

Report on the size and ethnic composition of the population of Kosovo

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Summary

After a review of several sources and related literature in demography, it is my opinion that the population of Kosovo in the period preceding the conflict there in 1998-1999 was about 2,1 million, or between 2,0 and 2,2 million. Of this total, the percentage of ethnic Albanians would be about 83 per cent, or between 80 and 85 per cent, and that of ethnic Serbs about 10 per cent, or between 9 and 13 per cent, leaving persons in other ethnic groups at about 7 per cent.

There are several reasons for uncertainty about the size and ethnic composition of the population of Kosovo in the 1990s. The primary reason is that the 1991 census was boycotted by the Albanians. The second major reason is that there was substantial but not tabulated migration from and to Kosovo in the 1990s, of Albanians, Serbs and other nationalities. However, several estimates of the size and ethnic composition of the population have been made, and an assessment of their results and methods permit certain conclusions to be made about the population in Kosovo in the relevant period.

The Federal Statistical Office (or, FSO) of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) has itself estimated the size and composition of the population in 1991, based on a projection of the 1981 census population and on certain assumptions about the trends of fertility, mortality and migration since 1981. The FSO estimates, which seem quite reliable, show a total population of 1,956,000 in 1991, of which 82 per cent were ethnic Albanians, 10 per cent ethnic Serbs and 8 per cent others. These estimates are estimates of the *de jure* population, however, since they include people who are temporarily working abroad. The FSO has also estimated the *de facto* mid-year 1991 population at 1,935,000, only 33,000 lower than the *de jure* estimate for mid 1991.

It is more difficult to estimate the population size before the conflict in 1998-1999, because no census was conducted in the 1990s and because migration streams during the 1990s, which may have been significant, are not well recorded.

There are, however, two independent sets of estimates of the population shortly before the 1998-1999 conflict. The first set of estimates, made for 1997 by the FRY's Federal Statistical Office, found a *de jure* population of 2,188,000 and a *de facto* population of 2,166,000 during the relevant time period. FSO has also estimated the *de jure* population in mid 1998 at 2,222,000.

The second set of estimates, by a group of French demographers at the University of Montesquieu-Bordeaux, estimated that the *de facto* population of Kosovo on 1 October 1998 was between 2,044,000 and 2,131,000 people. This estimate was based on a large representative household survey conducted in Kosovo during November 1999-February 2000, in collaboration with the United Nations Population Fund, the International Organization for Migration, and the Statistical Office of Kosovo. The research conducted by these demographers included questions about temporarily absent household members. Responses to these questions also permitted the demographers to estimate that the population would have been 2,290,000 if there had been no such departures since 1981.

The *de facto* estimates for 1997 and 1998, 2,188 million (FSO) and 2.044-2.131 million (Blayo et al), are very close, both of them being slightly more than two million. These estimates are probably the best that can be obtained since no accurate data exist, and permit conclusions to be drawn as to the population of Kosovo at the relevant time period.

There are also other estimates for 1998 and the preceding years, which were reviewed for this report. The Federal Secretariat of Information of the FRY estimate for 1998, 1,3 million total in Kosovo, of which 917,000 are Albanians, is markedly lower than other estimates for 1998. For this estimate to be correct an exceedingly high volume of net out migration would have had to take place, about 750,000 from mid 1997 to mid 1998. Thus, the estimate does not seem to be realistic. I do not know the basis for the estimate, however, but it would be highly unusual if the Federal Secretariat of Information had at its disposal migration and other data that another government institution, the Federal Statistical Office, would not have or be provided with to revise its own estimates.

Likewise, another estimate, by Islami (1997) for 1995, that the Kosovo population in 1997 was 2,2 million (probably also intended to be a *de facto* estimate), does not seem to be realistic, being very high.

Finally, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has also made a *de jure* estimate for 1998, probably for 31 March, as an extrapolation of the 1991 census population, arriving at 2,188,817. This figure is very close to the FSO *de jure* mid-year estimate for 1998, 2,220,000.

All of these three estimates also include the ethnic composition of the population, but as mentioned above the first two do not seem realistic. However, the UNHCR estimate offers a useful estimate of the ethnic composition. As the UNHCR estimate is *de jure*, it is likely that the *de facto* ethnic composition did not deviate very much from the *de jure* composition, since there probably was net out-migration of all ethnic groups from Kosovo in the 1990s.

On the basis of my review of several sources of population, the most reliable estimate of the ethnic distribution appears to be that of the UNHCR estimate, while the most reliable estimate of the total population appears to be that of the Blayo estimate. Thus, I find that there were between 1,708,000 and 1,780,000 Albanians, between 197,000 and 205,000 Serbs, and between 139,000 and 145,000 other nationalities in Kosovo in the first half of 1998. Or, since these numbers may appear to be more accurate than they may be in reality, I conclude that there were about 1,7 million Albanians, about 200,000 Serbs and about 140,000 people of other nationalities in Kosovo in 1998. This corresponds to 83 per cent Albanians, 10 per cent Serbs and 7 per cent other nationalities.

For this report, I have also looked at other aspects of the population development of Kosovo. I found that the population growth of Kosovo has been high but declining during the last half century and that this is likely to continue for the next 20 years, according to population projections made in 1996 by the Federal Statistical Office before the conflict in 1998-1999. The population movements in Kosovo in recent years have certainly changed the population prospects for the province, however.

Finally, I conclude that the major reason for the fast population growth has been the elevated fertility of the Kosovo Albanian population as compared to the Serb and other population groups, but the Albanian fertility is declining rapidly, however, just as in the rest of Europe.

1. Background

I have been asked by the Office of the Prosecutor (OTP) of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) to prepare a report on the size and ethnic composition of the population of Kosovo, before the conflict in 1998-1999. The report does not discuss population changes after 1998.

The sources of information for this report are set out in the list of references at the end of the report. Where appropriate, I have made specific references to sources or indicated the extent to which some sources were not available to me.

Because of the limited time available for writing this report, the difficulties in identifying and obtaining statistical and other publications, and also possible language limitations, it is possible that there are relevant publications and statistical sources that I have not been aware of or had access to. The possibility that some of these could have an affect on the findings and conclusions presented in this report cannot be excluded.

2. Introduction

The main statistical office of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY), and later of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY), is located in Belgrade.¹ The Serbian name is *Savezni zavod za statistiku*, which is now translated into "Federal Statistical Office" (or, FSO), has previously also been translated as "Federal Institute for Statistics" (and this term is also used in this report). During the SFRY period there was also a statistical office in each of the six republics and the two autonomous provinces, Vojvodina and Kosovo (called Kosovo and Metohija by Serb authorities). The federal office was responsible for the design and planning of the various statistical activities and for publishing the results, whereas the republican and provincial statistical offices usually did the collection of the data and the data entry.

Population and Housing Censuses were taken in Yugoslavia in 1948, 1953, 1961, 1971, 1981, and 1991.² They were planned by the Federal Statistical Office in consultation with the republic/province offices.³ The enumeration forms were the same in all republics/provinces, except

¹ The information in this section regarding the Yugoslav organs that dealt with population statistics and demographics is based on material that is publicly available. This information is set out for background purposes only.

² "Prvi rezultati opstinama" (First results on municipalities), *Statistički bilten* no. 1890, Savezni zavod za statistiku, Belgrade 1991.

