015).

Table 15. Distribution of the Employed by sex and professional status (%), Kosovo 2006-2013

Category of Employment	2006		2007		2012		2013	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
Employed	69	53	70	59	71,4	86,4	66,5	78,3
Self-employed with 1 or more paid employees	4	8	2	12	10,1	2,1	8,3	2,6
Self-employed with employees	6	20	6	14	12,6	6,2	17,2	10,0
Family employee	22	18	22	15	5,8	5,4	7,9	9,1
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: KAS, LFS, 2006, 2007; KAS, 2015 for 2012-2013. Note: Although the data published by KAS pertains to the entire country, it mainly reflects the situation of the population of predominantly Muslim ethnicities as the Serbs in the Serb controlled regions do not recognize the authority of the Kosovo government. The rest of Kosovo has a negligible number of Serbs. See Footnote # 7.

Poverty rate in Kosovo is, in general, very high. However, it is higher among non-Muslim population as shown in Table 16.

Table 16. Poverty in Kosovo by Religious Affiliation

	% of Poor	Std. Err.	[95% Confidence Interval	
Muslim	46.6	1.4	43.8	49.5
Catholic	56.7	6.2	44.5	69.0
Orthodox	59.2	2.9	53.5	64.8

Source: author's calculation from the 2000 LSMS. Note: The Poverty line was defined by the World Bank based on the following criteria : The survey data were used to construct per adult equivalent monthly expenditures for each household. Using the share of non-food items for households with food consumption close to the Food Line (food share= 53.97%), the poverty line was determined to be DM 3.498 per adult per day. (World Bank, 2007. *Kosovo Poverty Assessment Volume II: Estimating Trends from Non-comparable Data* Report No. 39737-XK. October 3, 2007.

3. D. The Rural/Urban Divide including Internal Migration

Table 17 shows that the majority of population of Kosovo (55%) lives in the rural areas. This appears to be an underestimate, because, as noted above, the most recent report published by KAS reports 61.9% of the population of Kosovo as rural.

Table 17. Urbanization in Kosovo by Religious Self-Identification (LSMS 2000)

	Muslim	Catholic	Orthodox	Other	Total
Rural	56.7	94.44	51.2	100	56.95
Urban	43.3	5.56	48.8	0	43.05

Source: LSMS 2000; author's calculations;

Notes: in defining the religion of household members in terms of the religion of the household head, we are ruling out the possibility of mixed religious households. Also, not all Serbs are orthodox nor are all Albanian Muslim although 99.78% of all Serb households in the sample self-identified themselves as Orthodox. 97.78% of all Albanians identified themselves as Muslim. About 90% of the Romas also identified themselves as Muslim – only 3.34% of Romas identified themselves as Orthodox; the rest identified them as 'other'.

4. Discussion and Concluding Remarks

Our study bears out two important insights that deserve further discussion.

First, the key finding of our research is that Muslim population of Kosovo will continue to grow over the next twenty years (rising to 95% by 2029), *ceteris paribus*, but at a decreasing rate. The increasing share is only partly accounted for by higher current fertility rate of Muslims; it is also due to the exodus from Kosovo of non-Albanian (most orthodox Christian) population. Second, despite projected decline in fertility of populations of predominantly Muslim ethnicities, Kosovo is expected to face continuing demographic pressure on the labor market as illustrated by the ratio of the potential labor market entrants over the next couple of decades (proxied by the population aged 0-14) .

While the Muslim population is likely to grow faster relative to the non-Muslim population of the country, the large inflow of fresh labor force into the labor market offers an important opportunity as well as a challenge for Kosovo. Given the size of the informal economy in Kosovo, it would be highly beneficial for the economy if most economic activity is shifted from the informal to the formal sector. With a GDP per capita among the lowest in Europe, and unemployment rate among the highest, emigration potential in Kosovo remains high. The Intentions to Emigration survey of 2008 shows that a more likely scenario is that this potential outflow would be diverted to the advanced countries of the European Union. However, unlike Kosovo's neighbors - Albania, Bosnia, Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia – that were granted visa free access to the Schengen countries, Kosovo has been so far excluded from visa free access to the EU although it did receive a visa liberalization roadmap on 14 June 2012.

