A Critical Analysis of the Greek Referendum of July 2015
Event Analysis

Yannis Sygkelos
Lecturer, DEI College, University of London
yannissygkelos@hotmail.com

www.suedosteuropa.uni-graz.at/cse/en/sygkelos
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A Critical Analysis of the Greek Referendum of July 2015

Yannis Sygkelos*

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Introduction
On 27 June 2015, after five months of politics of brinkmanship in negotiations with the European Union / European Central Bank / International Monetary Fund (EU/ECB/IMF) troika, Alexis Tsipras, the Prime Minister of the unusual coalition government of the left-wing Coalition of the Radical Left (Synaspismos Rizospastikis Aristeras, SYRIZA) and the far-right Independent Greeks (Aneksartitoi Ellines, ANEL), all of a sudden, proclaimed a referendum, to be held on 5 July 2015. Referendums first ushered in under the rule of Napoleon Bonaparte; in the 19th and the first half of the 20th century, they were, at its best, a highly controversial form of direct democracy. Referendums were being advocated by so uncommon political forces as British Conservatives, German Social Democrats and Nazis, but were also being disapproved by severely opposing political ideologues such as liberals and communists.1 By the end of the 20th century, though, they have proliferated in many European countries, inasmuch as issue politics have been outweighing representative democracy along with social, economic, ethnic and/or religious cleavages.2 Hence, citizens are now getting more and more eager to influence key decision-making concerning single issues and this is feasible through referendums or citizens’ initiatives. Nonetheless, Greece has got an extremely poor political experience in types of direct democracy. Apart from the post-junta referendum of 1974 on Republic, all other six referendums held during the 20th century were conducted in conditions of political turmoil, chaos and, in most of the cases, extensive electoral fraud.

Referendums have assorted shapes and dilemmas, such as constitutional issues, strategic options for a state (e.g. accession to the EU, adoption of the euro), devolution or secession, and local mundane issues. In constitutional

* Yannis Sygkelos is a Lecturer at DEI College [Thessaloniki, Greece], a registered teaching institution of the University of London (International Programmes). His research interests involve nationalism, human rights, political ideologies, and discourse theory and analysis, while his main field is the Balkans. He is the author of the manuscript “Nationalism from the Left” and several academic articles.


theory, referendums are classified into binding and advisory or into constitutional and facultative. In practice, however, one could distinguish referendums between those that governments use to consult the electorate or are constitutionally required to approve constitutional amendments, and those that governments abuse as a façade of legitimacy and popular mobilization. This classification does not intend to imply that the latter are always rigged and satisfactory for the leaders who devise them, the Chilean plebiscite of 1988, which removed Pinochet from power, being the most compulsive.

Constitutional oddities in respect of the Greek referendum of July 2015
The legality of the recent Greek referendum is wholly indubitable. Greek Constitution art.44 stipulates that

\[ a \text{ referendum over pivotal national questions is proclaimed by a Presidential decree, after the approval of Cabinet's request by the absolute majority of the total number of MPs. } \]

Art.44 is supplemented by the implementing law 4023/2011 “on enhancing direct and participatory democracy through referendums.” Fiscal questions are excluded, albeit upon already passed bills. In his address to the Greek people, Alexis Tsipras announced that the Cabinet decided to put the ultimatum (sic) of the EU/ECB/IMF institutions, that is, their proposal on Greece’s bailout programme, at referendum. Articulating a discourse fraught with national instances, he invoked national sovereignty, national unity, the dignity of the Greek people, national history, and the metaphor of Greece as the birthplace of democracy and the foundation of the European civilisation. As a consequence, the national question art.44 refers to was translated into a national cause: the resistance of the Greek people to EU/ECB/IMF proposals and plans of people’s humiliation and subversion of government’s democratic mandate. Playing the patriotic card and setting the goal of popular mobilization, Tsipras and his close associates resorted to a facultative referendum in order that the incumbent coalition government retain office.

Within this framework, a wide range of constitutional oddities took place. To begin with, the one-week-time frame between the call and the date of the referendum was too pressing. A week time, as the General Secretary of the Council of Europe, Thorbjorn Jagland, mentioned, is not sufficient for the voters to make their minds up. 4023/2011 art.12 provides that the referendum should be held within 30 days “after the publication of the Presidential decree on its proclamation.” Evidently, this is not to be interpreted that a referendum ought to be called and conducted within 30 days. Such a very brief period is rather unprecedented: we could only compare it with referendums held by

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3 A constitutional referendum is stipulated in the Constitution, e.g. Irish referendums over any constitutional amendment; a facultative referendum operates as a mediating device to cope with an exigency, e.g. the UK referendum over the EEC membership (1975).
authoritarian or illegitimate regimes, such as the one concerned the status of Crimea (2014), which was proclaimed by pro-Russian secessionists to be held within ten days. On the contrary, referendums held in established European democracies allow a long period for public deliberation. For instance, the recent referendum on Scottish independence was settled on under the Edinburgh Agreement (15 October 2012), proclaimed under the Scotland Act 1998 Order 2013 (issued on 12 February 2013), and held on 18 September 2014. Also, the Danish euro referendum (2000) allowed over six months of campaigning despite that two referendums on the Maastricht Treaty on European Union (1992 and 1993) had already been held and the recent, more trivial, Irish referendum over same-sex marriage allowed four months of public debate.

Within the very limited time of one week, no essential campaigning was unfolded. Instead of distinct YES and NO camps being deployed and public debate being held, YES and NO proponents orchestrated rallies and argue their cases mainly through broadcasting and the social media. As political science comparative studies have shown, however, campaigning might prove to be decisive in determining the outcome of a referendum.6 Eventually, the referendum ended up to a proxy-election aiming to determine the popularity of the incumbent government. And the shorter a government has been in office, the more likely it is to convince the electorate to take its side: in our case, the NO side. Apparently, there was not enough time for the voters to make informed decisions, campaigning was at its best truncated, and the voters cast their ballot expressing, in general terms, their preference to the government of the day or the opposition.

Another important constitutional oddity concerns the clarity of the question. According to 4023/2011 art.3, “the question is phrased in a comprehensible and succinct manner.” On the contrary, the question was puzzling and vaguely framed. The ballot read:

\[ \text{should the plan agreement submitted by the European Commission, the} \]
\[ \text{European Central Bank, and the International Monetary Fund in the} \]
\[ \text{Euro-group of 25.06.2015, be approved? It consists of two parts, which} \]
\[ \text{constitute an aggregate proposal: the first document is entitled "Reforms for} \]
\[ \text{the Completion of the Current Program and beyond" and the second} \]
\[ \text{"Preliminary Debt Sustainability Analysis"} \]

(both document titles appeared in English with a translation in Greek placed in brackets). It offered two options: Not approved/NO and approved/YES. Apart from being too lengthy to be placed on a referendum ballot, the question cited two documents of a very recent non-paper amounted to 34 pages that the voters themselves had to find out and read carefully. Besides, the Greek translation of the above documents contained abbreviations in English as well as economic and legal jargon non-comprehensible to most of the voters. Citation of documents is not unusual in referendum ballots: most of the referendums on the EU required prior reading of Treaties; yet, the texts were not that sophisticated and the time allowed the voters to be informed was substantially

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longer. Nevertheless, the questions were rather comprehensible and succinct, e.g. "are you in favour of or against approval by the Netherlands of the treaty establishing a constitution for Europe?" (Dutch referendum on the Constitutional Treaty held in 2005). That is to say, that even if a voter had not read the document of the Treaty could very well reply to the question of whether s/he is in favour of a European Constitution or, by implication, of ceding part of sovereignty to a supranational authority. On the contrary, the Greek referendum ballot did not address the issue at stake outright, that is, the bailout program, but a peripheral agreement emanating from it.

As regards to the consequences, they were wholly unforeseen and ambiguous. Even the seemingly clear-cut YES option would have had ambiguous ramifications. The draft agreement that the Greek electorate would have potentially approved concerned a bailout program due to expire on the 30 June, that is, before the referendum having been held. The NO option was completely ambiguous: had the electorate disapproved the draft agreement put in referendum, would the government have proceeded with another bailout agreement? To what extent, a new bailout agreement would have been different from the disapproved one? Would there have been no bailout programme at all? Would this have meant default and Grexit? A request for an extension of the bailout program with amendments on the proposal that the coalition government called the voters to disapprove, was submitted by Tsipras on 30 June and caused further confusion as regards the expediency and the necessity of the referendum. Such ambivalence as of the impact of the result of the referendum is rather unprecedented in established democracies. From a constitutional point of view, referendums should not allow any interpretation of the popular vote and the impact of YES and NO should be absolutely clear either.

The last but not least oddity concerned the architecture of the ballot. Paradoxically, the NO option, backed by the government, was above the YES one: a manoeuvre rather reminiscent of referendums called by authoritarian regimes. For example, the format of the 1978 Chilean referendum ballot on the approval of Pinochet’s regime was biased in favour of YES, which was represented by the national flag, whereas the NO block was a black rectangle.7

Conclusions
Too a pressing time frame, absence of an essential campaigning, puzzling wording, unforeseen implications, and a bizarre format, all made the Greek referendum of July 2015 problematic. Regardless of whether aiming to forestall the split of SYRIZA and government’s downfall, or being a step towards a decisive split with the euro-zone facilitating a drachma plot,8 or intending to

increase the popularity and legitimacy of Tsipras, because of all the aforementioned oddities, this referendum should have never been made. It rather constituted an abuse of direct democracy, an unexpected political manoeuvre made by a political leader to circumvent a hard political exigency. Despite the so many appeals of the coalition government to European values and standards during the tiny period of campaigning, such a referendum falls short of European standards and is unfamiliar with European democratic norms.

The financial repercussions of the proclamation of this referendum were harsh for the Greek society, as it immediately led to a bank run and the inevitable imposition of capital controls. What is more, the compromise reached in the EU Summit of 12 July 2015 made it absolutely meaningless in political terms. Most interestingly, nonetheless, the referendum of July 2015 highlighted the oxymoron of what might be called a “leftist democratic myth”, systematically articulated by SYRIZA, that is that globalised neo-liberal institutions, namely the EU/IMF/ECB troika, and hegemonic figures at a global level, i.e. Schaeuble foremost, Merkel, Lagarde, Dragi, and Juncker, all allegedly aborted the democratic mandate of the coalition government and defied the vote and will of the Greek electorate. On the contrary, the conduct of a referendum manipulative of the popular vote and serving certain partisan considerations and ends is apparently at odds with the democratic discourse of SYRIZA’s leadership.

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Building State Failure in Kosovo?

Book Review

Joseph Coelho
Assistant Professor, Framingham State University, Massachusetts
jcoelho2@framingham.edu

http://www.suedosteuropa.uni-graz.at/cse/en/coelho
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Building State Failure in Kosovo?

Joseph Coelho*

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Introduction
Since the end of the Cold War, the international community has engaged in a number of ambitious interventions in postwar countries with the aim of fundamentally reshaping state-society relations through building new state institutions, restructuring economies and supporting the development of civil society. The notion that international actors are able to build effective and legitimate state institutions in societies recovering from war has led to a proliferation of studies that have explored, both theoretically and empirically, the impact of international state-building. The general consensus in the literature is that the record is not a good one: the few success stories of international state-building have been overshadowed by a laundry list of failures. Explanations of these failures typically range from a mismatch of resources and mission objectives\(^1\) and the lack of strategic coherence among international state-builders\(^2\) to the deleterious effects of liberal interventions\(^3\) and so-called ‘liberal imperialism’.\(^4\)

The international intervention in postwar Kosovo is perhaps the epitome of international state-building missions. Since the 1999 NATO military intervention, Kosovo has been subjected to a series of highly invasive international missions that have built and supported the institutional architecture of its political and economic systems. From 1999-2008, it was a protectorate of the international community and administered by the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), a mission that wielded executive, legislative, and judicial powers. On 17 February 2008, Kosovo declared its independence from Serbia and was subsequently placed under the supervision of the International Civilian Office (ICO). Its police, border control, and judiciary are currently under the authority of the European Union Rule of Law Mission (EULEX). Yet after fifteen years of state-building, international administration and supervision, and billions in aid, resources and investments, Kosovo is still considered a ‘black hole’ in Europe. Today, the

\(^{*}\) Joseph Coelho is an Assistant Professor of Political Science at Framingham State University in Framingham, Massachusetts. He received his PhD in International Relations at Northeastern University in Boston Massachusetts. His research interests are in state-building and democratization in the Western Balkans. He is currently a member of the International Advisory Board for the Balkans Free Press.


country's political system is designated as a 'semi-consolidated authoritarian regime.'\textsuperscript{5} Political corruption and organized crime are rampant. Unemployment rates are among the highest in the region and about one third of the country lives in poverty. The economy is largely dependent on international aid and remittances from abroad. And recently, tens of thousands of desperate Kosovars left the country seeking refuge and economic opportunity elsewhere in Europe.

Two recent books on Kosovo offer some compelling insights and answers as to why international state-builders stumbled in Kosovo: Elton Skendaj's, \textit{Creating Kosovo: International Oversight and the Making of Ethical Institutions} (hardback $49.95) and Andrea Lorenzo Capussela's \textit{State-Building in Kosovo: Democracy, Corruption and the EU in the Balkans} (hardback $55.00). Both books are welcome additions to the growing discourse on state-building and touch on some of the more important themes that have recently dominated the literature, including the principle of local ownership, the limitations of technocratic approaches to state-building, and the dilemmas of political corruption and state capture in postwar societies.

Local ownership is overrated

In \textit{Creating Kosovo}, Skendaj attempts to answer a straightforward question: Can ambitious international interventions build states and democracies? His initial hypothesis going into the research was that international organizations would be unable to accomplish such goals. This is not surprising given that for sometime in the scholarship on state-building (and liberal peace-building alike) the pendulum swung from emphasis on institutional strengthening led by international technocrats with strong executive mandates to expressions of locally-driven transitions that genuinely promoted greater 'local ownership' of state-building processes. This shift towards local ownership represented a growing criticism among scholars and practitioners alike that international interventions usually lack the local sensitivities and knowledge needed for effective state-building. As a result, international missions create state institutions that are detached from the realities of the everyday local.

The findings presented in \textit{Creating Kosovo}, however, push against the grain and in some ways swing the pendulum back towards the other direction: instead of handing over the keys to local officials during the incipient stages of post-conflict state-building, the international community should insulate state institutions from political and societal influences for an extended period of time. By insulating these institutions from local political pressures, internationals will be able to build and leave behind autonomous state bureaucracies that will recruit and promote based on meritocracy. From this, the new employees of these established bureaucracies would learn that professional success depends upon following rule-bound behavior through various mechanisms, such as strategic calculation, role-playing, and normative suasion. Such a sequence will lead to effective and ethical bureaucracies that will be able to implement public policies in an impartial manner. By contrast, the author hypothesizes that the local ownership approach, or the early

devolution of authority from international to local actors, leaves bureaucracies vulnerable to corrupt practices that result in ineffective institutional outcomes. In the end, the key to Skendaj’s argument is that “international strategy matters more than international resources in state-building.”

Skendaj’s analysis is essentially a Weberian approach to understanding state development. He arrives at his conclusion by unpacking Kosovo’s state into four of its core bureaucracies: the central administration, court system, police force, and customs service. According to the author, this is an important first step because most of the literature on state-building treats the state as a unitary concept that is “overly abstract” and fails to take into account how state bureaucracies vary in terms of their effectiveness. In chapter 3, Skendaj provides evidence that supports his hypothesis and demonstrates the hazards of transferring authority early to elected leaders in the central administration and outright ownership of the judiciary by local judges and prosecutors. With regard to the central administration, UNMIK’s strategy led to the politicization of this particular bureaucratic organization as “party elites brought their village or town networks and employed family and friends in the new administration.” In terms of the judiciary, the institution was corrupted from the beginning as local judges and prosecutors were exposed to intimidation, corruption and intense political interference. In chapter 4, the author’s findings demonstrate the opposite institutional outcome when UNMIK insulated both the customs service and police forces from political and societal interference. He finds:

“[t]he sequence for proper construction of the bureaucratic organization is therefore ensuring autonomy through insulation before embedding organizations in society. The socialization of officials into the professional norms of bureaucracy started with strategic calculation and it continued with roleplaying and normative suasion as employees learned appropriate behavior in the organization. With time, employees thus internalized such rules and acted on them habitually. Therefore public administration employees need to be socialized into the rules and norms of the bureaucracy in order to behave in a rational Webranian fashion.”

Skendaj then shifts his attention from Kosovo’s state-building process to democratization in chapter 5. The author argues that citizen mobilization in the 1990s during Serbian repression supported the theoretical argument that mass mobilization and public participation contributed to a democratic opening in Kosovo. However, in the postwar stage, the country’s democratic development had been undermined by the unwillingness of Kosovo’s voters and civil society to hold their elites accountable. This demobilization of citizenry is a direct legacy of the parallel structures of the 1990s when nationalism was used to silence opponents and critics of Kosovo’s emerging political elites. This trend continued in the postwar phase as Kosovo’s elites used the status question throughout UNMIK’s rule to evade responsibility for poor governance.
and denounced critics and opposition forces as “anti-Albanian” or “traitors.”

Moreover, the international community is equally responsible for demobilizing Kosovo society as “influential international actors tried to influence public opinion against engaging in protests or visible criticism of government policies.” The key finding here is that international actors have to take different approaches to state-building and democratization: whereas state-building requires insulation from the public, democratization depends on active societal participation to drive the process and hold political elites accountable for their behavior and policies.

Creating Kosovo is a well-written and researched book that challenges the premise of local ownership, which at times has dominated the contemporary scholarship and practice of state-building. For this reason, it is an important and refreshing contribution to this growing field. The study relies on data drawn from fieldwork that generated over 100 semi-structured interviews with international representatives, government officials, and members of local civil society. In addition, he utilizes various survey data – including Gallup’s Balkan Monitor Insights and Perceptions: Voices from the Balkans (2008-2010) and the Early Warning Reports published by the United Nations Development Programme – to measure public perceptions of bureaucratic effectiveness. However, the implications of his findings will undoubtedly lead critics of international state-building to shake their heads in disagreement. The notion that internationals need to assume control over bureaucratic organizations in order to insulate them from local influences is hardly the solution that countries from the developing world are likely to accept. Moreover, the international appetite for costly and invasive international interventions is unlikely to materialize in the foreseeable future. With no international administrators or supervisors willing to insulate the bureaucracies of war-torn countries, Skendaj suggests that media and civil society will have to take the lead in monitoring these organizations and putting pressuring on local officials to behave professionally. But as Skendaj shows in the case of Kosovo, such societal organizations remain weak and ineffective at changing the behaviors of illiberal political elites. This left the reviewer scratching his head at the conclusion of Creating Kosovo.

Fearing Kosovo’s criminal elites

State-building in Kosovo by Andrea Lorenzo Capussela is an insider’s account of the EU’s flagship mission – EULEX – to strengthen Kosovo’s rule of law institutions. Between 2008-2011, he served as the head of the economics unit of the ICO, which was in charge of supervising the functioning of Kosovo’s new state institutions laid out in the 2007 Comprehensive Proposal for Kosovo Status Settlement, generally known as the ‘Ahtisaari plan.’ In some ways, Capussela’s study is a sequel to Iain King and Whit Mason’s Peace at Any Price, which was also an insider’s account of the obstacles faced by UNMIK during its state-building mandate. While both books offer astute observations

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9 Skendaj, Creating Kosovo, 155-62.
10 Skendaj, Creating Kosovo, 164.
about the geopolitical issues of international interventionism in Kosovo and how they impacted the mandates of international state-builders, Capussela’s analysis is much more in tune with the contemporary scholarly literature on institutional development and state-building.

Capussela’s main argument is that the international community allowed Kosovo’s main elites to capture and corrupt the new state it had created. Due to the controversial nature of NATO’s military intervention in 1999, the Western governments had to demonstrate to both world opinion and their domestic constituents that the intervention was a moral decision, justified by their aims of laying the institutional foundations of a democratic Kosovo state that respected the principles of human rights and the rule of law. Preoccupied with the image of Kosovo being a source of regional instability, the international community made itself vulnerable to the threats of Kosovo’s politico-criminal elites, who at times have instigated instability if their perceived interests were threatened by international policies, as evidenced by the unrest in northern Kosovo and in neighboring Macedonia. According to Capussela, the critical event that led the international community down this path was the failure of NATO to enforce its disarmament program of the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) after its bombing campaign: “Tolerating that its disarmament orders be openly flouted was a grave mistake, which weakened the credibility of Kosovo’s new administrators and magnified the political influence of the worst elements of Kosovo’s emerging elites.”

This vulnerability led the international community to neglect its state-building mandate by overly concerning itself with the short-term priority of maintaining stability at the expense of its long-term goals of developing a prosperous market democracy. It also opened the way for Kosovo’s elites to gradually consolidate their grip over political and economic power. Entrenched in organized crime and a violent insurgent past, the emerging elites entered politics after the war and subverted Kosovo’s fragile institutions as a way of expanding their criminal fortunes through patronage networks and rent extraction. According to the author, this led to the development of a particular ‘social order’ that emerged during the early days of Kosovo’s status as an international protectorate. Here Capussela dips into the theoretical literature on institutional development and draws heavily from the economic historian, Douglass North, whose work in 2009, Violence and Social Orders, provides Capussela with his conceptual framework for understanding the high levels of corruption and state fragility in Kosovo. Classifying Kosovo as having a ‘limited access social order,’ Capussela explains how this type of social order is predicated on a ‘pact’ among a dominant coalition of elites, who organizes society through various patronage networks. What keeps the pact together and self-enforcing is a balance of power in terms of the distribution of rents that are generated by limiting public access to valuable assets, resources, and activities. Rents are therefore the key to maintaining stability in limited access societies. International efforts aimed at strengthening state institutions contradict the logic of this social order as they threaten the dominant elite’s privileges and access to rents. Accordingly, any disruptions to the distribution of rents will

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likely lead to violence and instability, which in part explains why the international community behaved so cravenly and passively in Kosovo.

Capussela posits that Kosovo’s social order is the main causal mechanism for generating corruption and state failure in the country. For this reason, the biggest obstacle to international state-building in Kosovo is the elite class, which is opposed to any meaningful reforms that may mitigate the logic of this social order. His main findings are located in chapters 4 and 5 where he examines the ICO and EULEX respectively. The author goes to great lengths to demonstrate that, while both missions were given extensive resources and powers to accomplish their objectives, the misalignment of interests among certain international actors and the international community’s obsession with the policy of local ownership undermined them. In terms of the former, Capussela traces the powerful influence that American diplomats have wielded throughout Kosovo’s postwar development. From selecting presidents and prime ministers to organizing political coalitions, the actions of the American embassy have had a detrimental impact on Kosovo’s state-building process. In particular, the American embassy defanged the ICO and prevented the mission from criticizing governmental corruption and upholding the governance principles outlined in the Ahtisaari plan: “it was clear that, should improving governance in Kosovo come into conflict with other national interests […] Washington was more likely than the EU to pursue the latter to the detriment of the former, because Kosovo’s long-term development is not a US priority.”

Capussella attributes EULEX’s inability and unwillingness to prosecute serious crimes to a combination of factors, including the misallocation of funds at the expense of its judicial mandate, the mission’s unpopularity among the local population, and EULEX’s propensity to avoid conflict with the dominant coalition out of fear of elite retaliation. As for local ownership, Capussella makes a persuasive case that EULEX’s obsession with local ownership mitigated the effectiveness of the mission. Local ownership was in contradiction to the EU’s Joint Action plan that established the mission in the first place: “it confirms the importance of the executive functions and, in particular, the need to tackle high-level corruption and organized crime.” Yet, instead of wielding this executive authority in the judiciary, the most corrupted institution in Kosovo, EULEX simply opted to perform its monitoring and advisory functions that allowed political corruption and organized crime to flourish in the country since its deployment. Here, Capussela presents his most interesting findings that are both revealing and provocative. He analyzes 23 criminal cases of critical political and economic importance that were adjudicated between 2008-2014 and opened by the EULEX mission. Of the 23 cases, EULEX issued 15 indictments, of which only 4 of them ended in convictions. A closer analysis is provided in the Annex, which is accessible online, and suggests that the “mission tended not to prosecute high-level crime, and, when it had to, it sought not to indict or convict prominent figures.”

12 Capussela, State-building in Kosovo, 104.
14 To access the Annex, visit: https://eulexannex.wix.com/draft.
15 Capussela, State-building in Kosovo, 121.
State-building in Kosovo is a compelling book that provides a comprehensive analysis of the limitations of state-building interventions that underestimate or misunderstand the social orders of post-conflict societies. The significance of the study lies in how it approaches the subject matter from a perspective of political economy, which is sorely lacking in the scholarship of state-building. To assess the impact of international efforts on Kosovo's institutions, Capussela employs data from the World Bank’s Worldwide Governance Indicators, which allows him to draw developmental comparisons in the region. In addition, the book heavily relies on internal reports by the European Commission and leaked intelligence documents by NATO and Germany’s intelligence agency, all of which paint a controversial image of Kosovo’s government dominated by political elites steeped in organize crime and political corruption. While his analysis is theoretically informed and supported by a plethora of international and local sources, one must also reserve caution about certain findings due to his involvement in the ICO; especially those claims that involve rivalries among his former organization and other international actors. Nevertheless, what it may lack in ‘scientific objectivity’ is more than made up for with his inside accounts and anecdotes that reveal the contentious relationships among international actors and the dilemmas they faced in interacting with Kosovo’s criminal elites.

Conclusion
Although the international state-building efforts can play an important role in helping societies move out of conflict, the overall impact in terms of promoting development and creating the institutional foundations of a capable and legitimate state remains decidedly mixed. The books reviewed here highlight a number of themes in the literature that help explain why international state-building in Kosovo fell short of the expectations of international and local actors alike. Perhaps the most dominant theme that transcends both books is the principle of local ownership. Both authors seem to question the strategy of devolving authority over to local actors early on in the state-building process. In Kosovo, this led to the capture of state institutions as these “bureaucracies became embedded sites of patronage politics, in which employees were only loyal to top politicians without substantial concern for public services.” The international strategy of insulating state bureaucracies from local influences and wielding executive authority for an extended period of time is similar to that of Steven Krasner’s ‘shared sovereignty’ approach, which recommends external actors taking responsibility for some of the domestic authority structures of target states for long stretches of time. Yet, today, such solutions seem very unrealistic given the recent failures in Afghanistan and Iraq and the current financial crisis, which have dampened the international community’s inclination for engaging in such ambitious interventions.

A second theme that emerges from both books is the issue of relying on technocratic approaches and solutions to rebuilding postwar societies. The

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18 Skendaj, Creating Kosovo, 174.
strategy of treating failed states much “like broken machines, [which] can be repaired by good mechanics.”\(^{20}\) has been increasingly challenged in the contemporary literature of state-building. Such approaches and solutions have been criticized for their Western dogma on state development; their tendency to treat local actors as merely passive recipients of international measures; and for their failure to consider how local interests and values interact with international ones, and what the implications of this are for state-building outcomes. In some ways Creating Kosovo falls victim to some of this criticism: Skendaj’s approach to understanding successful institutional outcomes is contingent on whether or not international technocrats have insulated local bureaucracies and employed Western practices of meritocratic hiring and promotion. Such an approach fails to consider the political nature of international state-building and how such efforts interact with local values and conceptions of legitimacy. Conversely, the political economy approach taken in State-building in Kosovo is more in tune with the contemporary scholarship and its growing aversion to technocratic approaches. In his analysis, Capussela demonstrated how important it is not to gloss over the interests and motivations of Kosovo’s local elites, who in many ways actively worked to weaken the state and its institutions in order to entrench their own power and personal economic interests. His examination of Kosovo’s prevailing social order showed the critical role of informal authorities and power structures, and the continued existence of wartime economies and political networks that subverted Kosovo’s newly established institutions.

A final theme worth noting is the problematic impact of political corruption on Kosovo’s democracy and institutional development. Both authors go to great lengths to show the extent to which political corruption and organized crime have penetrated many aspects of the country’s economy and public institutions. Perceptions of Kosovo as one of the most corrupt countries in the region (and in the world) has dissuaded foreign investments, and has prevented the European Commission from lifting visa requirements, which has further isolated the country’s image as a regional pariah. However, the authors of the two books reviewed here provide different explanations on the ubiquity of corruption in today’s Kosovo. According to Skendaj, the corrupt practices of today’s dominant elites in Kosovo are a direct legacy of communist Yugoslavia: “One of the enduring legacies of the Yugoslav socialist party organizations in Kosovo has been the continuing presence of clientelist networks in the local courts and the central administration.”\(^{21}\) He contends that patron-client networks were an indispensable source of stability in Yugoslavia’s communist system and that the persistence of such networks in the 1990s and onwards is a common feature throughout the rest of post-communist Europe. Skendaj therefore paints a historical and cultural understanding of Kosovo’s current problems with political corruption. By contrast, Capussela dismisses partially the premise that links Kosovo’s predilection for poor governance and corruption to historical and cultural explanations. For him, such explanations are “self-serving” and over-simplistic and ignore the power and interests of the country’s emerging elite and the passive role that international state-builders played in facilitating the nexus of politics, corruption, and organized crime in Kosovo.


\(^{21}\) Skendaj, Creating Kosovo, 42.
Bibliography
Turkey – June 7: The Elections with the Wrong Results

Election Analysis

Cengiz Günay
Senior Fellow, Austrian Institute for International Affairs (OIIP), Vienna
cengiz.gunay@oiip.ac.at

http://www.suedosteuropa.uni-graz.at/cse/en/gunay
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The elections of June 7, 2015 had the effect of a political earthquake. Turkey’s ruling AKP conceded a sharp drop of 9 percent (from 49.9 to 40.9 percent), losing, after 13 years in power the overall majority of seats. It was the first time the ruling party saw a dramatic fall in support. The AKP’s losses seem even more dramatic considering the opposition parties’ underrepresentation in media and the ruling party’s abuse of public resources.

The major victor of June 7 was the leftist pro-Kurdish HDP (Peoples’ Democratic Party). So far, in order to circumvent the 10 percent threshold, the Kurdish movement had fielded independent candidates who then once elected formed a group in parliament. Despite of the fact that Selahattin Demirtaş, the party’s co-leader had achieved 9.7 percent in the presidential elections in August 2014, the decision still harboured many risks (Todays Zaman 17-01-2015).¹ Polls showed that the party would narrowly pass the 10 percent, necessary to enter parliament, but only a few observers expected a breakthrough of 13.1 percent. The HDP’s rise can be attributed to the party’s departure from ethnic based Kurdish political rhetoric, and re-branding and opening up to an electorate much beyond its Kurdish core constituency in the country’s east, but this time also the 10 percent threshold played positive role for the HDP. Many people voted for the HDP because they feared that in case the party could not exceed the 10 percent, this would leave the Kurds out of parliament and open the door to a constitutional majority for the AKP. While the 10 percent threshold had been an instrument that bolstered the ruling parties’ majority in parliament, this time it turned against the AKP.

Also the nationalist MHP (Nationalist Movement Party) could increase its votes by 4 percent, gaining 16.3 percent. As opposed to this, the major opposition party CHP (Republican People’s Party) had not been able to increase its votes and even lost one percent falling to 25.0 percent.

Seats in parliament are distributed as 258 for the AKP, 132 for the CHP and 80 for the MHP and 80 for the HDP. The result re-introduced Turkey with the
The unexpected fact that the AKP did not only by far miss its set goal of gaining a two-third majority in order to transform the constitutional system into a tailor-made presidential one, but – with only 258 seats – it also missed the number of 276 seats, necessary to form a government on its own, turned the political game in Ankara on its head. As Aslı Aydıntaşbaş, a journalist with *Milliyet* daily held in a TV program, on June 8 Ankara woke up to a new political reality in which Erdoğan and the AKP are not the only game makers in town anymore. Although the political community had difficulties in adapting to it, a breeze of freedom started to flow through media. Even pro-government channels began to cautiously air criticism. President Erdoğan who had openly campaigned for the AKP did not appear in public and did not comment on the results. Erdoğan stayed off-air for more than three days and twenty two hours, considering his omnipresence in media an unprecedented length counted by an online ticking counter (*Hürriyet Daily* 11-06-2015). His silence opened a discursive space for oppositional voices. However, it soon became clear the domination of the AKP was not easy to break. A coalition between the three oppositional parties, leaving the AKP out was immediately ruled out by the nationalists. The MHP went further and refused any cooperation with the HDP accusing them of being the long arm of the Kurdish guerrilla. The AKP’s regaining of control became evident in the election of the speaker of parliament. While the CHP did not support the MHP’s candidate (the two parties’ joint candidate in the presidential elections), the MHP in turn refused to support anyone who would also get the votes of the HDP. The frictions within the oppositional camp re-widened President Erdoğan’s scope of action. Erdoğan returned on the scene and began to circulate the idea of early elections. Ahmet Davutoğlu was only given the task of forming a government a month after the elections on July 9th. The constitution provides that if no government can be formed within 45 days early elections have to be called. AKP and CHP delegations met several times, but the leaders were only involved in the last stage. Once also preliminary talks with the MHP also failed all viable options were exhausted, as the AKP categorically ruled out any potential coalition with the HDP. Erdoğan did not hand over the task to Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu from the CHP, but called for early elections on November 1st.

**The electoral campaign**

The elections of June 7 were the first general elections since Recep Tayyip Erdoğan’s election into the post of President of the Republic in August 2014.

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2 In its almost 70 years long history of multi-party politics, Turkey has experienced numerous coalition governments. Particularly, the 1970s and 1990s were characterized by alternating coalition governments.

3 Erdoğan declared that he would not give the task to anyone “who does not know the way to Beştepe”, Erdoğan’s new presidential palace, referring to the opposition’s refusal to participate in any receptions held in the new presidential palace.