³ "The work on the methodology and organization of the census were carried out by the services of the population statistics and industry and construction census of the Federal Institute for Statistics. The final solutions of the methodology were adopted in expert methodological group of the Federal Institute for Statistics in consultation with republican and provincial statistical institutes." (Federal Institute for Statistics 1974).

for language and alphabet. In some cases, however, “*the republican institutes were authorized by the federal Statistical Institute to make additional instructions*” for the enumerators. For the 1971 census this was done on the question of nationality - primarily on how those offices should handle responses relating to regional or local affiliation instead of nationality or ethnic affiliation (Federal Institute for Statistics 1974).

Ethnicity, or rather nationality in the sense of national belonging or affiliation (*nacionalna pripadnost*), has been recorded in all SFRY censuses: “... *the question on nationality was asked in the same way and basically the same classification was applied for the results presentation.*” (Federal Institute for Statistics 1974). Nationality has always been recorded through self-reporting in the censuses (Klopčić 2000). In 1971 it became possible for the respondents to express their nationality or ethnic affiliation without any predetermined categories, including the right *not* to state this.⁴

In my opinion, the Yugoslav censuses were conducted by professional statisticians according to recognized international methodologies. One of the 1971 census methodology publications, for example, mentions that when the draft questionnaire was compiled, use was made of the recommendations of the Conference of European Statisticians for the population and housing censuses around 1970 (Federal Institute for Statistics 1974).

The most serious problem with the results of the SFRY census in 1991 is the question of the impact of the boycott of it by Albanians in Central Serbia, Kosovo and Macedonia. Measures taken by the FSO to address this issue are described later in this report.

3. Problems in obtaining population estimates

The most common method to obtain estimates of the size and composition of a population is to conduct a population and housing census. Practically all countries in the world take censuses regularly, usually every ten years. Censuses present many challenges, being very large undertakings, to ensure high coverage and high-quality data.

De facto and de jure

At the outset, a consideration of the FSO's census results requires a brief explanation of certain principles of population statistics. One of these is the definition of the population to be enumerated. The two main concepts are the *de facto* and *de jure* population: “*The total population of a country may comprise either all usual residents of the country (de jure population) or all persons present in the country (de facto population) at the time of the census. For purposes of international comparisons, the de facto definition is recommended.*” (United Nations 1958). Strict conformity to either of these two simple concepts is rare, however (United Nations 1996).

The Yugoslav censuses appear to follow the *de jure* concept since the population is enumerated according to the “*principle of resident population*”, although the term “*de jure*” is not used expressly.^{5,6} For the issues discussed in this report the most noteworthy part of the popu-

⁴ “*The data on ethnic nationality are the result of freely expressed ethnic nationality of population, respectively of parents (guardians) in the case of children under 10 in the censuses up to 1961, or under 15 years of age since the 1971 census.*” (Federal Statistical Office 1997)

⁵ “*In all six post war censuses the population was enumerated and the results shown by the principle of resident population. It means that every inhabitant had to be enumerated in the place of permanent residence, even when at the time of the Census he/she was absent from that place due to any reason (travel, education or field work, temporary work abroad, compulsory service in the Army, medical treatment, penal service, imprisonment, etc.). Data on these persons were furnished by their households. Accordingly, data on persons were included in the*

lation that is absent but nevertheless enumerated is “*persons at temporary work abroad*”. This is done “*regardless of the duration of stay of a responding person*” (Federal Institute for Statistics 1974). This is not strictly in conformance with the United Nations recommendations since persons temporarily in a country may be considered residents after some time and consequently be included in the census of that country as well. This makes international comparison difficult (UN 1996).

Data on temporarily absent workers are provided by the members of their households, as explained in footnote 5. This implies that such persons will only be included if there is a member of the household to report them in the census. Thus, if all household members have gone abroad there will be nobody to report them.⁷

Most tables on the Yugoslav population include temporarily absent persons. The Federal Statistical Office has, however, also published tables that show the population “*in the country*”, “*Based on the projections of the number of Yugoslav citizens at temporary work abroad.*” (FSO 1997). These statistics correspond closely to the *de facto* population concept. These FSO estimates, when compared with other FSO estimates, show that the difference between the *de jure* and *de facto* population counts for Kosovo are between 28,000 and 91,000 persons (1.7-4.6 per cent of the resident population) for the years for which I have found data, see table 6. These temporarily absent persons appear to include both Albanians and Serbs in other former Yugoslavia republics and outside Yugoslavia.⁸

The FSO estimates of the temporarily absent workers abroad, 28,000-91,000 people, are substantially lower than some other estimates of the number of Albanians living abroad: Malcolm (1998) writes that 368,000 Kosovo Albanians were living in Western European countries in 1993, whereas Islami (1997) estimated that about 500,000 Albanians from throughout the former Yugoslavia lived abroad in 1997 (cited by Grecic 1999). However, the estimates cited by Malcolm and Grecic include many Albanians who have become residents abroad, including many who emigrated with their entire households, leaving nobody to report their absence. Such persons would be counted in neither *de jure* nor *de facto* population estimates. Consequently, the estimates of the absent workers mentioned above need not be inconsistent with each other.

census results for the locality the persons was domiciled, regardless of whether this persons was in that or some other locality at the time of the Census.” (Federal Statistical Office 2001). Emphasis added.

⁶ Federal Institute for Statistics (1974, p.22-23) notes in the section Persons engaged at temporary work abroad: “In the 1971 census as persons at temporary work abroad were considered the citizens of Yugoslavia who stayed abroad and worked there with a foreign employer's or on own-account. [...]”

Whether a work of an individual is to be considered as “temporary” was concluded on the basis of statement of those who provided the information (as a rule household members). The response “temporary” work was entered regardless of the duration stay of a responding person. The reason for this is that even persons when leaving for abroad, as well those who already found job abroad, often do not make a firm decision in respect of duration of their stay abroad. [...]

Persons at temporary work are distributed in the tables of results in this book, according to age, ethnic nationality, literacy status, educational attainment and their activities prior to leaving the country in order to find a job abroad, in the same way as other population. However, in order to make possible the use of the census data on economic characteristics of population which lives and works in the country separately from the data on persons at temporary work abroad, these persons are not grouped into individual modalities of the characteristics “employment status” and “industry”, but are shown in summary figures as “persons at temporary work abroad”. Detailed data on these persons are published in Statistical bulletin, No. 679, published in August, 1971.”

⁷ Blayo et al. (2000) found that of those had been absent from Kosovo for more than a year in 1999, between 10 and 34 per cent had left with the whole household.

⁸ FSO (1997: 64) reports that there were 25,000 persons at temporary work abroad, including their family members in 1971 and 39,434 such persons in 1981. It is not clear, however, if these numbers include all persons temporarily absent from Kosovo or only persons absent from Kosovo who are outside SFRY.

Population estimates

For years without population counts, such as those between censuses and after the most recent census, annual population numbers can be estimated.⁹ Several different methods can be used for this. The simplest is to extrapolate the growth rate of the population, but this does not take into account age structure dynamics and trends in birth, death and migration rates.