Network theory suggests that disproportionate migration of Kosovar Muslims would continue even with the initial economic motivation is absent. As for the non-Muslim Serbian minority, emigration from the country to Serbia could also be fuelled by perceived or real discrimination in the domestic labor market, in general, and, the public sector in particular. However, evidence from the NEW Member States of the EU shows that the possibility to work freely within the EU is likely to benefit the most disadvantaged individuals / groups of the candidate countries, and/ or those people and ethnic minorities who for any reason feel discriminated against in the domestic job market. Thus, inadequate access to educational and job opportunities for the relatively disadvantaged Serb minority population could be another emigration driver for the continued emigration of Kosovo's Serbian population.

The controversy surrounding *Muslim* demographic explosion thesis remains unabated although there appears to be a gulf between the academic and the popular press. Some academic studies that continue to support the

thesis, such as, that of Philip Jenkins (2006).³⁰ Other analysts are skeptical. Charles Westoff and Tomas Frejka (2007) challenge the thesis of Europe being ‘overrun’ by Muslims, and suggests that the fertility gap between Muslims and non-Muslims has been shrinking. It has been noted that Muslim fertility rates in the Netherlands have shrunk (Kent, 2008). The 2011 Pew Research Center study which forecasted an increase of Muslims in European population from 6% in 2010 to 8% in 2030, also noted a drop in Muslim fertility from 2.2 in 2010 to 2.0 in 2030 (Grim & Karim, 2011). Contrary to popular perception, the Pew study also projected the non-Muslim fertility rate in Europe to increase from 1.5 in 2010 to 1.6 in 2030. Our finding is consistent with the conclusions of most academic studies on the demographics of Muslims.

In a seminal article on demographic transition among Muslims in Eastern Europe, Courbage (1992) observes that Islam has often been seen as pro-natalist and the high fertility of Muslim populations in FRY, which was real enough until the 1970s, is attributed to Islam. We reject the essentialist view which holds that there is some immutable characteristics of a group that is immutable. Unlike gender and race, religious identity is an acquired identity. Thus, loss or weakening of religious identity under different socio-economic and political circumstances by itself can trump the effect of the presumed above-average birth-rate of Muslims. That not all descendants of Muslim immigrants will remain Muslim is borne out by recent studies (CSIS, 2007; Sherkat, 2015). According to Sherkat, General Social Survey in the United States shows that 32 percent of the residents of the United States who were raised Muslim no longer embrace Islam in their adult life, and 18 percent report no religious identity. Most scholars are skeptical about the culturalist explanation of fertility. There is considerable empirical evidence that casts doubt on the cultural explanation: the dramatic reduction in fertility in large Muslim countries such as Bangladesh and Iran, and the observed reduced fertility of Muslim women who migrate to advanced Western societies are just some cases in point. While we agree with Courbage who observes that “Albanians living in Kosovo, Turks and Roma as well, possess a set of socio-economic characteristics which in synergy almost invariably induce high fertility” (ibid., p. 435), the interesting fact to note is that current fertility levels of Albanians vary in different regions of the Balkans. The total

³⁰ Jenkins estimates that by 2100, Muslims will compose about 25% of Europe's population, not taking into account divergent birthrates amongst Europe's immigrant Christians.

reported fertility rate of Muslim women in Macedonia as of 2004 was 2.14 which is lower than 2.6 which is reported in table 7 for women from predominantly Muslim ethnic groups in Kosovo.³¹

A final point concerning data limitations is in order here. Given the protracted turmoil and conflict Kosovo has undergone in the last two decades of twentieth century available data is sporadic, frequently unreliable, or simply not available. Given the relatively young age of Kosovo as a sovereign state, data collection and processing capacity is limited; however, it has been growing, as reflected in the number of recent publications and the growing body of online statistics. Additional data and research is required to put the findings of the current study on firmer empirical footing.

³¹ In our projection, we have assumed a slight increase in the fertility rate of non-Muslim and a secular decline in the fertility rate of Muslims.

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Methodological Appendix

Projection for Kosovo is done by Cohort-component method. Two separate projections were made for the population, one for Muslim population proxied by the population of the predominantly Muslim ethnicities and another for persons with other religious affiliations; projection for the country was done by merging results from those two projections. For calculating fertility base assumption is that all Albanians, Turks, Romas and Bosnians are Muslim; all other nationalities are assumed not to be Muslims.