4 A constitutional amendment made in 2007, approved by a plebiscite, provides for the election of president by popular vote for a five-year term with a chance to be re-elected. The amendment reduces the tenure of parliament to four years. In the first popular election of a Turkish president, Tayyip Erdoğan was elected into the new office with 51.79 percent in the first round, while the joint candidate of the two major opposition parties Republican People’s Party (CHP) and the
The Turkish constitution assigns the president the role of a non-partisan arbiter with relatively broad powers particularly in regard to the filling of higher public sector posts and the formation of government. Erdoğan, however, referring to the fact that he is the first and only president in Republican history, who was elected by popular vote (51 percent), claims a re-interpretation of the office as the supreme head of state and politics. Since assuming office he has pushed to the limits of the constitutional system. He did not stay aloof from day-to-day politics. Erdoğan convened several times the cabinet, publicly stated his opinion and ignored the principle of impartiality. Erdoğan repeatedly highlighted the ills of a “double headed" system. He toyed with the idea of a change of the current parliamentary system into a presidential one, strengthening the role of the president and reducing that of the PM, the government and the parliament. Erdoğan held that this change had become necessary as the presidency which was earlier defined as a guardian of the tutelary regime would now be the elected representative of the people. Erdoğan and the AKP have come to see a presidential system as the last cornerstone in the reconfiguration of the Kemalist state.

In the run-up to the elections, Erdoğan toured the country under the pretext of openings of infrastructure projects or “presidential visits”. In his speeches he mobilized for his political project. As the opposition fiercely defied his ambitions, Erdoğan called for 400 seats (a bit more than a two-third majority, required for constitutional amendments) for the ruling party. Erdoğan did not take on the role of a distanced statesman or of a neutral arbiter, but by acting as if he was still a party politician, he breached the constitution. His discourse mainly polarized against the HDP whose electoral success would prevent him from a “presidential majority”.

Erdoğan’s re-interpretation of the presidency politicized the office, made it more vulnerable. It challenged the constitutional order and further polarized society. As neither the constitutional court nor the supreme election board or any other independent institution put Erdoğan in his place, the elections became the only arena to defy him. In light of the president’s unbridled hunger for unlimited authority, Selahattin Demirtaş’s proclamation; “we won’t let you become president!” fell on a fertile ground. Demirtaş and the HDP’s campaign revived the Gezi spirit of summer 2013. The HDP’s anti-authoritarian liberal messages and Demirtaş’s cheeky and humorous responses to Erdoğan’s aggressive rhetoric appealed to a broad spectrum of Erdoğan critics much beyond the party’s Kurdish constituencies. The party’s campaign aimed at presenting the HDP not as a Kurdish party, but one that has also a Turkish focus. Consequently, the HDP addressed the Kurdish issue in the broader context of principles as human rights, minority rights and gender rights. It highlighted the Kurdish issue in the context of the ills of the authoritarian Turkish state, represented by the AKP. The HDP’s representation of the Kurds as the victims of the authoritarian state built a bridge to other minorities and groups discriminated against by the male authoritarian state such as women, LGBTs, leftists, trade unionists, workers, Alevis and others. The HDP’s

Nationalist Movement Party (MHP) won 38.44 percent and Selahattin Demirtaş of the Democracy Party of Peoples (HDP) garnered 9.78 percent.
inclusive message, its reference to diversity and equality and its sensitivity towards other “victims” in return increased the sense of solidarity and compassion with the Kurds. Besides liberal constituencies in the country’s western cities such as Istanbul, where the HDP could win 12.43 percent - the party was also able to appeal to conservative Kurdish voters, who had earlier voted for the AKP but have become increasingly disappointed with the government’s handling of the Kobane crisis and the Roboski (Uludere) massacre when in December 2011 34 civilians were killed in a Turkish airstrike. The government blocked any investigation on the case and has ever since tried to sweep it under the carpet. In that regard, the HDP was able to capitalize on the peace process. The AKP’s decision to start negotiations with the Kurdish guerrilla had been a paradigmatic change that was accompanied the breach of many nationalist taboos. The HDP could build on this atmosphere.

While the AKP could hardly capitalize on the peace process – due to the above mentioned reasons- another party did; the nationalist MHP. While the HDP could address those who supported the peace process, the MHP’s messages addressed the fears and uncertainties connected with the process. To many voters, Turkish nationalism was the answer to the fear of the partition of the country. These fears were also rising as news about the absence of Turkish state authority over the eastern provinces began to circulate. Allegedly, the government in order not to disturb the peace process had turned a blind eye on the PKK’s establishment of parallel administrative structures in the region, including check points and courts.

One can conclude that the supporters of the peace process as well its critics were lured away from the two major political parties; the AKP and the Republican People’s Party (CHP). Despite a face lifting and a reframing of its electoral program – the CHP tried to present itself as a viable and serious social democrat alternative, emphasizing mainly social issues – the HDP proved to be the better and fresher liberal leftist alternative. Demirtaş’s humorous responses to President Erdoğan’s attacks made him into the most popular oppositional leader. Although, Demirtaş’s charisma radiated away into the CHP and sympathies for him flew high, to many CHP voters with a nationalist leaning, the HDP still remained unelectable due to its relations with the PKK.

The AKP’s campaign in turn, tried to picture the party as the only representative of the real people. The AKP campaign referred to the party’s “Yeni Türkiye” – New Turkey project, transporting imaginaries of economic development and social advancement, but it was mainly devoted to Erdoğan’s presidential system. The presidential system was presented as a remedy to the ills of the country. The AKP’s campaign did not claim the peace process it had initiated. Instead, the party seemed to turn away from the peace process. Erdoğan’s attacks on the HDP targeted the rising Turkish nationalist votes.

Erdoğan’s partisan attitude and active campaigning for the AKP overshadowed the run-up to the elections. Erdoğan was not only partisan, but he acted as if he was still the head of government and leader of the AKP. While the PM and the cabinet became reduced to the executive of decisions taken in Beştepe,
Erdoğan's new presidential palace. His public appearances dwarfed PM Ahmet Davutoglu and other leading party figures. He was overrepresented in media and the abuse of state resources was massive. Erdoğan's authoritarian attitude fuelled fears of manipulations of the electoral results. This in turn stimulated an unprecedented number of people to register with newly constituted NGOs such as oy ve ötesi (vote and beyond) for voluntary election monitoring.

The AKP's new ideology: Erdoganism

The June 7 elections provided Erdoğan and the people around him the opportunity to get rid of inconvenient persons within the party. Particularly, people accounted as being close to former President Abdullah Gül posed potential obstacles to the AKP's transformation into a de-ideologized party machine and majority provider for Erdoğan’s ambitions. Levent Gültekin an independent journalist wrote in the online news platform Diken that Erdoğan played a major role in choosing the candidates for the elections. Gültekin highlights that many ideologues and old companions became replaced with yes-men, who owe their status and position to Erdoğan and who are absolutely loyal to him (Diken 31-05-2015). Erdoğan’s interventions made Davutoğlu look like his trustee. This had a negative effect on their relationship. Tensions between the palace (saray) on the one hand and Davutoğlu, the government and leading party figures on the other hand grew. Three major events revealed the growing frictions between the palace (saray) and the Davutoğlu government:

The first one was President Erdoğan’s public fall out with the governor of the central bank. Erdoğan attacked the governor of pursuing a wrong interest rate policy. The crisis was seen as a reflection of the growing tensions between Yiğit Bulut, a former TV comentator and the president’s major advisor on economy and Ali Babacan, the minister of economy a mentor of the governor and a defender of the institution’s independence.

The second event was the so called “Fidan case”. Hakan Fidan, the chief of the Turkish national intelligence organization (MIT) often described as Erdoğan’s black box is considered to be a major cornerstone of his personal power system. In the run-up to the elections Fidan resigned after consulting the PM from his post and put his candidature for parliament on the AKP list. Fidan was fancied as the country’s future foreign minister. Erdoğan openly stated his disappointment about Fidan’s resignation without asking for permission:

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\text{We brought [Fidan] to such a position. I am the one who brought him there. If so, when departing, he should have stayed and not left there if he was not being allowed to do so,” “[...] There is of course a disappointment if a candidacy is in question even though we have expressed our opinions (Hürriyet Daily News 04-03-2015).}
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Shortly after, Fidan withdrew his candidacy and returned to his post as chief of MIT.

The third major event that made the growing tensions within the AKP visible was the president’s fall out with the government over the “peace process” and
the turbulences this caused among leading party figures. Erdoğan publicly disagreed with the government on the so-called “Dolmabahçe declaration” in which the government and a Kurdish delegation jointly declared to have agreed on the formation of an observational committee. Deputy Prime Minister and the government’s spokesperson Bülent Arınç, a founding member of the party and a long-standing political companion of Tayyip Erdoğan, responded the next day by stating that it is still the government that rules the country and politically responsible and that the president’s statements were inapropriate. Arınç’s statement in return was commented by Melih Gökçek, the mayor of Ankara with a tweet. Gökçek accused of having ties with the Gülen Movement. Arınç’s response came prompt accusing the mayor of Ankara of extensive corruption and of having himself “sat in Gülen’s lap” (Hürriyet Daily News 23-03-2015). Arınç also announced to “reveal the mayor’s wrongdoings” after the June 7 elections (Hürriyet Daily News 23-03-2015). Meanwhile Arınç did not reveal any of his allegations, the prosecutor did not become active and no file was opened. The dispute brought the conflict within the party to the fore.

The June 7 elections clearly bolstered Erdoğan’s grip on the party, also because many of the “heavy weights” among the ideologues, such as Arınç himself, were not able to stand in the elections due to the party’s self-imposed three term limitation for any party functions.

One can conclude that Erdoğan’s omnipresence has undermined the party’s political mission and identity. Ideology has become replaced by Erdoğanism, where allegiance to the leader is a major requirement. This has further fostered the personalization and informalization of relations and opened the door to palace intrigues. The election results of June 7 thwarted Erdoğan’s plans. The solution of the “system error” was seen in a reset; early elections.

Inciting the Kurdish question
On July 20, 34 people, mainly young Kurdish activists, were killed in a major bomb attack in the town of Suruç, close to the Syrian border. The attack was allegedly committed by the IS (Islamic State). The next day, as retaliation for the attack, two policemen were shot dead by the PKK. These events signalled the beginning of a spiral of violence. While in the first days the government declared to fight terrorism of all sorts, it soon became clear that this was the beginning of a new war against the PKK. The oppositional newspaper Sözcü commented the government’s U-turn from the peace process with the following headline; “votes gone - peace process gone” (Sözcü 25-07-2015). Indeed, to many observers it has not been clear why the government’s policy towards the peace process has changed that radically. The government’s escalation strategy seems to have nationalist votes in mind. Critics suspect President Erdoğan of having consciously incited conflict in order to be able to present himself as a

5 The Gülen Movement, a former ally, has turned into Erdoğan’s major internal enemy. The movement accused of having infiltrated the judiciary and the security apparatus, has been associated with the bugging of the PM and ministers and the allegations brought forward against Erdoğan and his son. Ever since, the Gülen movement has been a red rag to Erdoğan. Ties with Gülen have now become a liability and a subject of political pressure and blackmailing within the ruling party.
guarantor of stability and national unity. His repeated claims for a two-third majority in parliament as a guarantor for stability; “if we would have gained 400 seats, the situation would have been different” (Diken 06-09-2015) seem to confirm these suspicions. Debates on whether the resurgence of the conflict was staged have been also fuelled by the tweets of whistle-blower Fuat Avni, who claims to be a part of Erdoğan’s inner circle. Avni has tweeted several events in advance. In any case, the government’s willingness to return to a military conflict resonated with the position of elements within the PKK who seemed also disturbed by Selahattin Demirtaş’s and the HDP’s rise and its universalist messages.

The news on fallen soldiers have incited feelings of revenge and invoked nationalist responses. The killing of 16 soldiers in Hakkari Dağlıca on September 4, fuelled public anger. In the following days, in a concerted action, nationalist groups, including young AKP supporters, went into the streets. HDP bureaus, shops that were allegedly owned by Kurds as well as oppositional media institutions such as the offices of the Hürriyet newspaper were attacked and some of them set on fire. At the same time PKK attacks on the Turkish state have continued. The town of Cizre, a PKK stronghold, was under curfew for a couple of days. The security situation in the eastern provinces has deteriorated. Debates whether elections can be held on November 1st became aired.

The political discourse has been defined by nationalist themes. Under these circumstances conciliatory voices have been silenced or not heard. But, at the same time it seems that the mood has also turned against the AKP and President Erdoğan. The resurgence of the conflict with the PKK has not alleviated the polarization within society. On the contrary, critical voices against the government have increasingly turned into angry voices. On several occasions, the funerals of fallen soldiers have turned into protests against the government. The outcry of a lieutenant colonel at his brother’s funeral, a soldier who had fallen in the fight against the PKK was synonymous. His words; “why do those who called for peace now call for war?”(Zaman 24-08-2015).

Despite of the dramatic changes that occurred since June 7, polls point at no radical changes for the outcome of the November 1st elections. It seems that the AKP will not be able to capitalize on its politics of escalation and re-gain an overall majority, if it will not be able to lure away some of the nationalist votes it lost to the MHP, Turkey will again stand where it stood on June 7, however in the meantime even more polarized, divided into ethnic camps, desperate, disillusioned and economically weakened.
Bargaining Chips: Examining the role of Economic Crisis in Serbian Minority-Majority Relations

Research Article

Laura Wise
Joint MA Candidate in Southeastern European Studies at the Universities of Graz and Belgrade
laura.wise@edu.uni-graz.at

http://www.suedoesteuropa.uni-graz.at/cse/en/wise
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Bargaining Chips: Examining the role of Economic Crisis in Serbian Minority-Majority Relations

Laura Wise*

Contemporary ethnic bargaining theory claims that minority ethnopolitical mobilization is best understood through the influence of a third-party actor, whose signals can determine whether a minority will radicalise against or accommodate the position of the state majority. It is a dynamic approach, which Erin Jenne argues goes beyond the limits of explaining minority actions using purely structural features of a group, including economic status. This article questions to what extent, if any, do shifts in the economic status of a minority, host-state and kin state affect the ethnic bargaining game, particularly in times of crisis. It uses a comparative case study of the Albanian and Hungarian minorities in Serbia since 2006, in order to explore whether or not the differences between their mobilization activities can be adequately explained by expanding Jenne’s ethnic bargaining model to include structural economic differences. It concludes that although inclusion of economic status as an additional piece in the ethnic bargaining puzzle does expand the levels of analysis, ultimately it does not address other limitations of using the model to understand minority mobilization.

**Keywords:** ethnic bargaining, minority mobilization, Serbia

**Introduction**

In 'Ethnic Bargaining: The Paradox of Minority Empowerment', Erin Jenne claims that an effective way to understand the ethnopolitical mobilization of minority groups is through the relationship between a minority ethnic group, the state which hosts them, and an external actor which engages with the host state on the minority's behalf.¹ Using case studies from Central and Eastern Europe, Jenne develops and tests a rational choice strategic model in order to explain and predict fluctuations in the political behaviour of minority groups in the region. The study argues that the importance of a lobby actor will influence a minority to radicalise or accommodate the actions of the host state, even when to do so would be counter intuitive. Advocating a dynamic theoretical approach, Jenne argues that this work goes beyond the limits of explaining minority actions using purely structural explanations, of which the economic features of a group are included as a possibly influential condition for conflict. This article does not advocate treating economic disparities between minority and majority as a mono causal condition; on the contrary, it suggests that

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* Laura Wise is a Joint MA Candidate in Southeastern European Studies at the Universities of Graz and Belgrade. She holds an Bsc (Econ) in International Politics from Aberystwyth University and an MA in Comparative Ethnic Conflict from Queen’s University Belfast. Her research interests include ethnic conflict management, minority mobilisation, and comparative politics.

expansion of the ethnic bargaining approach to include economic opportunity-structures, group features, and interpretation of economic signals, is a necessary adaptation for a model which places such a strong emphasis on rationality. This article draws from theoretical debates regarding the role of economics in ethnic mobilisation, and questions to what extent, if any, do shifts in the economic status of a minority, host state and lobby actor affect the ethnic bargaining game, particularly in times of crisis. The central contention is that the unwillingness of ethnic bargaining scholarship to critically engage with economic arguments reduces its explanatory value as a theoretical approach. This article applies the ethnic bargaining model to comparative cases of the Albanian and Hungarian national minorities in the rump-Yugoslav state of Serbia, with assessment of their fluctuating mobilization from 2006 to 2013. These case studies are placed within the context of the global economic crisis of 2008, in order to further expand the model by exploring the potential effect that reduced economic wellbeing across all levels of the nexus has on the bargaining game. In doing so it examines how ethnic bargaining approaches can be scrutinised through the inclusion of this important structural feature, and why it has been neglected in previous research. The first section of this paper focuses on how economic issues have been engaged with by scholars of minority bargaining. It then outlines how economic features could be included into the ethnic bargaining approach, in order to answer some criticisms of the existing rational-choice model. The final part of the paper explores how this could be conducted, through application of an economic ethnic bargaining model to the chosen cases studies, before discussing the issues that are raised by conducting such an exercise.

1. Economic Ethnic Bargaining
The many differences in the minority groups to which mainstream economic theories of mobilization may apply has provoked a wealth of empirical studies and debate, albeit predominantly between theories of relative depravation or wealth. This indicates that rather than being contradictory (for example, wealthy versus impoverished minority groups as being more or less likely to mobilise), the relationship between economics and ethnic marginalisation exhibits a variety of case-specific features. However, the central thesis of both approaches is relatively similar; that minority groups are motivated to radicalise against the centre by the prospect of achieving economic advantage through political mobilisation along ethnic lines, and that the decision to do so is a rational one based upon cost-benefit analysis of the minority’s position in the state. When minority-majority relations are conceptualised as a bargaining game, existing ethnic bargaining literature has interpreted economic theories as falling within these categories of relative wealth and deprivation. Earlier developments have conceptualised minority behaviour as a bargaining game

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between minority groups and the state majority, with Rogers Brubaker introducing the term ‘triadic nexus’ to emphasise the role that third party actors (such as a national minority’s kin state) has on the outcome of such a bargain. All of these studies briefly mention previous theories of structuralist influences, of which economic status is sometimes included as one of many, alongside aspects such as group size, territorial location, and salience of minority identity. However, they predominantly discuss the strategic mechanisms of minority-majority bargains, rather than alternative theoretical approaches to minority mobilization. Jenne’s work comprehensively discusses the value of a bargaining model against more structuralist arguments, and concludes that whilst economic explanations of minority behaviour do not lack value, they should not be treated in isolation as an influential factor. A discrepancy between value indicators in the preceding case studies makes it possible to discredit economic explanations in the specific cases, but the lack of consistency indicates that there is merit in re-evaluating the role that economics could play in minority bargaining.

This scrutiny is not to suggest that these theories are applied to the cases at face value, as in several of the cases Jenne isolates specific economic factors, such as the influence of market reforms as a signal of policy intent to peripheral regions. In fact, it is in this more specific analysis of economic features, that the possible contribution of economic theory to ethnic bargaining becomes tentatively apparent, as the relationship between structural influential factors and minority mobilization may be more complex than a cursory treatment of economic theories can demonstrate.

2. Exploring Ethnic Bargaining in Serbia

With this opportunity in mind, this paper attempts to integrate considerations of minority disparities and economic interpretation into the ethnic bargaining game, without risking causal isolation or overemphasis. Adapting the core ethnic bargaining hypothesis is necessary, so as to suggest how minority groups may interpret economic signals from other game players.

By understanding that perceptions of negative or positive disparities in the economic status of a minority and majority could incite mobilisation, it is suggested that efforts made by external lobby actors to reduce these differences are attempts to influence the accommodation of minority actors. For relatively wealthy minority groups, unwillingness of a lobby actor to provide economic assistance or direct policy towards external kin could be interpreted as an indicator that radical claims, framed as protection against exploitation by an economically-weak centre, would not be supported. Therefore they would accommodate the host state, even if it would leave the minority unprotected from future economic downturns affecting the centre. Similarly, relatively deprived groups could interpret host-state or third-party investment as a

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method of reducing economic disparity and encouraging integration, for example, through improving access to higher education to enable employment in the public sector. The deprived minority’s response could reasonably be expected to de-radicalise from existing claims framed as economic grievance, as support from a third party reduces the need for mobilising against the centre in order to address certain inequalities, even if the minority remains economically marginalised by policies of the host state.

This hypothesis, that supportive and unsupportive economic signals from an external lobby actor can influence the accommodation of a national minority within a host state, aims to explain conditions for de-radicalisation within dynamic bargaining games of either a triadic or quadratic nexus. International institutions proposing inequality reduction strategies, such as the World Bank and non-governmental organisations, may also signify policy intent to increase the integration of marginalised groups into formal participation structures, or demonstrate an unwillingness to support the economic activities of increasingly radical groups which threaten the stability of a host state. Exploring quadratic level bargaining would address concern that triadic ethnic bargaining models do not adequately reflect the influence that international organisations can have in issues of communal politics, and that by increasing the levels of analysis, the potential influential factors increase, making it more possible to discern the complexity of minority mobilisation within a wider context.

Focussing on bargaining between the minority and its host state reduces the triadic or quadratic nexus to a dyad, and emphasises the importance of domestic relations and economic conditions, both material and perceived. If third-party attempts to reduce horizontal equalities are a contributing factor to de-radicalisation, then the same signals made by the host state could be interpreted in a similar way by minorities. As Jenne’s model treats host state movements as either being repressive or non-repressive, radicalising policies could be those which limit minority participation in majority-dominated structures of economic advantage, such as a lack of state investment in minority-language university education. Policies which neglect horizontal inequalities could be interpreted as repressive, minorities will radicalise against only if they perceive that there is potential support for mobilization from a lobby actor. For relatively wealthy groups, exploitative signals from the centre could also be interpreted as repressive, as although this would enhance the economic networks between the state and the minority, it could be engagement which exists to benefit the majority whilst constraining the minority from utilising resources for mobilisation.

An important factor is the reliance these hypotheses make on the minority interpreting these signals as such. Cetinyan’s perfect information strategic model assumes an ability of all players to access the information which would

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allow them to correctly interpret the true intent of another actor. However, Brubaker argues that interpretation of the triad contributes to spirals of radical minority mobilisation. Jenne treats minorities as actors which must navigate the various behaviours of other actors in order to infer the credibility of intent which such behaviour could indicate. It is entirely possible for minorities to misinterpret signals of economic assistance from a lobby actor as support to strengthen the group’s bargaining power for future autonomy, secession, or irredentism, when in fact the policy was intended to reduce the appeal of trans-border economic migration. Alternatively, a regionally concentrated minority could interpret host state investment as a positive step in reducing inequalities, whilst the reality of improved infrastructure is implemented to facilitate resource extraction with minimal local redistribution.

The final methodological issue is the aspect of crisis. Jenne argues that ‘the majority and lobby actor preferences can change suddenly due to economic shocks’, and that this complicates the minority’s ability to update its awareness and perception of the other actors’ intent towards minority groups. This idea is implicitly rooted in the belief that economic shocks, such as a crisis, can shift state and international level actors’ priorities due to a concern for their own economic prosperity and stability, which could lead to a reduction in the availability of resources to be allocated for de-radicalising minorities at risk. Rather than isolate the factor of economic crisis in order to hypothesise, the following case studies are conducted within a time frame of a global economic crisis, in order to observe how an economically-framed bargaining game is further complicated by such a crisis.

This case study explores the integration of economics into ethnic bargaining by attempting to understand the minority groups’ fluctuations in mobilization through the relevant economic theories, and assessing the relationship between the perceived economic statuses of the actors, the way that moves in the game are framed in economic terms, and the minorities’ responsive behaviour.

The analysis begins at a transitional event, as Jenne’s model assumes that the vulnerability which could be felt by a minority during a period of state transition means that ‘the minority prefers concessions to equal treatment’, and therefore the minority will express demands that require both the majority and the external lobby actor to respond with signals of either accommodation or repression (the majority) or support or non-support (the external lobby actor). The choice of Serbia as a transitional host state makes it possible to begin the analysis in 2006, which was the year that Montenegro declared independence and formally ended the two-nation federation previously known as the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. For minorities in the rump state, this transition could have demonstrated an opportunity to redefine their relationship with the state centre, and their position within domestic institutional structures. It could also have provoked a sense of insecurity, as the state had lost a significant

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12 Brubaker, *Nationalism Reframed*, 68.
proportion of territorial influence, and may have moved to secure its dominance over the remaining area of control.

Serbia has also been chosen due to the acute affects the global economic crisis has had on its economy. The consequences of the negative growth suffered by its main trading partners eventually affected Serbia’s growth through decreased demand,16 and by 2009 Gross Domestic Product had dropped by 3.5 per cent from the previous year.17 Household Consumption fell by 2 percent, with a significant decrease in Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) from 7.3 per cent of GDP for 2005 to 2009, to 4 percent between 2008 and 2012.18 This shift in the economic condition of the host-state means that the possible effects of a reduction in the prosperity of the centre may have on an ethnic bargaining game can be examined. The current analysis ends in 2013, however, continued fiscal reform under the Serbian Progressive Party’s rule, as required by the International Monetary Fund, would be valuable to include in future research, as it could raise minority perceptions of their treatment under continued austerity.

The minority cases have been selected both for their suitability and positions in the existing literature. The non-violent cases of Hungarians in Vojvodina and Albanians in Preševo both have a varying number of relational fields of nationalizing actors, presenting aspects of a triadic game between the minority, majority, and the minority’s external lobby actor, or a quadratic game between all of the above, but with international organisations as an additional field open to discursive interpretation. The Hungarian case also expands on previous research undertaken by ethnic bargaining scholars, whilst the Albanian case engages with a group largely under-examined by minority mobilization studies.19 Regarding economic theories, each case is specifically relevant to investigation of different theoretical understandings of why minorities would radicalize or de-radicalize.

Vojvodina is one of the most economically advanced and ethnically diverse regions in Serbia, with Hungarians only constituting a majority in the municipalities of Bečaj, Bačka Topola, Mali Idoš, Subotica, Ada, Kanjiža, Senta and Coka.20 When understanding minority mobilization through an economic lens, it is difficult to establish the Hungarian minority as an actor which may act according to advanced regionalism expectations, when such a region is inhabited primarily by the majority group whose economic disparities from the minority are under consideration. This study focuses on the economic status of

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19 Future research could extend to the Bosniak national minority in south-west Serbia, as a group which exhibits similar structural features to Albanians, and whose bargains have also involved quadratic level actors. See Vrbensky, Ratislav. 2008. *Can development prevent conflict? Integrated area-based development in the Western Balkans – theory, practice and policy recommendation*. London: Centre for the Study of Global Governance (LSE).
municipalities where Hungarians constitute a relative majority with over 25 per cent of the population, in order to account for this regional distribution. By doing so the Hungarian municipalities can be understood as relatively wealthy compared to the centre, albeit by a slight margin, as all of the municipalities, with the exception of Čoka, were classified in 2006 as being highly developed or within the national average. This assessment remained the same in 2012, and thus the Hungarian minority can be expected to behave according to the wealthy minority group hypothesis.

It is easier to establish why relative deprivation is the most applicable economic hypothesis for the shifts in mobilization of the Albanian population in Serbia. Concentrated as a relative or total majority in the southern areas of Preševo, Bujanovac and Medveđa, all three municipalities were classified as being either highly undeveloped or devastated areas in 2012. As with the Hungarian municipalities, this classification had not changed from 2006. In 2009, the official average rate of unemployment in Albanian municipalities was 39 per cent; however, local officials claimed that unemployment was estimated to be around 60 and 80 percent respectively. This disparity between data highlights the challenge of establishing the precise nature of the economic situation of minority actors, but as according to work on economics and Russian regionalism by Yoshiko Herrera, the minority’s perception of its economic status in relation to the centre is more important than the specific nature of the disparity and relationship.

3. Hungarians in Vojvodina

Prior to the moment of transition in 2006, the first organisation of the Hungarian minority was the formation of the Democratic Community of Vojvodina Hungarians (DCVH) after Vojvodina’s constitutional right to regional autonomy was dissolved in 1989. In April 1992 the DCVH adopted a memorandum which presented the concept of Hungarian ‘personal autonomy, a local Hungarian government, and a regional Hungarian government with special [minority] status’, but a provisional Hungarian National Council was not established until the end of the decade. Autonomy for Vojvodina was only partially restored by the so-called “Omnibus Law” in February 2002.

28 Kokai, About the Autonomy Efforts, 3.
By 2006, the Hungarians of Vojvodina had reached an advantageous bargaining position. Although provincial autonomy had not been fully restored to the constitutional status of 1974, the historical and institutional precedent for regional self-governance was still there, something not possessed by other minorities in Serbia. They also became the first minority in Serbia to have a kin-state in the European Union (EU) when Hungary became a member in 2004, presenting the perception of greater access to economic benefits for Hungarian kin located outside of the bloc, particularly through initiatives such as the National Responsibility Programme.

3.1. Minority Bargaining between 2006 and 2013
Following Montenegro’s independence in 2006, Article 182 of the new Serbian constitution established Vojvodina’s status as an autonomous province within Serbia’s borders. This autonomy enabled provincial institutions to regulate matters including education, urban planning, healthcare, agriculture and infrastructure; additionally, it stated that the seven percent of the Serbian central budget should be allocated for Vojvodina. The lack of claims expressed by the Hungarian minority at this time suggest that during the period of transition they were content with developing the senior positions held in government at the next local and national elections. Meanwhile, stable trade relations between the kin and host-state were being consolidated, particularly co-operation between joint-owned small and medium sized businesses, most of which were located in Vojvodina.

The first explicitly stated claim on Jenne’s spectrum of minority mobilization, which ranges from affirmative action to secession or irredentism, occurred during the run up to the May 2008 national and provincial elections. The Hungarian Coalition, comprised of the Alliance of Vojvodina Hungarians (VMSZ), Democratic Fellowship of Vojvodina Hungarians (DZVM) and Democratic Party of Vojvodina Hungarians (DSVM) parties, contested the election with an underlying goal of ethno-territorial autonomy for the Hungarian majority municipalities in North Bačka and North Banat, a goal which had been explicitly stated in January by the leader of the VMSZ, István Pástor. After the polls, however, Pástor quickly backtracked, declaring that due to a lack of political will ‘it would be a multi-ethnic region, not a Hungarian region.’ This shift in mobilization could be attributed to the underperformance of the Hungarian Coalition in the election, rather than any

33 Jenne, Ethnic Bargaining, 40.
sudden economic shifts which occurred during that time period. The kin-state response to the territorial claim was wholly unsupportive, with the Hungarian foreign minister openly rejecting the possibility.\textsuperscript{38}

By 2010 the idea of territorial autonomy had been quietly abandoned, and the VMSZ branded itself as a regional party seeking full autonomy for the province as a multi-ethnic region.\textsuperscript{39} The minority was enabled to pursue cultural, rather than territorial, autonomy by moves made by both the centre and the kin-state. The Serbian Law on National Minorities in 2009 elicited promises of financial support from the Hungarian government for the work of the National Minority Council, and encouragement of Hungarians to collect enough signatures to hold elections for the body.\textsuperscript{40}

Additionally, in 2008 the Assembly of Vojvodina adopted a new statute for the province, establishing decentralization which included designating Novi Sad as the provincial capital, and opening a representative office in Brussels to encourage external investment.\textsuperscript{41} Decentralisation at this level, despite being multi-ethnic, could be interpreted by an economic ethnic bargaining model as a radical move, as Hungarian representatives held significant influence and key positions in the Assembly, and therefore could better protect the regional budget from exploitation by the centre, whilst campaigning for greater investment in Hungarian majority municipalities. However, this was also prior to the economic crisis, and whilst Serbia was less economically advanced than the minority’s kin-state, there were no serious economic shocks which could push the minority to radically readdress their position within the state. The statute also reaffirmed the participation of Hungarian majority municipalities within the current borders of Serbia.

The issues of autonomy and economic wellbeing were more clearly linked at the end of 2008, when the VMSZ declared the republic’s constitution to be ‘unacceptable’, claiming that the stipulation to allocate seven percent of the budget had not been respected since the constitutional referendum in late 2006.\textsuperscript{42} This became a re-occurring statement of grievance prior to parliamentary debates over the annual budgetary issues, particularly following the fiscal measures introduced by Serbia as part of its response to the global economic crisis. In the VMSZ’s opposition to the 2011 drafting of a public property bill, Pástor acknowledged the state’s restricted financial situation, but argued that there was a ‘discriminatory’ imbalance in the allocation of funding to the Vojvodina Capital Investments Fund.\textsuperscript{43} The following year changes proposed by the Vojvodina Assembly to the Law on the Budget System, which argued that previous changes did not follow the constitutional allocation of 7

\textsuperscript{39} Zuber. Ethnic party competition, 936.
per cent of the state budget to the province, were rejected by the Serbian government.\textsuperscript{44}

Despite the economic crisis impacting Hungary more severely than Serbia,\textsuperscript{45} in 2010 the kin-state remained financially committed to supporting the cultural autonomy of Hungarians in Vojvodina by supporting the VMSZ minority education programme.\textsuperscript{46} Amendments made to the Act on Hungarian Nationality in 2010, which enabled non-Hungarian citizens to achieve dual citizenship through naturalization, and thus greater trans-border movement, employment and other economic benefits, could have been interpreted as a signal that the kin-state was utilising a trans-border citizenship regime to redefine its borders.\textsuperscript{47} An assertion from the Hungarian government that ‘this legislation does not create room for the conferring of citizenship en masse’,\textsuperscript{48} and the ongoing positive relationship between the host and kin states, enabled the minority to correctly interpret that this support for their freedom of movement was intended to both consolidate their position within Serbia, and deter illegal economic immigration into Hungary.\textsuperscript{49}

Contestation between the centre and the minority remained minimal until July, when the Constitutional Court declared that twenty provisions of the law on Vojvodina’s jurisdictions were invalid within the Serbian constitution, including the opening of a provincial office in Brussels. The minorities of the province condemned the decision, perceiving it to be moving towards an abolition of Vojvodina’s autonomy, and the VMSZ reneged on a prior suggestion that it would be part of a future coalition government.\textsuperscript{50} This refusal of the leading Hungarian minority party to join the central government demonstrates the importance of provincial autonomy to the Hungarian minority, and that the development of a National Minority Council was not a substitution.

The move elicited muted response from the minority kin-state, with Hungary choosing to improve its relationship with the new government following the 2012 elections. However, the dispute over Vojvodina’s competencies continued into 2013, and in May the Vojvodina Assembly passed a declaration which accused the central government of violating the province’s autonomous status.\textsuperscript{51} Whilst the issue does not cleanly fit into the minority claims spectrum, as it is neither a purely Hungarian issue, nor a newly advanced claim, the minority’s contestation of the court’s decision persisted regardless of continued of kin-state investment into the region. This behaviour is in line an

\textsuperscript{44} N.N. 2012. MPs discuss Vojvodina’s budget. \textit{B92}, 22 November 2012 (accessed: 20 September 2015).
\textsuperscript{49} Butler, \textit{Hungary and the European Union}, 1127.
economic ethnic bargaining idea that whilst the minority perceives there to be little support for radicalisation from the triadic or quadratic levels, the most profitable course of action is to strengthen existing autonomy mechanisms within the state structure, even though they perceive the centre to be curtailing their economic capabilities.