The most common method is to project the total population from one year to the next, adding births and in-migrations and subtracting deaths and out-migrations. This method, known as the natural increase method, assumes that there are statistics or reliable estimates of these events. Data on births and deaths are usually obtained through the so-called vital statistics system. Yugoslavia has had such a system for many years, like most countries. A problem is raised by the availability of data on migration, which are difficult to obtain, even if a system to register moves was established in SFRY 1988. Consequently, the Federal Statistical Office calculates its annual mid-year estimates of the total population by adding the *natural* growth for each year, that is the surplus of births over deaths.

This method for estimating annual population totals is inconvenient for estimating the population by age and sex. The so-called *cohort component method* is more appropriate for this. According to this method a population for an area is projected by age (cohort) and sex, taking the demographic components mortality, migration and fertility into account for each age group. It is most common to project five-year population groups by sex five years forward at a time, subtracting estimated numbers of deaths and out-migrations and adding in-migrations and births (to women in each age group). The Federal Statistical Office used this method to estimate the 1991 population in Kosovo, projecting the 1981 census population forward for ten years.

4. Migration

Migration to and from Kosovo is a highly political and contested issue. Before I present some data on this I would like to point out some essential aspects on the quantification of migration:

- It is usually very difficult to measure migration. Most countries do not have systems that require people to register moves in the same way as births and deaths are registered in vital statistics systems.
- Even if a country has established a system for registering migrations, like SFRY, people often do not report their moves, especially when they have no incentive to do so.
- Migration between urban and rural areas, and from less prosperous to more prosperous regions and countries is normal all over the world (unless migration is strictly controlled). This also occurred from the poorer to the richer Yugoslavian republics, provinces and municipalities. This factor contributed to out-migration from Kosovo.
- As a general principle, small (or large) net migration streams are normally the result of much larger gross migration stream in each direction.

⁹ Countries with good population registers that are updated regularly can derive register-based population statistics for any year. However, only a few countries in the world have registers good enough for this purpose, mainly the Nordic countries. Although a universal ID number (*matični broj*) was introduced in Yugoslavia in 1981, this was not used to derive statistics on the size and composition of the population. Some of the former Yugoslav republics have developed registers that can be used for this, in particular Slovenia, but not Serbia or the autonomous provinces of Vojvodina and Kosovo. The main difficulty is in updating a population register with data on births and deaths, and particularly with migrations, since moves are often not reported.

There are many examples of migration streams to and from Kosovo in the literature, including migration of both Serbs and Albanians from Kosovo for economic reasons but also due to violence and persecution; migration into Kosovo from Albania; migration into Kosovo of Serbs from Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina during the war period 1992-1995, settlement of Serbs from Central Serbia in Kosovo, etc.

The contentious nature of this issue is illustrated by the contrasting views in the literature. Grecic (1999), for example, writes that 150,000 – 200,000 Serbs were forced to leave Kosovo between 1961 and 1981, whereas Malcolm (1998) writes that “*the most careful study of this issue concluded that there was a net emigration of between 80,000 and 100,000 between 1961 and 1981. This estimate is in line with evidence of the 1981 census, which found that 110,675 people living in inner Serbia ... had moved there from Kosovo, of which 85,636 had come there in the period 1961-81.*” (page 350).

The Federal Statistical Office does not regularly publish migration statistics in its statistical yearbooks, but it has done so in connection with its population projections, see table 1.¹⁰

Table 1. Average annual net out-migration from Kosovo

| | Historical | Assumed for projections 1991-2021 | |
|---|------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| | | Constant migration variant | Variable migration variant |
| 1961-1971 | 3685 | | |
| 1971-1981 | 5294 | | |
| 1981-1991 | 6213 | | |
| 1991-2001 | | 7298 | 7161 |
| 2001-2011 | | 8797 | 8182 |
| 2011-2021 | | 10430 | 6683 |
| Average annual crude net migration rate (per 1000) | | | |
| 1961-1971 | -3,3 | | |
| 1971-1981 | -3,7 | | |
| 1981-1991 | -3,5 | | |
| 1991-2001 | | -3,4 | -3,4 |
| 2001-2011 | | -3,4 | -3,3 |
| 2011-2021 | | -3,4 | -2,4 |

Source: *Yugoslav Survey XXXVIII* No.1, 1997: 3-34

These figures are the result of migration streams out of Kosovo, both to other parts of Yugoslavia, including Central Serbia, and to foreign countries, as well as migration streams into Kosovo. The annual net migration figure of 6213 persons from Kosovo during 1981 -1991 implies a total net emigration of 62,000 during that 10-year period.

We notice from table 1 that the net migration rate from Kosovo, 0.3-0.4 per cent of the population per year for 1961-1991, is relatively modest. FSO assumed in 1996, when the population projections were made, that this level of net out-migration would continue during the 1990s and for the period 2001-2021.

Blayo et al. (2000) have estimated the impact of migration on the population of Kosovo, based on a representative survey of more than 40,000 persons from November 1999 to February 2000. The sample represents approximately 2.5 per cent of the population estimated in August 1999 by UNHCR, based on information from village authorities, 1,560,000. Because of the risk of overestimation by counting absent persons in certain villages and doubts about

¹⁰ FSO does publish, however, statistics on displaced persons and inter-republic migration, but not migration to other countries.

the intensity of returns by entire households, Blayo et al. bounded the UNHCR estimate by the interval 1.4-1,7 million.

The survey asked the sampled households to list all persons who were absent, finding that 12.3 per cent were absent at the time of the interview, which represents approximately 225,000 persons for all of Kosovo. About 62 per cent of these left before 1998. Blayo et al. note that *“The figure of 225,000 does not cover all persons absent from Kosovo, because it does not include those belonging to household in which all members left Kosovo, leaving no one to report their absence.”* By combining the 1981 census data with vital statistics data and subtracting the UNHCR 1999 estimate, the authors found that between 611,000 and 911,000 left Kosovo during 1981-1999. Breaking this number down to when they left, they arrived at an estimate of the total population present in Kosovo on 1 October 1998 of 2,044,000 - 2,131,000.

Without any emigration since 1981 the population would have been 2,290,000, according to Blayo et al. The difference between this figure and their estimates for the population on 1 October 1998, amounting to between 159,000 and 246,000, would represent migration between 31.03.1981 and 01.10.1998.¹¹

5. The 1991 population census for Kosovo

The 1991 population census for all republics of SFRY was conducted from 1st to 15th April 1991, with 31 March 1991 as the census (reference) day (Savezni zavod za statistiku 1991). In all municipalities of Kosovo and Metohija as well as the Bujanovac and Preševo municipalities in Central Serbia, *“... the majority of the Albanian population boycotted the census, so the actual data on its size are not available”*¹². To compensate for this the FRY statistical office in Belgrade estimated the size of the Albanian population on the basis of the 1981 census results taking into account, then, population changes during the intercensal period 1981-1991, using the cohort component method described in section 3.¹³

The estimated population numbers for 1991 were published in the 3rd volume of the 1991 census publications for each of the about 1400 localities (*naselje*, “inhabited area”) and 31 municipalities (*opština*) for every nationality.¹⁴ Volume 17 of the 1991 series explains the methodology and gives more detailed results, including the population by age and sex (Savezni zavod za statistiku 1997).

¹¹ There is a difference of 21,000 between this range, 159,000-246,000, and the range given by Blayo et al. for the number of absent people who left before 1 October 1998, 180,000-267,000. It is not clear to me whether this difference is due to an error or whether there is a conceptual difference.

¹² Savezni zavod za statistiku (1993). Translation provided by OTP.