Base population by religion affiliation was calculated using age and sex distribution from “Demographic, social and reproductive health situation in Kosovo”, January 2005 KAS; total population from “Demographic changes of Kosovo population 1948-2006” KAS February 2008; and distribution by ethnicity and religion affiliation from the UNDP Kosovo Mosaic Survey database.

Total fertility in the base year is taken from *Demographic changes of the Kosovo population 1948-2006* Table 5. Total fertility for Muslims is estimated to be 2.41 children per female in 2009 and is fitted to reach 1.85 in 2050. In end year of projection 2029 TFR reaches 2.11 children per Muslim woman. Mortality follows model lx (west 23) trend which correspond to country e0 for both sexes that is 71.2 for male and 75.0 female. Net migration of the non-Muslim was assumed to be disproportionate to their share in the population but was assumed to fall and reach zero by 2029 as shown below.

2004	-1928
2009	-1668
2014	-1181
2019	-665
2024	-115
2029	0

For the Muslims, Net migration of the non-Muslim was assumed to be less than proportionate to be high but was assumed to fall and reach zero by 2029 as shown below.

2004	-21442
2009	-18547
2014	-13135
2019	-7399
2024	-1275
2029	0

Appendix Table 1

Share of Muslims in Different Ethnic Groups in Kosovo in 2000										
		Albanian	Croat	Moslem**	Roma	Serb	Turk	Yugoslav	Others	Total
Muslim	N	2,355	0	65	38	1	22	0	1	2,481
	%	97.78	0	100	89.26	0.22	100	0	47.55	86.13
Catholic	N	53	11	0	0	0	0	0	0	64
	%	2.19	100	0	0	0	0	0	0	2.21
Orthodox	N	1	0	0	1	329	0	1	1	332
	%	0.03	0	0	3.34	99.78	0	100	52.45	11.54
Other	N	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	3
	%	0	0	0	7.4	0	0	0	0	0.11
All Non-Muslim	N	54	11	0	5	329	0	1	1	399
	%	2.22	100	0	10.74	99.78	0	100	52.45	13.87
Total	N	2,409	11	65	42	330	22	1	1	2,880
	%	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Share of Different Ethnicities in the Muslim Population of Kosovo in 2000										
		Albanian	Croat	Moslem	Roma	Serb	Turk	Yugoslav	Others	Total
Muslim	N	2,355	0	65	38	1	22	0	1	2,481
	%	94.95	0	2.61	1.52	0.03	0.87	0	0.03	100
Catholic	N	53	11	0	0	0	0	0	0	64
	%	82.9	17.1	0	0	0	0	0	0	100
Orthodox	N	1	0	0	1	329	0	1	1	332
	%	0.21	0	0	0.42	98.93	0	0.22	0.22	100
Other	N	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	3
	%	0	0	0	100	0	0	0	0	100
Total	N	2,409	11	65	42	330	22	1	1	2,880
	%	83.64	0.38	2.24	1.47	11.45	0.75	0.02	0.05	100

Source: Kosovo, LSMS 2000. Author's calculations;

Notes: i. Sample weights were used to estimate the shares of different groups. The LSMS weights are Albanians (88%), Serbs (6%), and other communities (6%).

*Non-Muslims consist of everyone else who does not identify oneself as a Muslim.

**The category of "Moslem" refers to "Muslims by ethnic identity" or "ethnic Muslims" and includes mostly people of Slavic background who converted to Islam during the Ottoman period, and who gradually developed a distinct ethnic consciousness. Many of them describe themselves as Bosniac. "In the first postwar census in 1948, as in the previous Yugoslav censuses, "Moslem" was considered a religious rather than an ethnic category. Thus, those who declared themselves as Moslems had to also identify themselves as belonging to one of the large nationalities and were registered as "Serb-Moslem," "Croat-Moslem," and so on. In the 1953 census the "Moslem" category was abolished and Moslems of Yugoslav ethnic origin were classified as "Yugoslav-undeclared," a group that also included people of other nationalities who chose not to declare their actual ethnic back-ground. The 1961 census was the first to include the category "ethnic Moslem" as indicated here (Botev, 1994).