3.2. Economic Ethnic Bargaining
The shifts in mobilization by the Hungarian minority can be tentatively understood in terms of economic theories of wealthy regionalism, but doing so raises several analytical concerns. Despite the classification of almost all the Hungarian majority municipalities as being of higher than or in line with average levels of development, this assessment is not supported by unemployment rates. A vast disparity existed in 2009 between municipalities such as Subotica, with a below national average rate of 19 percent, and Mali Idoš, which with an unemployment rate of 47 per cent, was experiencing higher unemployment than in the devastated Albanian majority areas. This disparity continued to remain until the end of the bargaining game, with Ada experiencing dramatic drops in unemployment from above to below the national average, whilst in all other Hungarian municipalities unemployment increased. The unevenness between the economic wellbeing across the area where claims are made by the minority representatives, with the VMSZ performing well electorally in all of these municipalities, shows that extent to which conditions must be bracketed in order to treat the minority according to a specific economic theory in a bargaining situation.

The second concern raised by the Hungarian case is the proportion of claim making which is framed around the status and resources of a multi-ethnic institution. Initially, the persistent attempts to protect the central budget allocation for the region corresponds with ethnic bargaining, as the unequal reciprocation by the centre to reflect the net contribution from the region is a key driver for radicalisation away from an exploitative host-state. However, the complication with such a theory in this case is that the regional contribution is multi-ethnic, despite the high development of Hungarian majority municipalities. Whilst the minority contention can be understood due to the high levels of participation of Hungarian representatives at the regional level, as that is the mechanism through which they can exercise the greatest agency over financial and economic resources, it also demonstrates the difficulty of applying a broad economic theory of mobilization to the specific experiences of one minority in the bargaining game.

Stability between the kin and host states, and the relative lack of quadratic level engagement with the region, means that economically framed moves by external actors to influence the minority’s behaviour are more subtle than perhaps they would be if the minority was treated as a relatively deprived group. Throughout the game, the triadic level actor does encourage the minority’s economic wellbeing within the current state boundaries, through investment, support for cultural autonomy, minority education and freedom of

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labour movement across the kin-state borders. It is difficult, however, to ascertain to what extent these efforts contribute to the minority’s behaviour, particularly as the VMSZ rarely expressed economic claims aside from the annual budget dispute.

4. Albanians in the Preševo Valley
The first significant moment of mobilization in the Preševo Valley occurred when Albanian leaders conducted a referendum in 1992, in which the population voted for unification with the formerly-autonomous region of Kosovo. This vote was never transformed into material attempts to unify the Valley and Kosovo, but the referendum is often referred to by Albanian politicians when making claims against the state.

In January 2000 the Liberation Army of Preševo, Medveđa and Bujanovac (UCPMB) launched an insurgency campaign from the Preševo Valley, aiming to unify with an internationally-backed Kosovo. The conflict ended in May 2001, and governance of the Valley fell under the Čović Plan to disband the UCPMB, and assert the territorial integrity of Serbia. The self-titled Albanian Councillors of Preševo Valley signed a declaration in January 2006 which committed them to seek the “unification of Preševo Valley with Kosovo in case of possible change of [Kosovo’s] borders”. However, the councillors suggested that they would wait for regional developments to facilitate this change, rather than use force.

By May 2006, Albanians were concentrated in some of the most economically devastated parts of Serbia, complaining of high unemployment rates, exclusion from public employment, under-developed healthcare and other infrastructure, and lack of access to education in Albanian. These factors determine that the group will be studied according to theories of relative deprivation, and whether shifts in their actual or perceived economic relationship with the centre, their kin-state of Kosovo, and the large number of international agencies interested in the stability of the Preševo Valley, affect the Albanian minority’s radicalisation or accommodation of the Serbian state.

4.1. Minority Bargaining between 2006 and 2013
Following Montenegro’s independence in May 2006, Albanian protestors in June called for decentralization and establishment of a self-administered region of the three municipalities in the Preševo Valley. Legitimised as a genuine minority claim with support from the President of the leading minority Party for Democratic Action (PVD), Riza Halimi, it was met with silence by the Serbian government and other actors in the bargaining game. The call for decentralization was repeated in the autumn of 2006, when the PVD urged...

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Albanians to boycott a national referendum on accepting the new constitution of Serbia.\textsuperscript{59}

However, by January 2007, OSCE and European state ambassadors had convinced the four main Albanian party leaders Riza Halimi, Ragmi Mustafa (Democratic Party of Albanians), Jonuz Musliu (Movement for Democratic Process) and Skender Destani (Democratic Union of the Valley) to form ‘the Albanians of Preševo Valley’ and break a fifteen-year boycott of parliamentary elections by running as a coalition.\textsuperscript{60} This was facilitated by the Republican Electoral Commission, who reduced the signature requirement for minority party registration from 10,000 to 3,000, making minority contestation more achievable.\textsuperscript{61} There were also reports of pressure exerted by Hashim Thaçi, the Prime Minister of Kosovo, on the more radical leaders to integrate.\textsuperscript{62} The final Albanian coalition succeeded in winning one parliamentary seat for Halimi, who consequently became the first ethnic Albanian Member of Parliament in the post-Yugoslav Serbian republic.

The first claim framed in economic terms was the reaction of Albanians to the Ahtisaari plan, which in March 2007 argued that re-integration of Kosovo into Serbia was not possible, and advocated instead for an independent, majority-Albanian state backed by the international community.\textsuperscript{63} According to ethnic bargaining theory, this signal from the quadratic level to the kin-state could be interpreted by the minority as an opportunity for radicalisation, and in September the leaders of the Albanian parties in Preševo issued a declaration supporting the plan, condemning the ‘sluggishness’ actions of the government run Coordination Body for Preševo, Medveđa, and Bujanovac, and blaming the state for instability in the area which threatened ‘economic development’.\textsuperscript{64}

The Albanians’ concern that regional instability was hampering development became evident when Kosovo eventually declared independence in February 2008. Kosovo authorities immediately introduced stricter border and customs controls to emphasise their statehood, regardless of the consequences for ethnic-kin in Preševo, where cross-border trade effectively ceased.\textsuperscript{65} Whilst this negative economic signal from the kin-state did not prevent a ‘Coalition for Preševo Valley’ successfully running in the May parliamentary elections, a second economic effect of the independence led to a shift in the minority mobilization, after the Serbian Ministry of Education stopped recognising the accreditation of diplomas issued in Kosovo in August. Minority party leaders


\textsuperscript{61} However, this decision was inexplicably reversed one month before the 2008 national and provincial elections. OSCE, ODIHR. 2007. \textit{Republic of Serbia Parliamentary Elections: Election Observation Mission Report}. Warsaw: OSCE, 6.


protested to Belgrade, threatening to withdraw Albanian participation from the Coordination Body if the decision was not reversed, as failure to do so would prevent many Albanian students in Preševo to seek employment in Serbia using their qualifications.\textsuperscript{66} The threats were dismissed, and responsibility for encouraging Albanians to de-radicalise was left to international actors such as USAID who, alongside the Coordination Body, signed an investment memorandum with the mayors of Preševo, Bujanovac and Medveđa, whilst the French ambassador to Serbia pledged EU assistance to tackle regional under-development.\textsuperscript{67}

International efforts by donors and the OSCE to re-integrate the Albanian representatives into the Coordination Body were successful in March 2009, despite the unresolved issues of inhibited cross-border trade, and Serbia’s unrecognition of Kosovo-issued diplomas. Once again, the accommodation lasted only a few months before the assembly of the municipalities sent the government a proposal which reaffirmed the January 2006 declaration for establishing regional autonomy, proportional representation of Albanians in public institutions, and calling to reverse the diploma recognition decision.\textsuperscript{68} This followed a denouncement, by the mayor of Bujanovac, of a drastic cut in the annual municipality budget allocated by the Coordination Body, and the perception that despite state investment in ‘infrastructural development, which had contributed to improving the quality of living…economic development projects had been lacking’.\textsuperscript{69} The perceived awareness minority actors had of their worsening economic status as a result of kin-state actions, and repression by the centre through exclusion of diploma holders and underemployment in the public sector, could have influenced the group to radicalise their claims again, despite lack of support from their kin-state, and ongoing international assistance to improve regional economic development.

These latest claims preceded moves made by the government to visibly make progress on regional development beyond infrastructure projects. After years of stalled progress, in October 2009 bilingual branches of Nis University opened in Medveđa, with support from USAID and the OSCE,\textsuperscript{70} whilst at the start of 2010, 4.3 million euros were allocated to the Coordination Body from the central budget for infrastructure development. The Coordination Body’s director highlighted that this was a ten percent increase from the previous year, stating that ‘the fact that the Coordination Body is one of the few state institutions that has received more money than it did last year, despite the economic crisis, clearly indicates that southern Serbia is a strategic priority of the government’.\textsuperscript{71} Meanwhile, the government of Albania took steps to establish economic cooperation with the region, through assisting Coordination

Body projects, and encouraging private investment from Tirana, with the Vice-
President urging leaders in the Preševo Valley to establish an Albanian National Council.\textsuperscript{72}

This support appears to follow the hypothesis that perceived investment from both the state and external lobby actors effectively promotes accommodation of the minority, as in June 2010 the Albanian National Council was finally formed by successful elections. It represented a huge step for the cultural autonomy of the Albanian minority, but also for the attempts by other actors in the bargaining game to reduce calls of more radical, territorially based claims. However, regional economic underdevelopment was still a prominent concern for Albanian leaders, with the high unemployment rates and lower than average wages becoming a more pressing issue as the Coordination Body announced that donor assistance was ‘slowly drying up’\textsuperscript{73} and the delayed effects of the economic crisis on the central state became clearer. The minority could have perceived an economically weakened centre as a less formidable opponent to bargain with; however, they appear to have understood that a worsening economic state for the state as a whole would lead to reduced budgets for expenditure at multiple levels of governance. Therefore, rather than framing claims in economic terms, the next discernible move made by the minority was a mass boycott of the 2011 population census, which they protested would marginalise Albanians by refusing to include citizens living abroad,\textsuperscript{74} an important aspect for an economically depressed region which had experienced steady and significant labour migration.

The opening of a multi-lingual department of economics in Bujanovac, and a joint Coordination Body and U.K investment project for small and medium enterprises, were efforts by the state between October 2011 and April 2012 to further address development issues other than infrastructure. This investment may have contributed to a quiet period of minority claim making, with only a partial, radical, boycott of the May 2012 presidential and parliamentary elections, and a brief verbal conflict over the removal of a UÇPMB memorial in 2013. Although the minority did attempt to use the Brussels Agreement proposals for an Association of Serb Municipalities in Kosovo to for claims of an equivalent arrangement in South Serbia, they received minimal support from the Kosovo Assembly, which passed legislation supporting Albanian civil rights, but within the existing state borders.\textsuperscript{75} These flare-ups between the minority and the state between 2012 and 2013 seem to be actions driven by radicals, and not claims made by legitimate representatives of the group.

4.2. Economic Ethnic Bargaining
This exploratory case study of Albanians in the Preševo Valley indicatively supports the inclusion of economic theories into ethnic bargaining analysis of

minority mobilization. The relative deprivation of the minority is regularly referenced by actors alongside and independently of other issues when expressing radical claims, whilst appearing to respond temporarily to efforts made by other game players to improve the economic condition of Albanians. The quadratic level of ethnic bargaining is also supported by the minority’s confidence in international actors’ involvement through direct regional investment, aid, joint projects with state institutions, and the influence that international institutions and foreign governments could have on the status of their kin-state.

Throughout the period of analysis, triadic and quadratic level actors display awareness of a need for strong signals of commitment to investment and economic integration following periods of minority radicalization, such as the renewed claims for regional self-governance in 2009. It also demonstrates how economic investment and integrationist political institutions in the region are intricately linked, with the role of the Coordination Body as a decentralised, cooperative institution between the central state and local minority leaders, whilst also providing a degree of minority agency over economic governance structures, within a structure which enhances existing borders and the legacy of the Čović Plan.

Conclusion
This paper has explored a way in which ethnic bargaining as a dynamic theory, could be developed in order to acknowledge the potential influence of economic structures for minority mobilization. The subsequent case studies demonstrate that it is possible to expand previous ethnic bargaining models to include a quadratic level of analysis and contextual features of the circumstances in which a bargaining game is taking place, such as a global economic crisis. By doing so, it has addressed concerns that a triadic bargaining game does not effectively account for the influence and participation of international players, such as international organisations or non-kin states, in relations between a host-state and national minorities. The Albanian study in particular has raised the need to be aware of the participation of secondary kin-states, when they display greater interest in the economic wellbeing and integration of a minority abroad than the primary lobby actor. Emphasising the discursive interpretation of economic status and moves by minority players also contributes to the dynamic nature of existing ethnic bargaining theories, ensuring that despite arguing for inclusion of a structural feature, the constructivist roots of bargaining theory are not distorted.

Although the case studies demonstrate minority behaviour which appears to support economic ethnic bargaining hypotheses, they also raise issues regarding the need for bracketing minority features, a reliance on observing the dominant ethnic voice, and the complications that arise when minority claims are expressed through multi-ethnic institutions. The limitations of the two indicative case studies means that further and more extensive research is required to establish how these could be addressed, or whether these are necessary features of ethnic bargaining models which limit the applicability of the theory to specific minority behaviour. Whilst in both cases claims were expressed in economic terms, and moves made by other players to reduce
minority radicalisation through financial means can be observed, the case studies also demonstrate that relative economic difference between a minority and the centre is a significant but not necessary feature of mobilization. Therefore, this paper concludes that the possibilities of ethnic bargaining theory remain open for discussion and engagement, particularly through the use of case studies beyond the area of Central and South-Eastern Europe. It welcomes the contribution that ethnic bargaining models make to dynamic theories of comparative ethnic conflict, but also suggests that it could be developed to address the existing limitations it relies on in order to retain a predictive capacity.

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Laura Wise


Introduction: The Politics of Numbers in the Post-Yugoslav States

Soeren Keil  
Reader, Canterbury Christ Church University  
soeren.keil@canterbury.ac.uk

Valery Perry  
Lecturer, Sarajevo School of Science and Technology  
valeryperry@yahoo.com

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Introduction: The Politics of Numbers in the Post-Yugoslav States

Valery Perry and Soeren Keil*

Introduction: The Merits and Pitfalls of Counting Populations
Since 1991, every country in the former Yugoslavia has either held, or has attempted to hold, a census. The most recent efforts occurred in or around 2011, reflecting both the interest of harmonizing with the European Union’s (EU) own 2011 census round, as well as the need for accurate data in a region that has experienced significant population flux in the past generation. Macedonia’s 2011 census was cancelled during the enumeration period due to objections related to the counting procedure, but grounded in politics related to the Macedonian and Albanian populations, and representation provisions in the Ohrid Framework Agreement that ended the violent conflict in the country in 2001. Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) collected data for the first time since the war in 2013, but as of this writing (October 2015) the results have not been finalised. Kosovo’s census results have been contested by Belgrade, with a number of Serb majority municipalities in Kosovo boycotting the census while other minorities have also questioned the results.

In the former Yugoslavia, censuses are clearly not about the simple number of persons in a household or their education; the number of people in a municipality; the numbers of people employed; the percentage of people who drive or take public transportation to work; or other such information common to census taking in other parts of the world (including most EU Member States). In this region, the census very often becomes focused squarely on sensitive identity questions related to one’s ethnicity, one’s nationality, one’s religious affiliation, and one’s mother tongue. Interest in these sensitive questions is not purely academic, but based on either existing required quotas and representation requirements and local level budgeting decisions, or on the aspirational politics of groups seeking to ensure greater formal mandated participation in power structures, at either the local or state level. As Simon and Piché argue, “[t]he statistical representation of diversity is a complex process which reveals the foundations of societies and their political choices. Thus there is a gap between the apparent ethnic and racial diversity in most countries in the world and the way these societies perceive themselves [...].” The link between a defined group and a defined piece of territory is not unique to the former Yugoslavia;

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* Valery Perry is an independent researcher and consultant based in Sarajevo. She is a Senior Associate in the Democratization Policy Council, and is teaching conflict analysis and resolution at the Sarajevo School of Science and Technology.
Soeren Keil is Reader in Politics and International Relations at Canterbury Christ Church University in the United Kingdom. His research interests include the political systems of the post-Yugoslav states, EU enlargement policy and conflict resolution in divided societies.

1 Some basic preliminary data has been released such as the overall number of people residing in the country, but no actual breakdown of all the information has yet been released. It is expected that these data will be available later in 2015.

Benedict Anderson notes in his study of identity construction and consolidation in Southeast Asia that, “[i]t would be unwise to overlook the critical intersection between map and census.” These questions of who lives where and who rules where, and who is a majority or a minority, and who is constituent or not constituent, were at the core of the power struggles and led to violent conflict in the region in the 1990s. While the violence ended, the concerns about such issues, by people but especially by political parties both shaping and shaped by these dynamics, continues.

**Public Policy, Identity and Contestation**

This special issue aims to explore these issues by looking at the census experiences of each country that has emerged from the former Yugoslavia. While each case study presented has its own focus and structure, a number of themes emerge that demonstrate a certain cohesion among the cases.

One theme is the link between demographics and public policy, including political participation. Some of the cases ensure certain minimal representation of minorities based on the count of a minority in a certain area; reaching a threshold guarantees a certain level of representation or number of seats. In some cases this provides primarily for representation and certain rights (often language rights) at the local level, while in others state-level rights and representation is confirmed as well. As the discussions in Croatia demonstrate, local issues do not only reflect questions of minority rights protection, but can also link into previously unresolved issues related to the violent conflict that erupted in the country in the early 1990s. Similarly, discussions in Bosnia have demonstrated how important censuses can be in a system that is dominated by power-sharing quotas and positive discrimination for minorities. This link between representation and numbers creates a context in which everybody — and every body — counts, leading to incentives to ensure the highest possible number of one’s own group, to in turn ensure the highest possible representation.

While a census is typically aimed at being a “snapshot” of the people residing in a country at the time of the enumeration process, these political incentives create motivation to ensure that this snapshot is enlarged, to include diaspora who have been out of country for short- or long-periods of time. Discussions on including the diaspora have not only contributed to problems during the census process in Macedonia, but have also been present in Bosnia and Kosovo. This competition for numbers is further expressed through often organized efforts to ensure that individuals declare “cleanly” as members of just one identifiable group, or speak one primary mother tongue; persons of complex or mixed heritage, or those who seek not to declare are often expected to “take sides” to ensure greater numbers of one group or the other. The fact that sensitive, identity-focused questions are not in fact required by the EU has not removed the political allure of categorizing citizens in this manner. Censuses remain key instruments of ethnic engineering, of creating a certain type of polity, in which

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different groups live, have rights and enjoy political and societal participation, while others (those not counted, or not fitting the previous pattern) remain marginalized. This is nowhere truer than in the post-Yugoslav states. In turn, this means that those organizing a census become political actors, engineering questionnaires and methodologies according to which the population is categorized, and deciding who is and is not counted.5

Another theme that runs through several of the contributions reflects the fact that these challenges related to identity are not unique, and have been evident in census efforts in the region for over a century. This is particularly visible in the discussion of identities such as “Muslim”, which have changed in numerous countries, including Bosnia and Montenegro, where the dominant category has become “Bosniak.” Identities have changed at various times in each country’s history, as new census responses have been available; while a person could remain the same as an individual between two separate census periods, their available identity options could in fact change, meaning that in one census they could be offered a different range of ethnicity or nationality options than in another, being left to consider which “box” is more appropriate for them to tick (if any). Another example of this form of identity change would be the rise and fall of the category “Yugoslavs” which played a key role in the 1950s in Yugoslavia, when Tito was trying to promote a common identity for all Yugoslav peoples. Nowadays, this identity does not feature anymore in censuses – and like the state, Yugoslavs seem to have disappeared. Florian Bieber has recently analyzed how different processes have affected the construction of national identities in the post-Yugoslav states. He highlights processes of state-dissolution, nation-state-building, the reification of national identities and the emergence of new categories as key elements that influenced the development of census categories in these states.6

A third theme in these articles is contestation, as certain aspects of nearly all of these censuses have been contested by various groups claiming pressure, over- or under-counting, or flawed data collection methods.7 Once group rights have been identified and enshrined in public policy, the importance of the count makes it obvious that results will often be challenged, as tangible budgetary or political participation rights are based on these numbers. This environment also increases the ethnic stakes of what is – to people outside of the region – often believed to be a purely technical exercise. All country studies in this special issue mention different forms of contestation. Some of these contests are based on questions such as whether to include the diaspora, while others evolve around socio-economic factors. For example, Roma in most countries are permanently undercounted because of lack of permanent residence, low literacy rates and social exclusion, which makes their participation in census exercises

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particularly difficult. Other contests arise out of the question of refugees and displaced persons. Should these individuals be included in the censuses of the countries where they are refugees, or should they be included in the censuses in the countries where they originally come from (and supposedly will return to)? How would data reliability be affected if they were included in both? What if this group of people is not included in any of the censuses because of their “in-between” status? These are but some of the questions which have resulted in contestation of censuses in the post-Yugoslav states.

Contributions

The contributions in this special issue confirm that in the countries of the former Yugoslavia, censuses are never simply technical. Since censuses in the post-Yugoslav states have not only been used as tools of ethnic engineering, but also as mechanisms to assess countries’ preparedness and convergence with EU standards and regulations, the articles in this special issue are organized according to the countries’ EU integration process, starting with Slovenia, which joined in 2004, followed by Croatia which became an EU Member State in July 2013. This is followed by the article on Montenegro, which became a candidate country in 2010 and shortly afterwards opened membership negotiations with the EU. It is perceived by many as the most advanced country of the non-EU Western Balkans, in terms of its progress towards eventual membership. The following article discusses Serbia, which became a candidate country in 2012 and opened negotiations on membership in 2014. Macedonia, which is discussed in the following paper, has been an EU candidate country since 2005, but has so far been unable to open membership negotiations due to the ongoing name dispute with Greece. Finally, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo are discussed, neither of which have official candidate status, though Bosnia signed a Stabilisation and Association Agreement with the EU in 2008, and is also part of the visa liberalization process, which allows its citizens visa free entry into the Schengen area of the EU. Kosovo has so far not formally signed any Agreements (SAA) with the EU on its path towards membership, although it is currently engaged in negotiations on a SAA. The last contribution provides a broad overview of census in the region.

Damir Josipović’s article on Slovenia provides a historical overview of the census on the territory of Slovenia, post-Yugoslavia’s first “success story”. He shows how even during the Yugoslav period, there were differences in territorial enumeration units and methodology that can make longitudinal comparisons difficult. He reviews the way in which certain new census methods were tested in Slovenia in this time; a trend that continued after the fall of Yugoslavia as Slovenia has now in fact moved away from “classic” census techniques and towards a register-based system of data collection. Josipović also touches on the country’s own controversy concerning the “erased” persons, namely the approximately 30,000 people who were living in Slovenia and were essentially erased from the population register for failing to apply for Slovenian citizenship in time. What Josipović demonstrates persuasively is the fact that even in a small state that is considered relatively ethnically homogenous, and which escaped the Yugoslav break-up with little violence on its own territory, controversies surrounding population censuses and questions about who is being counted and who is not, and which categories are used, remain.
Anna-Lena Hoh’s article examines Croatia’s census in 2011 to determine whether or not this country provides a good example in terms of the application of EU norms to a candidate country seeking to meet accession requirements. While the technical aspects of the census were broadly viewed as meeting the needed requirements, the inclusion of sensitive ethnicity/nationality questions in a semi-closed manner can be viewed as a weakness. Further, she explains how the linkage between certain political participation rights for minorities and census results have increased inter-group tensions, particularly with the Serb minority.

Ivan Vuković’s contribution on Montenegro provides a broad historical overview of the country’s 20th century experience of independence, its incorporation in various south Slav polities, and then its renewed independence in 2006. The options available to citizens in censuses in this time reflect the various political interests of the ruling regime, and as such while the actual population structure had not changed in noticeable ways, the manner in which people declared themselves in the numerous censuses held in these various constructs did fluctuate significantly. His detailed review of ongoing political dynamics and the census results of 2003 and 2011 demonstrate the interplay among the responses of citizens, meanings of identification, political party development and evolution, and broader political strategies. He also highlights very clearly how censuses can be used as tools of nation-building and reflect ongoing political issues in a country that is still trying to find the meaning of Montenegrin nationhood, now that it has found Montenegrin statehood.

Mina Djurić-Nikolić and Laura Trimajova look at the two most recent censuses in Serbia (2002 and 2011), analyzing the results and related politics in this heterogeneous state. They discuss the impact of census boycotts in Kosovo, but also responses among Hungarians (primarily in Vojvodina), Albanians in southern Serbia, among Bosniaks and the Roma. They survey the political dynamics evident during these two enumeration periods, and the policies of guaranteed representation thresholds among various minority groups. They conclude that many minorities still contest Serbian censuses and feel insufficiently integrated into the census project and the state more generally.

Roska Vrgova provides an overview of the consistently contentious census experience in Macedonia – the only country in the region in which the latest census failed. She outlines the historical context for debates on demography and population, and the impact of built-in quotas in the Ohrid Framework Agreement, which has reinforced the belief that every person counted matters. Vrgova also reviews the role of the census in identity consolidation through public policy – a theme repeated in several of the contributions. She concludes that although the most recent attempt to hold a census in 2011 failed due to technical issues over who is counted and how the results will be used, this failure in fact reflects deeper political issues between the Macedonian and the Albanian population. Because political representation and certain group rights are linked to representative figures from the census, each census exercise becomes a form of political mobilization and a ‘game of numbers.’
Valery Perry looks at the 2013 census in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) – the first since the war that displaced half of the pre-war population. Twenty years after the end of the war, Bosnia continues to face significant political challenges and obstacles, most of which are driven by the nature of ethno-national parties operating in the ethno-national system devised and confirmed at Dayton. As the results of the census are not expected to be available until late 2015 (and some doubt this timeframe), she focuses on unanswered policy questions related to Bosnia’s census, and questions the nature of the notion of “constituent peoples” if the census reveals that there are more “Others” than there are of a constituent group (the Croats). As is the case in Macedonia, Perry also highlights how the link of group rights is connected to absolute (and relative) numbers revealed by the census, making the count a powerful tool around which political and religious elites mobilize, often manipulating and undermining what, in essence, should be a technical counting exercise.

Mehmet Musaj explores Kosovo’s contentious experience with censuses, including the boycott of the 1991 census by Albanians following Kosovo’s rescinded autonomy by the Milošević regime as Yugoslavia began to disintegrate, and the 2011 census boycott by Serb municipalities in the north, as well as by some Serbs in parts of the south. He also examines the sensitive nature of the census and the consequences of relying on other data sources as he explains current controversies concerning the much smaller numbers of minorities as enumerated in 2011, and the impact that this could have on local budgeting and minority representation. Population censuses, Musaj argues, cannot only be a way towards ensuring a minority is properly represented and enjoys sufficient rights, but it can also be a way of scaling back minority rights and funding for minority communities if in fact certain minorities are demonstrated to be smaller in numbers than previously assumed.

Pieter Everaers gives a practitioner’s view of the censuses in the region, grounded in his years of experience with EUROSTAT, including, most recently, as the EUROSTAT Director. He looks at the countries that participated in the 2011 census round, looking at the EU’s role in supporting the development of appropriate census infrastructure and processes, and broad methodological consistency to ensure a solid basis for comparison among EU states. Reflecting on the pervasive interest in the sensitive (and, from the EU’s point of view, optional) identity questions, he acknowledges the political dynamics of identity-based census campaigns, but notes that the nature of such optional questions can at best be used as an independent variable, and that absolute interpretation of responses to these sensitive questions should be avoided, since they were either non-compulsory questions or people had the option to ‘not declare’.

In the conclusion, Soeren Keil poses a number of questions related to policy issues and the censuses. He argues that censuses are always more than just a technical counting exercise. Discussions in Western Europe focused on regional funding, infrastructure support and long-term policy planning, and were often as contested and heated as questions over identity, religion and mother tongue in the post-Yugoslav states. However, Keil demonstrates that identity-related questions in an area in which identity is still in flux, and in which fundamental demographic changes have recently taken place, prevent any focus on more policy-oriented discussions. In their EU integration process, all of the countries
will have to concentrate on issues such as economic development, sustainable infrastructure planning, and budgeting within the strict rules of the most recent EU agreements, and hence policy discussions should be at the forefront of the debates about the results of the censuses. Instead, discussions over who is counted and how remain of key importance in all countries (even those that have joined the EU), and demonstrate unconsolidated nation-building and state-consolidation projects.

While the 2011 census round is over, it is clear that the ramifications of the results will continue for some time. Croatia, an EU member state, will continue to grapple with ensuring it meets its human rights obligations concerning its Serb minority (mostly located in the east of the country), and political dynamics that can at times favor nationalist rhetoric and illiberal policy. It is difficult to imagine a scenario in Bosnia in which the results of the sensitive questions are released without contestation, and the policy implications of the count remain woefully unclear. That the success of Macedonia’s Ohrid Agreement continues to be threatened by the manner and methodology of a count, and the fears of how resulting numbers will be used, suggests that the foundations of the peace in that country are still rather fragile. Kosovo’s count remains incomplete due to the ongoing conflict with Serbia, both in broad terms regarding its declared independence, and in targeted terms related to Belgrade’s continued role in and among the Serb majority municipalities. Even if countries begin to follow Slovenia’s model, moving away from a decennial special enumeration process and towards the concerted collection of data from various registries, the controversies and conflicts surrounding the politics of demography, territory and representation will likely continue as long as the countries of the region remain heterogeneous and seek to identify appropriate means of political participation that are grounded in various definitions of group identity.

Bibliography:
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Research Article

Valery Perry
Lecturer, Sarajevo School of Science and Technology
valeryperry@yahoo.com

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The 2013 Bosnia and Herzegovina Census: Waiting for Results and Counting the Questions

Valery Perry*

Bosnia and Herzegovina held its first post-war census in autumn 2013, over two decades after the final 1991 Yugoslav census, following a war that displaced nearly half of the population, and killed approximately 100,000 people. The long delay was related to several reasons including the post-war reconstruction, the efforts to either support or obstruct the return of persons to their pre-war homes as guaranteed in the Dayton peace agreement, and pervasive ethno-political agendas. Such agendas were often based on the practical reality of who, from what constituent group, lives where. As of August 2015, the results have not been released. This article therefore reviews BiH’s experience in the recent census, and poses a number of policy relevant questions about how the data could be used.

Keywords: Bosnia and Herzegovina, census, state-building, nation-building, power sharing

Introduction

Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) held its first post-war census in 2013, after years of controversy and delay. The technical process rolled out over two weeks in October, and the subsequent data processing has continued through early 2015. While there had been some anticipation – and concern – that the results would be ready around the same time as the 2014 October general elections, it appears that the final results will not be announced until late-2015.

In the absence of anything other than the most preliminary data shared to date, as of August 2015 it is impossible to discuss the results that might be released. However, there are significant policy questions looming in terms of how the data may be used to make or affect public policy. It is not clear how the results will be used; how several non-mandatory questions will be analyzed or utilized; or whether independent researchers and analysts will have access to the data for independent study. Further, as of the time of writing it is unclear how contradictory references in many laws that refer to the census might be interpreted or implemented. Only once the results are fully and officially released, and once these policy questions are answered, will the lasting impact of the 2013 census be known.

* Valery Perry is an independent researcher and consultant based in Sarajevo. She is a Senior Associate in the Democratization Policy Council, and is teaching conflict analysis and resolution at the Sarajevo School of Science and Technology. She has worked for organizations including NATO SFOR, the OSCE, the Public International Law and Policy Group (PILPG), IMPAQ International and the UN Office on Drugs and Crime.
This article will briefly review BiH’s contentious recent census history and the broad conduct of the 2013 census,1 and will then focus on the potential impact of laws that alternately require policy to be based on the 1991 census or the “last” census.

Why Count?
The author recalls a comment from friends sometime in 2004 mocking a commercial for laundry detergent that asserted that a very specific number of washing machines broke down each year due to using soaps that led to build-up. They scoffed, “how would anyone know that when we do not even know how many people live in this country?” While this was a joke, it demonstrated a certain truth – Bosnia had not had a census since before the war. Countries need to know how many people live in it to make policy decisions. The U.S. constitution – the world’s shortest (excluding amendments) – includes a requirement for a decennial census (Article 1, Section 2), while this is supplemented by many other data collection methods, a proper census is still held every ten years, and forms the basis for important congressional seat allocation decisions. The EU also requires that its members collect census data, with the last census round held in member states – and some prospective member states – in 2011.

Data on a country’s individuals and households, potentially including basic economic data, family size, employment status, educational attainment, agricultural data and other information – can help to inform a range of public policy decisions ranging from urban and infrastructural planning, school construction/expansion, social service provision and legislative re-districting. Some countries are beginning to move away from regular, broad-based, interview-style censuses, instead aggregating data from other existing public databases of information. For example, Slovenia now gathers information in this way2, as do a number of other countries.

While talking about statistics cause many people’s eyes to glaze over, some elements of data collection can be quite controversial, as they can influence the distribution of public resources, or can establish the number of various groups of citizens in a society according to racial, ethnic, religious or linguistic affiliations. The questions posed, the manner in which they are asked (or not asked) and the coding and aggregating of data all allow for differences in interpretation, analysis and presentation. The technical can quickly become political.

This has particularly been the case in colonial and post-colonial regions, in fragile, heterogeneous societies, and in countries rebuilding in the wake of war and population displacement.3 The way in which former colonial masters or new domestic leaders seek to categorize their populations has not only had contemporaneous implications, but lasting historical consequences as well.

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2 See Josipovic, this volume.

Anderson has noted, “The fiction of the census is that everyone is in it, and that everyone has one – and only one – extremely clear place. No fractions.” In some cases being counted is seen by various groups as the priority, while in others not participating in the count is viewed as preferable in terms of long-term policy options. While the role of groups in mobilizing can have significant implications, such processes diminish the space for individuals and their own possibly complex and layered identities, subsuming what might be considered as a personal choice into a social statement.