¹³ *“The estimated size of the population of the Albanian nationality by municipalities was calculated as the difference between the estimated total population (on the basis of an adopted hypothesis on birth and death rates as well as the migration balance in terms of age and sex in the 1981-1991 period) and enumerated (popisanog), or more precisely, enumerated and estimated “non-Albanian” population (the population of other ethnic affiliation, and the population who failed to choose, or rather state, their nationality, or declared themselves Yugoslavs or stated their religious affiliation). Exceptionally, the size of the Albanian population in the Gora, Zvečan, Zubin Potok, Leposavić, Novo Brdo and Štrpce municipalities was estimated on the basis of a specially adopted hypothesis about its birth and death rates as well as the migration balance in the period between the 1981 and 1991 census.”* From “Methodological explanations” in Savezni zavod za statistiku (1993). Translation provided by OTP. The six municipalities that are referred to in the last sentence are municipalities with a non-Albanian majority, see table 1.

¹⁴ From “Preface” in Savezni zavod za statistiku (1993). Translation provided by OTP.

Table 2 shows my summary of these numbers for the municipalities of Kosovo, called Kosovo and Metohija in the publication. I have calculated the number of "Others" as the total population for each municipality less the number of ethnic Albanians and ethnic Serbs. Ethnic Albanians were the majority population in 25 of the 31 municipalities, ethnic Serbs in five (Leposavić, Novo Brdo, Štrpce, Zubin Potok and Zvečan) and Muslims in one (Gora).

The table shows that, according to the estimates made by the Federal Statistical Office, the total population size of Kosovo in 1991 was 1,96 million.¹⁵ Of these 194,000 (9.9 per cent) were Serbs, 1,6 million (81.6 per cent) were Albanians, and 166,000 (8.5 per cent) were "other nationalities" (including Yugoslavs and not declared). The largest of the "other" groups were Muslims (66,189 - 3.4%), Roma (Gypsies) (45,745 - 2.3%), Montenegrins (20,365 - 1.0%), Turks (10,445 - 0.5%) and Croats (8,062 - 0.4%). There were only 3,457 (0.2%) Yugoslavs.

Table 2. Population of Kosovo 31 March 1991 by municipality and ethnicity

| Opština | Population size | | | | Per cent distribution | | |
|--------------------|-----------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|-----------------------|-------------|------------|
| | Total | Serb | Albanian | Other | Serb | Albanian | Other |
| Dečani | 49000 | 188 | 47669 | 1143 | 0.4 | 97.3 | 2.3 |
| Đakovica | 115097 | 1751 | 106868 | 6478 | 1.5 | 92.9 | 5.6 |
| Glogovac | 53618 | 23 | 53562 | 33 | 0.0 | 99.9 | 0.1 |
| Gnjilane | 103675 | 19370 | 79357 | 4948 | 18.7 | 76.5 | 4.8 |
| Gora | 17574 | 60 | 941 | 16573 | 0.3 | 5.4 | 94.3 |
| Istok | 57261 | 5968 | 43910 | 7383 | 10.4 | 76.7 | 12.9 |
| Kačanik | 38010 | 223 | 37368 | 419 | 0.6 | 98.3 | 1.1 |
| Klina | 52266 | 5209 | 43248 | 3809 | 10.0 | 82.7 | 7.3 |
| Kosovo Polje | 35570 | 8445 | 20142 | 6983 | 23.7 | 56.6 | 19.6 |
| Kosovska Kamenica | 52152 | 12762 | 38096 | 1294 | 24.5 | 73.0 | 2.5 |
| Kosovska Mitrovica | 104885 | 9482 | 82837 | 12566 | 9.0 | 79.0 | 12.0 |
| Leposavić | 16395 | 14299 | 951 | 1145 | 87.2 | 5.8 | 7.0 |
| Lipljan | 69451 | 9713 | 53730 | 6008 | 14.0 | 77.4 | 8.7 |
| Mališevo | 47817 | 475 | 47318 | 24 | 1.0 | 99.0 | 0.1 |
| Novo Brdo | 4611 | 2666 | 1845 | 100 | 57.8 | 40.0 | 2.2 |
| Obilić | 31627 | 5490 | 20971 | 5166 | 17.4 | 66.3 | 16.3 |
| Opolje | 21861 | 0 | 21844 | 17 | 0.0 | 99.9 | 0.1 |
| Orahovac | 59877 | 3795 | 55033 | 1049 | 6.3 | 91.9 | 1.8 |
| Peć | 127796 | 7815 | 96441 | 23540 | 6.1 | 75.5 | 18.4 |
| Podujevo | 92946 | 1118 | 91005 | 823 | 1.2 | 97.9 | 0.9 |
| Priština | 199654 | 26893 | 154990 | 17771 | 13.5 | 77.6 | 8.9 |
| Prizren | 178723 | 10911 | 135674 | 32138 | 6.1 | 75.9 | 18.0 |
| Srbica | 55471 | 713 | 54437 | 321 | 1.3 | 98.1 | 0.6 |
| Štimlje | 23506 | 971 | 21716 | 819 | 4.1 | 92.4 | 3.5 |
| Štrpce | 12712 | 8138 | 4300 | 274 | 64.0 | 33.8 | 2.2 |
| Suva Reka | 64530 | 3001 | 61230 | 299 | 4.7 | 94.9 | 0.5 |
| Uroševac | 113668 | 8314 | 100144 | 5210 | 7.3 | 88.1 | 4.6 |
| Vitina | 57290 | 7002 | 45078 | 5210 | 12.2 | 78.7 | 9.1 |
| Vučitrn | 80644 | 5522 | 71354 | 3768 | 6.8 | 88.5 | 4.7 |
| Zubin Potok | 8479 | 6282 | 2079 | 118 | 74.1 | 24.5 | 1.4 |
| Zvečan | 10030 | 7591 | 1934 | 505 | 75.7 | 19.3 | 5.0 |
| Total | 1956196 | 194190 | 1596072 | 165934 | 9.9 | 81.6 | 8.5 |

Source: Table "Stanovništvo prema nacionalnoj pripadnosti", page 226-275 in Savezni zavod za statistiku (1993).

6. Population by ethnicity from previous censuses

Figure 1, which is based on table 3, shows the results from all Yugoslav post World War II population censuses, 1948-1991, for the ethnic composition of the population of Kosovo, as published by the Federal Statistical Office of SFRY. We notice that the proportion of Albanians has been growing throughout this period, from 68.7 per cent in 1948 to 77.4 per cent in 1981. From 1981 to 1991 the Albanian majority grew from 77 to 82 per cent, according to the

¹⁵ Slightly different estimates have been published for the Kosovo population in 1991, for example, 1,966,436 in *Population projections 1991-2021 (Federal statistical office, Belgrade 1996)*. The differences may be due to revisions after the first preliminary figures were published or a mixture of *de jure* and *de facto* population numbers.

FSO estimates, while the proportion of Serbs declined from 13 to 9 per cent. The proportion of other nationalities did not change much.