As demonstrated by the articles in this special issue, censuses have garnered particular controversy and interest in the countries of former Yugoslavia. It is not a coincidence that those countries that experienced the most difficult violent conflict and displacements, and which even at peace exhibit many looming questions about who “belongs”, have experienced the most census angst. Several of these cases are explored by Visoka and Gjevori, who review the 2011 census processes in several Western Balkan countries (Albania, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia), assessing whether they can be considered a full or partial success, or, in the case of Macedonia, a failure. As BiH’s census results have not been released as of the time of writing, it is too soon to definitively determine whether the 2013 census can be considered a success. However, the long period of time without a census, the failure to organize one in 2011, the continued controversy concerning the sensitive questions and the lack of agreement, not to mention the adopted policies on how to use census data, once again reflects the problems that pervade every aspect of BiH political, social and even economic life: The lack of agreement on the state, the nature of the state, the nature of citizenship and a common vision for the present and the future.

Controversial Counting in BiH

For nearly two decades after the war, BiH continuously relied on census data from the 1991 census – the final count in Yugoslavia – which itself was often read together with previous censuses conducted in the 19th and 20th centuries in the Ottoman Empire, the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, and socialist Yugoslavia. Throughout the 20th century, Bosnia has faced census challenges and constraints related (among other factors) to the presence of the three main groups in the territory, the competing claims regarding the notion of ethnicity, nationality and religious affiliation, as well as language/mother tongue.

The other contributions in this collection confirm the controversies about one’s proclaimed ethnicity, nationality, and what this might mean for a polity. In Bosnia, one of the key issues of contention for decades has been on how to categorize and count Bosnia’s Muslims; the categorization of Croats and Serbs has

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been in comparison rather straightforward. Miller describes the approach of the Communist Party during the inter-war and wartime periods, noting measures that began to recognize this group as a group in their own right; measures likely taken in part to secure support for the party by this important demographic: “…although in 1948 Muslims were only allowed to register on the census as Muslim-Serbs or -Croats, they were able to register with organizations (such as the Communist Party or Women’s Anti-Fascist Front) as Muslims. In 1953 Muslims did not have qualified options on the federal census either, leading many to register as Yugoslavs, but by 1961, a category for “Muslim in the ethnic sense” (Musliman u etničkom smislu) was made available. Though not granting full national affirmation, the category was popular, drawing approximately 842,200 individual registrants in Bosnia alone (25.7% of the republic’s population). Analysis of the statistical shifts between the two censuses suggests that a large portion of these had likely chosen Yugoslav in 1953. In the 1971 census, the category “Muslim (in the national sense) first appeared as an option on the Yugoslav census, with 1,482,430 people (39.6%) in Bosnia selecting it as the best description of their national identity.”7 In the last Yugoslav census in 1991, the option “Muslim” (Musliman) was also available (selected by 43.38% of the population in Bosnia), as was “Yugoslav” (selected by 5.5%). Other variants of responses, including the label “Bosniak,” were varied and rare (reflecting fewer than 0.04% of respondents as Muslim-Bosniak,” or “Bosniak-Muslim”).8 This issue remained a foremost concern among some activists in the run-up to the 2013 census, as there were fears that Bosniaks might respond that they are “Bosnian” or “Muslim,” in either case decreasing the number in the category of “Bosniak.”9

While historically and politically interesting, for policy purposes in general, and in the wake of the massive wartime displacement in particular, the need for a census in BiH was appreciated for years.10 During the three-and-a-half year war, approximately 100,000 people were killed and 2 million (half of the entire population) were internally displaced or refugees.11 The returns process was uneven, with people alternately deciding to either reclaim their property and stay, or to reclaim their property and sell, building their lives in a new post-war location. There have been many efforts to estimate the impact of the war, ranging from ad hoc assessments based on voter registers, informal confirmation of mostly homogenous communities and other “finger in the wind” approaches. Political parties and politicians follow such population trends as it helps them to target their generally monoethnic campaigns. Scholars have also developed their own models.12 Government agencies and the civil service, very often bound by positive discrimination hiring regulations aimed at ensuring


9 Perry, The Census in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

10 Perry, The Census in Bosnia and Herzegovina.


some staffing heterogeneity, have continued to use the 1991 census as their benchmark (see below).

In 2002 and 2003 a counting exercise in the Federation (FBiH) provided a fore-shadowing of the dynamics of counting exercises, in terms of process, politics and social pressures. A “Federation-wide social mapping exercise” was held in 2002 in the Federation’s ten cantons, organized by the Federation government. It is interesting to note that this experiment is known by few, and the results seem to have been quickly shuffled aside. Markowitz studied this exercise looking both at these results as well as the information provided in marriage registers. She notes in particular the choices made in providing respondents with options on how they would like to declare themselves; rather than semi-open response options that could allow for a wide range of responses (as in 1991), “the FBiH population was now grouped into four categories only,” the three constituent peoples and the Others. \(^{13}\) She relates anecdotes of enumerator pressure on respondents to elicit the “right” identity responses, and assesses the exercise as an exercise in hardening the identities according to the new post-war politics and reality: “the FBiH population survey, administered under government auspices only six years after the end of a war waged on the principle of ethnic cleansing, pushed familiar but slippery notions into fixed categories so that citizens (were) identified in the census along the exclusivist, tri-partite scheme agreed upon by their (nationalist) leaders and inscribed as the constitutional base of the state.” \(^{14}\) While it was clear that in the preparation and conduct of the 2013 census there would be a similar potential for subtle persuasion or overt manipulation, beyond some civic discussions on the matter of the sensitive questions, \(^{15}\) there was little effort by the BiH authorities or international supporters/donors to engage in de-escalating these issues. It was evident through interviews with technical experts and others that the main priority was to simply organize a census, and that the decisions on the sensitive questions would be left to the local level, and based on a commitment to “local ownership”. \(^{16}\)

While an imperfect exercise in the Federation entity, the country as a whole still needed to capture this basic data. The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and the Delegation of the European Commission in BiH drafted a paper in 2005 sketching out many issues that were seen as imperative in a BiH census. At the time, there were hopes that with proper planning and preparation, a census could be held in or around 2010. There was particular appreciation for practices and rules allocating certain political representation rights to groups according to pre-war data, to provide for “positive discrimination” aimed at taking steps to promote return and try to reverse the results of ethnic cleansing. “The key threat remains the impact of the results on the proportion-


\(^{14}\) Markowitz, Census and Sensibilities, 47.

\(^{15}\) See Perry, *The Census in Bosnia and Herzegovina*.

\(^{16}\) Author interviews and discussions in Sarajevo, 2013. This myopic focus on the technical played out in Macedonia as well. Friedman recounts his interaction with international observation mission members who “told me they were quite surprised when they discovered that they were embroiled in highly charged political issues, as opposed to a mechanical statistical exercise,” in Friedman, Victor A. 2001. *Observing the Observers: Language, Ethnicity, and Power in the 1994 Macedonian Census and Beyond*. *New Balkan Politics* 3/4 (accessed: 01 November 2015).
ality guarantees embedded in the Dayton Accords and subsequent agreements, and the associated domestic political reaction. It should be noted, however, that the 2002 ‘Agreement on the Implementation of the Constituent Peoples’ Decision of the Constitutional Court of Bosnia and Herzegovina’ specifically enshrines representation of the constituent peoples in the members of the Government after the completion of Annex 7. Neither then, nor today, was there agreement on a set of objective and agreed upon indicators that would conclusively enable parties to agree that Annex 7 was completed.

The lack of clarity on the questions that should be asked, and the ways that data might be formally or informally used, led to continued political delays on census organization in BiH. Serb politicians were most interested in moving forward with a count including identity-based questions, to presumably demonstrate the post-war “facts on the ground” in terms of demographic shifts. Bosniak and Croat parties were for years less supportive of such a process, with Bosniaks fearing the publication of any data that might be used as justification to “end” return, and Croat concerns about likely declines in their population throughout the country. Positions on the issue remained polarized and deadlocked for years, like many policy and reform concerns. In 2011, the EU decided to connect the unfreezing of BiH’s EU Stabilization and Association Agreement (SAA) and the country’s ability to formally apply for EU candidacy status, to three goals: the adoption of a Law on State Aid, (adopted in February 2012); demonstration of credible progress in making the constitutional reforms needed in light of the European Court of Human Rights decision in the Sejdic and Finci vs. Bosnia and Herzegovina case; and the adoption of a state law on census.

The Law on the Census of Population, Households and Dwellings in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2013 was ultimately adopted on February 3, 2012, without public consultation or a public comment period. It was quickly made clear that a political compromise had been worked out, which, while politically expedient, could be difficult to translate in terms of implementation and practical policy implications. To balance concerns regarding the sensitive identity issues, questions on “ethnicity/nationality” and “religion” were included as non-obligatory questions, while a question on “mother tongue” – a potential proxy for identity – was included as an obligatory question.

It is important to point out that relevant EU guidelines for member states or prospective member states clearly delineate that such subjective questions are not required, ultimately the decision to include these questions was made solely by BiH’s politicians. The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe

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20 There is a detailed EU legislative framework on census data collection, including: Regulation (EC) No. 763/2008; Regulation (EC) No. 1201/2009; Regulation (EU) No. 519/2010; and Regulation
(UNECE), in cooperation with EUROSTAT drafted the non-binding Conference of European Statisticians Recommendations for the 2010 Censuses of Population and Housing. This UNECE/EUROSTAT guidance includes recommendations for the organization and conduct of censuses that suggest that certain “non-core topic areas” reflecting ethnic/national/cultural characteristics (e.g., ethnicity, language, and religion) should be handled in an appropriately sensitive manner. Additional guidance is related to data monitoring and protection, with particular attention to minority groups, and the engagement of various minority groups in census preparations to build confidence in the process.

In addition, the Statistical Committee of the UN published guidelines entitled, Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses, Rev. 2, in 2008 to assist the many countries organizing censuses in 2010 and 2011. Their recommendations also urged maximal flexibility of response in the event a country decides to ask identity-related questions. On issues related to language, countries are urged to collect data with a focus on functionality; for example, asking about the language one spoke at home in one’s early childhood; the language most frequently spoken in one’s home at the time of the census; and the ability to speak multiple languages; guidance aimed at measuring linguistic functionality, and to avoid the use of language as an oversimplified proxy for ethnicity.

Following the adoption of the Law, planning, logistics and technical support efforts moved forward. A budget of 46,489,665 KM was allocated, with funds coming from BiH, the EU and various donors. A slogan was agreed (“My Step to the Future”) after considerable debate among the entities as there was opposition by the Republika Srpska to including “BiH” or “Bosnia and Herzegovina” in the census slogan. In light of the work that needed to be done, initial plans to hold the census in April 2013 were scrapped, and October 2013 set as the new census date. The BiH and entity statistics agencies were engaged to begin intensive planning and coordination. An International Monitoring Operation (IMO) was established by the European Commission, the Council of Europe and the BiH Council of Ministers to monitor all phases of the census operation to ensure quality and public confidence in the process.

It quickly became clear that any hopes that the census would be more technical than political were unfounded. Nearly all attention fell squarely on the three sensitive identity questions. The intense focus on these issues reflects the role of census data in constructing and solidifying identities, “the ways in which the census is used to divide national populations into separate identity categories: racial, ethnic, linguistic or religious”. The development of the census questionnaire was contentious, as initial plans envisioned limited “closed” questions.

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21 See also Pieter Everaers contribution in this issue.
23 Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses, Rev. 2 (2.156).
24 See BiH Agency for Statistics.
25 Kertzer and Arel, Census and Identity, 2.
for the sensitive questions, rather than an open-ended response option. A semi-open compromise option was ultimately adopted for the final form, as a result of pressure by civic groups and others.26 Quite late in the process, a question related to the issue of one’s entity citizenship was added (though respondents could opt to not declare); the purpose or possible implications of this question were not explained.27 A pilot census was held from 1-15 October 2012, leading to immediate “leaks” focused solely on the questions regarding the respondents’ identity declarations. While unfounded, this even further increased the politicization of the census environment, and a number of efforts to influence, shape or direct respondent responses to the three sensitive questions were initiated by the three constituent communities. Such efforts were particularly active among Bosniak activists, who feared that Bosniaks might be especially prone to respond instead as “Bosnian”, demonstrating that the census was, as throughout the 20th century, still the most complicated for the country’s Bosniaks – let alone for Bosnians or those citizens who rejected any identity labels.28 Diaspora groups also became involved seeking a counting process that would include non-resident BiH citizens as well.29 At no point was a clear public statement made by anyone in the international community – including the EU or individual members states funding the census – noting that the three controversial questions were not required by BiH to meet EUROSTAT standards or potentially secure future EU-related funding; nor was there an international statement clearly noting the international standards in this regard. The appropriate BiH institutions and authorities also failed to explain to citizens that the focus on the subjective identity questions had absolutely nothing to do with BiH’s “EU path”.

While campaigns aimed at influencing citizen responses to the identity questions were well underway throughout 2013, the absence of a widespread, official information campaign by the statistics agencies allowed for misinformation to spread. The IMO noted this in its 14th assessment report: “Unfortunately, these campaigns and rumors were not contradicted by an efficient official communication campaign and systematic official relations.”30 In fact, several IMO reports had noted concerns about the lack of preparation for public outreach. The public campaign only began in the weeks before the census was to begin, and made no effort to actively counter the abundant misinformation, or to educate citizens on their rights with regards to responding to sensitive questions. Some NGOs sought to fill this gap in the period just before the census began, through the launch of a website to facilitate irregularities during enu-

26 Perry, The Census in Bosnia and Herzegovina.
27 Perry, The Census in Bosnia and Herzegovina.
28 Perry, The Census in Bosnia and Herzegovina.
meration, and the publication of booklets and a policy paper.\textsuperscript{31} As reports of pressure, problems, and questionable planning and training grew, on 2 October (one day after the start of the count) the coalition \textit{Jednakost} called for a boycott.\textsuperscript{32} However, calls for boycotts or delays went unheeded, and the census went ahead as scheduled.

Broadly speaking, the October census unfolded relatively smoothly, and there was no “Macedonia scenario” that might have completely undermined or shut down the process.\textsuperscript{33} While BiH officials, international community representatives and census experts generally viewed the 2013 enumeration process as a success, some voices have assessed it as questionable at best, and botched at worst. The IMO concluded that while there were some problems, the enumeration had been conducted largely in accordance with international standards: “In conclusion, the SC [Steering Committee] considers that despite some external pressure, the census enumeration was carried out smoothly and in accordance with the international standards”\textsuperscript{34}. However, there were immediately voices who pointed out irregularities, either systematically or anecdotally. (There was no “script” used in the enumeration interview process, leading to many different interview experiences.) The NGO “Zasto Ne?” reported that they had received more than 850 complaints online (Popismonitor.ba) or by telephone from 45 municipalities throughout the country. Complaints ranged from pressure to declare in one way or another on the sensitive questions, improper handling and storage of forms, and enumerator behavior that either indicated poor training or a concerted effort to manipulate data.\textsuperscript{35} Unfounded speculation on the numbers of the country’s various ethno-national groups began promptly, with politicians and activists alike claiming data proving one point or another.\textsuperscript{36}

Preliminary results were released in November 2013 in accordance with the Law. The preliminary results include very basic data on the population, households and dwellings, broken down by municipality, with the caveat that data could be subject to change once full data processing is completed. The total number of people enumerated was 3,791,622; 585,411 fewer than in 1991. Of these, 62.55% responded in the Federation, 35% in the RS, and 2.45% in Brcko.\textsuperscript{37} At the time of this writing it is unclear when the final results of the census will be publicly available. In its 20\textsuperscript{th} assessment visit in November 2014, the IMO noted progress in a number of technical areas, such as the elec-

\textsuperscript{31} For example, the NGO Zasto Ne? developed the web site, www.popismonitor.ba to provide basic information on the census, and to provide a mechanism through which respondents’ complaints about the census process could be gathered. The NGO ACIPS published a policy paper on the topic of the census, entitled: \textit{The Purpose of the Census: A Guide for Citizens}.\textsuperscript{32} Jukic, Elvira M. 2013. Bosnian NGOs Call for Boycott of Census. \textit{Balkan Insight}, 3 October 2013 (accessed: 01 November 2015).\textsuperscript{33} The 2011 census in Macedonia was stopped during the enumeration process due to ongoing controversies. See Vrgova article in this volume for more information.\textsuperscript{34} Steering Committee, \textit{Thirteenth Assessment}, 8.\textsuperscript{35} N.N. 2013. Civic Monitoring Reveals Numerous Irregularities in BiH's 2013 Census. \textit{Zasto Ne?}, 22 October 2013 (accessed: 01 November 2015).\textsuperscript{36} Irwin, Rachel / Halimovic, Dzenana / Bjelalac, Maja / Hunterer, Drazen and Mladen Lakic. 2013. \textit{Bosnian Census Risks Deepening Ethnic Rifts}. \textit{Institute for War and Peace Reporting}, 6 December 2013 (accessed: 01 November 2015).\textsuperscript{37} The data is available here.
tronic database, but pointed out many tasks that remain if the results are to be finished by mid-2015, as they had hoped.\(^{38}\) As of this writing (August 2015), there are hopes that the results could be released by the end of the year. However, this could be difficult, as there is fundamental disagreement between the entities on how to define the resident population in BiH, and, in turn, which collected forms should and should not be counted. The RS seeks a narrow definition of resident, insisting on residents living, working and studying in BiH in order to be finally included in the count. The Federation seeks a broader definition of residence, to potentially encompass more people who may live, work or study in another country for certain periods of time.\(^{39}\) This again reflects an interest in manipulating numbers to get the results desired by policy-makers.

In the case of the RS, they favor a restrictive framework that would not include people who have left or who reside outside of that entity more than they reside in it (namely minority returnees). Within the Federation, both Bosniaks and Croats have an interest in a broader count, the Bosniaks to both demonstrate their plurality throughout BiH, and to potentially increase the number of Bosniak returnees counted in the RS, and the Croats to ensure that their final count – as the smallest of the three peoples – is as high as possible, relying if necessary on Bosnian Croats living, working and studying in neighboring Croatia or elsewhere. The impact of the war on displacement, and policy differences related to displacement and return, remain central and core disagreements.

### Lack of a Consistent and Harmonized Legal Framework

In addition to ongoing technical, processing and analysis questions, there are a number of outstanding issues related to the future potential influence of the census on public policy.\(^{40}\) The Law that provided for the census did not include reference to how the data collected might be – or must be – used to develop public policy. This leads to numerous questions: Will responses to optional, non-compulsory questions be used in policy-making? At what levels of government (state, entity, canton, municipality) can/might the data be used in policy-making? Will information on questions be aggregated? If so, how? It is particularly interesting to consider the role that the census data could potentially play in affecting various laws aimed at ensuring a certain “positive discrimination” in hiring practices. Two of these main outstanding questions are considered below.

#### Which Census?

First, there are many references to census data in state and entity legislation, and even in the entity constitutions. However, the language used is not consistent, leaving ample room for interpretation.\(^{41}\) For example, the words “national” (nacionalni) and “ethnic” (etnički) are seemingly used interchangeably. Of more concern is the use of either “the last census” or “the 1991 census” as a reference point.

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\(^{38}\) Steering Committee, *Thirteenth Assessment*.


\(^{41}\) This review is based on a memorandum entitled: *References to the Census in Selected List of State- and Entity Level Laws*, drafted in December 2013. This reference document, together with links to the noted laws, is available here.
A number of state-level laws and institutions reference the “last” census when setting out the needed ethnic demographic structure of each body. The state-level Law on Civil Service in the Institutions of BiH states that, “The structure of civil servants within the civil service shall generally reflect the national structure of the population of Bosnia and Herzegovina in accordance with the last census,” and that, “Civil servants nationality is based on a voluntary declaration in accordance with this Law.” The Law on Administration of BiH similarly notes the requirement for “an appropriate ethnic structure” that reflects the last census, as does the Labor Law in the Institutions of BiH. The Law on the Intelligence and Security Agency of BiH, the Law on Auditing Institutions of BiH, the Law on the Service for Foreigners’ Affairs all reference the “last census” when providing guidance on the needed demographic structure of these bodies.

This is not, however, consistent. The Law on State Border Service references the 1991 census, with a high degree of specificity: “Structure of police officials, civil servants and other employees within the SBS shall in general reflect the national structure of the BiH population according to 1991 census pursuant to the following criteria: Representation of any of BiH constituent peoples at all levels shall in no event constitute more than 2/3 or less than 1/10 of the total number of the SBS staff. This provision shall not apply to the representation of Others, who shall, in any event be entitled to the representation according to 1991 census and the above criteria.” The Law on the Protection of Personal Data similarly notes the 1991 census when noting the employee structure of that Agency. The Framework Law for Primary and Secondary Education also references the 1991 census when considering school board composition. “The composition of the school board must reflect the national structure of students and parents, school staff and local community, as it is recorded at a relevant time, in principle according to the census of the BiH population from 1991.” However, inclusion of the words “in principle” can also potentially provide a certain leeway in interpretation and implementation. The Law on Rights of National Minorities notes that national minorities’ participation in public office and public services should be proportional, based on their representation in the “latest” census data.

A review of a number of laws at the level of the Federation entity shows a tendency to specifically reference the 1991 census, though there are again exceptions. At the highest level, the Federation constitution notes the following: “Published results of the 1991 census shall be appropriately used for all calculations requiring demographic data until Annex 7 is fully implemented.” Several other articles and amendments in the entity constitution repeat this. However, even within this constitution there is inconsistency. Article VI.3, Amendment 104, on issues of municipal governance, notes, “The municipal mayor and the president of the municipal assembly in a municipality or municipal assemblies of multiple national composition may not be from the same constituent group, or the group of others, except in those cases in which one constituent group composes more than 80% of the population, referring to the last census in Bosnia and Herzegovina.”
The Law on Civil Service in the FBiH, the Law on Employees in the Civil Service Organs in FBiH and the Law on Police Officers in FBiH each reference the 1991 census until such time as Annex 7 is implemented. However, in terms of the employment structure foreseen by the Law on Auditing the Institutions of FBiH, the “last census” is referenced.

In the RS, the entity constitution notes the 1991 census, also noting Annex 7 implementation as a benchmark: “As a constitutional principle, such proportionate representation shall be based on the 1991 census until Annex 7 is fully implemented, in accordance with the Civil Service Law of Bosnia and Herzegovina. This general principle shall be further regulated by specific legislation of the Entities.” However the Law on Public Servants, the Law on Local Self-Governance and the Law Regarding the Protection of National Minorities each reference the “last census”.

The District of Brcko, always a unique example, is again unique in its approach to this topic. The Statute of the Brcko District, the Law on Civil Service, the Law on Police Officials, the Law on Elections, and the Law on Public Administration all reference that the structure or composition of the population should be taken into account in employment, without any mention of any census.

This review does not consider every existing mention of the census in laws at any level of government; it is simply indicative of the kind of language used, and the variance that exists. However, by including key laws related to the civil service, elections and national minorities, it does demonstrate the potential for policy disagreements once the results of the census are finalized. In the absence of a harmonized approach to the data, would it be possible for one entity to continue to use the 1991 census as the reference point for civil service hiring goals, while the other uses the 2013 census? Could each entity’s statistics agency independently manipulate and interpret the data independently, publically issuing different analyses resulting in different policy proposals? Further, it demonstrates the sensitivity of linking public policy to the ill-defined implementation of Annex 7. There is no concrete guidance that will signal when the return process will be “done.” There is also no political agreement on what the “successful fulfillment” of Annex 7 might look like. This guarantees that census numbers will always be questioned and contested by those who believe that there is still the potential for more refugee returns – whether this might mean Croats or Bosniaks to the RS, or Serbs to the Federation.

Which Questions?
The second challenge is even more fundamental. Regardless of the language used in the various laws noted above, the intent is clear: to ensure that civil service and specific government bodies (generally) reflect the ethnic or national structure of the population in either the 1991 or the last census. Whether or not the 1991 or 2013 census is used as a reference point, the question remains how such population structure would be measured based on the 2013 data, since the question on ethnicity/nationality was not mandatory. When being enumerated, respondents were not told how this information might be used, or whether it would be used at all. It has been noted that international expert
guidance on such matters recommends that non-mandatory responses on such sensitive matters be used as an explanatory or independent variable.42

There is some possibility that the mandatory “mother tongue” question would be used as a proxy for nationality/ethnicity. However, this would be problematic in many ways, most notably because citizens were not told that this data would be used in such a way when compelled to respond. It is also possible to imagine that, in the absence of such clear demographic data on the population structure, the clear results from 1991 would continue indefinitely. However, this has not been stated, and laws have clearly not been revised to reflect such an approach. It is similarly unclear how the question on one’s “entity citizenship” (19.1) might be used, and how this information might influence policy-making (this question was not optional, but did have a “do not declare” option).

Concluding Remarks
As of this writing it is still unclear when the results will be released. The International Monitoring Operation visited BiH in December 2014 for its 20th assessment mission, and urged the authorities to release the data by mid-2015; as with many other hoped-for deadlines, this one has come and gone. There has been some confusion as to whether the results may be published gradually, or in one formal release.43 Much is uncertain.

There is no doubt that accurate census data is needed in BiH – as in any country – to effectively develop public policies, budgets and other planning mechanisms. Whereas the necessity of a census was certainly clear; it is less clear whether the identity-centered questions were necessary at this stage in the country’s consolidation. The nature of post-war BiH – and the continued squabbling over peoples, quotas and the meaning of constituency and citizenship – means that it is highly improbable that any of the groups will be satisfied with the outcome.

The question remains: how will census data be used in policy-making, of the “mundane,” day-to-day kind, or potentially in the larger constitutional deliberations? There is speculation that efforts by the country main Croat party leaders to seek constitutional protections (in the entity and/or the state) could be motivated in part by a desire to lock in changes prior to the release of data on how many Croats remain in the country. There are uncomfortable ongoing discussions on what it would mean if an aggregated count of the country’s “Others” might be larger than the count of one of the constituent peoples. (These discussions of constituency and citizenship have garnered further energy through some past and pending decisions by the European Court of Human Rights.44 Confirmation of Serb majorities in the Republika Srpska (potentially

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42 See Everaers’ article in this volume.
44 In the now famous Sejdic-Finci vs. Bosnia and Herzegovina case, the European Court of Human Rights in 2009 found that the BiH constitution discriminated against the country’s non-constituent peoples (the “Others”) by restricting the ability to run for certain state-level offices to only those who declare as Bosniak, Croat or Serb. In 2014, the Court ruled in the Zornic vs. Bosnia and Herzegovina case that the plaintiff was discriminated against for refusing to declare as a member
measured through both the sensitive questions and the entity citizenship response) and relatively low rates of Bosniak return could fuel future secession rhetoric.45

The year 2015 stands to be a difficult one for Bosnia and Herzegovina. Nearly a year after the October 2014 general elections, the coalitions at all levels are unstable and, to date, broadly ineffective.46 The country’s economic situation remains dire, as an unfriendly investment atmosphere, together with the high costs of doing business and an overburdened public administration, fuelled patronage, continue to take a financial toll on an already strapped population. While there is much talk of the need to focus on socio-economic issues, the politics of identity remain a constant theme in political discourse and strategy. The census results will be released in this environment, and will contribute to it. Whether or not they play a role in crafting more effective public policies and contribute to social stability and confidence, or are added to the already large toolbox of divisive political rhetoric, remains to be seen.

Bibliography

of any particular ethnic group, preferring to declare as a citizen of the country. Another case, Ilijas Pilav vs. Bosnia and Herzegovina, is pending decision, and again looks at the issue of requirements of declared constituency in standing for public office.


The 2011 Census in Croatia- A (partial) role model for the Western Balkans?
Research Article

Anna-Lena Hoh
PhD Candidate, Maastricht University
anna-lena.hoh@maastrichtuniversity.nl

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The 2011 Census in Croatia – A (partial) role model for the Western Balkans?

Anna-Lena Hoh

Within the framework of EU enlargement, the population and housing census is a pre-condition for EU membership. The 2011 census in Croatia was conducted according to EU regulations and considering this, it should present a good example for the region. However, there are some aspects which are not addressed by EU regulations, but are of importance when looking at censuses in the Western Balkans: the so-called sensitive issues (ethnicity, language and religion). Answers to these questions are not required by the EU; nonetheless all Western Balkan countries have included these questions in their censuses. In Croatia, the census results are used to determine political participation by proportional representation of ethnic minorities, and this has led to ethnic tensions. This article looks into the historical perspective of censuses in Croatia, as well as the EU conditionality of census-taking in the Croatian census of 2011. In addition, the practice of linking political participation to census results will be taken into account, before finally posing the question of whether the 2011 census in Croatia can really be taken as a role model for census-taking in the Western Balkans.

Keywords: Census-taking, Ethnicity, EU conditions, proportional representation

Introduction

Census-taking in Croatia has taken place long before the European Union (EU) existed. However, under the acquis communautaire, it is now part of the accession process. Regarding Croatia’s accession process, compliance with EU conditions has not always been a strong point. Nonetheless, Croatia has been seen as the undisputed leader in the region in terms of both progress towards EU accession and its capacity for policy-making and implementation. It is regarded as the “poster child” of the Western Balkans, securing EU membership in July 2013.

* After her Research Master in Social and Cultural Sciences and a Master in Human Geography, focussing on Europe’s Borders, Governance and Identities, together with her current PhD supervisors, Anna-Lena Hoh applied successfully for a Dutch research talent grant for the project “Europeanization of census taking in the Western Balkan”.
5 Börzel, Tanja. 2013. When Europeanization hits limited statehood- The Western Balkans as a test case for the transformative power of Europe, in European Integration and Transformation in the
Since its independence in 1991, Croatia has conducted two censuses: the first in 2001 and the second in 2011. The basic concept of census-taking is to gain information about a state’s population and certain aspects of their living standards. It is “a massive continuing national enquiry, a key anchor for much of the official statistical system”⁶. It provides information for national statistics and helps to formulate policies accordingly; it is used for example as a tool for the collection of taxes and the distribution of subsidies and national account systems. On average, countries connected to the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) conduct a census every ten years; the last was the 2010 census round⁷. Within the EU the decennial collection of population data is mandatory⁸. By categorizing the population according to statistical variables the census helps to create social reality⁹ and identifies the hard lines of the population, which has consequences for social and political rights¹⁰.

According to the Croatian Bureau of Statistics,¹¹ all relevant EU regulations were transposed in the 2011 census and its results were widely accepted. Even though Croatia has been an EU member state since July 2013, at the time of the census Croatia was still a candidate country, therefore the intense control measures which EU members need to comply with during census-taking were not yet in place. However, while the census data of 2011 have been accepted overall, there were some contestations of the results¹². Most criticism had to do with the count of the Serb minority, as the number of this minority continues to have an important role in political disputes three years after the census¹³. The aspect of the Serb minority opens up the question of the so-called sensitive census aspects, which look at ethnicity, language and religion¹⁴. Questions regarding these aspects are not required by EU rules and are non-core aspects considering the UNECE census recommendations, but still were included in all the censuses in the Western Balkans in the 2010 census round. In the Western Balkans these are often connected to the proportional representation of ethnic minorities in political participation, such as special representatives in the

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⁹ Kertzer and Arel, *Census and Identity*, 36.
¹³ Pavelic, *Croatia’s language dispute*.
¹⁴ This article focuses foremost on the Serb minority in Croatia. Nonetheless other minorities, such as the Italians and Roma are of importance as well. However with regard to the census the Serb minority is most often mentioned and including other minority groups in this research is beyond the scope and the focus of this article.
Parliament or the use of minority languages. This policy linkage leads to the politicization of censuses.

This article assesses the impact of EU conditions on census-taking in the enlargement process, as well as the practice of linking political participation to census results. It relies on the single case study of Croatia and focuses on the 2011 census, because the aspect of census-taking has only been regarded as an issue of importance for EU accession after the 2000 census round. It concludes by assessing whether the 2011 census in Croatia meets the EU requirements for census-taking and consequently whether it can be taken as a role model for censuses in the other Western Balkan countries.

Censuses in the Western Balkans

The practice of census-taking is believed to be over 6000 years old. It has been described as the historical origin of the term ‘accountability’, and censuses are labeled as a “social contract with society”. Census-taking is a major statistical exercise and the “costs to poll and compile data on each person and household in a country can be enormous”. Therefore, an ever-increasing statistical capability and infrastructure is required. The difficulties and challenges of a census are to be found in the different steps of the process, including the formulation of the census questionnaire, the collection of the census data and the compilation of the data. The population and housing census helps to provide an overview of the living conditions of the population, and gives an overview of a country’s statistical infrastructure. The population figures are used for, and in tandem with, other important statistics, such as a country’s GDP per capita. However, critical aspects can arise when conducting a census, including, among others, the definition of who to count, where, when (and whether or not to include the diaspora), and how to address sensitive aspects in a country (such as ethnicity, language and religion).

As an international practice, censuses have been conducted in the Western Balkans long before the countries were even considered a future territory for EU enlargement. However, the quality of these censuses is questionable. The last census in Yugoslavia took place in 1991:

“No one is aware of the total amount of people living in a country, since the census was held only in 1961. The last census was conducted in the context of the Yugoslav war and it is not possible to determine the exact number of people who died in the war. The census was not held in the newly formed countries of the Western Balkans, which makes it impossible to determine the exact number of people living in the region”.

References:

20 Cook, The quality and qualities of population statistics, 121.
became important tools of inter-ethnic conflict/bargaining in the setting of new borders, minority rights, and representation schemes. Measuring group size, identifying ethnicity, mapping ethnic geography, and then allocating rights again became one of the most important and delicate processes in the Balkans in general and Western Balkans in particular.”

Although the history of the Balkans makes it increasingly difficult to collect information on sensitive issues (of ethnicity, language and religion), the politics of numbers still play an important role in the region.

The problem of counting ethnicity
As Urla has shown through the example of the Basques in Spain, censuses can map ethnic identities through the selection of different options in constructing a census questionnaire and subsequent census categories and aggregation practices. This is also described by Kertzer and Arel: “[The] examination of the relationship between the census and the formation and evolution of collective identities, as we have seen, involves us in the messy process of politics. We witness the struggle among a multiplicity of actors over that most basic of powers, the power of name, to categorise, and thus to create social reality.”

Ethnicity, language and religion are sensitive issues which make up a part of a social structure and its categories. “The census [...] emerged as the most visible, and arguably the most politically important, means by which the states statistically depict collective identities.” Through the categories of the census, identities and the aspects of differentiating identities, such as ethnicity, language and religion, become increasingly visible and influence the actual census-taking. Thus, the consciousness of ethnic divisions can increase due to the census, and this in itself can affect the process of census-taking. This is especially problematic in situations where certain political rights are granted if a group makes up a certain percentage of the population: “In polities where the ability to influence political representation, local governance, budgetary policies, education policies, and cultural policies is dependent on a group’s share of the total population, census-taking becomes inextricably connected to population politics.”

In the Western Balkans the concept of ethnicity has been very important, particularly in the 20th century. For example, in Yugoslavia ethnic tensions were appeased by using “a complex state structure based on national and...”

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22 Visoka and Gjevori, Census Politics, 6.
23 Visoka and Gjevori, Census Politics.
25 Kertzer and Arel, Census and Identity, 36.
26 Kertzer and Arel, Census and Identity.
27 Kertzer and Arel, Census and Identity, 3.
29 Visoka and Gjevori, East European Politics.
30 Visoka and Gjevori, Census Politics, 3.
historical group characteristics”\textsuperscript{31}. However, to do so, information was needed on the population of the various ethnic groups. Therefore, it has been vital to include questions on the sensitive identity issues in the census. As mentioned above, in the 2010 census round all Western Balkan countries included these questions in their census questionnaires\textsuperscript{32}. The censuses became part of a highly politicized process, “which revealed the unstable and contested nature of citizenship, ethnic belonging, and a weak civic identity”\textsuperscript{33}.

Since the political change towards the EU in 2000, Croatia has made major steps with regard to minority rights\textsuperscript{34}. Of particular importance was the Constitutional Law on the Rights of National Minorities of 2003\textsuperscript{35}. Since the creation of this law, Croatian minorities are entitled to more rights if they make up more than a certain percentage of the population: “Members of national minorities, in accordance with Article 19 of the Constitutional Law [on the Rights of National Minorities], constituting more than 1.5 % of the total population of the Republic of Croatia are guaranteed a minimum of one and a maximum of three representative seats for the members of that national minority”\textsuperscript{36}. Further, representation in local governmental bodies depends on the population numbers (the threshold is 15%)\textsuperscript{37}, and if a certain minority makes up more than 30% in a local self-governed unit the "equal official use of the minority language and script must be stipulated by the statute of a local or regional self-government unit in compliance with the provisions of the Minority Language Law”\textsuperscript{38}. The political representation of minority groups and their language rights are therefore directly linked to the results of the census.

\textbf{Census taking in Croatia – the historical perspective}

The Croatian Bureau of Statistics provides a very good overview of the historical censuses on the territory of Croatia\textsuperscript{39}. According to their website, the first census “covering the territory of the present-day Republic of Croatia”\textsuperscript{40} dates from 1746 and 1754. However, these were incomplete as they did not count gentry and clergy, and the “[p]opulation was enumerated according to the affiliation of holdings to particular noblemen or towns.”\textsuperscript{41} The next census was in 1857, but it too was incomplete\textsuperscript{42}. However, these data are used to indicate changes in the population, and the population numbers are used for comparison with the census data of 1869, 1880, 1890, 1900 and 1910\textsuperscript{43}. From then on censuses have been held relatively regularly every 10 years, with an
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interruption in 1941 due to the war. Due to the historical developments the sources for the population data by Šterc and Crkvenčić derive from the “statistical population censuses of the former Yugoslavia (i.e. of Serbia, as the central statistical bureau of the former Yugoslavia was located in Belgrade and it was there that census regulations were determined, data was compiled and stored, etc.).” At the last census of Yugoslavia in 1991, the population of Croatia was about 4,784,265, living on “56,538 km 2, or 84,62 persons per square kilometre.”

As a result of the recent war (1991-1995), there have been two major population flows. The first was in 1991, resulting from the establishment of Serb Krajina, Western Slavonia and Eastern Slavonia, Baranja and Western Sirmium by the Yugoslav People’s Army and the Serb rebels. This led to approximately 84,000 Croats fleeing from regions under Serb control, and 70,000 displaced Serbs settling in the Danube region. The total estimated number of displaced people during the war varies between 430,000 and 700,000. “By mid-1995, the figure had decreased to 591,123 registered IDPs [internally displaced persons] and refugees (mostly ethnic Croats), whereas a year later, due to the flight of ethnic Serbs, it increased to 688,169.” This increase was a consequence of military operations in the summer of 1995 which caused the second major population flow. This “was four years later [than the first population flow] when the Croatian government seized control over the Serb-occupied territory during two rapid military operations, Flash and Storm, in May and August 1995 respectively.” Serbs leaving these territories found refuge in Serbia (about 300,000) and in the Republika Srpska in Bosnia (about 40,000). By September 2009, about “34% of Serb minority refugees had been officially registered as officially returned to Croatia.” After the war the difficult relationship between Croatia and its Serb minority continued: “The deterioration of the relationship between Croatia and its Serb minority could be traced to the first days of the Croatian democracy. The victory of the right wing HDZ [Croatian Democratic Union, in Croatian: Hrvatska Demokratska Zajednica] in the 1990 elections had far-reaching consequences for the relations of the Croatian state vis-à-vis the Croatian Serbs which, consequently, greatly influenced the Serb minority perceptions regarding the

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45 Šterc and Crkvenčić, The population of Croatia, 422.
46 Šterc and Crkvenčić, The population of Croatia, 417.
49 Blitz, Refugee Returns, 182.
50 Djuric, The Post-War Repatriation, 1640.
52 Blitz, Refugee Returns, 182.
53 Djuric, The Post-War Repatriation, 1640.
54 Djuric, The Post-War Repatriation, 1639.
nature of the emerging state". The census outcome clearly shows the effects of these population flows and refugee returns.

As noted, Croatia has conducted two censuses (in 2001 and 2011) since its independence. The 2001 census, according to the European Commission, was "in line with the UNECE/Eurostat recommendations for the 2000 censuses of population and housing in the ECE region."
The Croatian censuses cannot be directly compared, due to "the different statistical definition of the total population used in the 2011 Census", which "was partly changed according to the international standards."
(This will be discussed more below.) In comparison to the 2001 census, where Eurostat assisted the Croatian Bureau of Statistics with the census, Eurostat was less involved in 2011. Nonetheless, the 2011 census was, in most aspects, in line with the EU regulations on censustaking: "Since the Republic of Croatia is a candidate for the membership in the European Union, the Census is, in terms of definitions and classifications, fully harmonised with the EU Regulation on population and housing censuses."

However, both censuses were disputed by the Serb minority. "Since many Serbs either fled Croatia during the war or were driven out, the number of Serbs living in Croatia declined so that while Serbs accounted for just over 12% of the population in 1991, they constituted just 4.54% of the population in 2001, according to the official census results. These numbers have been used to show the difficult re-integration of Serb refugees in Croatia after the war. "At that time [the 2001 census], 89.63% of the population was ‘Croat’ out of total population of 4,437,460", whereas in 1981 only 75.08% of the population of Croatia declared themselves as ‘Croat’ (out of a total population of 4,601,469). (For a complete overview of the Croatian population by ethnicity from 1991 to 2011 see table 1 on page 15.) This reflects the idea of consolidating an ethnically homogenous state since independence. This process has also been termed "ethnic engineering."

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59 Hipkins, Dominic. 2002. Croatia: Serb Fury Over Census Result, Global Voices, 14 June 2002 (accessed: 23 October2015); Minority Rights Group International. 2008. World Directory of Minorities and Indigenous Peoples, Croatia: Overview, (accessed: 23. October 2015); Pavelic, Croatia Sees Population Drop; One of the aspects this article is neglecting is the focus on the Roma community in Croatia. In the 2011 census, 16,975 people declared themselves ‘Roma’ (Croatian Bureau of Statistics, 2006-2014a). This is a group which is vulnerable to undercount and further research would be necessary to investigate the implications of the census on their living situation.
61 Ramet. Politics in Croatia, 40.
63 Barić, The Rise and Fall of the Republic of Serb Krajina; Blitz, Refugee Returns.
One of the problems related to this is the Constitutional Law on the Rights of National Minorities, which links the proportional representation of ethnic minorities to political participation and to “the official use of a minority’s language and script if it makes up more than a third of the population in a particular area.” To implement this provision, the country needs to know the numbers of the minority in the population. Even though in Croatia this is not as influential as the Dayton and the Ohrid Framework agreements, there are now ethnic tensions in some of the districts where minorities have the right to certain privileges.

The principle of EU conditionality

When the EU extended the membership perspective in 2000 they pronounced support for the Western Balkan region, with this support associated are the “obligations en route” to EU membership. The support of the EU towards the Western Balkans has developed from a post-war stabilizing approach towards EU enlargement. Therefore, EU rules and practices have to be implemented by the candidate countries. As part of the acquis communautaire, census taking is one of the requirements which need to be implemented.

The instrument of conditionality “is the principle mechanism available to the EU to bring about change in the domestic opportunity structure of political actors” and to “press for democratic reforms and to monitor compliance with its core political values.” With the EU setting the agenda for membership the instrument of EU conditionality is always, strictly speaking, democratic, based as it is on an unequal and asymmetric relationship of imposition, pressure, control and, partly, threats. To achieve this, the EU uses incentives, which are seen as an essential driver of “democratic institutional change” which need to be strong enough to compensate for eventual perceived loss of power or popularity.

With regard to census-taking one needs to make the distinction between the often addressed democratic conditionality and the compliance with the acquis communautaire. Democratic conditionality is the first criterion for accession and focuses on the political transformation towards democratization and (EU

62 Pavelic, Croatia’s Language Dispute.
64 Visoka and Gjevori, Census Politics, 12.
65 See on this topic also the contributions by Valery Perry on Bosnia and Roska Vrgova on Macedonia in this special issue.
70 Noutcheva and Aydin-Düzgit. Lost in Europeanisation, 59.
71 This has also been called acquis conditionality by Schimmelfennig, Frank and Ulrich Sedelmeier. 2005. The Europeanization of Central and Eastern Europe. Cornell University Press, 211.
member) state building.\textsuperscript{75} It comprises the Copenhagen criteria, and includes, for example, the aspect of minority rights.\textsuperscript{76} The \textit{acquis} conditionality is regarded more as a technical approximation, to “promote[…] a growing body of laws, agreements, resolutions, declarations, and juridical decisions and take[…] part during the negotiations on the 35 chapters and more than 80,000 pages of legislative text.”\textsuperscript{77} Census-taking is part of the chapter on statistics, and encompasses the UNECE recommendations on the population and housing census\textsuperscript{78} and the EU regulations on the census.\textsuperscript{79} This process is meant to harmonize data on the population and housing censuses across Europe, to be able to compare the data of the member states. Nonetheless in the area of the census the outcomes are not always as expected, when considering, for example, the aborted census in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.\textsuperscript{80} This example shows that the technical issue of census-taking is in fact highly politicized. Even though the UNECE recommendations advise not to, and the EU regulations do not require asking for sensitive issues such as ethnicity, religion and language, all the Western Balkan countries included questions addressing these in their census questionnaires, at times with negative effects\textsuperscript{81}.

\textbf{The EU conditions for census-taking}

The whole process of census-taking is a major exercise: starting with the census law, the preparation of methodology and the questionnaires the selection of the enumerators, and the data collection process itself; then the data aggregation and if applicable a post-enumeration survey, to test the quality of the census; and finally the publication of the data. In every step of this exercise, there are aspects which require special attention. Even though census taking is only a small part of the \textit{acquis} chapter on statistics, it is one of the most challenging tasks of the national statistical offices, because these data are used as the

\textsuperscript{77} Anastasakis, \textit{The EU's political conditionality}, 367.
\textsuperscript{78} United Nations Economic Commission for Europe. 2006. \textit{Conference of European Statisticians Recommendations for the 2010 Censuses of Population and Housing}.
\textsuperscript{80} On the tenth day of the enumeration process, the Macedonian Parliament annulled the earlier adopted Census Law in effect cancelling the planned census owing to political disagreements, poor preparation and high expectations of irregularities yielding suspicions of potentially incorrect census results (Daskalovski, Zhidas. 2013. Census taking and inter-ethnic relations in Macedonia. \textit{Southeast European and Black Sea Studies} 13(3), 1-15). It was suspected that the insecurity regarding the methodology of the census would “have […] an effect on the numbers of the majority Macedonians and the minority Albanians” (Daskalovski. \textit{Census taking}, 2).
\textsuperscript{81} Eurostat, 2011 Population census framework- Factsheet.
backbone for other statistical equations and for selecting survey frames. As mentioned above, in the Western Balkans these numbers are also used to ensure the political representation of minorities.

As the rules and regulations of census taking stated in the UNECE recommendations are only recommendations, the EU has formulated more concrete rules on census-taking. These are given in the statistical compendium, which refers to the EU regulations on the population and housing censuses. The EU cannot oblige candidate countries to comply with the legal rules (yet), because those countries are (or were in the case of Croatia) not yet member states. However, the UNECE recommendations are in fact very similar and should ideally be taken into account by the candidate countries in the Western Balkan region. The main difference of interest with census-taking in the Balkan region is in regard to the sensitive questions of ethno-cultural characteristics. These questions are not required by the EU while the UNECE lists these as ‘non-core’. Even so, these questions are part of the census questionnaires in the Western Balkans and are already causing tension.

The 2011 census in Croatia

The Croatian census of 2011 was conducted without any major problems and is “in terms of definitions and classifications, fully harmonised with the EU Regulation on population and housing censuses.” As described above, Croatia had already conducted a census in 2001, which, according to the European Commission, was in line with the UNECE/Eurostat recommendations for the 2000 censuses. However, the census results cannot be compared due to different statistical definitions of the total population, mainly with regard to refugees and the diaspora: “Firstly because the intention of staying was not collected in the 2001 Census, and, secondly, due to the fact that the 2001 Census included in the total population persons absent for longer than a year who returned to their residence on a seasonal or monthly basis (these persons are not included in the total population in the 2011 Census).”

The 2011 census was carried out “according to the Conference of European Statisticians [the UNECE] Recommendations for the 2010 Censuses of Population and Housing.” The census law was adopted by the Croatian Parliament in July 2010 and the census data were collected from 1 to 28 April in 2011. The census law outlines the deliverables for the census data

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collection, as well as the costs of the census. These were covered by the Croatian government. Some of the tasks related to ensuring the correctness of the census, such as the Post Enumeration Survey, were funded by the EU through the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA).\footnote{Eurostat, 2011 \textit{Population census framework- Factsheet.}}\footnote{European Statistical System, Republic of Croatia: First results of the Census 2011.} The statistical office in Croatia had the knowledge of the previous census and knew what to expect; it had the experience and capacity to conduct the 2011 census without major external support. “The first results of the Census were obtained by a direct summing up of census units (persons, households and dwellings) at the lowest spatial unit level. The results were then aggregated at the level of higher spatial units, that is, for settlements, towns, counties and the City of Zagreb as well as for the whole of the Republic of Croatia.”\footnote{European Commission, \textit{Croatia 2011 Progress Report.}}\footnote{European Statistical System, Republic of Croatia: First results of the Census 2011.} Although, the census probably played only a minor role in the whole accession process, the overall acceptance of the census data was a good sign. The EU Progress Report for 2011 states that, “[g]ood progress has been made in the area of statistics. A good level of alignment has been achieved.”\footnote{European Commission, \textit{Croatia 2011 Progress Report.}}\footnote{European Statistical System, Republic of Croatia: First results of the Census 2011.} On the first view it seems as if Croatia has been fully compliant with the implementation of the EU rules of census taking. However, it has been stressed that the alignment has been foremost with regard to the “terms of definitions and classifications.”\footnote{European Statistical System, Republic of Croatia: First results of the Census 2011.} Looking at the questionnaire,\footnote{Republic of Croatia and Croatian Bureau of Statistics. 2011. \textit{Personal questionnaire Census 2011}. (accessed: 23 October2015).} it includes questions on ethno-cultural characteristics – questions which are not required by the EU. Regarding the question on ethnicity, the questionnaire provides an answer box for people who declare themselves as ‘Croat’, a box for ‘not-declared’, and an open field for other ethnic declarations. According to the UNECE recommendations “questionnaires should include an open question and interviewers should refrain from suggesting answers to the respondents” and “[r]espondents should be free to indicate more than one ethnic affiliation or a combination of ethnic affiliations if they wish so.”\footnote{United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, Conference of European Statisticians Recommendations for the 2010 Censuses of Population and Housing. \textit{United Nations}. 96.} In this regard the Croatian questionnaire is not in line with the recommendations. Including the box for ‘Croat’ does not reflect the idea of an open question, which can lead to measurement errors during the enumeration process. Also, this questionnaire suggests that only one ethnic affiliation is possible. Almost the same issues hold for the questions regarding language (‘mother tongue’ in the Croatian census questionnaire) and religion. With regard to the question on religion there has been criticism by the media, as census takers were suspected of not (or wrongly) declaring the religious preference of Serb residents.\footnote{N.D. 2011. Census takers sanctioned for not taking down orthodox religious preferences. \textit{Croatian Times}, 04 April 2011 (accessed: 23. October 2015).} Considering these issues, the census questionnaire of Croatia should be assessed critically and improved before the next census round in 2020.

At the time of the 2011 census, Croatia was already relatively well advanced in the accession process and did not consider the census as a major obstacle before accession. By the time of the census in 2011, the progress of Croatia’s accession was tangible. In the Progress Report of 2011, the same year as the census, the accession date of July 2013 was already stated. Even so, it has been argued that EU conditionality varies in effectiveness throughout the different stages of the accession process. The population and housing census of 2011 was “harmonised with international standards that define the joint rules for the collection of data on population and housing and prescribe definitions that countries are obliged to apply in their censuses in order to provide the international comparability of data.” Even though candidate countries do not need to comply with the EU regulations (yet), the Regulation (EC) No 763/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 9 July 2008 on Population and Housing Censuses and the Commission Regulation (EC) No 1201/2009 of 30 November 2009 implementing Regulation (EC) No 763/2008 are mentioned as two of the most important documents for international standards, together with the UNECE recommendations. Eventhough the EU has more means to steer the compliance of countries through conditions during the accession process, in terms of the census, the check-ups on whether rules and recommendations were implemented were not as thorough (in comparison to member states and other accession countries), though in general the results of the 2011 census were accepted (and are available on the website of Eurostat). In the next census round the check-ups of the EU will be more thorough, as Croatia now has EU member state obligations.

The implications of counting ethnicity in Croatia

Croatia has had problems with xenophobia and integration of its Serb and Roma communities. Mostly as a result of the war, the relationship between Croats and the Serb minority was difficult: “[A]fter the military operation Storm, and a mass exodus of Serb refugees from Croatia to neighbouring republics, Croatia implemented a set of discriminatory practices that de facto excluded them [Serb refugees] from state membership and impeded their sustainable return.” The Croatian policy towards Serb returnees after the war has been described as “hesitant” and citizenship criticized as a tool for

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103 Koska, *Framing the citizenship regime*, 401. 
104 Leutloff-Grandits, *Croatia’s Serbs*, 157.
“ethnic engineering.”\textsuperscript{106} By comparing the census results from 1991 and 2011 (see table 1), the Serb minority decreased from a population of 581,663 in 1991\textsuperscript{107} to just 186,633 in 2011.\textsuperscript{108} Apart from the Serb population, other minority groups also decreased in numbers. For example, whereas in 1991 there were 22,355 people who declared themselves Hungarian in the census, in 2001 there were only 16,595.\textsuperscript{109} Looking at the table from the Croatian Central Bureau of Statistics, the biggest minority groups after the Serbs in the census of 1991, were ‘others’ with 3.91%. In another source these are specified as ‘Yugoslav’ (2.22% of the total population) and ‘Muslim’ (0.91% of the total population). These categories are followed by undefined (anonymous) categories such as ‘no national declaration’ (1.53% of the total population) and ‘unknown’ (1.32% of the total population).\textsuperscript{110} The definition of the categories, even though they seem rather small, can affect the population count. In the table of the Croatian Central Bureau of Statistics, in 2011 the biggest minorities were formed by ‘Bosniaks’ (0.73% of the total population), ‘regional affiliations’ (0.64% of the population)\textsuperscript{111} and ‘not declared’ (0.62% of the total population).\textsuperscript{112} The most important reason for this decrease is probably the war, but also nationalist policies and migration to urban areas, as well as abroad.\textsuperscript{113} However, there is also the probability that minorities are vulnerable towards being undercounted – particularly the Roma. The changes might also be a result of the formulation of the census question on ethnicity, as it strongly encourages the ticking of the box ‘Croat’. Another reason of undercount could be due to the fear of discrimination, leading people to not state their ethnicity, but to opt for other options, such as ‘not-declared’.\textsuperscript{114}

Table 1: Population by Ethnicity, 1991-2011 Censuses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>1991 Census</th>
<th>2001 Census</th>
<th>2011 Census</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republic of Croatia</td>
<td>4,784,265</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>4,437,460</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Croats</td>
<td>3,736,356</td>
<td>78,10</td>
<td>3,977,171</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Albanians</td>
<td>12,032</td>
<td>0,25</td>
<td>15,082</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austrians</td>
<td>214</td>
<td>0,00</td>
<td>247</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bosniaks\textsuperscript{1)}</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>20,755</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulgarians</td>
<td>458</td>
<td>0,01</td>
<td>331</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montenegrins</td>
<td>9,724</td>
<td>0,20</td>
<td>4,926</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Czechs</td>
<td>15,086</td>
<td>0,27</td>
<td>10,510</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungarians</td>
<td>22,355</td>
<td>0,47</td>
<td>16,595</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Macedonians</td>
<td>6,280</td>
<td>0,13</td>
<td>4,270</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germans</td>
<td>2,635</td>
<td>0,06</td>
<td>2,902</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poles</td>
<td>679</td>
<td>0,01</td>
<td>367</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textsuperscript{106} Koska, Framing the citizenship regime; Štiks, The Citizenship Conundrum.
\textsuperscript{107} Sterc and Crkvenčić, The population of Croatia, 418.
\textsuperscript{109} Minority Rights Group International, Minorities in Croatia, 5.
\textsuperscript{110} Sterc and Crkvenčić, The population of Croatia, 418; Looking at the table on page 418, also in 1991 “regional affiliations” was quite a strong category chosen by 0.95% of the population.
\textsuperscript{111} When looking at the detailed classification table of the 2011 census, these are presumably people declaring themselves as “Istrian” or “Dalmation” (see: Croatian Bureau of Statistics. 2006-2014a. Population By Ethnicity – Detailed Classification, 2011 Census. (accessed: 23 October 2015).
\textsuperscript{113} Minority Rights Group International, Minorities in Croatia, 12.
\textsuperscript{114} Minority Rights Group International, Minorities in Croatia, 14.
The 2011 Census in Croatia – A (partial) role model for the Western Balkans?

As a result of external pressure from the EU, as part of the accession process constitutional changes in 2002 improved the legal situation of the Serb minority. However, the Serbs still dispute both census results since Croatian independence, as they see it as the continuation of ethnic cleansing and link it to the difficult return of Serb refugees. As described above, the constitutional changes of 2002 link the implementation of minority rights with the outcome of the census results of 2001. Population politics are still visible in the current legislation, where political participation depends on the proportions of the population and official use of a minority language is allowed if in a particular area the minority makes up more than a third of the population.

Population results can lead to tensions: There were about 20 municipalities in Croatia where Serbs make up more than 30% of the population, meaning that Cyrillic script could be introduced as an official language. This caused major protests and even a referendum on changing the constitution to increase the needed threshold.

The tensions were especially visible in the city Vukovar, which in 1991 “was besieged and part demolished by the Yugoslav Army and Serbian paramilitaries during Croatia’s war of independence, becoming a symbol of independence.” Now, it is one of the municipalities which could introduce Cyrillic script, and where most of the protests took place. This shows that in spite of the existing constitution, which is protecting minorities, a part of Croatian society does not support the acceptance (and integration) of ethnic minorities. While the referendum on constitutional change was blocked by the Constitutional Court, it nevertheless shows that including the sensitive categories in the census

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115 Koska, Framing the citizenship; Petričušić, Constitutional Law.
117 Hipkins, Croatia: Serb Fury Over Census Result.
118 Petričušić, Constitutional Law; 615.
119 Pavelic, Croatia’s Language Dispute; Petričušić, Constitutional Law.
123 Pavelic, Croatia’s Language Dispute.
questionnaire and linking them to proportional representation in political participation and language rights can cause political and especially ethnic tensions. By linking political participation and mandate representation quota’s with the census results, it is very likely that the census will be politicized and its results disputed. This also raises the question of the use of the census results and whether it will ever be possible to leave these sensitive questions out of the census questionnaire. The current legislation has sparked protests and discussion around the aspect of minority rights, but also around the aspect of ethnicity.

Conclusion
The 2011 census in Croatia can be regarded as the most complete census in the history of Croatia. This shows that Croatia had the needed structures and capabilities of conducting such a large scale project. It was in line with most EU regulations and most of the UNECE recommendations. This does not come as a complete surprise, considering that in the same year the census was taken the accession date for EU membership was set. The census was not regarded as a major obstacle considering that the overall process of census-taking went smoothly.

Although the core aspects of census-taking as part of the acquis conditions by Eurostat are regarded as simply technical, by opting to ask for ethno-cultural characteristics the census becomes connected with issues regarding minority rights and therewith could be part of the political conditions. By the time of the serious EU approximation of Croatia “the major problems for minorities had already been resolved.” Therefore, it seems as if the possible politicisation of the census categories was never considered to be a major problem. So far these aspects have been neglected by the EU, and there is no general EU guideline. The EU regulations on the population and housing census do not even mention this aspect, but refer to the UNECE recommendations. With regard to the sensitive ethno-cultural aspects, the Croatian census (questionnaire) is not in line with international recommendations. As mentioned above, on the one hand the collection of this data is connected to the political representation and protection of ethnic minorities. On the other hand, however, the possible implementation of some of the minority rights sparked protests, and a rise of ethnic intolerance has been observed in Croatia.

Can the census in Croatia serve as a role model for the other Western Balkan countries? Croatia certainly seems to have the statistical infrastructure to conduct a census. This cannot be stated for all the countries in the Western Balkans and is one of the aspects where Croatia can be taken as a role model. Following the general lines of EU regulations, it can to a certain extent be regarded as a good example. On the one hand there are good aspects, such as

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124 Milekic, Croatia Referendum; Pavelic, Croatia Sees Population Drop; Pavelic, Croatia’s Language Dispute.
the availability of the data, the organization of the census (for example the allocation of a census budget, the collaboration and integration of the EU rules etc.) Whether Croatia follows upon the rules after its EU accession remains to be seen in the next census round (2020). On the other hand, there are various problems with regard to sensitive issues, such as ethnicity, which in other Western Balkan countries may cause even more problems than in Croatia, as has been shown by the aborted census in Macedonia.\textsuperscript{127} The EU should not underestimate the effect these aspects can have on the census, but also the social and political position of ethnic minorities in the region. This also links to the question: if political participation is connected to census results will it ever be possible to overcome the construction of the ethno-cultural concepts (and therewith the politicization of the census) in countries with contentious recent histories? Not only is this important in the Western Balkans, this paradox has been also identified with regard to discrimination in other European statistics.\textsuperscript{128} The collection of sensitive data via surveys such as in the Netherlands could be considered a possible solution, but whether this actually solves the problem should be the subject of further research.

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\textsuperscript{127} Daskalovski, \textit{Census taking}.


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Kosovo 2011 Census: Contested Census within a Contested State
Research Article

Mehmet Musaj
Independent Researcher
m.musaj@gmail.com

http://www.suedosteuropa.uni-graz.at/cse/en/musaj
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Kosovo 2011 Census: Contested Census within a Contested State

Mehmet Musaj*

This paper analyzes the census in Kosovo in 2011 with specific focus on the political implications and ethnic minority rights. A key conclusion is that this census highly influences public policy-making, and with regard to minority rights, the census data, in comparison to previous estimates and Kosovo Constitutional provisions, is not favorable to ethnic minorities. Expressing a lower number of minorities in total terms, the 2011 census explicitly reduced the representation of minorities at the central and local institutions, and consequently affected budget allocations. However, we must be aware that to some extent, because of the full boycott in the North by local Serbs, and the partial boycott in the South by the Roma and Serb communities, comparisons are limited and the data needs to be analyzed with care.

Keywords: Kosovo, census, state institutions, Western Balkans, minorities, identities.

Introduction

After the fall of communism in Europe, the countries of the region entered into a new stage of transformation, where the transition to democracy has often been a difficult path. Yugoslavia, a socialist federation constituted by six republics (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Slovenia) and two autonomous provinces (Kosovo and Vojvodina), experienced the most tragic transition in comparison to other ex-communist countries. Indeed, rather than a “routine” and peaceful transition, the ex-Yugoslav republics fell victim to nationalist appeals, and instead of proclaiming democratic principles, descended into violent conflict. Four ethno-national wars emerged, accompanied by a considerable number of victims, material and moral damage, and a significant number of internally and externally displaced persons.\(^1\) Without a doubt, this displacement of persons and depopulation\(^2\) during the Yugoslav wars reflected a project of ethnic cleansing, and has effectively contributed to the idea and reality of state homogenization. Recent history in the region of Yugoslavia suggests that identity serves as an enduring political tool for the ambitious usurpation of

\(*\) Mehmet Musaj is an independent researcher. In 2015 he defended his second MA thesis at the University of Zagreb, Faculty of Political Science. Previously, he obtained an MA at the University of Sarajevo/University of Bologna on Democracy and Human Rights.

\(^1\) Carter Johnson notes that throughout history, in the most extreme cases censuses have been used to identify ‘the enemy’ based on ethnic belonging, followed by targeted killing. See: Johnson, Carter. 2008. Partitioning to Peace Sovereignty, Demography and Ethnic Civil Wars. International Security 32(4), 140-70.

power and strategic resources. Likewise, for reasons both intended and unintended, language, culture and ethnic belonging have seemingly become the most significant 'trump card' for citizens, and, especially for their politicians.

In this highly politicized context, in 1991 Yugoslavia conducted a population census which was fully boycotted by Albanians in Kosovo. At that time Kosovars started to build a parallel institutional system inside of Serbia. The Kosovar parallel life continued through mid-1999, when after the 1998-1999 war and international military intervention, Kosovo began a period under the administration of the United Nations until February 2008 when Kosovo declared its independence. During the period of international administration, Kosovo did not conduct any census on population and housing. Only after EU recommendations and facilitation, Kosovo finally conducted a census in 2011 after thirty years (the last non-boycotted census was in 1981).

This paper considers the Kosovo 2011 census paying specific attention to political implications and ethnic minority rights. A key conclusion is that this census has significantly influenced public policy-making, and with regard to minority rights, the census data, in comparison to previous estimates and Kosovo Constitutional provisions, is unfavorable to ethnic minorities. Expressing a lower number of minorities in total terms, the 2011 census explicitly reduced the representation of minorities at the central and local institutions, and consequently has affected budget allocations. However, due to the full boycott in the North by local Serbs, and the partial boycott in the South by the Roma and Serb communities, comparisons are limited and data needs to be analyzed with care.

**Theoretical discussion: censuses and identity construction**

The emergence of the modern state has been characterized by features such as territory, government and population, wherein the need to have a clear picture of their territories and peoples evolved to become a primary concern of the modern state. Therefore, as mentioned by Kertzer and Arel, states became involved in representing their population at the cumulative level based on identity criteria, hence the census developed as the most evident, and perhaps the most politically important means by which states statistically illustrate collective identities. In this respect, censuses have played a crucial role in the construction of identities, with specific emphasis on cultural, racial, linguistic and religious dimensions. Furthermore, in political terms, censuses have served as a tool for the construction of identities which have not existed in the past. In Anderson’s words (as cited in Kertzer and Arel), the census was conceptualized as a useful tool by the colonial state to impose a ‘totalizing, classificatory grid’ on its territory, allowing governments to differentiate between ‘peoples, regions, religions, languages.’

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5 David and Arel, *Census, Identity*, 5.
Another category of identification which can have political implications is ethnicity – a multidimensional category that encompasses linguistic, religious, historical and territorial aspects, and which necessarily has a subjective dimension. Alternatively, as Koller has framed it, even if it is based on self-identification, confessing one’s belonging to an ethnic group is in itself a form of collective action. Those who indicate their ethnic affiliation, differentiating themselves from the majority group in a certain country, can experience certain disadvantages, social exclusion and different forms of discrimination. Particularly in the second half of the twentieth century, the categorization of populations based upon their language, ethnic and national belonging, has been considered to be very important in public policy-making. However, Goldscheider rightfully raises a question - what would we know about ethnicity if we only had the census definition or categories? If our only text about ethnic divisions and categories in a society came from official documents, what would be missing? Further, Goldscheider emphasizes that if our entire knowledge about certain ethnicities stemmed merely from census classification and categorization, we would have lost the point and consequently our understanding of the political, social and cultural connotation of ethnicity would be inaccurate. However, for political (and often practical) reasons, the official counting and acknowledgement of ethnic groups remains important for governments due to issues such as political representation, elections and power-sharing and the (re) distribution of public goods within a society. Additionally, in Limenopoulou’s words, the power of numbers seems to be significantly important for ethnic and/or minority communities in relation to political settlements which may include mechanisms such as territorial autonomy and various levels of self-determination.

In the following section, the multinational character of the Ottoman legacy, as illustrated from the censuses of the First Yugoslavia, (the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes) that emerged after World War I, and communist Yugoslavia (Second Yugoslavia), the federal state that emerged after World War II, will be explored. Then the very ethnic categorization and politicized context of the censuses will be considered in light of the break-up of the Yugoslav federation towards the end of the 20th century. This historical review is brief for reasons of space; however it is important to introduce key trends and characteristics.

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9 Goldscheider, Ethnic categorizations, 72.
11 See here also Pieter Everaers's contribution in this volume.
Censuses in Yugoslavia before 1991
Since 1921, Yugoslavia has, to some extent, regularly organized censuses. The intention here is not to analyze the details of all of them, but to emphasize the characteristics that are most related to the categorization of ethnicities and nationalities. Ethnicity has been taken into account in some regards in the Yugoslav censuses in 1921 and 1931- but at that time, ethnic categories were not clearly classified because of the mixture of language, religion and ethnicity. For instance, Serbs and Croats were both indexed as speakers of Serbo-Croatian and cannot be differentiated on a linguistic basis; all Orthodox Christians are not necessarily Serbs, nor are all Catholics necessarily Croats; neither are all Muslims Slavs. This lack of clarity in ethnic classification continued even in censuses held post-World War II, in 1948 and 1953. However, ethnic categorization was more clearly tabulated in the 1961 Yugoslav census and subsequently there was a clearer indexing of identities and somewhat less ambiguity.