Figure 1. Population of Kosovo by ethnicity, according to population censuses 1948-1991

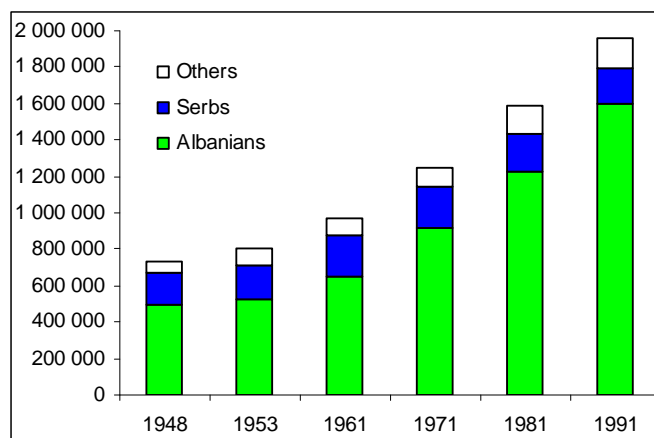


Table 3. Population of Kosovo by ethnicity according to censuses 1948-1991

| | 1948 31 March | 1953 31 March | 1961 31 March | 1971 31 March | 1981 31 March | 1991 31 March |
|---|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Albanians | 498 242 | 524 559 | 646 605 | 916 168 | 1,226,736 | 1,596,072 |
| Serbs | 171 911 | 189 869 | 227 016 | 228 264 | 209,497 | 194,190 |
| Others | 57 667 | 93 713 | 90 367 | 99 261 | 148,207 | 165,934 |
| Total | 727 820 | 808 141 | 963 988 | 1 243 693 | 1,584,440 | 1,956,196 |
| Annual population growth since previous census | | | | | | |
| | | 2.1% | 2.2% | 2.5% | 2.4% | 2.1% |
| Per cent distribution | | | | | | |
| Albanians | 68,5 % | 64,9 % | 67,1 % | 73,7 % | 77,4 % | 81,6 % |
| Serbs | 23,6 % | 23,5 % | 23,5 % | 18,4 % | 13,2 % | 9,9 % |
| Others | 7,9 % | 11,6 % | 9,4 % | 8,0 % | 9,4 % | 8,5 % |
| Total | 100 % | 100 % | 100 % | 100 % | 100% | 100% |
| Source | SZS 1989 | SZS 1989 | SZS 1989 | SZS 1989 | FSO 1997 | FSO 1997 |

The 1981 census is regarded as the last census for Kosovo with full participation of all population groups. I am aware, however, that the 1981 and 1971 censuses have faced some criticism (Grecic 1999).¹⁶ The criticism of the 1981 census, which appears to be based on information provided by the Federal Secretariat of Information (1998), seems to focus on the lack of cooperation between the Kosovo authorities and “*the statistical organs of the Republic*”, but there is no explanation of why and how this affected the results. Furthermore, Grecic discusses the results from the censuses in neighbouring Macedonia in 1991 and 1994 and concludes, but not convincingly, that there was a similar overestimate of Albanians in both Kosovo and Macedonia in 1991. Finally, he finds it implausible that the number of Albanians grew 1.7 times faster in Kosovo than in Macedonia from 1948 to 1981 and that the “*entire population growth of the Gypsies and Turks in the Province was ascribed to Albanians*”.

¹⁶ The Federal Statistical Office (1997:7) alludes to the debate on this: “*The 1991 Census was successfully implemented¹ (one did not get involved with the justification of the remarks on received results of the 1981 Census especially the ones pertaining to the over assessment of the data about the number of the population of Albanians nationality)¹ The authors made important resignation from this fact only when they were setting up the hypothesis for drafting of the assessment of the agricultural population.*” Translation provided by OTP.

It is difficult to see that this, even if it were the case, may have had much significance. According to the censuses the total number of Roma (Gypsies) and Turks in Kosovo grew from 12,545 in 1948 to 46,639 in 1981, while the number of Albanians grew from 498,242 to 1,226,736 (Savezni Zavod za Statistiku 1989 and FSO 1997). The number of Roma and Turks is both much less and growing much faster than the Albanians in this period (272 and 146 per cent, respectively).

Grecic's reasoning, which is based on indirect arguments, is difficult to follow and does not seem to be based on solid demographic data and accepted methodology. Thus, I do not find his conclusions very reliable. The same is the case for the estimates made by the Federal Secretariat of Information, to which Grecic refers, but to which I have not had access.

7. Other population estimates for the 1990s

Table 4 shows estimates for 1995 and 1998 made by other institutions than the Federal Statistical Office. Estimates have been made for 1995 by Huizi Islami (1997), and for 1998 by UNHCR (1999), Federal Secretariat of Information (1998), and Blayo et al. (2000).

The numbers in the first column, which were made by Islami (1997, quoted by Grecic 1999), give an Albanian population of fully 1.96 million in 1995, 89.1 per cent of the total population. This number does not seem realistic. It is difficult to see how the Albanian population could have grown that fast from 1991 to 1995, i.e. at 5.1 per cent per year. This growth is greater than in any previous period, see table 3.

Table 4. Population estimates for Kosovo for 1995 and 1998

| | 1995 Date not known | 1998a Probably 31 March | 1998b Mid 1998 | 1998c 1 October |
|------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------|--|-------------------------|
| Albanians | 1 960 000 | 1 829 119 | 917 000 | |
| Serbs | 140 000 | 210 943 | 221 000 | |
| Others | 100 000 | 148 755 | 240 980 | |
| Total | 2 200 000 | 2 188 817 | 1 378 980 | 2,044,000- 2,131,000 |
| Per cent distribution | | | | |
| Albanians | 89,1 % | 83,6 % | 66,5 % | |
| Serbs | 6,4 % | 9,6 % | 16,0 % | |
| Others | 4,5 % | 6,8 % | 17,5 % | |
| Total | 100 % | 100 % | 100 % | |
| Source | Islami 1997 | UNHCR 1999 | Federal Secretariat of Information 1998 | Blayo et al. 2000 |

The 1998a estimates were made by UNHCR for each village in March 1999. The UNHCR (1999) report says: "*Population figures are extrapolated from 1981 and 1991 census data. As the 1991 census was boycotted by the ethnic Albanian population and the extrapolation does not take into account large numbers of ethnic Albanians known to have moved overseas in recent years, these figures should be considered as a guide only and not necessarily accurate.*" Further explanation is given by Steven Wolfson of UNHCR: "... *the difference between the 1981 and 1991 was taken and used to calculate a proportional change to 1998. The exception to this is where an ethnic group showed a decrease between 1981 and 1991; in this case the 1991 estimates was left unchanged.*" (Letter to OTP dated 21 June 2002).

Thus, UNHCR has done a simple extrapolation.¹⁷ The dynamics caused by the age structure, fertility and mortality differences etc. have not been taken into account, as was done by the FSO for their 1991 estimates and in their population projections for 1991-2021, where they made assumptions about the likely trends in fertility mortality and migration during the nineties and later, see section 8. Another limitation on the accuracy of the UNHCR estimates is that migration out of (and into) Kosovo was not included, due to lack of data. This implies that the UNHCR estimate of the total population in 1998, 2,188,817, is a *de jure* estimate. As such it is very close to the FSO *de jure* estimate for mid 1997.

The next estimate for 1998, called 1998b, has been published by the Federal Secretariat of Information (1998, quoted by Grecic 1999). I have no information about the basis for this. The estimate does not seem very reliable, however, as it implies an unprecedented annual decline of the total population from 1991 to 1998 by 5.5 per cent and of the Albanian population by 7.9 per cent. This estimate is highly inconsistent with all estimates for the 1990s made by the Federal Statistical Office as well as by other institutions, see figure 2.