Concerning ethnic belonging, it is interesting how the former Yugoslavia introduced two categories with regard to minorities. The first category was known as ‘nation’ (narod) and included Serbs, Croats, Slovenes, Montenegrians and Macedonians, with the ‘right’ to statehood in their own republic. The second category was known as nationalities (narodnosti) and included among others Albanians, Hungarians, Italians and Turks, whose main ‘national bodies’ live outside Yugoslavia in kin states. Roma and Vlachs were classified as minority groups without any affinity to other states, and ‘Yugoslavs’ who were classified as a special ethnic group in the censuses. Declaring oneself as ‘Yugoslav’ was mostly a response among people for whom ethnic identity did not play any crucial role, leading them to elect to not identify using historical terms; this often included supporters of the national unity of Yugoslavia, and children from ethnically mixed marriages. Generally, throughout the Yugoslav censuses notions such as ‘ethnic minority’, ‘nationality’ or ‘ethnic membership’ were used as synonyms and without clarity or nuance. Another important aspect, with regard to ethnicity in Yugoslav censuses is the categorization of ‘Muslim.’ In the 1961 census, ‘Muslim’ was conceptualized as applicable merely to persons of Yugoslav origin, and not to other people of the Islamic faith such as Albanians and Turks. Apparently ‘Muslim in an ethnic sense’ in the Yugoslav census was itself a form of ethnic engineering by the Communists in Yugoslavia, who had a special focus on ethnic relations in Bosnia.

With regard to the ethnic and national composition of Yugoslavia before 1991, it is interesting to compare the 1971 and 1981 censuses. Compared to 1971, the total number of inhabitants considerably increased by 1981, in all six republics.

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12 Many of the other articles in this special issue provide additional historical background. See for example the discussion in the contributions on Slovenia and Montenegro in this special issue.
14 Hammel, A fish stinks from the Head.
15 Werner, Ethnic, Religious and Language.
16 Hammel, A fish stinks from the Head, 1105.
17 Hammel, A fish stinks from the Head.
and the two autonomous provinces. According to the Yugoslav census of 1981, the country had 9.20% more inhabitants than in 1971, with the greatest increase in Kosovo (24.47%) and the smallest in Vojvodina (3.87%) and Croatia (3.95%).\(^8\) It is important to note that despite the increased overall population, the numbers of some nationalities and/or ethnicities were lower. For instance, in 1981 there were 98,000 Croats and 7,000 Serbs fewer than in 1971, but at the same time, there was an increasing affiliation with the category of ‘Yugoslavs’; according to the data from the 1981 census, the total number of people declared as ‘Yugoslav’ soared from 273,077 in 1971 to 1,215,000 in 1981, with an increase of 450%.\(^9\) These changes do not suggest massive population shifts, but changes in the way individuals chose to self-identify.

The Yugoslav Census of 1991: Kosovar Contestation

During the history of Yugoslav censuses, there is no doubt that the 1991 Yugoslav census remains one of the most controversial, reflecting not just the census taking process and its methodology, but the changing political dynamics. Problems related to the conduct of censuses can be of varying nature, but politically motivated interferences are always the most problematic. Haug noted that a significant problem relates to the way in which censuses are conducted and the political climate during a census operation.\(^20\) The problems listed by the author include the challenges of countries with a high degree of illiteracy, communication problems, the lack of confidence in enumerators and the state bodies, inadequate data protection or even direct attempts to pressure or manipulate the conduct of field operations.\(^21\) In this regard it is critical to mention that the Yugoslav census of 1991 was conducted on the eve of the dissolution of the Yugoslav federation, when the sparks of the inter-ethnic wars were beginning to appear on the horizon. For example, the census was conducted after the abolishment of Kosovo’s autonomy by Serbian authorities, ultimately leading to Kosovo’s development of its own parallel institutions. Therefore, not only was the 1991 census boycotted by the Albanians in Kosovo; the census was contested within the framework of an increasingly contested (Yugoslav) state. In this political context, as Bookman (as cited in Limenopoulou) writes, and as particularly evident in Bosnia, all three main groups were using population statistics to strengthen claims that their peoples deserved more territory and political power.\(^22\)

Concerning Kosovo, due to these political factors springing from the boycott of the 1991 census and the 1998-1999 war, it has been difficult to calculate the exact population since the 1981 census, which was the last regular census conducted in Kosovo within the Yugoslav federation. However, Brunborg has conducted some useful investigation with regard to Kosovo’s population evaluations in 1997, 1998 and 1999. For example, she notes that the Federal Statistical Office of Yugoslavia used the so-called cohort component method.


\(^{19}\) Stankovic, Yugoslavia’s Census.

\(^{20}\) Werner, Ethnic, Religious and Language.

\(^{21}\) This is characteristic for Albanians in Kosovo and Macedonia who were encouraged and motivated by their political leadership to boycott the Yugoslav census of 1991.

\(^{22}\) Limenopoulou, The politics of ethnic identity, 4.
where a population for a certain area is projected by age and sex, based on the
demographic component of mortality, migration and fertility; therefore, in spite
of the boycott the size of the population of Kosovo can be estimated based on
the 1981 census applying this methodology.\textsuperscript{23}

There are other separate population estimates made about Kosovo during this
period of tension throughout the 1990s, such as estimates for 1995 by Huizi
Islami (1997), a 1998 estimate by UNHCR (1999), the Federal Secretariat of
Information (1998) and Blayo et al. (2000).\textsuperscript{24} In addition, after the 1998-1999
war, a significant demographic survey was conducted by the UNFPA (United
Nation Population Fund) in the period between November 1999 and February
2000.\textsuperscript{25} Therefore, there is and has been available data, though methods and
results often remain contested. A thorough review of the various data is beyond
the scope of this article except to note that the data from all of these estimates
often provide no or very limited information on the ethnic composition of the
country, and represent different methodological approaches.

\textbf{The Kosovo Census of 2011}

Like most other countries in Europe, in 2011 Kosovo conducted a Population
and Housing census.\textsuperscript{26} For Kosovars, this was the first internationally
recognized census since 1981. According to the Kosovo Agency of Statistics
(\textit{Agjencioni i Statistikave të Kosovës, ASK})\textsuperscript{27} the census was organized in full
accordance with the international recommendations prepared by the UN
Economic Commission for Europe in cooperation with the European Union
Office of Statistics (EUROSTAT)\textsuperscript{28}.

\begin{table}
\centering
\begin{tabular}{|c|c|c|}
\hline
Ethnic or cultural background & Figures & \% \\
\hline
Albanian & 1,616,869 & 92.9\% \\
Serbs & 25,532 & 1.5\% \\
Bosniaks & 27,533 & 1.6\% \\
Turks & 18,738 & 1.1\% \\
Roma & 8,824 & 0.5\% \\
Ashkali & 15,436 & 0.9\% \\
Egyptian & 11,524 & 0.7\% \\
Gorani & 10,265 & 0.6\% \\
Other & 2,352 & 0.1\% \\
\hline
\textbf{Total population} & \textbf{1,739,825} & \textbf{100\%} \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\caption{Kosovo 2011 official census results by ethnic or cultural background}
\end{table}

Source: ECMN Kosovo: Minority Communities in the 2011 Kosovo Census Results: Analysis and

\textsuperscript{23} Brumborg, Helge. 2002. \textit{Report on the size and ethnic composition of the population of Kosovo}, 14

\textsuperscript{24} Helge, \textit{Report on the size and ethnic composition}.

\textsuperscript{25} See UNFPA (United Nation Population Fund), SOK (Statistical Office of Kosovo), IOM
(International Organization for Migrations). 2000. \textit{Demographic, social, economic situation and
reproductive health in Kosovo following the 1999 conflict}, \textit{Statistical Office of Kosovo} (accessed: 30
October 2015).

\textsuperscript{26} Appendix 1 - you can see the results of the census 2011 for all municipalities and natural growth
for the period 01 April - 31 December 2011.

\textsuperscript{27} Kosovo Agency of Statistics (\textit{Agjencioni i Statistikave të Kosovës, ASK}), 2012. \textit{Rezultatet
përfundimtare të regjistrimit të popullsisë 2011}[Final Results of 2011 Census], Prishtina.

\textsuperscript{28} The International Monitoring Operation (IMO) noted that, the 2011 Kosovo Census was
conducted in a relatively successful manner and resulted in figures that can be relied on.
The legal basis for the 2011 census was the adoption of the Census Law in 2010, wherein the status of resident was defined as all persons who had permanently lived in Kosovo for 12 months before the census and who intended to remain in Kosovo for over a year afterwards, as well as recognizing those who were temporarily absent from Kosovo and were abroad for less than 12 months for different reasons, including work, study, travel or medical treatment. However, the Law also included provisions for a supplementary list for all persons living and working abroad (Diaspora), and who could not be considered as residents, with all information about this group of people to be provided by the person themselves, or by their family members.

This definition of the concept of resident was not fully accepted by the wider public, many of whom wanted the Diaspora formally counted. For example the Kosovo Academy of Science and Arts (Akademia e Shkencës dhe Arteve të Kosovës, ASHAK) strongly contested this definition by noting that all persons who have not been in Kosovo for more than 12 months would not be included, and in this way the real demographic conditions of Kosovo would not be presented and the rights of “our countrymen living abroad will be violated.”

This debate is in fact a deliberation between de facto and de jure meaning of population. While the de facto population includes all persons present in the country at the time of the census, the de jure population includes the total population of a country that could be “home” and resident in the country, even if away at the time of the census. As Kosovo has a substantial Diaspora population living and working abroad for short- or longer periods of time, this distinction is relevant. According to Brunborg, the Yugoslav censuses historically have tended to follow the de jure concept, despite the fact that for international comparisons purposes, the de facto definition is recommended by the United Nations.

It is important to emphasize again that this census was conducted within a considerably politicized atmosphere. Indeed, the 2011 Kosovar census was completely boycotted and contested by the Kosovo Serbs in the Northern part of the country, as well as partially in the Southern part, by both the Serb and Roma communities. This boycott was based upon the contestation of Kosovar...
statehood by Serbia since the proclamation of independence in 2008. Therefore, the Serb community in Kosovo was strongly influenced by appeals of official authorities in Belgrade to boycott, emphasizing that Kosovo is not a recognized state, and hence Kosovar institutions had no right to conduct any kind of census. In this politicized context, the Serbian parliament’s committee for Kosovo called on Kosovo Serbs not to take part in the census, saying Kosovo institutions had no authority to carry out a head count. Furthermore, Serbia’s minister for Kosovo and Metohija declared that Kosovo’s Albanian-led institutions were preparing ‘a census theft’ in order to make the world believe that fewer Serbs live in Kosovo than is the case. The minister stated that 250,000 Serbs had been displaced from Kosovo since the 1990s and that the Serbian government maintains that only the UN can carry out a census in Kosovo. Additionally, proposals that suggested Serbia would conduct a census within the entire territory of Kosovo were presented as well. Miladin Kovacevic, Deputy Director of the Serbian Statistical Office emphasized that the constitution obliges the office to carry the population census out in the entire territory of the country, including Kosovo (which Serbia does not recognize as independent). The first census conducted in post-independent Kosovo was therefore challenged and contested on two levels, externally by the Serbian authorities in Belgrade, and internally by the local Serbs.

However, while Kosovo did successfully conduct the census in 2011 in spite of the principal contestations noted above, the results of this census produced a range of dissatisfied reactions, particularly with regard to minorities. From this perspective the census explicitly influences the government’s policy-making and distribution of public goods, and the results are therefore consequential. After the publication of the census results by the Kosovo Agency of Statistics (ASK), the Kosovar Institute for Advanced Studies (Instituti për Studime te Avancuara, GAP), made inquiries on the census data, and the implications that the data may have on public policies. For instance, it is important to understand how the population of a municipality impacts the distribution of government grants. According to the Law on Local Government Finance (Law n.03/L-049), the government grants for municipalities are based upon four criteria: the total population; the number of minorities; if the national minorities make up a majority; and geographical size. Therefore, reflecting municipal population differences from before and after the 2011 census, the government is required to reframe the distribution of grants for all municipalities. Specific concerns are related to the four Serb municipalities in the North, which as previously noted boycotted the census en bloc. Therefore, since there are no official census data for the North, it is unclear upon which criteria the government would distributes grants. For the other Serb

40. Appendix 2 summarizes the differences between previous estimates and 2011 census data.
41. It is important to emphasize that the Northern Serb municipalities have continued to receive substantial financial assistance from Belgrade.
municipalities in the rest of Kosovo, the census data of 2011 could also be affected by the partial Serb boycott. Another important issue is employment in local administration and/or the civil service. In 2008 the government of Kosovo issued a decision (no.10/46) on the size of local administration, which noted that the minimal number of employees in all municipalities must be 55 in municipalities with over 100,000 inhabitants, with one civil servant per 620 citizens; and in municipalities with fewer than 100,000 inhabitants, the proportion must be one civil servant per 780 citizens, while not dropping below 55. Thereby, using this formula in light of the results of the 2011 census it appears that at the local level there are 3111 civil servants more than the government decision of 2008 recommends. Another aspect of interest regards the discrepancies between the numbers of voters. In this respect comparing the total number of voters with the data from the 2011 census, in some cases the number of registered voters in a municipality exceeds the total number of inhabitants. It remains unclear how the government will update or implement policies based on such census data.

Another important dimension of the census data is related to minorities, whose rights and obligations became a very sensitive issue in the post-Communist era and the dissolution of the multinational state. Concerning minority issues, the Kosovo 2011 census is of particular interest because of political implications, as the results from the 2011 census may directly influence on power-sharing in political institutions, budget distribution, and other fields of public life in Kosovo.

The European Centre for Minority Issues Kosovo (ECMI) prepared a useful analysis of minorities’ concerns emanating from the Kosovo 2011 census. According to the 2011 census results, the proportional number of minorities in Kosovo proves to be 7%, which is lower than the previous estimates of 10-12%. Thereby, this lower percentage, in addition to leading to voices of dissatisfaction from among the minorities, carries a set of political implications since various minority rights and provisions in Kosovo, are related to the total number of the minority population. Likewise, according to the Constitution of Kosovo and the Law on Local Self-Governance, in municipalities where at least 10% of the residents belong to non-majority communities, the position of Deputy Chairman of the Municipal Assembly for Communities must be reserved for a representative of these communities. Similarly if such a condition is met, there shall also be a Deputy Mayor for Communities. The new numbers can therefore lead to significant changes. For instance, according to previous estimates made by ECMI Kosovo and the OSCE Mission in Kosovo, in the municipality of Obiliq, non-majority communities comprised 11-18% of the municipality’s total population, but according to the 2011 census they amount to approximately 7-8%. This percentage falls under the official threshold to

42 Institute for Advanced Studies, Population Census, 8.
43 Institute for Advanced Studies, Population Census; This might happen because of two basic reasons: first, the dead persons are not completely removed from voters’ rolls; and second, because of discrepancies between census data and voter rolls with regard to Kosovan diaspora.p.8
nominate a Chairman of the Municipal Assembly for Communities and a Deputy Mayor for Communities.\textsuperscript{44}

Further provisions with regard to the total number of minorities are related to the Law on the Civil Service, wherein a minimum of 10\% of civil service positions in central level institutions should in principle be reserved for minority communities. Again, new 2011 numbers could lead to changes. For instance, according to the census data the total number of the Turkish community in the municipality of Lipjan is 2\%, while previous estimates had ranked that community in amount of 6-7\%. Language is another important aspect, as municipalities in which at least 5\% of the population consists of a non-majority community speaking a language different than the official languages (Albanian and/or Serbian) this language must have the status of official language in that municipality. Additionally, in accordance to the total number of non-majority communities in Kosovo, there are also reserved places for students belonging to non-majority communities within Kosovo's public universities.\textsuperscript{45}

Moreover, according to the Constitution of Kosovo (art.96), non-majority communities form part of central state institutions, and constitutional provisions guarantee twenty seats in the Kosovo Parliament for all minority communities, of which ten are reserved for the Serb community, while at the Government level non-majority communities are represented by two ministers and four vice ministers.\textsuperscript{46} As of the time of writing, changes on the ground resulting from the implementation of policies based on the new census numbers have not been observed; the potential future implications remain unclear.

\textbf{Conclusion}

As argued throughout this article, in countries like Kosovo that have emerged after the collapse of communism in Europe, the conduct of censuses can be a very politicized issue, wherein nationalist rhetoric with specific emphasis on ethnicity is a well-known and crucial driver of political demands. The very nature of political polarization is expressed by the boycott and contestation in the North of Kosovo by local Serbs, whose aim is to contest the state \textit{per se}, primarily encouraged from their homeland’s official structures in Belgrade. Others have argued that as the census was contested partially by the Roma and Serb community in the South as well, it may be classified as an \textit{extensively contested census}.\textsuperscript{47}

Therefore, censuses cannot be considered as a simple bureaucratic and administrative tool of enumeration. In particular this article has tried to illustrate the political importance of censuses in the process of public policy-making, especially in relation towards national minorities. The article

\textsuperscript{45} ECMI, \textit{Minority Communities}.
\textsuperscript{46} Constitution of the Republic of Kosovo. 2008.
\textsuperscript{47} Visoka, Gëzim and Elvir Gjevori. 2013. Census politics and ethnicity in the Western Balkans. \textit{East European Politics} 29 (4), 479-98.
introduces several issues that the government has to reframe based on the results of the 2011 census, the most prominent being related to municipal budget allocations. On the other hand, the government and local authorities will have to carefully scrutinize and possibly cut the number of employees in the public administration; something that will have an impact not only on minorities, but on general employment and patronage. The mismatch between the data from the census and voter lists further illustrates the challenges of the count, and in particular the definition of a resident. The discrepancies can be great - according to the results of 2011 census, in twelve municipalities the number of voters exceeded the total number of the population.\textsuperscript{48} There is clearly a need for more cooperation between the Kosovo Agency of Statistics and the Civilian Registration Office. The minorities in Kosovo have found themselves in a very disadvantageous situation following the release of numbers showing smaller minority populations than previously estimated (a deviation from 10\% to 7\%). The full implications remain unclear, but could be manifest in a loss of some political and/or functional positions throughout local and state institutions, which may translate into lower budgetary funds.\textsuperscript{49}

In closing, it is clear that while the contestation and boycott of censuses is not new, it does reflect the still conflicted nature of the region emerging from the ‘aggressive’ break-up of the Yugoslav federation. Censuses have been boycotted in the past, such as the Yugoslav census of 1991, and continued to be contested to various extents. Disagreement on whether a census should count the number of people resident in a country at the time of the enumeration, or include the often substantial Diaspora populations, also reflect the historical legacy of regional politics, emigration and identity-building. Ethnic and racial identity can be reflected in and constructed through censuses, and the data may then be variously used in public policy. The long-term implementation of the results of the 2011 census in Kosovo will demonstrate the impact of population changes, census methodology and adherence to constitutional and human rights principles, as the still relatively young state continues to shape as a polity.

\textsuperscript{48} GAP, Population Census, 8-9.\textsuperscript{49} It is important to note that this can be partially explained by the Serb and Roma boycott, and demonstrates that census data should never be used to provide absolute figures. Until now there have not been any additional efforts to employ different methodologies to estimate the numbers of peoples that boycotted the census.
Appendix 1

Population census 2011 and natural growth for the period 01 April - 31 December 2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Municipality</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Fertility</th>
<th>Mortality</th>
<th>Natural growth</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Deçan</td>
<td>40.019</td>
<td>562</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>449</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gjakova</td>
<td>94.556</td>
<td>1.327</td>
<td>335</td>
<td>992</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glogoc</td>
<td>58.531</td>
<td>983</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>816</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gjilan</td>
<td>90.178</td>
<td>1.165</td>
<td>335</td>
<td>831</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dragash</td>
<td>33.997</td>
<td>583</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>427</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Istog</td>
<td>39.289</td>
<td>641</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>409</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kaçanik</td>
<td>33.409</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>378</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Klina</td>
<td>38.496</td>
<td>740</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>620</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fushë Kosova</td>
<td>34.827</td>
<td>573</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kamenica</td>
<td>36.085</td>
<td>349</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>199</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mitrovica</td>
<td>84.235</td>
<td>1.243</td>
<td>356</td>
<td>887</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leqinëviq</td>
<td>13.773</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>-38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lipjan</td>
<td>57.605</td>
<td>951</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>787</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Novobërda</td>
<td>6.729</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obiliq</td>
<td>21.549</td>
<td>315</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>249</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rahovec</td>
<td>36.208</td>
<td>1.014</td>
<td>151</td>
<td>862</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peja</td>
<td>96.450</td>
<td>1.351</td>
<td>320</td>
<td>1.031</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Podujeva</td>
<td>88.499</td>
<td>1.251</td>
<td>236</td>
<td>1.015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pristina</td>
<td>198.897</td>
<td>2.922</td>
<td>605</td>
<td>2.317</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prizren</td>
<td>177.781</td>
<td>2.640</td>
<td>552</td>
<td>2.087</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skenderaj</td>
<td>50.858</td>
<td>848</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>718</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shkodër</td>
<td>27.324</td>
<td>426</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>369</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shkodërca</td>
<td>6.949</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suhareka</td>
<td>59.722</td>
<td>1.165</td>
<td>214</td>
<td>851</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ferizaj</td>
<td>108.610</td>
<td>1.636</td>
<td>361</td>
<td>1.275</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vingga</td>
<td>46.987</td>
<td>700</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>539</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vuashtri</td>
<td>69.870</td>
<td>1.033</td>
<td>233</td>
<td>800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zubin Potok</td>
<td>6.616</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>-6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zveçan</td>
<td>7.481</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>-23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malisheva</td>
<td>54.613</td>
<td>1.149</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>1.031</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junik</td>
<td>8.084</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mamusha</td>
<td>5.507</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hani i Elezit</td>
<td>9.403</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gračanica</td>
<td>10.675</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ranilug</td>
<td>8.806</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>-12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pardesh</td>
<td>1.787</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kilokot</td>
<td>2.556</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1.780.021</td>
<td>26.719</td>
<td>6.014</td>
<td>20.705</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 2

The difference between the data presented in “Annex I” of the Law on Local Government Finance on the overall number of population and minorities compared with the census data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Municipality</th>
<th>Number of population according to the Law on Local Government Finance</th>
<th>Number of population according to the census</th>
<th>Difference</th>
<th>Number of minorities according to the Law on Local Government Finance</th>
<th>Number of minorities according to the census</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Deçan</td>
<td>40,400</td>
<td>40,019</td>
<td>-381</td>
<td>294</td>
<td>550</td>
<td>+256</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gjakovë</td>
<td>115,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gjilan</td>
<td>60,000</td>
<td>58,531</td>
<td>-1,469</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>45</td>
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Parliamentary Elections in Croatia 2015: Victory without Actual Winners
Election Analysis

Tihomir Cipek
Professor, Faculty of Political Science Zagreb
tcipek@fpzg.hr

Miroslav Macan
Research Associate, Academy for Political Development Zagreb
miroslav.macan@hotmail.com

Tea Trubić
Independent Researcher
tea.trubic@gmail.com

http://www.suedosteuropa.uni-graz.at/cse/en/cipek
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Parliamentary Elections in Croatia 2015: Victory without Actual Winners

Tihomir Cipek, Miroslav Macan, Tea Trubić

Keywords: Croatia, Parliamentary Elections, HDZ, SDP, Karamarko, Milanović, MOST

Introduction
The Croatian Democratic Union (Hrvatska demokratska zajednica, HDZ) has won yet another election in Croatia. After the success it had on the European and presidential elections, the so-called „Patriotic Coalition“, led by the aforementioned party has won 59 out of 151 seats in the Parliament. Their opponents, a slightly-altered version of the current leading coalition led by the leftist Social Democratic Party (Socijaldemokratska partija Hrvatske, SDP), won 56 seats. However, the results are far from final. According to the Croatian Constitution, the party that would be given the mandate to form a government has to assure the support of 76 seats in the Parliament. So far, none of the new major parties has succeeded in that task.

The current situation is additionally complicated by the fact that the winner of the most recent elections is the newly formed initiative called MOST (literally translated; „the bridge“) which won 19 seats in the Parliament, and without which it is mathematically impossible to form a government. Given the fact that MOST is not a party, but a platform made out of 19 individuals, it does not have a clear party structure, ideology or discipline, and it is therefore almost impossible to predict the side it will eventually choose to form the government with. There are several conclusions that could be made when observing the most recent elections in Croatia; regardless of the continuing growth of criticism among the voters directed towards the two major parties, both have succeeded in preserving their dominance in the Croatian political scene. In spite of the large number of seats won by the initiative MOST, the two major coalitions won ¾ of the overall seats in the Parliament, therefore proving the stability of the Croatian political party system. Furthermore, democracy needs parties to function properly; the emergence of a non-party initiative in the...
political arena is more likely to damage the Croatian democratic practice than to improve it because of their lack of experience and disorientation on national level. Finally, the only true loser of these elections is the leader of the right party in Croatia, Tomislav Karamarko.

**The economic situation of the country**

In 2011, the left coalition celebrated a landslide victory over the previous HDZ-led government, which lost the elections due to corruption scandals and the poor economic situation that it was not able to cope with. The voters in Croatia were thus motivated to change the government due to the economic downfall. However, the left coalition did not live up to the expectations of improving the economy. If anything, it additionally damaged it. At the very beginning of their term, Croatia had become the 28th member of the European Union. It had the misfortune of entering the Union at the time of the biggest Eurozone debt crisis, so the initial effects were negative. Even though there were a lot of expectations following the acquirement of membership, the government failed to take advantage of the resources offered by the Union, so the country soon became one of the very few that had given more than it had received from the EU. It has been estimated that by 1 December 2014, Croatia had extracted only 45% of the available resources from the EU funds, unlike Slovenia that had extracted 76%, Poland 82% and the Baltic countries more than 90%. Alongside the lack of success in European policy-making, the left-government had failed in the domestic political arena as well.

![Graph 1: Annual GDP growth comparison; source: World Bank (20.11.2015.)](image)

Just when the country’s GDP growth had started to gradually recover from the global economic crisis from 2010 to 2011 (as seen on the graph 1), it dropped down from -0.3% in 2011 to -2.2% in 2012. However, the Croatian GDP started to grow in low intensity in every quarter since the end of 2014. Due to all of its wrong judgments and the overall lack of success, the left government gained a label of being the least popular government in Croatian history. It has been
estimated that even in the better part of its term, more than 70% of voters believed that the government was leading the country in the wrong direction. Considering all of the negative economic trends the left government caused during its previous term, one would have assumed that the opposition would get the majority in the following elections without any trouble. However, by assuring only relative instead of an absolute majority, the opposition had failed to take advantage of the momentum. The question remains: how was that possible?

Cleavages between the voters and the two parties
According to a research conducted by Josip Glaurdić of the University of Cambridge, the voters of the Western democracies in Europe have a tendency of voting predominantly by evaluating the economic performance of the current government. The same research was conducted in Croatia and it was expected that the economic performance of a given government would gradually overshadow voting inspired by identity politics. The results of the research were completely the opposite; they demonstrated that among the Croatian voters, economic performance was submitted to the identity towards a certain party, usually produced during the World War II. Those powerful identities have almost unexceptionally been passed through generations in families, creating a very firm electorate for the two parties. Even though the voters might be disappointed by the poor economic performance or numerous corruption scandals, the voters will still vote for a given party primarily because of the animosity they feel towards the other party. That is one of the reasons which explains why HDZ and SDP have successfully maintained their stability and power in Croatian domestic politics since the foundation of democracy. These results place Croatia in a somewhat different position in regards to democratic development comparing to any other post-socialist country in Central Europe. Other Central and Eastern European countries have experienced a downfall of the parties that were dominant in the first stage of their democratic transition.

In Croatia, the animosity between the two parties and two electorates interdependently determines their stability. Ever since Croatia entered the European Union, the parties lost their common interest. Consequently, the rhetoric among the two sharpened as a result of the overall lack of mutual goals. On top of that, after the historically bad result on the elections in 2011, HDZ was forced to change its President in order to do some damage-control. Tomislav Karamarko, former intelligence service official and Minister of the Interior, filled the position. His initial idea was to detach the party from the center-right towards the radical right, with strong patriotic, anticommunist and Christian sentiment. As HDZ celebrated victory on two consecutive elections; European ones in 2014, and more importantly, the presidential ones in 2014/2015, Karamarko believed that intensification of such rhetoric could lead to another good electoral result. He failed to take into account, just like the former president Josipović, that current president Kolinda Grabar-Kitarović won the elections by accumulating votes from the center and the

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center-right. According to the victory on the presidential elections, but also due to the high unpopularity of the left government, most of the polls conducted prior to the recent parliamentary elections were announcing great advantage of the coalition led by HDZ.

Graph 2: Support towards the two parties during the election year, Source: IPSOS Pulse, Crobarometar (20.11.2015.)

Graph 2 represents support towards the two big parties conducted in consecutive months before the elections. As evidently shown in the graph, the support toward the ruling party was relatively low one year before the elections, but it had recovered greatly in one year.

On the other hand, the opposition party had lost its initial advantage, with a decrease in popularity for a couple of months, resulting with an insignificant advantage before the elections. Furthermore, the immigrant crisis sharpened the discord between the two parties as they had different strategies to manage the problem. SDP leaders made good use of the crisis to accumulate support from the voters; they were certain that the refugees had no intention of staying in Croatia, so they used it to promote the humanitarian approach. One can argue that voters believed that the management of the crisis should be guided by the principle of humanitarian help rather than radically, as suggested by HDZ. As seen on the graph above, the approach of the government was perceived as the more positive one, given the fact that their support began to grow in September when the crisis escalated. On the other hand, the opposition’s support began to decline.

Campaign
HDZ failed to accumulate the disapproval of the government into its own success. Karamarko used radical patriotic rhetoric during the campaign and the main point of the campaign was to stress the negative effects the previous government had made in its term. Also, they used the slogan “Together for better Croatia”, accompanied with a lot of suggested reforms and changes,
alluding that with their leadership the country would overcome the economic and social crisis. On the other hand, SDP decided to fully personalize their campaign; the main actor was the president of the party who turned out to be better spoken than his opponent. HDZ recognized that and chose to evade any direct confrontation between the two party presidents. This could be characterized as one of the fatal mistakes of the right-wing party, as their avoidance of confrontations was presented by the media and their opponents as an expression of their unprofessionalism. One of the fairly used slogans at the time directed towards Karamarko was “Come out and fight”, emphasizing that that his abolishment of the debate was damaging the established democratic practice during the campaign. It has to be said that debates are common practice in other European democracies, such as Denmark, the UK, Poland and Spain. Likewise, SDP presented the aforementioned opposition’s slogan and suggested reforms as a relapse to corruption and recession.

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Table 1: Seats in the Parliament and percentage of votes in the previous elections, Source: Croatian State Electorate Commission (20.11.2015.)

Table 1 shows the results of parliamentary elections in 10 national constituencies which are represented through 140 parliamentary mandates. Seats reserved for the national minorities are therefore excluded from this analysis, and so are the diaspora votes. Failed votes represent the amount of votes given to the options that did not pass the threshold of 5% within the constituency in which they ran for mandates. As seen in the Table 1, the parties have turned back to their harshly polarized electorate. The table also shows the high percentage of failed votes in the 2011 elections (19.76%) significantly decreased on the 2015 elections (7.64%) which proves that MOST managed to homogenize and accumulate those votes into their benefit.

MOST – the initiative and its voters
Due to the sudden and unexpected success of the initiative MOST, it is natural to wonder who are the people behind this initiative, what does it represent, whose votes did it get and which party did it damage the most. As previously stated, the 19 elected representatives of the platform do not function as a common party; all of them are independent and have different ideological backgrounds. The foundation of their platform was the urge for reforms that have not been initiated by any of the two major parties. One of the main questions asked after the elections was: who did the initiative damage the most? A survey conducted by Dragan Bagić on 34 353 respondents indicated that the majority of MOST’s voters (38%) were voters who had voted for some of the third parties in the previous elections. Thus, the majority of voters did
Parliamentary Elections in Croatia 2015: Victory without Actual Winners

not greatly damage the steady electoral body of the two major parties, HDZ and SDP.

However, if the former voters of the two parties are analyzed specifically, Bagić states that former voters of the left-coalition make 30% of the MOST electoral body, while the former voters of the right-wing coalition make only 12%. Considering this data, it is hard to argue that HDZ failed to get an absolute majority because of the emergence of initiative MOST.

Final remarks

The elections held on the 8th of November 2015 ended with the following result.

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Table 2: Results of the most recent elections in Croatia, Source: Croatian State Electoral Commission (20.11.2015)

As seen in Table 2, both of the Patriotic Coalition and the Left Coalition garnered the same result. Given the fact that it is mathematically impossible to form a government without assuring the support of the representatives from MOST, the process of forming the government entered a stalemate phase.

An already complex situation was additionally complicated by the fact that the representatives of MOST had notarized a statement against forming a coalition with either of the parties, accusing them of destroying the economy of Croatia. The representatives have found themselves in an undesirable situation in which they either have to violate the promise given to their voters by colliding with either of the parties in question, or to trigger new elections in Croatia. It has to be noted that the new elections would surely damage the good result MOST achieved as the voters would blame them for irresponsible behavior. On the election night, while the votes were still being counted, both of the party leaders proclaimed their victory. Zoran Milanović, the president of SDP, expressed his gratitude towards the voters and has invited all the parties
interested in reforms to support him as a leader. He also invited the representatives from the platform MOST to shape the future executive branch, as equals. On the other hand, Tomislav Karamarko gave a speech when HDZ had greater advantage in seats according to unofficial results; he believed that their advantage is going to additionally grow through the night. He thanked all of the voters and coalition partners, declaring a glorious victory and better times ahead for Croatia, forgetting to invite other parties (primarily MOST) to cooperate until he was reminded of it by one of the coalition partners. In this case, much like during the campaign, Milanović had shown a certain political wisdom and put himself in a better negotiating position.