Thus, both the 1995 and the 1998b estimates of the population of Kosovo by ethnicity seem to be unrealistic.¹⁸ I have, however, not had access to the original publications and the methodology and data that these estimates have been based on.

The last estimate of the 1998 total population in table 4, 1998c, was made by Blayo et al. (2000), discussed in section 4 above. As previously note, they found that between 180,000 and 267,000 people had left Kosovo between 31 March 1981 and 1 October 1998, which resulted in a population on 1 October 1998 of between 2,044,000 and 2,131,000. This is slightly less than the UNHCR estimate for 1998 (which is probably for 31 March 1998). Without the departures from Kosovo the population would have been 2,290,000, according to Blayo et al.

Table 5. Population growth per year, based on censuses and other estimates

| | Based on population censuses | | | | | Based on other estimates | | | | | |
|-----------|------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|--------------------------|------------|------------|-----------|------------|------------|
| | 1948-1953 | 1953-1961 | 1961-1971 | 1971-1981 | 1981-1991 | 1981-1995 | 1981-1998a | 1981-1998b | 1991-1995 | 1991-1998a | 1991-1998b |
| Albanians | 1,0% | 2,6% | 3,5% | 2,9% | 2,6% | 3,3% | 2,9% | -2,1% | 5,1% | 1,9% | -7,9% |
| Serbs | 2,0% | 2,2% | 0,1% | -0,9% | -0,8% | -2,9% | 0,0% | 0,4% | -8,2% | 1,2% | 1,8% |
| Others | 9,7% | -0,5% | 0,9% | 4,0% | 1,1% | -2,8% | 0,0% | 3,5% | -12,7% | -1,6% | 5,3% |
| Total | 2,1% | 2,2% | 2,5% | 2,4% | 2,1% | 2,3% | 2,3% | -1,0% | 2,9% | 1,6% | -5,0% |

8. Development of the total Kosovo population since 1948

In addition to census results the Federal Office of Statistics publishes estimates of the mid-year population for each republic and province. I have located such estimates for almost every year since 1948. These estimates appear to have been made using the natural increase method explained in section 3. Generally, the estimates exclude internal and external migration, according to FSO (1997: 58), thus corresponding to the *de jure* population concept used in the censuses. These estimates are shown in the second column of table 6.

¹⁷ There is a small problem in that the UNHCR report left out the numbers for some localities in the totals for 12 of the 31 municipalities (12,486 persons altogether). This is probably due to an error but it does not affect the overall size and composition of the estimates. I have included the corrected totals in all tables and graphs in this report.

¹⁸ In a discussions of the conflict between Albanians and Serbs in Kosovo in the 1980s Judah (1997: 152) writes: "In the 1980s, however, the bitterest statistics war was waged over the question of population and emigration." and "Although both sides question the official statistics when they do not suit their arguments, they both use them, for example the census returns, when they do"

Table 6. Estimates of the total population of Kosovo, 1948-1998

| Year | De jure population | De facto population: excl. citizens at temporary work abroad | Difference between <i>de jure</i> and <i>de facto</i> population | Type and date of estimate | Source |
|-------|--------------------|--|--|---------------------------|---|
| 1948 | 727,820 | | | Census, 31 March | SZS 1989 |
| 1952 | 793,000 | | | Mid-year estimate | SGJ 1991 |
| 1953 | 808,141 | | | Census, 31 March | SZS 1989 |
| 1953 | 813,000 | | | Mid-year estimate | SGJ 1991 |
| 1954 | 832,000 | | | Mid-year estimate | SGJ 1991 |
| 1955 | 842,000 | | | Mid-year estimate | SY Y 1997 |
| 1957 | 873,000 | | | Mid-year estimate | SPB 2001 |
| 1958 | 890,000 | | | Mid-year estimate | SGJ 1991 |
| 1959 | 921,000 | | | Mid-year estimate | SGJ 1991 |
| 1960 | 944,000 | | | Mid-year estimate | SGJ 1991 |
| 1961 | 963,988 | | | Census, 31 March | SZS 1989 |
| 1961 | 972,000 | | | Mid-year estimate | SGJ 1991 |
| 1962 | 997,000 | | | Mid-year estimate | SGJ 1991 |
| 1963 | 1,021,000 | | | Mid-year estimate | SGJ 1991 |
| 1964 | 1,046,000 | | | Mid-year estimate | SGJ 1991 |
| 1965 | 1,082,000 | | | Mid-year estimate | SY Y 1997 |
| 1966 | 1,101,000 | | | Mid-year estimate | SGJ 1991 |
| 1967 | 1,131,000 | | | Mid-year estimate | SGJ 1991 |
| 1968 | 1,159,000 | | | Mid-year estimate | SGJ 1991 |
| 1969 | 1,189,000 | | | Mid-year estimate | SGJ 1991 |
| 1970 | 1,220,000 | | | Mid-year estimate | SGJ 1991 |
| 1971 | 1,243,693 | | | Census, 31 March | SZS 1989 |
| 1971 | 1,254,000 | | | Mid-year estimate | SGJ 1991 |
| 1972 | 1,291,000 | | | Mid-year estimate | SGJ 1991 |
| 1973 | 1,329,000 | | | Mid-year estimate | SGJ 1991 |
| 1974 | 1,367,000 | | | Mid-year estimate | SGJ 1991 |
| 1975 | 1,405,000 | 1,377,000 | 28,000 | Mid-year estimate | SY Y 1997 |
| 1976 | 1,446,000 | | | Mid-year estimate | SGJ 1991 |
| 1977 | 1,487,000 | | | Mid-year estimate | SGJ 1991 |
| 1978 | 1,526,000 | | | Mid-year estimate | SGJ 1991 |
| 1979 | 1,566,000 | | | Mid-year estimate | SGJ 1991 |
| 1980 | 1,553,000 | | | Mid-year estimate | SGJ 1991 |
| 1981 | 1,584,440 | | | Census, 31 March | SZS 1989 |
| 1981 | 1,595,000 | | | Mid-year estimate | SGJ 1991 |
| 1982 | 1,635,000 | | | Mid-year estimate | SGJ 1991 |
| 1983 | 1,676,000 | | | Mid-year estimate | SGJ 1991 |
| 1984 | 1,717,000 | | | Mid-year estimate | SGJ 1991 |
| 1985 | 1,760,000 | 1,701,000 | 59,000 | Mid-year estimate | SY Y 1997 |
| 1986 | 1,803,000 | | | Mid-year estimate | SGJ 1991 |
| 1987 | 1,848,000 | | | Mid-year estimate | SPB 2001 |
| 1988 | 1,894,000 | 1,818,000 | 76,000 | Mid-year estimate | SY Y 1997 |
| 1989 | 1,939,000 | 1,857,000 | 82,000 | Mid-year estimate | SY Y 1997 |
| 1990 | 1,987,000 | 1,896,000 | 91,000 | Mid-year estimate | SY Y 1997 |
| 1991 | 1,956,196 | | | Census est., 31 March | SY Y 1997 |
| 1991 | 1,968,000 | 1,935,000 | 33,000 | Mid-year estimate | SY Y 1997 |
| 1992 | 2,008,000 | 1,943,000 | 65,000 | Mid-year estimate | SY Y 1997 |
| 1993 | 2,044,000 | 1,977,000 | 67,000 | Mid-year estimate | SY Y 1997 |
| 1994 | 2,079,000 | 2,011,000 | 68,000 | Mid-year estimate | SY Y 1997 |
| 1995 | 2,115,000 | 2,046,000 | 69,000 | Mid-year estimate | SY Y 1997 |
| 1996 | 2,151,000 | 2,100,000 | 51,000 | Mid-year estimate | SY Y 1997 |
| 1997 | 2,188,000 | 2,116,000 | 72,000 | Mid-year estimate | SY Y 1998 |
| 1998 | 2,222,000 | | | Mid-year estimate | SPB 2001 |
| 1995 | | 2,200,000 | | De facto? Date not known | Islami 1997 |
| 1998a | 2,188,817 | | | 31 March? | UNHCR 1999 |
| 1998b | | 1,378,000 | | De facto? Mid-year | Federal Secretariat of Information 1998, cited by Grecic 1999 |
| 1998c | | 2,044,000 low 2,131,000 high | | 1 October | Blayo et al. (2000) |

SGJ: Statistički Godišnjak Jugoslavije (Statistical Yearbook of Yugoslavia)

SZS: Savezni zavod za statistiku (Federal Institute for Statistics / Federal Statistical Office)

SY Y: Statistical Yearbook of Yugoslavia

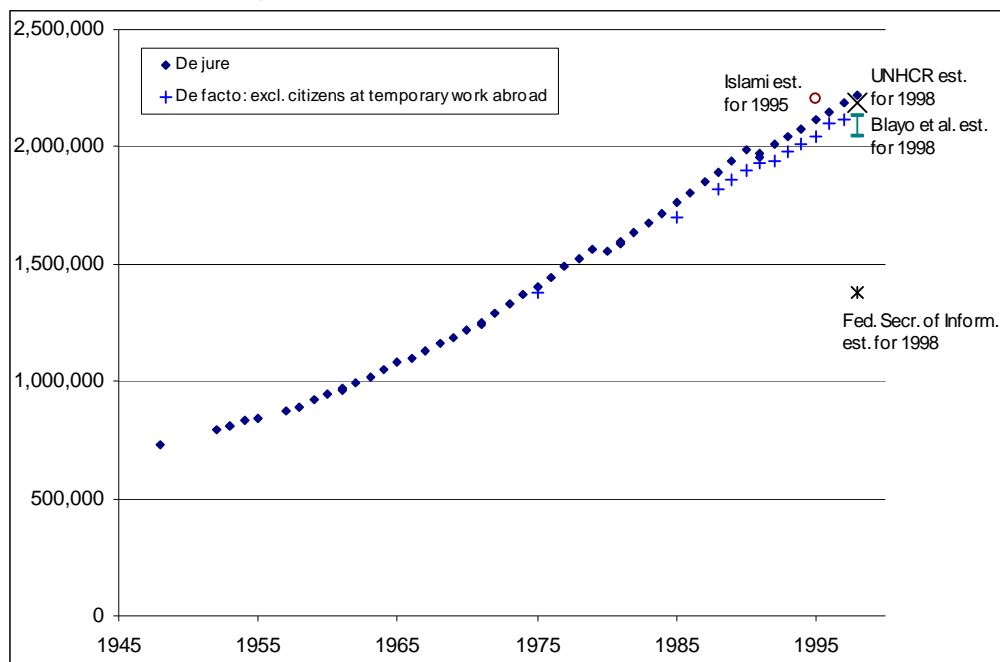
SPB: Statistical Pocket Book

However, FSO has also made estimates of the population "in the country", which are "Based on the projections of Yugoslav citizens at temporary work abroad" (FSO 1997: 64). This corresponds to the *de facto* population concept. These estimates have also been included in table 6 and figure 2 below, together with the independent estimates for 1995 and 1998 discussed above.¹⁹

Note that the FSO numbers are consistent with each other, i.e. both census and midyear estimates. The UNHCR estimate for 1998 also seems consistent with the FSO estimates, whereas the Federal Secretariat of Information estimate is far off the trend that the Kosovo population growth has been exhibiting during the last fifty years, whether migration is included or not.

The difference between the FSO *de jure* estimate for 1998, 2.2 million, and the Federal Secretariat of Information estimate for 1998, which appears to be an estimate of the *de facto* population, is more than 800,000. This difference is very large, 758,000, greater than in the previous year, and it is not likely that all of this can be explained by migration in the course of only one year, from the middle of 1997 to the middle of 1998.

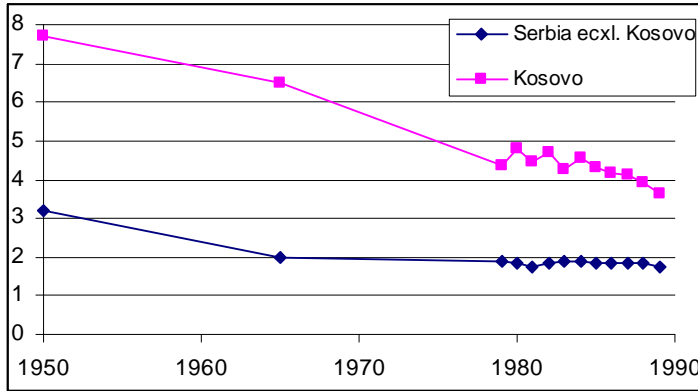
Figure 2. Total population of Kosovo according to official censuses and mid-year estimates for 1948-1998, and other estimates for 1995 and 1998



According to the FSO estimates, from 1981 to 1991 the total population of Kosovo grew by 2.1 per cent per year on average. The Serb population declined by 0.8 per cent per year, whereas the Albanian population increased by 2.6 per cent per year. These growth rates are within the plausible range. The decline of the Serb population is most probably due to net out-migration from Kosovo. The fertility levels in both Central Serbia and Kosovo have been declining to a low level as in the rest of Europe, see figure 3, but it is not likely that the fertility level of Serbs in Kosovo already was already so low as to cause population decline.

¹⁹ To be accurate the census figures refer to 1 March and the mid-year estimates to 30 June, but this difference would not be visible in this graph. The dates of reference for two of the independent estimates for 1998 are not known.

Figure 3. Total fertility rate (number of children per woman) in Serbia and Kosovo,



Source: *Demografska statistika 1989*, Savezni zavod za statistiku, Beograd 1991.

The relatively high growth of the Albanian population, more than 2 per cent per year, is primarily due to a large surplus of births over deaths. This growth is consistent with the demographic development of a population that has not completed the demographic transition, i.e. it has a relatively high but declining fertility level and a relatively low but still declining mortality level. Table 4 shows that the growth rate has been declining in recent decades.

The total fertility rate (TFR) for Kosovo, i.e. the expected number of children per woman, declined from about 6.5 in 1961 to 3.5 in 1991 and was assumed to be 3.15-3.25 for the period 1991-1996 in the FSO population projections for 1991-2021. (See below for more on the FSO population projections. This is about twice the level of TFR assumed for Central Serbia and Vojvodina, 1.63-1.77, which is at the current Western European level. The life expectancy in Kosovo also changed considerably since the 1960s, and is assumed to be only slightly lower than in Central Serbia and Vojvodina. The projections publication shows a youthful population pyramid for Kosovo, which is an indication of high but declining fertility in the last two decades (Federal Statistical Office and University of Belgrade 1996).