Today, both of the coalitions are negotiating with the representatives from MOST, trying to find common ground for pushing the reforms. By now, most of the minority and regional representatives have declared their support for the left coalition as a response to the radical right-wing rhetoric of Karamarko. Moreover, other parties that have passed the electoral threshold are also more likely to support the left government than the right one but none of them has officially declared their support, leaving the possibility of giving support to the right-wing government. In the quest of reforms initiated by MOST, it seems like Karamarko could be more generous in his willingness for reforms and offering some key positions in the executive branch because his position in the party is jeopardized by unexpected low result. On the other hand, Milanović’s position in the party is not as questioned. Even if he fails to form a government he is less likely to be replaced within his own party. To sum up, two major parties continue to reign over the political system of Croatia. Even though they both won almost the same amount of mandates, the left coalition can be more satisfied considering that it saved the possibility of forming another government regardless of their bad governmental performance and the lack of support in the pre-election polls.

The right-wing coalition won the elections by a relative majority, but it cannot be satisfied with the result as it expected to win an absolute majority, given the fact that the previous left-wing government performed poorly during the last term. MOST seems shocked with the amount of the mandates won which became evident during the government-forming process by their confusing behavior and inexperienced communication within the highest level of national politics. Despite the big disturbance MOST caused on the Croatian political scene, by winning the ¾ of the seats in the Parliament, the two major parties have proven to be the only stable and solid options – that trend is unlikely to be changed in the future.

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Census, Identity, and the Politics of Numbers: The Case of Macedonia

Research Article

Roska Vrgova
Researcher, University of the Basque Country
roskavrgova@gmail.com

http://www.suedosteuropa.uni-graz.at/cse/en/vrgova
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Census, Identity, and the Politics of Numbers: The Case of Macedonia

Roska Vrgova

A census is a statistical procedure which can provide detailed information on demographic characteristics including the fluidity (or stability) of identities with which a population identifies in a given period of time. A census also represents a political process which can play an essential role in ethnic politics, especially when power is distributed on the basis of numbers. As such, censuses often have results that are contested, and the case of Macedonia is no exception. This article provides an overview of the census taking processes in the years following Macedonia’s independence in 1991, the dynamics and the challenges of the process itself and implementation of the results, and potential implications for the creation of identities. The author shows how census politics in Macedonia has been used as a political tool both in inter- and intra-ethnic relations, presenting ethnic political elites as true defenders of the interests of their respective communities. Moreover, it shows how the census taking process has generated tensions, fear, lack of trust, and reification of ethnic demographics. The author demonstrates that there is a lack of political will on the part of policymakers to move forward in conducting a new census and creating relevant policies that will enhance the lives of individuals.

Keywords: Macedonia, census, identity, politics of numbers, ethnic relations

Introduction

A population census is just one example of a statistical tool a country may use in order to count its population and identify and map trends in its economic, political and social reality during a defined period of time. However, many view censuses as significant. As Arel argues, censuses do not simply reflect social reality; rather, they play a key role in its construction. This proves to be especially true in cases where censuses divide the population along ethnic, racial, linguistic and religious lines. Censuses play a significant role in ethnic politics, as their results can directly affect the distribution of power and the allocation of public goods, making it fundamentally a political process and an “exercise of social power, with potential to change policy outputs.”

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* Roska Vrgova holds an M.A. in Human Rights and Democracy from the University of Bologna/Sarajevo, and she currently specialises in international election observation and international assistance at the Basque Country University. Her past research has explored topics such as, intra-party democracy, minority representation, government accountability, transparency of institutions, as well as EU integration.


Macedonia has a substantial Albanian minority, so “the game of the ethnic numbers has been running wild” in the past as well as today; census taking has never failed to be a source of contestation both among inter-ethnic groups and, more recently, among factions of the same ethnic group (although for different reasons, as explained below). As Friedman notes in his observations, the experts observing the Macedonian census in 1994 “thought they were going to be overseeing the technical aspects of a statistical exercise,” but were instead “shocked by the level of political passion their very exercise reignited.” As Ademi from the Democratic Union for Integration (Bashkimi demokratik për integrim - DUI) states, “the inability to agree on who is to be counted, in particular how to approach the counting of the classical Diaspora, and the Diaspora who remain attached in one or more ways to Macedonia, persists in being an obstacle in conducting a census”. The signing of the Ohrid Framework Agreement (OFA), which ended a short armed conflict between the Macedonian army and Albanian paramilitary forces (National Liberation Army-NLA), granted to any minority constituting over 20% of the country’s population the right to guaranteed representation in Parliament, as well as other privileges with regard to employment in the public administration, military, education system, and other sectors. Since its independence in 1991, Macedonia has held four census operations, of which only two (1994 and 2002) have been relatively successful. The 1991 census was boycotted by the Albanian minority, and the 2011 census was stopped due to methodological inconsistency and controversy. Bearing in mind that different methodologies would have yielded different results, some representatives of political parties still doubt whether a mutual agreement between the ruling coalition of Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization - Democratic Party for Macedonian National Unity (Внутренняя македонская революционная организация - Демократическая партия за македонское национально единство - VMRO-DPMNE) and DUI was ever reached prior to the start of the 2011 census.

The biggest challenge in overcoming the negative census dynamics has been and still is the low level of trust among the communities. Moreover, since the census is used for political purposes by the different political parties, and in light of the lack of trust in the State Statistical Office, due to the complaints on lack of representation of different ethnic groups at the institutions, these dynamics have strengthened divisions among ethnic groups, without achieving much progress in minimizing tensions or negotiating a solution acceptable to

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4 Friedman, 1996, 94, as cited in Dominique and Kertzer, Census and Identity, 19.
5 Personal interview with Abdylaqim Ademi, Minister of Education, Secretary General of DUI, Skopje, 13 October 2014.
6 Implying the inability of the ruling Macedonian-Albanian coalition partners, in this case VMRO-DPMNE and DUI.
7 When complete families have permanently moved out of the country.
8 Diaspora populations in which members of families frequently live abroad to earn a living, but regularly return to visit their close or extended families, have attachment to the country, and have not given up their Macedonian citizenship.
9 Personal interview. Remenski, Frosina, Vice President of SDSM, Skopje, 14 October 2014.
10 Personal interview with Abdylaqim Ademi, Minister of Education, Secretary General of DUI, Skopje, 13 October 2014.
11 Ademi, Interview.
This article discusses how the politicization of census taking influences intra- and inter-ethnic relations, and the effects and consequences such processes have, both on the construction of identities and on the consolidation of democracy in Macedonia. First, an overview of the national context is provided. The debate is situated and analyzed in section two through the prism of census and identity politics, including an account of how political elites interact and negotiate, and what kind of approaches they employ to balance the institutional frameworks of post-OFA Macedonia. Sections three and four give an overview of census processes since Macedonia’s 1991 independence, including recent initiatives. The article concludes with several observations with regards to how census taking has affected the creation of identities, the approach and discourse that different stakeholders have employed at different times and the potential entry points for compromise in holding a new census in the near future.

**Background: Macedonian Contemporary History, Cleavages, and Political Systems**

Modern Macedonia emerged in 1945 as one of the six constitutive republics of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Following the dissolution of Yugoslavia, the country declared independence on 8. September 1991, and experienced a relatively peaceful transition, although its transformation to a multi-party democracy was (and remains) incomplete. A small-scale violent conflict in 2001 clearly demonstrated contested political views and agendas, but was much shorter and less intense when compared to other regional wars. The ethnic differentiation of the country is present in the country’s 1991 Constitution, which, in its Preamble defines Macedonia as the independent state of the “Macedonian people, in which full equality as citizens and permanent co-existence with the Macedonian people is provided for Albanians, Turks, Vlachs, Roma and other nationalities living in the Republic of Macedonia.”

From the moment of adoption of the Constitution, the language in the Preamble prompted many political disputes; while ethnic Macedonians found these provisions satisfactory, the Albanian ethnic group found them problematic. In the first decade after independence, Albanians openly expressed dissatisfaction with their political and social status, and the inequality of the distribution of economic, cultural and political resources. Their main political and social demands included wider official use of the Albanian language, decentralization of political power, proportional representation in public administration, and preservation of the Albanian cultural identity.

During the first decade of independence, Macedonia witnessed increasing mobilization and mounting grievances of the Albanian community related to their political status, and differences between the Albanians and the Macedonians about the nature of the state and the role of the Albanians in it. The discontent led to the eruption of a small-scale violent conflict between the

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Macedonian army and the NLA in 2001, which lasted for six months, from February until August, when the OFA was signed. The main goal of the OFA reforms has been to accommodate the grievances of the Albanian ethnic group and to address the ethnic Albanian demands for equal representation, while at the same time preserving the unitary character of the state in order to alleviate the concerns of the Macedonian majority, who feared a “federalisation” of the country and its eventual disintegration. The census, as some authors claim, was at the core of the conflict, as ethnic Albanian politicians have long upheld the view that ethnic Albanians constituted a significantly higher percentage of the population than the 22.8% recorded in the census of 1994; thus they felt that they deserved privileges which were not acknowledged by the state.

The constitutional amendments prescribed in the OFA, adopted in November 2001, institutionalized non-discrimination and equal treatment of all under the law. The non-discrimination principle was to be applied in particular with respect to employment in public administration and public enterprises, including access to public financing for business development. It confirmed what the Law on Local Self-Government of 1995 already guaranteed—the official status of languages spoken by at least 20 percent of the population of a given municipality. (However, language appeals appeared again following the 1994 census. Albanians claimed that they constitute more than one third of the population, therefore the Albanian language should become a second official language state-wide.) The OFA introduced a system of double majorities—a majority of all deputies, as well as of the ethnic Macedonian population and majority support from all minority communities jointly—for key areas of legislation. The Agreement introduced a programme of decentralization and local self-governance, cleared the way for a multi-ethnic representative police force, and ensured representation of ethnic minorities at the Constitutional Court, the Ombudsman, and the Judicial Council. Additionally, authorities were required to take measures to correct imbalances in the composition of the public administration through recruitment of members from under-represented communities, with special emphasis put on the police services.

The Macedonian–Albanian relationship has been a significant feature of Macedonian politics. Following the OFA, Macedonia introduced a political system based on power-sharing determined through an informal rule that the government would be composed of a multi-ethnic coalition. Although there has

17 Law on Local Self-Government 1995 (Official gazette of R. Macedonia, No. 52/1995, Arts. 88-89. The recognition of languages of smaller ethnic communities are subject to the municipal council’s decision.
been a broad coalition including Macedonian and Albanian parties since the first free elections in 1991, one can argue that this undefined quota provides for greater flexibility, but also carries a risk of inadequate protection if some of the parties decide to break up this informal agreement, which is observed by tradition rather than law.\textsuperscript{21} However, “the numerical strength of ethnic Albanians in the Macedonian polity and the structure of its party and electoral systems guarantee significant representation of ethnic Albanian parties in the national parliament and makes their participation in a coalition government at least highly likely.”\textsuperscript{22}

The OFA further stipulates that the consent of a majority of deputies representing all non-dominant groups is needed in several areas of legislation: culture, education, personal documents, use of language, use of symbols, as well as local governance.\textsuperscript{23} The OFA has been criticized for its favourable treatment of one minority group (the Albanians) over others, since they are the only group whose share of the population is so substantial, although the smaller ethnic groups have also benefited from these terms, especially in regards to their “post-Ohrid constitutional status and their empowerment on the municipal level.”\textsuperscript{24} The numerical 20 percent threshold has become the basis on which groups can lay political and administrative claims, which has led to further contestation of census issues, becoming “a source of permanent tension between Macedonian and Albanian parties.”\textsuperscript{25}

Census, Ethnicity, Identity, and the Politics of Numbers

In countries\textsuperscript{26} where calculations of ethnic populations are used for the distribution of power or obtaining certain privileges, the census process is highly politicized. This is also the case in other Western Balkan states, such as Croatia and Serbia.\textsuperscript{27} Ethnic population numbers matter in the distribution of power, resources, local governance, local finance policies, education, and cultural policies in Macedonia as well. The OFA, as stated above, defined the 20 percent threshold as critical for the entitlement of certain privileges. In such a political environment it is impossible for the census to transcend politics. Rather “since census politics is expressed in numbers, the pursuit of entitlement translates into a contest for achieving the ‘right’ numbers.”\textsuperscript{28} Identity politics is a game of numbers,\textsuperscript{29} and groups fear a change of proportions that will put them into a disadvantageous position, becoming a minority in the territory\textsuperscript{30} in which they have already secured certain rights.

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{21} Ian and Russell, \textit{Power Sharing}, 115.
\item \textsuperscript{23} Decisions related to the structure of the municipality, and policies affecting particular communities require a double majority of the majority councillors, and those representing the smaller communities together.
\item \textsuperscript{24} Armend, 2008. \textit{The Ohrid Agreement}, 56.
\item \textsuperscript{25} Brunnbauer, \textit{Fertility, families and ethnic conflict}, 567.
\item \textsuperscript{26} Turkey, Austria in the 19th century, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, are a few cited in Dominique and Kertzer, \textit{Census and Identity}, 114, 119.
\item \textsuperscript{27} See the contributions on Serbia and Croatia in this volume.
\item \textsuperscript{28} See the contributions on Serbia and Croatia in this volume.
\item \textsuperscript{29} Dominique and Kertzer, \textit{Census and Identity}, 30.
\item \textsuperscript{30} Dominique and Kertzer, \textit{Census and Identity}, 30.
\end{itemize}
The perception of a volatile environment contributes to making census taking a process of political negotiation, rather than objective assessment.\textsuperscript{31} The analysis below aims to analyse how the politics of numbers influences the “ways in which and conditions under which the practice of reification, and powerful crystallization of group feeling, works,”\textsuperscript{32} accompanied by an examination of the discourse and “processes through which they become institutionalized and entrenched in administrative routines.”\textsuperscript{33}

### Census Processes in Macedonia (1991-Present)

The first census taking processes in Macedonia took place in the 15\textsuperscript{th} century, when the Ottoman authorities registered only tax payers and the male population. The first modern census was conducted in 1921, however there is also census data from the 19\textsuperscript{th} century. Following World War II, the country conducted eight more censuses, with the last successfully completed census in 2002.\textsuperscript{34} This makes Macedonia the only country in Europe that still has not conducted a census in more than 10 years. (Bosnia and Herzegovina held its first post-war census in 2013, but as of this writing the results have not been released.) The former director of the State Statistical Office (SSO) Doncho Gerasimovski stated that the SSO of Macedonia has the capacity to conduct a census immediately, but the political will is lacking.\textsuperscript{35}

It has been said that one of the basic mathematics rules in census taking is that two and two rarely add up to four.\textsuperscript{36} Just as Petar Goshev, leader of the Democratic Party in 1994 stated, if we take into consideration the claims of size of all the ethnic groups living in Macedonia, “claims of modest Macedonians that 1.350.000 Macedonians live here, claims of Albanians as Naser Ziberi for 1 million to 1.2 million of Albanians, 400.000 Serbs according to claims made by a great number of Serb political demographers, 300.000 Vlachs of Greek descent, according to some Greek political demographers, 150.000-200.000 Turks according to the claims by representatives of the Turkish nationality, 220.000 Roma according to statistical data given by Faik Abdi, and around two million Bulgarians according to Bulgarian political demographic estimates,”\textsuperscript{37} then the total sum of the population would likely be 5,4 to 5,6 million inhabitants - two or three times the actual number. This is to be expected, as the question of numbers has disproportionate importance, as different ‘ethnic or religious groups are competing for the political, material and symbolic resources linked to control of the state.’\textsuperscript{38} Numbers do matter, as they imply potentially great political consequences, accompanied with great fear. An

\begin{thebibliography}
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example of one of the Macedonian collective fears is that “Macedonians will eventually become a minority by ‘demographic swamping’, due to the high reproduction rate of the ethnic Albanian population.”

Albanian fears are related to being undercounted. Although the general opinion among Albanians is that they comprise at least 25% of the population, there is an additional fear, as claimed by some experts, that this might not in fact be the case. The implication of this would be the loss of certain legal privileges if it were confirmed that their number is indeed less than the minimum 20%, especially in particular geographic areas.

Some experts warn about the danger of making policies without up-to-date data. There are estimates from the World Bank that over 447,000 citizens have left the country. Eurostat published that from 1998 to 2011, some 230,000 Macedonians have registered in various EU countries. Additionally the Australian Bureau for Statistics in 2012 published data that the total number of Macedonians has increased from 83,978 in 2006 to 93,570 in 2011. For a country with a population of 2 million, these numbers are significant. The following sections review the country’s post-Yugoslav census history.

Census taking in 1991
Following the dissolution of Yugoslavia the country created a Constitution which defines it as primarily the state of the Macedonian people, in which full equality as citizens and permanent co-existence with the Macedonian people is provided for Albanians, Turks, Vlachs, Roma and other nationalities living in the country. According to Daskalovski, this put the “ethnic Macedonians in a superior position vis-à-vis the rest of the population”, and as result the Albanian minority found this formulation discriminatory. During this period the Albanians were attempting to address the Albanian interest in autonomy; accompanied with independence for Kosovo, the federalisation of Macedonia into an Albanian and a Macedonian entity, within a bilingual state. While the interest in increased autonomy has been a key interest of many Albanian parties for some time, the strategy of framing this demand in terms of federalism has been increasingly evident in the post-Ohrid period, whereas prior to the conflict the main focus of the Albanian parties was recognition of the Albanians as a second constituent nation, as well as language and

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40 Editor’s Note, *Macedonia More Than Mathematics*.
45 Brunnbauer, Fertility, families and ethnic conflict, 567.

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education rights in the country. The Macedonian leadership was strongly promoting the idea of a unitary – not federal - state.

The Albanians boycotted both the referendum for independence from Yugoslavia, and the census in 1991. Friedman writes that the census ‘was carried out in an atmosphere of distrust and animosity’. The boycott was observed in municipalities with a large Albanian population: Debar, Gostivar, Kichevo, Kumanovo, Ohrid, Skopje, Struga, Tetovo, and Titov Veles. Albanian political leaders claimed that they would be deliberately undercounted, and complained about the lack of census forms in Albanian. On the one hand they were calling for a boycott, but on the other they appealed to Roma and Macedonian Muslims participating in the census to declare themselves as Albanians. They did not recognize the census results, and the SSO instead estimated the numbers in the boycotting areas using statistical projections based on data from the 1981 census, the natural growth of the population during the inter-census period, migration, and other statistical data.

According to the census results of 1991, Macedonia had a population of 2,033,964. Macedonians comprised 65.3%, Albanians 21.7%, Turks 3.8%, Roma 2.6%, Serbs 2.1%, and Others 4.6%.

During the 1991 census, people living abroad for over a year were included in the results whereas in 1994 they were not included. At that time, the Albanian leadership was claiming that they make up 40% of the total population, accompanied with similar unfounded claims by other ethnic groups, namely the Serbs, the Turks, Roma, Greeks, and Egyptians. Dr. Ahrens, a German diplomat with the rank of Ambassador and head of the Working Group for Human Rights and Minorities within the International Conference on Former Yugoslavia (ICFY), called for an extraordinary census in Macedonia to be supervised by the international community.

Census taking in 1994
The 1994 census was also highly contested. The usual inflated estimates of the different ethnic groups continued, and again the most disputed question was the percentage of the Macedonian and the Albanian populations. The main grievances of the Albanians during this period were again the lack of status as a constituent people. Among the political demands during this period were guaranteed representation of ethnic Albanians in all state institutions; improved secondary and higher education in the Albanian language; state-subsidized Albanian language media; strong government decentralization that

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52 N.D., *Macedonia More Than Mathematics*.
would allow municipalities to manage their own affairs, and representation in administration, the army, and the judiciary.

The 1994 census started on June 21, funded with $2.5 million from the European Commission (EC) and the Council of Europe, and it was observed by the International Census Observation Mission (ICOM), also called the Group of Experts. As Friedman notes, many members of the ICOM team, including some of the highest ranking, were “quite surprised when they discovered that they were embroiled in highly charged political issues, as opposed to a mechanical statistical exercise, and they expressed confusion and dismay over the complex ethnic situation they encountered.”

The primary complaint prior to the census taking in 1994 was the lack of census forms in languages other than Macedonian. The insistence of Macedonian radicals to have the census only in Macedonian, the complaints of the ethnic groups were by amending the Census Law, and finally the census form was available in Albanian, Turkish, Serbo-Croatian, Romany and Wallachian. Another complaint was related to Article 30 of the Law which envisaged that an enumerator shall be appointed for each enumeration district. The Albanians claimed that in practice this resulted in the appointment of enumerators of mostly Slavic origin. Menduh Tachi, Vice President of the then main ethnic Albanian political force, the Party for Democratic Prosperity (Partia për prosperitet demokratik – PDP) stated that, “the census was politicized by the Macedonian Government and has only created confusion”. He complained that the Albanian representation in census commissions was 12.8%, while the Albanian community was much larger.

During the pre-census period “there were serious behind-the-scenes negotiations with the Albanian members of parliament, who threatened to call for a boycott despite the presence of the ICOM and the expenses already incurred.” According to the 1994 census results, Macedonia had a population of 1,945,932, out of which Macedonians comprised 66.6%, Albanians 22.7%, Turks 4%, Roma 2.2%, Serbs 2.1%, and others 0.5%. All Albanian parties declared the result to be illegitimate, saying there were not enough Albanian experts employed by the SSO and involved in processing the data. Hence, “representatives of the ethnic Albanian community in Macedonia continued to challenge this number, claiming deliberate undercounting.” Although PDP leaders promised to do their own count, they did not, and the completion of the

84 Roger, Macedonia Census, 8.
85 Roger, Macedonia Census, 8.
86 Friedman, Observing the Observers.
87 N.D., Macedonia More Than Mathematics.
88 Roger, Macedonia Census, 8.
89 Roger, Macedonia Census, 8.
90 Roger, Macedonia Census, 8.
91 Roger, Macedonia Census, 8.
92 Friedman, Observing the Observers.
94 Robert, Macedonia.
census seemed to put to rest many speculations about the ethnic composition of the country.\textsuperscript{66} However, in the period to follow, tensions increased; the grievances of the Albanian ethnic group ultimately escalated into armed insurgency in 2001.

**The 2002 Census**

The 2002 census took place in still volatile conditions, following the violence in 2001. The enumeration took place from 1-15 November, and it was again disputed by the Macedonians, the Albanians, and the smaller ethnic groups. The census was conducted by 11,000 people, with registration forms available in six languages, Macedonian, Albanian, Turkish, Vlach, Romani, and Serbian. Additionally, 50 experts from 26 European countries monitored the process.\textsuperscript{67} The final census results were published a year later, and according to them Macedonia in 2002 had a population of 2,022,547, out of which Macedonians comprised 64.2%, Albanians 25.2%, Turks 3.9%, Roma 2.7%, Serbs 1.8%, and others 0.7%.

The results showed an increase of the Albanian ethnic group from 22.7% to 25.2%, and a decrease of the Macedonians from 66.6% to 64.2%. Although the international community assessed the census results as “a fair and accurate statistical analysis,”\textsuperscript{68} the process and the outcome of the census provoked speculation and dissatisfaction among several parties. The Albanian parties believed that the official figure of 25% represented undercounting; while Macedonian nationalists believed it was too high,\textsuperscript{69} claiming the real number of Albanians was less than 15%.\textsuperscript{70} The census results were also disputed by the Turks and the Serbs, who rejected the decrease in the number of Turks and Serbs; the Turks claimed that their real percentage is 5.15% rather than 3.85%, while the Serbs claimed that the announced numbers represented an attempt at their elimination.\textsuperscript{71}

Among other speculations was that the percentage, primarily of the Albanian ethnic group, was agreed upon even prior to the start of the census, among the new winners of the 2002 elections. Such claims also came from officials of VMRO-DPMNE, as Nikola Gruevski, then President of the party, said he based his claims on the fact that the State Census Commission (SCC), was totally excluded from the process of analyzing the data. Other developments fed skepticism; the President of the SSO, Blagica Novkovska, was removed from the position in the middle of the post-census period; the President of the SCC, Zoran Krstevski resigned; and the results were delayed for seven months. Recalling the census in 2002, Krstevski announced that there were no political reasons for his resignation, but that he simply was not convinced that the

\textsuperscript{66} Robert, Macedonia.
\textsuperscript{68} Alagjozovski and Stavrova, *Macedonia’s Census*.
\textsuperscript{70} Gjorgjevski, Branko. 2006. *Albancite se pomalku od 15 otsto od naselenieto vo Makedonija* [The Albanians are less than 15% of the Macedonian population. *Dnevnik*, 18 March 2006 (accessed: 26 October 2015).
\textsuperscript{71} Alagjozovski and Stavrova, *Macedonia’s Census*. 

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census results were valid. Apostol Simevski, head of Census Data Processing, gave assurances that there was no room for abusing census materials or for falsifying data, because “the methods of control and the computer programs immediately reveal every mistake.”

Ultimately, the census results were recognized by all government coalition partners as the basis for negotiation. If we exclude the claims referring to the Albanians, for being undercounted (as perceived by the Albanians), or overcounted (as perceived by the Macedonians); as well as the claims for undercounting of other smaller ethnic groups the 2002 census could be considered as relatively successful, because the results were ultimately endorsed and accepted by all groups.

The Cancelled Census in 2011
The census in 2011, initially scheduled for April, was postponed until October due to early elections in June. This census-cycle revealed that in addition to the issues of who is to be counted and how, the chosen time period for enumeration could also be controversial. A year prior to holding the census, the Albanian political parties claimed that in case the census was held in April, this “will create an artificially reduced number of Albanians, since many ethnic Albanians live abroad during this period.” The preferred timing for the Albanian parties was July, when the emigrants come back to Macedonia for holidays; otherwise they threatened to boycott the census. Smaller ethnic groups also threatened to boycott the census when it was announced that the census-takers would be drawn from the two largest communities in each area.

The smaller groups such as the Macedonian Muslims, Serbs, Turks, and Vlachs, complained that the larger ethnic groups tried to assimilate them and offer money or false promises to make them declare themselves as, for example, Albanian or Roma. There were also mutual accusations between Albanians and Macedonians, the former claiming that the Macedonian majority on the census commissions had arranged the criteria in order to underestimate the number of Albanians in the country, whereas the latter argued that the census was being falsified in Albanian-dominated areas in order to exaggerate the true number of Albanians.

According to official information from the SSO, the census was envisaged to include only the resident population, in accordance with Eurostat standards
aiming to avoid double registrations of emigrants. The readiness of the SSO in 2011 was assessed as very good by Eurostat, however the institutions faced misunderstandings among the local census commissions and enumerators in regards to the methodology. Namely, the issue in regards to methodology was the documents used for verification of the resident population, and whether only original IDs were acceptable. (There were also reports that people had registered via Skype.) This aroused suspicions of potential irregularities. In an interview, Gjorchev of VMRO-DPMNE, stated that although the Government ensured equal multi-ethnic representation of enumerators (there was a total number of 16,000 enumerators, out of which 10,000 were Macedonian, 4,000 Albanian, and 2,000 others), in order to enhance trust in the census, the continued debate over different methodologies, as well as different approaches among the different regional census commissions and their presidents, led to the decision to stop the census. To the question of whether there was clear agreement prior to the start of the census on the methodology and the scope, Gjorchev neither confirmed nor denied the claims, stating that “there was an agreement to conduct a census.”

An agreement to hold a census was possible, but the devil was clearly in the details.

The census lasted for 10 days, and it was halted upon the collective resignation of all members of the SCC. In a statement, the commission said “there are no basic preconditions for continuation of the census.” A clear and detailed explanation and report in regards to the planned budget of 14 million euros (851,569,900 MKD) provided from the state budget, was never officially conveyed to the public. However, in a recent interview the former President of the SSO, Novkovska, announced that Eurostat has published data which states that the country spent a total amount of 2.86 million out of the budgeted 14 million Euros.

Ongoing Debates and Future Prospects for Censuses in Macedonia

The year 2014 brought yet more buoyant debate, and the apparent involvement of ruling parties, civil society, and academia. Whether this implies a higher chance for successful planning and implementation is difficult to predict. The urgency to conduct a census was stated by the Council of Europe in 2013. Although EU officials seemed to be in favor of using an alternative approach of

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78 Chomovski, Gorazd. 2014. *Intervju Novkovska Za sleden popis se potrebni podgotovki od najmaalku edna goding.* [The Preparation for a Census will last at least a year]. *Faktor,* 09 July 2014 (accessed: 26 October 2015).
79 Gorazd, *Intervju Novkovska.*
81 Gjorchev, Vlatko, Member of Parliament of VMRO-DPMNE, Skopje, 14 October 2014. *Gjorchev, Interview.*
83 Delimitov, Kostadin. 2014. *Popis nekogas kje ima no so poinakov "recept"* (Some day there will be a census but according to a different “recipe”), 07 July 2014 (accessed: 26 October 2015).
85 Gorazd, *Intervju Novkovska.*
counting the population by using administrative registries,\textsuperscript{88} the ongoing wire-tapping scandal which revealed conversations related to electoral fraud,\textsuperscript{89} put census taking high on the agenda again, as it is considered as one of the preconditions for creating a credible electoral list of voters.

In April 2014, Macedonia held both Presidential and Parliamentary elections. Five minutes after the closing of the ballot boxes, the opposition (Macedonian) SDSM declared that they did not recognize the elections. As officials from the party stated, they found the fact of 1,800,000 eligible voters as very problematic, and suspected manipulation of the numbers.\textsuperscript{90} Since the country does not have up to date census data, it is hard to confirm whether the ‘cleaning’ of the election lists was in fact done properly for the latest Parliamentary elections held in April 2014.\textsuperscript{91} The President of SDSM also claimed, that “the phantom voters that the opposition warned about during the last elections have multiplied during these elections.”\textsuperscript{92} They claim that no institution addressed their complaints, so the only option, which the party had, was rejecting the elections.\textsuperscript{93} They conditioned their return to Parliament (they won 34 out of 123 seats) with several requests including formation of a technical government, creating conditions for separating the party from the state institutions, independent media regulation, cleaning the electoral lists, and conducting a census.\textsuperscript{94} The party maintains that a new census would show how current voter lists are packed with people who are deceased or ineligible to vote, mostly because they have left the country.\textsuperscript{95} They state that a potential census will question the turnout in many municipalities during the last elections.\textsuperscript{96}

Following the elections, and the demands of the opposition, the ruling coalition of VMRO-DPMNE and DUI came up with several proposals for conducting a census. Namely, VMRO-DPMNE is in favor of conducting an administrative census, where the results are received by aggregating and cross-referencing data from existing state institutions and registers.\textsuperscript{97} Prime Minister Gruevski proposed installing devices on border crossings that would record entries and exits of citizens for the purposes of the census. Gjorchev of VMRO-DPMNE states the party’s position is clear and they want a European census conducted according to the criteria of Eurostat and the United Nations (UN).\textsuperscript{98} Any other solution would be unacceptable to the party.

\textsuperscript{90} Personal Interview. Remenski, Frosina, Vice President of SDSM, Skopje, 14 October 2014
\textsuperscript{91} Remenski, \textit{Interview}.
\textsuperscript{93} Remenski, \textit{Interview}.
\textsuperscript{95} Remenski, \textit{Interview}.
\textsuperscript{97} Uffe, \textit{What’s in a Number?}. 
\textsuperscript{98} Some municipalities, such as the municipality of Aerodrom, had a turnout of 97%. Remenski, \textit{Interview}.
\textsuperscript{99} Marusic, \textit{Macedonia PM}.
\textsuperscript{98} Gjorchev, \textit{Interview}.
DUI, the coalition partner of VMRO, finds the proposal for an administrative census acceptable only if it includes citizens who live abroad.\textsuperscript{99} The unofficial DUI proposal is to conduct a census that will include all the citizens of Macedonia who live in the country and abroad. They suggest processing the results in two tables: one that will register the citizens that are present in Macedonia during the time of census taking, and another that will register the citizens who have Macedonian citizenship and have entered the country in the period of 12 months prior to the census. They suggest the data from the first table to be used for planning and policy-making for the upcoming 10-year period in the field of demographic, economic, educational, and other policies, whereas the numbers of the second table to be used for determining the rights of the ethnic communities. The party claims this would not endanger any policy, and at the same time the country will be able to fulfill its obligations towards the EU.\textsuperscript{100} Moreover such an approach would make a distinction between people who have families in the country and are absent during the year due to work, and the ‘classic’ diaspora. Although DUI is aware that this breaches the provisions of Eurostat, due to the specificities of the country they consider their proposal is of utter importance, since they are “emotionally attached to the ethnic rights”\textsuperscript{101}, as many Albanians work outside of the country but keep their Macedonian passport and visit their families regularly. However, the party agrees with any proposed methodology of the coalition partner VMRO, as long as they agree on the scope of the census.

Besides the political parties, civil society has also been engaged in promoting the idea of the census. A group of organizations launched a campaign called \textit{Popis Sega (Census Now)}.\textsuperscript{102} They claim that Macedonia must not be held hostage by political elites who cannot find a common ground for census-taking. Their aim is to inform and educate all citizens through round tables organized in several bigger cities in the country. They try to emphasize that the census is a statistical operation which is needed in order to create relevant policies, and they suggest, that the political side of it should be resolved through political negotiation.\textsuperscript{103} From the side of academia\textsuperscript{104} there have been ideas and efforts towards an electronic census that will use data from already existing registers. Although Prime Minister Gruevski announced the use of some census-taking software, to date, there have not been any steps towards implementation.

While there is continued debate there is still no defined timeframe for the next census. The budget for 2015 does not envisage costs for conducting a census.\textsuperscript{105}


\textsuperscript{100} The unofficial proposal of DUI was presented to the author during a personal interview with Abdylaqim Ademi.

\textsuperscript{101} Ademi, \textit{Interview}.


\textsuperscript{103} Personal Interview, Bejkova, Biljana. NGO Info Center, part of the Coalition \textit{Census Now}, Skopje, 10 October 2014.

\textsuperscript{104} Rashkovski, Dragi. n.d. \textit{Sistem I uredi za sproveduvanje na popis na naselenie [System and Devices for Conducting Census of Population]}, registered as G07C 13/00 in the field of physics, section for device for checking, device for voting, \textit{PhD. Patent}.