9. Discussion of the ethnic composition of the population of Kosovo

The best source for data on the ethnic composition of the population of Kosovo is the population censuses. They show that there has been a gradual increase in the proportion of Albanians from 68.5 per cent in 1948 to 81.6 per cent in 1991, except for a small decline from 1948 to 1953, see figure 4. For Serbs there has been a uniform decline, from 23.6 per cent in 1948 to 9.9 per cent in 1991. As explained above, the ethnic composition set out in the 1991 census derives from a FSO projection, because the census was boycotted by ethnic Albanians. The FSO estimates for 1991 yields a smooth increase in the proportion of Albanians from 1981 to 1991, as is the case for the previous periods. The growth of the proportion of Albanians relative to Serbs is both due to higher fertility among Albanians than among Serbs in Kosovo and to net out-migration of Serbs.

Figure 4. Proportion of Albanians and Serbs of the Kosovo population, according to censuses 1948-1991 and independent estimates for 1995 and 1998

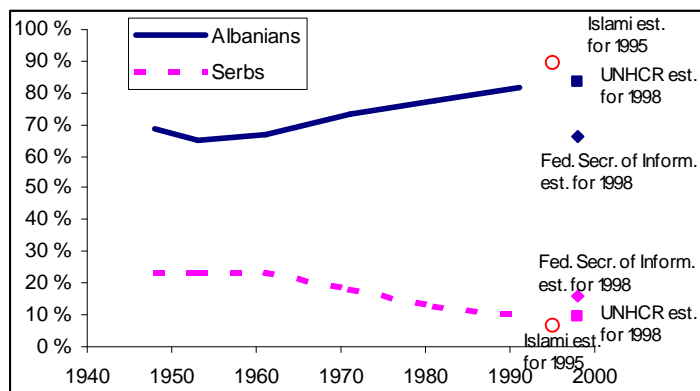


Figure 4 also includes other estimates, of which I found the Islami and Federal Secretariat of Information estimates to be unrealistic, as discussed above. The UNHCR estimates, on the other hand, are a smooth continuation of previous trends.

It has been claimed that the 1981 census overestimated the number of Albanians, but the increase from 73.7 to 77.4 per cent during the period 1971-1981 seems plausible, given the high fertility level of the Albanians in Kosovo.

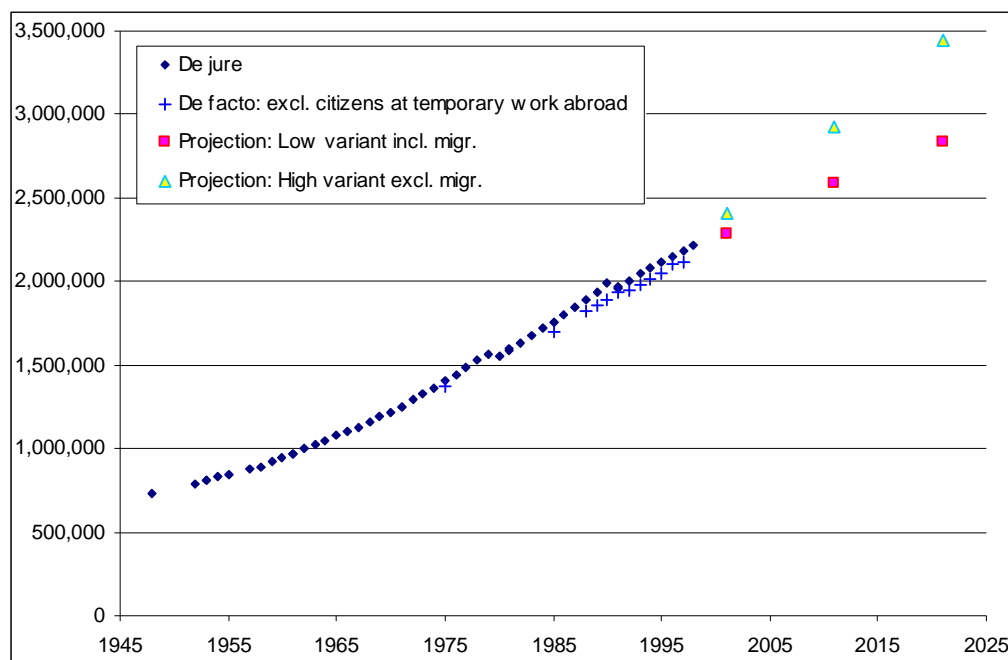
My conclusion is that the proportion of ethnic Albanians in Kosovo in 1998 is probably close to the UNHCR estimate of 83.6 per cent. It is certainly lower than the Islami estimate of 89.1 per cent (for 1995) and higher than the Federal Secretariat of Information of 66.5 per cent. The proportion is most probably also higher than the proportion found in previous censuses, due to the high natural growth of the Albanian population. Even if the 1981 results may have overestimated the number of Albanians - although I have no information about the magnitude of this - the proportion in 1998 is almost certainly higher than the 1971 proportion of 73.7 per cent due to the trends in population and growth rates of the different ethnic groups as reflected in the (S)FRY's censuses and population estimates.

It is difficult to give a *range* of plausible values of the proportion of ethnic Albanians in 1991. According to all available estimates, including those I find implausible, the range could be between 67 and 90 per cent. A more realistic range would probably be between 80 and 85 per cent, taking into consideration trends in population and growth rates as reflected in the (S)FRY's censuses and population estimates, as well the more reliable independent population assessments. A plausible range for the proportion of ethnic Serbs in Kosovo in 1998 is probably between 9 and 13 per cent.

10. Population projections

For this report, I have also looked at population projections for FRY, including Kosovo, made by the Federal Statistical Office and the Demographic Research Centre of the University of Belgrade in 1996. The projections are made for each republic and province of FRY by age and sex, but not by ethnicity. The projections are based on the 1991 enumerated (or estimated) population and an application of the cohort component method, as explained in section 3 above. Several different variants were made, based on different assumptions about the future trends of these demographic components. Figure 4 shows, together with the FSO estimates for the past, the two most extreme variants, i.e. the low variant with migration and the high variant without migration.

Figure 5. De jure, de facto and projected total population of Kosovo, 1948-2021 (Federal Statistical Office)



The population of Kosovo was in 1996 projected to grow to between 2.28 and 2.38 million in 2001 if there is migration, and to between 2.36 and 2.41 million if there is no migration. In both cases a continued high but declining population growth is projected, i.e. a continuation of the development in the previous decades. Both variants exhibit a growing population, but the growth is significantly lower in the low variant, primarily because it assumes very low future fertility. The migration assumption is based on the observed and estimated migration balance in previous periods. In the projections it is assumed that the migration balance will reach the highest level in the first part of the projection period, i.e. 1991-2001, and then decline. For Kosovo it is assumed that a negative migration balance will continue throughout the projection period 1991-2021. Still, the population will continue to grow, due to the relatively high fertility level. The events in 1998-1999 have dramatically changed the degree of realism of these projections, but it is nevertheless interesting to see how the Federal Statistical Office assessed the population trends in the middle of the 1990s.

Thus, the estimates and projections made by the Federal Statistical Office in the 1990s are consistent with the estimates made by UNHCR and Blayo et al., which indicate that the total population of Kosovo in 1998 was slightly above 2 million.

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