Officially there is a will to conduct a census, but both sides maintain very hard positions, with little room for compromise. The proposals by DUI are entrenched in the requests of the Albanians dating from 1994, whereas VMRO insists on strictly following the EU and UN standards. The EU standards\textsuperscript{106} are contradictory to the requests of the Albanians, so the prospects for a political compromise are questionable. The involvement of the opposition is also debatable, as they would accept a direct interaction only upon the fulfillment of their five requests.\textsuperscript{107} In the meantime, their approach is giving key proposals, and communication with the ruling coalition through media.\textsuperscript{108}

**Conclusion**

The census issue is present in almost all fields of cohabitation and existence in Macedonia, as it is intimately related to both the practical and symbolic sides of ethnic politics. As evident in all census processes in Macedonia from 1991 until today, the main issues have been the methodology and the scope of the census, while the real problem remains the complete politicization of the census and lack of political will for compromise.

Based on the assessment of some international organizations\textsuperscript{109} regarding emigration, it is reasonable to suspect that both of the main ethnic groups fear that they have decreased in number. Keeping in mind that political elites define their electorates on an ethnic basis, any decrease of what is thought to be the ‘real number’ of relevant groups would be considered a betrayal of the interests of their group. This dynamic additionally contributes to a hardening of collective identities generated by the political rhetoric of the elite, thus creating an ‘us against them’ discourse which exacerbates the fear of assimilation, and heightens instincts to fight for group preservation and power. Although this persists to be the general picture painted by media, and shared by the majority of the public, it is worth acknowledging the recent appearance of different civic initiatives which have managed to mobilize people of different ethnicities and generations, who have jointly gathered to express their dissatisfaction with the current system through different protests throughout 2015.

Still, finding an entry point for compromise acceptable for all sides is not an easy task. As Ademi stated, the biggest issue remains the trust among the ethnic groups; but based on experience, he concludes that this is surmountable.\textsuperscript{110} “It is important for the public to have census data, but in order to avoid speculations, distrust, and manipulation, we need full involvement, and participation of all sides.”\textsuperscript{111} This opens a door for the potential development of civic initiatives, to involve a broader public across ethnic lines, and to refocus the debate from one that is purely political to one.

\textsuperscript{107} Remenski, Interview.
\textsuperscript{108} Remenski, Interview.
\textsuperscript{110} In a personal interview, Abdylaqim Ademi pointed out that the inclusion of all parties, led to find acceptable solutions in regards to the Election Law.
\textsuperscript{111} Ademi, Interview.
focusing on essential issues such as the development of policies and strategies on up-to-date data, in order to create bottom-up pressure for a political compromise. There is clearly a need for civic strategies that will unite the otherwise often antagonistic groups, in a vision for a better quality of life for all residents. At the same time, ethnic Albanian politicians have to do their share by “strengthening their loyalty to the state by promoting not only the interests of their ethnic kin but also policies and practices that will make their country stronger, more efficient and less prone to clientelism and patronage,” while the Macedonians should prove their willingness to amplify the participation of all ethnic groups in all fields of public life. In the meantime, it remains uncertain when a new census will take place, whether it will show that there has been a change in the local demography of the country, and what this might mean for the country’s future.

The recent revelations about wire-tapping and large-scale electoral fraud have further raised questions not only about the willingness of the government and the opposition to work together, but also raise new issues in the relationship between Albanians and Macedonians. Since these revelations question the very nature of Macedonian democracy, it can be expected that the fall-out from these and the consequent investigations will take significant time, and further postpone outstanding discussions on a new attempt to hold a census.

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Population Censuses in Montenegro – A Century of National Identity
“Repacking”
Research Article

Ivan Vuković
Lecturer, University of Montenegro
vukovic_ivan@phd.ceu.edu

http://www.suedosteuropa.uni-graz.at/cse/en/vukovic

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Population Censuses in Montenegro - A Century of National Identity

“Repacking”

Ivan Vuković

Montenegro’s recent political history has been extremely turbulent. Within less than a century, this country lost and regained internationally recognized state independence. Moreover, it was a part of three rather different “Yugoslav” state projects. At the same time, albeit without significant demographic shifts, the declared ethnic/national composition of the Montenegrin population changed radically. The focus of this paper is on the interaction between Montenegro’s dynamic political development and the constant reconfiguration of its ethnic/national structure. It concludes that the varying outcomes of the population censuses in Montenegro have actually mirrored political changes which the country has undergone throughout the observed period. It also finds that, because of the proliferation and, in particular, participation in government of nationally-oriented party organizations, census results in recent years have become politically salient to the extent that they began to influence the very character of the political game in Montenegro.

Keywords: Montenegro, census, national identity

Introduction

Among the countries of the Balkan region, Montenegro has had a very dynamic contemporary political development. For nearly four decades before World War I (WWI), the Montenegrin principality/kingdom existed as an independent, internationally recognized state. Subsequently, as part of the 1918 establishment of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes (Kraljevina Srba, Hrvata i Slovenaca, KSHS), Montenegro was annexed by Serbia and thus erased from the world’s political map. It reappeared as a separate political entity in 1945, as one of the six constituent republics in the newly created socialist Yugoslav federation (Federativna narodna republika Jugoslavija, FNRJ). When, at the beginning of the 1990s, the era of brotherhood and unity of its peoples came to a bloody end, Montenegrins decided to continue living in a joint state with Serbia (Savezna republika Jugoslavija, SRJ). However, less than a decade and a half later, they chose to leave the state union and, through the May 2006 referendum, re-established the independent state of Montenegro.

* Lecturer in Political Science, University of Montenegro. The author holds a PhD in Political Science from Central European University. His research interests include comparative politics, democracy and democratization, hybrid regimes, and the Western Balkan region.

1 The KSHS was renamed the Kingdom of Yugoslavia (Kraljevina Jugoslavija, KJ) in 1929.
2 In 1963, with the adoption of a new constitution, it was renamed the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Socijalistička federativna republika Jugoslavija, SFRJ).
3 SRJ was reconstituted as a loose federation and renamed the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro (Državna zajednica Srbija i Crna Gora, SCG) in February 2003.
Put differently, a few generations of Montenegrin people, without changing their place of residence, alternately lived in a sovereign country, an unnamed province of the Yugoslav kingdom, a republic with all statehood attributes in the socialist Yugoslavia, a political unit of the federal unions with Serbia, and, once again, in an independent state.

Considering its turbulent recent political history, one should not be surprised by the scope of change of the country’s ethnic/national composition as defined by censuses during this period. In the first population census organized in Montenegro, in 1909, people were asked to self-identify in relation to language and religion. In the next one, conducted by the KSHS authorities in 1921, the questions were similarly structured, only this time, the answers were used as the basis for the creation of a list of a total of fourteen “nationalities” of the newly founded state. The fact that the term “Montenegrin” was absent from this list clearly reflected the nature of the aforementioned political change that had taken place in Montenegro three years earlier. On the other hand, in all the censuses that took place in the post-World War II (WWII) period, Montenegrins constituted the largest national group in Montenegro. Still, compared to the censuses organized in the socialist Yugoslavia (1948, 1953, 1961, 1971, 1981, and 1991), the number of people self-identifying as Montenegrins dropped significantly in the last two (2003 and 2011).

At the same time, the percentage of Serbs in the population of Montenegro also varied considerably, from over 90% in 1921, to less than 2% in 1948, to the current 28.7%. Thus, as the number of declared Serbs grew, the number of declared Montenegrins declined and vice-versa. The share of Muslims in the Montenegrin population dropped from 13.2% in 1971 – the year when they were officially recognized as one of the Yugoslav constituent nations – to the current 3.3%. Bosniaks appeared in the 2003 census as a separate national group and eight years later amounted to 8.6% of the overall population. Finally, just like the country after which they were named, Yugoslavs in Montenegro – standing at 5.6% in 1981 – practically disappeared (0.3%) as a national group in the 2003 census.

Furthermore, mirrored in the population censuses subsequent to the collapse of Yugoslavia, the course of Montenegro’s political development has been greatly influenced by their results. As a consequence of the escalating political crisis in the socialist federation in the late 1980s/early 1990s, the most salient political issues in the constituent republics became those related to ethnic/national and religious identity. The first multi-party elections in Montenegro, organized in December 1990, took place at the moment when the nationalist euphoria across Yugoslavia reached its peak. Strongly influencing the political atmosphere in

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4 The results showed that close to 95% of the Montenegrin population consisted of Orthodox Christians who spoke the Serbian language.
5 Montenegrins, predominantly Serbian-speaking Orthodox Christians, were officially incorporated into the Serbian national corpus. The results of the census are available (in Cyrillic) here.
6 The overall percentage of Montenegrins in the country’s population went down from 90.6 in 1948 to 43.1 in 2003, and to 44.9 in 2011. For the complete results of the three censuses, see here (1948), here (2003), and here (2011).
7 Muslims first appeared as a separate ethnic/national group in Montenegro in the 1961 Yugoslav census (see the results here). The results of the 1971 census are available here.
8 Their number in the 2011 census was 0.2%.
Montenegro, it gave rise to the emergence of numerous national parties in the country. The pro-Serbian oriented People’s Party (Narodna stranka, NS), and, in a coalition, the Albanian Democratic League in Montenegro (Demokratski savez u Crnoj Gori, DSCG) and the Bosniak Party of Democratic Action (Stranka demokratske akcije, SDA) took part in the 1990 elections. In the years that followed, more party organizations claiming to represent the political interests of various national groups were established in Montenegro.9 Their political rhetoric and ambitions have to a great extent been founded upon the results of the last two population censuses.

Throughout its recent political history, Montenegro’s fluid ethnic/national composition both determined and, lately in particular, has been determined by its internal political dynamics. Departing from this general premise, the main ambition of this article is to contribute to a better understanding of the interplay between the radical political changes and the diverging census outcomes in Montenegro. Towards that goal, the following stages in the country’s political development will be analyzed: the inter-war years (1918-1941) during which Montenegro and Montenegrins did not exist in political terms; the post-WWII decades of Montenegrin political and national emancipation in the socialist Yugoslavia; and the most recent (post-SFRJ) period leading to the 2006 renewal of Montenegro’s state independence.

The post-WWI years
After the First World War, albeit fighting along the victorious Allies, Montenegro lost its state sovereignty that had been internationally recognized at the 1878 Berlin Congress. Instead of joining the newly created Yugoslav state as one of its constitutive parts, Montenegro was first annexed by Serbia and as such incorporated into the Kingdom of Serbs, Slovenes, and Croats. On 24. November 1918, at the moment when Montenegro’s King Nikola I Petrović and his government were still in exile,10 under the heavy presence of the “liberating” Serbian military in the country, a so-called Great People’s Assembly (Velika narodna skupština) convened in Podgorica to “legitimize” the unconditional integration of Montenegro into Serbia.

Even though a vast majority of Montenegrins wanted their country to become a part of the “first Yugoslavia”, a considerable number stood up against the manner in which the integration had been carried out. Any union with neighboring South Slav states, they believed, was supposed to be based on the principles of equality and respect for the Montenegrin sovereignty.11 As it became obvious that such political status was unlikely to be bestowed upon the

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9 Among the (former) parliamentary parties, these include: the Democratic Union of Albanians (Demokratska unija Albanaca, DUA), the Serbian People’s Party (Srpska narodna stranka, SNS), the Croatian Civic Initiative (Hrvatska građanska inicijativa – HGI), the Democratic Serb Party (Demokratska srpska stranka, DSS), the Albanian New Democratic Power - FORCA (Nova demokratska snaga, FORCA), the Albanian Alternative (Albanska alternativa, AA), the Bosniak Party (Bosnička stranka, BS), the Albanian Coalition “Perspective” (Albanska koalicija “Perspektiva”, AKP), and the New Serb Democracy (Nova srpska demokratija, NOVA).
10 The rulers from Petrović-Njegoš family had governed Montenegro since 1697.
Montenegrins, their disillusionment with the state of affairs moved swiftly from vocal protest to armed uprising. However, by the end of 1919 the military campaign against the unification was largely neutralized and the “Montenegrin Question” was brought to a political end. The aforementioned absence of a specific “Montenegrin” denomination in the aftermath of the first Yugoslav census held two years later symbolized “an inglorious conclusion of Montenegro’s period of independence”. In a way, this was anticipated with the following remark by Savo Fatić, vice-president of the Great People’s Assembly, made on the occasion of the November 1918 proclamation of the state unification of Serbia and Montenegro: “We are no longer Montenegrins, but Serbs.”

Within the politically centralized Kingdom in which the territory of Montenegro comprised only 2% of the population, its political, cultural and national role remained “marginal.” The volume of central government grants for investments in Montenegro – to mention just one of the indicators of its status in the KSHS – was smaller than the amount of war reparations which it should have received after WWI. Therefore, as they were “forced to recognize that the regime was failing to address economic and social ills which had placed Montenegrins near the bottom of the heap in the new Yugoslav state,” many of those who had wholeheartedly supported the decisions of the Podgorica Assembly soon became disillusioned. The scale of popular discontent in Montenegro during the 1920s and 1930s is perhaps most convincingly demonstrated by the fact that the number of people killed, arrested, detained, and tried was “several dozens of times higher in percentage” when compared to the population in any other part of the KSHS.

The next Yugoslav census conducted in 1931 coincided with the adoption of a new constitution that was to legalize the earlier introduction of personal dictatorship by King Aleksandar. Followed by a brutal campaign against his political opponents, the Law on Royal Rule and Supreme State Administration (Zakon o kraljevskoj vlasti i vrhovnoj državnoj upravi) was passed in January 1929 as a response to the escalation of the prolonged political crisis in the Kingdom. Determined to uproot popular attachment to the historical regions within the country and symbolically unite them under its new name (the

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13 Officially established on 1 December 1918, the new Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes received international recognition a month later, at the Paris Peace Conference.
Kingdom of Yugoslavia), the King strictly prohibited the public display of tribal, i.e. national, symbols. In view of that, one should not be surprised by the lack of questions about ethnicity/nationality in the 1931 census.

**Montenegrin rebirth in the Yugoslav federation**

Subsequent to the end of the Second World War, in which it once again ended on the winning side, Montenegro was reestablished as a political entity. Denouncing the greater Serbian hegemony, which they regarded as the key factor in the failure of the first Yugoslavia, Yugoslav Communists – the leading force in the popular armed resistance against the Axis powers – endorsed the post-war creation of a federation of six republics “based on the principle of nationality under centralized party control.” On equal terms with Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Serbia, and Slovenia, Montenegro thus entered the new Federal People’s Republic of Yugoslavia. In addition, the 1946 federal constitution listed Montenegrins as one of its constituent nations.

Furthermore, reflecting its political status, the first census organized in the socialist Yugoslavia in 1948 demonstrated a radical change in the national structure of Montenegro’s population. Montenegrins – unrecognized in the Yugoslav kingdom – comprised the vast majority of people living in the smallest FNRJ republic with no less than 90.7%. At the same time, the percentage of people self-identifying as Serbs in the population of Montenegro went down to 1.7%. The next Yugoslav census conducted five years later had a similar outcome in this regard. There were officially 86.6% of Montenegrins and 3.3% of Serbs in Montenegro. Just like in 1921, the results of the 1948 and 1953 censuses mirrored the political reality, rather than any demographic change taking place in this country.

Namely, the Communist-led resistance movement in Montenegro during the Second World War, which was adjacent to class, aimed at the national liberation of its people. On 13 July 1941, Montenegrins organized hitherto the largest popular uprising in Axis-occupied Europe. Moreover, both during and after WWII, a higher percentage of population belonged to the Yugoslav communist party in Montenegro than in any other republic. At the end of the

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23 In contrast, the number of Albanians – standing in 1948 at 5.4% of the population – remained stable to date. See footnote 6.
24 Interestingly, this was less than the percentage of Croats (1.8) living in Montenegro at that time.
25 In addition, Yugoslavs (1.5%) appeared for the first time as a separate national group in Montenegro. For the complete results of the 1953 census, see [here](#).
26 During the next four years, Montenegro suffered massive human losses. The official death toll at the end of the war stood at 40,446 (more than 10 per cent of the country’s pre-war population – I.V.). See Marović, Branislav. 1987. *Društveno-ekonomski razvoj Crne Gore, 1945-1953*. Titograd: Istorijaliski institut SR Crne Gore, 28-30. It is important to mention that a considerable number of these casualties resulted from an internal conflict between the Montenegrin Partisans and the Serbian loyalists (Četnici) whose extremely nationalist program, contrary to the Communists’ idea of “a society of equal peoples and a state that would be restructured on a federal basis” (See Rastoder, *A Short Review*, 135), envisaged the creation of ethnically homogenous nation-state under the Serbian crown.
war, 17% of the officers and as many as 36% of the Communist-led Partisan army generals were Montenegrins.  

On account of the role they played in the National Liberation War (Narodnooslobodićak rat), Montenegrins subsequently managed to “colonize the federal bureaucracy” and – due to strong clientelistic networks – remained heavily overrepresented for decades in the institutions of socialist Yugoslavia. The power of the Montenegrin political elite was most clearly reflected in the generous allocations to the Republic from the federal budget as a result of which, during the times of socialist Yugoslavia, “Montenegro experienced the greatest economic regeneration in its entire history.” At the same time, its dynamic development was followed by the strengthening of the feeling of Montenegrin national separateness in the federation. In line with the idea of Yugoslavia as – in the words of Veljko Milatović (then president of the Montenegrin Presidency) – “an alliance of free states which Montenegro joined voluntarily,” the Republic’s highest officials had throughout this period been very critical of any initiative that could bring into question the national rights of Montenegrins.

On the other hand, Montenegro’s communist leadership constantly avoided tackling the problem of defining the meaning of Montenegrin nationhood. Instead, its representatives purposefully chose to cover it with “the blanket of ideological uniformity.” Through strict adherence to the Yugoslav communist dogmas, the local party leaders effectively sought to neutralize the national identity issue. In practice, as Andrijašević and Rastoder argue, they represented “an ideal surrogate of the Yugoslav nationality:

“Throughout the post-war period, [they were] less nationally-oriented than any other (Our nationality is communist – internationalist), being the last to found a national party (1948); they were the most ardent protagonists of the class struggle ("class above nation"); they lagged behind the others in the setting up of national institutions [.] they cherished the policy of inferiority and the extended hand [.] they operated by clichés and used a political vocabulary replete with phrases and slogans”. Such a “neutral” stance on the national identity issue was primarily aimed at bridging the deeply rooted Green-White political division in Montenegro.
With strong memories of its bloody revival in the Second World War, the Republic’s leadership was determined to maintain an internal political balance between the diametrically opposed positions. The socialist federation seemed to “engulf this demarcation by absorbing Montenegro’s two tones into a larger palette”. In essence, however, it implied an “undefined dual politics without a national program”.

Its impact on the process of Montenegrin national identity building was evident from the results of the population censuses conducted in Yugoslavia during this period. As demonstrated in Table 1 (see below), the share of people self-identifying as Montenegrins in the Republic’s population dropped from 81.3% in 1961 to 68.5 two decades later. Moreover, when judged against the first one, the last census organized in the federation in 1991 showed a decrease in the number of Montenegrins by almost one third (61.8 vs. 90.6%).

For the reasons mentioned above, the socialist Yugoslav years were, for many in Montenegro, the best in its entire history. Yet, because of the ambivalent attitude of its political elites, the issues of Montenegrin national identity and – in the context of the late 1980s Yugoslav political crisis – the related Montenegrin national interest remained essentially unresolved.

Determined principally by Montenegro’s political status within the SFRJ, they were bound to be re-problematized as the foundations of the socialist federation started to shake.

Post-Yugoslav ethnic/national realignment in Montenegro

Compared to the period between the two world wars, the ethnic/national structure of Montenegro changed substantially during the period of socialist Yugoslavia (see below). Montenegrins – officially unrecognized as a separate nation in the Yugoslav kingdom – became far and away the most populous declared national group in the smallest FNRJ/SFRJ republic. In contrast, the share in its population of the once-predominant Serbs plummeted to the single digits. In addition, Muslims and Yugoslavs emerged in 1961 as newly theirs on green paper. Seemingly irrelevant, this detail would symbolically mark the onset of the great political schism between pro-unionist and pro-independence oriented Montenegrins (Vuković, 2014: 68).

In 1971, Montenegrins made up 67.1% of the population of Montenegro. At the same time, the percentage of Serbs increased from less than three in 1961 to 7.4 ten years later. Similarly, the number of Muslims in Montenegro (see: footnote 7) doubled during this period (from 6.5 to 13.2%). The share of Yugoslavs in the Montenegrin population also rose progressively (0.3% in 1961; 2% in 1971; 5.6% in 1981). The percentage of Serbs in Montenegro’s population almost tripled between 1981 and 1991 (3.3 to 9.3). The results of the 1981 Yugoslav census are available here. For the 1991 census, see Grupković, Dragutin. 1994. Popis stanovništva, domaćinstava, stanova i poljoprivrednih gazdinstava u 1991. godini. Beograd: Savezni zavod za statistiku.

recognized nationalities in Montenegro. As noted by Džankić, national identity during the socialist period in this country was indeed “far from consolidated.”

Table 1. National self-identification (%) in Montenegro during socialist Yugoslavia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Montenegrins</th>
<th>Serbs</th>
<th>Muslims</th>
<th>Albanians</th>
<th>Croats</th>
<th>Yugoslavs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1948</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1953</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Statistical Office of Montenegro (data available at: http://www.monstat.org/eng/)

Furthermore, the radical changes in Montenegro’s ethnic/national set-up during the period of socialist Yugoslavia continued even more radically in the years that followed its 1992 dissolution (see Table 2). Namely, along with the disappearance of Yugoslavs as a distinct national identity, the population censuses conducted in 2003 and 2011 indicated a substantial reconfiguration of the ethnic/national structure within the country’s two biggest religious groups — Orthodox Christians and Muslims. For the first time since WWII, it was possible to clearly identify differentiation within those declaring as Orthodox Christian, to understand who identified as Montenegrin or Serb. Moreover, even though the share of Montenegrins in the general population dropped sharply between 1991 and 2003, they remained the most populous national group in Montenegro. On the other hand, due to the political reasons explained in the second part of this paper, the number of Serbs tripled during the observed period. At the same time, within the Muslim religious corpus, the emergence of national polarization between Bosniaks and Muslims became evident. The former group first appeared in the 2003 census (7.7%) and increased in number to the current 8.6% of the total population of Montenegro. In contrast, the number of people declaring themselves as Muslims went down to slightly less than 4% in 2003 and further to 3.3% in the last Montenegrin census. Interestingly, the ratio between the sizes of the two main religious denominations in the country remained largely stable between 1991 and 2011.

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43 See footnote 6.
Table 2. Montenegro’s national “restructuring” – the largest national groups (%) in the last three population censuses

Source: Statistical Office of Montenegro (data available at: http://www.monstat.org/eng/)

Taking into account its crucial importance for the overall political development of Montenegro, the remainder of this paper focuses on the recent ethnic/national restructuring within the Christian Orthodox segment of the country’s population. It argues that the aforementioned diverging census results reflect the character of the political evolution which Montenegro as well as the rest of former Yugoslavia underwent in the course of the last quarter of a century. At the same time, in view of the establishment of a significant number of national parties during this period (see footnote 8) and the ensuing issues of the politicization of identity in Montenegro – especially after the 2006 renewal of its independence – the article also hypothesizes a growing impact of the population censuses on the country’s political dynamics.

In the SFR Yugoslavia, as previously elaborated, the question of Montenegrin national identity had seemed to have been given an appropriate, that is historically justified, political answer. Nevertheless, the outbreak of political crisis in the federation and, in particular, the growing political pressure from the Serbian intellectual elite and the new leadership under Slobodan Milošević soon demonstrated the weaknesses of this approach. The new political developments in Serbia caught the Montenegrin authorities completely unprepared. Still firmly clinging to the idea of brotherhood and the unity of the Yugoslav peoples, they used the 1986 SKCG Congress to call for a “continuous strengthening of socialist self-management and […] the development of the Yugoslav federation based on the constitutional principles of the national equality and workers-class interest”.

In this spirit, at the moment when “the political rhetoric of national interest and nationalism increasingly framed public debate and participation”, the Montenegrin leadership also pledged, “an uncompromising battle against the causes and manifestations of Montenegrin, Greater Serbian, Muslim, Albanian, and Croatian nationalism”.

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44 On the wave of Serbian nationalism built up subsequent to the 1980 death of Josip Broz Tito – the founder and the life-long President of socialist Yugoslavia – Milošević took control over the Serbian League of Communists (Savez komunista Srbije, SKS) in September 1987.
45 Quoted in Radonjić, Politička misao, 531.
47 Quoted in Radonjić, Politička misao, 531.
With political circumstances in Yugoslavia changing in exactly the opposite direction, the communist leaders of Montenegro soon found themselves on a dead-end political course. To make their position even more difficult, the socio-economic situation in the Republic was nearing catastrophe during this period.\(^{48}\) As a consequence, more and more Montenegrins were openly demonstrating anger toward their political representatives.\(^{49}\) Many in Montenegro came to believe that their insistence on the political status quo of Yugoslavia was actually motivated by their personal political interests, i.e. the desire to preserve privileged positions within the country's political system. At that point, the smallest Yugoslav republic was politically and economically "ripe for a major outburst of popular discontent".\(^{50}\) Milošević’s populist, anti-bureaucratic movement which by mid-1988 began to "flow out" of Serbia served merely as the trigger.

In January 1989, following a series of massive popular protests, the communist leadership of Montenegro was forced to resign. Embraced by the Montenegrin people and politically and logistically endorsed from Belgrade, a new generation of the SKCG officials organized the overthrow of their allegedly self-interested and detached-from-the-popular-base comrades. Interestingly, and contrary to common knowledge of these events, which focus entirely on the role of Milošević’s political and security apparatus – the turnover in Montenegro’s political summit did not mark a simple victory of Serbian nationalism in the republic. The future Serbian president did, as a result of the shake-up, secure political support in Montenegro for his plans to reorganize the Yugoslav federation so as to “protect Serbian national interests”. Moreover, and arguably due to Belgrade’s considerable political influence, a significantly higher percentage of people in Montenegro declared themselves Serbs in the following population census. Identity-wise, however, the new SKCG leadership continued along the path paved by the old party elite, adamantly protecting Montenegro’s status within the socialist federation.

This was unreservedly stated in the official opening address at the Tenth Congress of the Communist Alliance of Montenegro, summoned in April 1989 to formalize the political change that had taken place a few months earlier: “Montenegro is a state within the Yugoslav federation [.] Should there be no federation, Montenegro, as a sovereign state, will independently decide on the form of relations with other states”.\(^{51}\) Veselin Vukotić, the coordinator of the party interim presidency similarly pointed out: “Neither from abroad nor

\(^{48}\) Montenegrin heavy industry-based economy, largely dependent on the federal subsidies, was hit hard by the 1982 introduction of severe austerity measures by the Yugoslav government aimed at tackling the country's fast growing international debt, inflation rate and the living costs. As a consequence, massive numbers of workers in Montenegro’s largely unproductive enterprises were laid off. Already in 1984, one in four Montenegrins was unemployed. Three years later, the Republic officially declared bankruptcy. For more on the topic, see Andrijašević and Rastoder, *The History of Montenegro.*


\(^{51}\) Krug, 22. September 1990.
domestically were people manipulated. These events do not signify any Serbization of Montenegro but [an expression of] the will to restore the dignity of the Montenegrin nation”. In a similar vein, at a meeting held in October 1989, the SKCG Central Committee concluded that the “Montenegrin nation and Montenegrin state are definitely a reality”.

Two weeks earlier, in Montenegro’s old royal capital of Cetinje, the government had organized a massively-attended re-burial of the remains of King Nikola and the members of his family. Given the above-mentioned political circumstances under which they died in exile, the symbolic connotation of this event was particularly strong. Furthermore, in an opinion poll published in November 1990, a month before the first multi-party parliamentary elections in Montenegro convincingly won by the SKCG, as many as 81.3% of the respondents expressed a very positive or positive attitude toward the Montenegrin nation. That a relatively high percentage (61.8) of people in Montenegro declared themselves Montenegrins – particularly when judged against the percentage of Serbs (9.3) – in the 1991 census should therefore not be considered surprising.

However, within the next decade, the political situation in Montenegro and – as it became evident in 2003 – its ethnic/national composition, changed drastically. Following the collapse of Yugoslavia, at the referendum organized in March 1992, Montenegrins decided by a large majority to continue living with Serbia in a state federation. After coming first in the 1990 elections, the SKCG – renamed in 1991 the Democratic Party of Socialists (Demokratska partija socijalista, DPS) – won again in 1992 and 1996. Yet, at the beginning of 1997, merely a few months after the landslide electoral victory, the ruling party split up as a result of conflict between its two most important figures – president Bulatović and vice-president Đukanović – over the issue of political partnership with Milošević. While the DPS head remained loyal to its old political friend – despite terrible economic and political consequences of his belligerent politics – Đukanović gradually moved away from him and toward new, Western political partners. The resultant division of the predominant

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52 RTCG, 1 February 2015.
55 Running under the original name, the party won an impressive 52.6% of the vote. In addition, the SKCG head, Momir Bulatović, won the second round of the concomitantly organized presidential election. For more on the post-communist political development of Montenegro, see: Vuković, Ivan. 2010. The Post-Communist Political Transition of Montenegro: Democratization prior to Europeanization. Contemporary European Studies 2(1), 59-77; Vuković, Ivan. 2011. Diverging Party Outcomes in Hybrid Regimes: The Cases of Croatia, Serbia, and Montenegro. Romanian Journal of Political Science 11(2), 81-104; Vuković, Ivan. 2015. Political Dynamics of the Post-Communist Montenegro: One-Party Show. Democratization 22(1), 73-91.
56 Out of 2/3 of Montenegrins who took part in the referendum, almost 96% voted to stay with Serbia. On 27 April 1992, the two-member Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Savezna republika Jugoslavija, SrJ) was officially proclaimed.
57 In the general elections held on 20 December 1992, the Democratic Party of Socialists triumphed with 42.6% of the vote (46/85 parliamentary seats), and Bulatović was re-elected President, garnering 63.4% of the vote in the second round. Four years later, the ruling Montenegrin party even managed to win an absolute majority of the vote - 51.2%. It is important to mention that the DPS’s electoral successes, in large part, stem from the semi-authoritarian character of its rule during this period. For a detailed analysis of the reasons behind the early 1990s political domination in Montenegro by the Democratic Party of Socialists, see Vuković, Political Dynamics.
ruling party and, in particular, Đukanović’s narrow triumph in the October 1997 presidential election marked the beginning of Montenegro’s genuine democratic transition and – as it soon turned out – the decisive step towards the renewal of its independence.  

In addition, the 1997 conflict in the DPS resulted in the creation of (or, perhaps, just made obvious) a clear line of separation within the country’s Orthodox Christian population between Montenegrin and Serb national identities. In the years that followed, the DPS became the leading advocate of Montenegrin independence and a separate Montenegrin ethnic identity, while Bulatović’s newly-established SNP promoted the common state with Serbia and a Montenegrin ethnic identity indistinguishable from the Serb one. After a long period during which it was common for people in Montenegro – regardless of how they would officially declare themselves – to feel both “Montenegrin” and “Serb” at the same time, the growing division over its potential independence led to the “reconstruction of these identities and their association to pro-independence and unionist camps, respectively”. The political debate in Montenegro during this period “greatly resembled that of 1918, when the issue of the unification of Montenegro with Serbia was a hot political topic.” This time, however, the constellation of political forces was very different. As noted by Gallagher, “those who insist that Serbs were coethnics of Montenegrins or else closely related to them in terms of kinship and that Montenegrin government policy ought to reflect such ethnic consistency, found themselves on the defensive before forces asserting a primary Montenegrin identity”.  

The primacy of the Montenegrin national identity among the Christian Orthodox population of Montenegro was confirmed by the results of the 2003 census. Its political verification came three years later, with the success of the referendum on independence. Furthermore, judged by the results of the latest population census conducted in Montenegro, the renewal of its statehood seems to have strengthened the sense of Montenegrin national distinctiveness as the percentage of people who declared themselves Montenegrins increased for the first time since 1981. As expected, this was followed by a drop in the number of Serbs in Montenegro. Above all, the two groups now seem permanently divided not only along the lines of national, but also linguistic (Serbian vs.

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57 After Bulatović won by a small margin in the first round (47.44 against 46.71% of the vote), Đukanović prevailed in the second by less than 5,500 votes (out of 344,000 cast). Subsequently, the Bulatović-led faction left the DPS and in February 1998 organized a new party organization – the Socialist People’s Party (Socijalistička narodna partija, SNP).
59 Džankić, Cutting the Mists, 413.
60 Džankić, Cutting the Mists.
61 Pavlović, Who are Montenegrins?, 94.
63 See footnote 6.
64 On 21 May 2006, with the turnout of over 86%, 55.5% of Montenegrins voted in favor of independence (see the OSCE official report on the referendum here (accessed: 1. November 2015).
65 See footnote 6.
Montenegrin language) and to a smaller extent religious identity (Serbian vs. Montenegrin Orthodox Church).\textsuperscript{66}

Finally, its turbulent post-communist transition, dominated by various forms of ethno-politics resulted in the establishment of a considerable number of national parties in Montenegro.\textsuperscript{67} Prior to the beginning of its democratization in 1997, the opposition parties in this country – including those with a national prefix – were all politically subjugated under the semi-authoritarian rule of the hegemonic Democratic Party of Socialists. What is more, throughout the years that followed, everything in Montenegrin politics happened in anticipation of the referendum on independence. Hence, only after the statehood issue was taken off the table in 2006 could the national parties actually embark on the realization of their political programs, most of which prioritizing the preservation of cultural autonomy and proportional representation in political institutions.

At the same time, their political demands within the latter principle are, for obvious reasons, principally founded on the results of population censuses. Given its heterogeneity, the ethnic/national structure of Montenegro has thus become an important factor in the country’s overall political life. Moreover, on account of the active role they played in the pro-independence referendum campaign, Albanian, Croat, and Muslim/Bosniak political organizations “earned” a considerable amount of political credit for the future period. Their position is further strengthened by the existence of the previously elaborated deep political cleavage between the two biggest national groups in Montenegro. The fact that a certain number of minority national parties participated in all Montenegrin governments in the post-referendum period allows them to put forward their political agendas. Thus, for instance, the political platform based on which the Bosniak Party, Croatian Democratic Initiative, and the (Albanian) Forca agreed to enter the incumbent government lists “higher level of the minority peoples’ integration into the democratic processes in the society” as one of the founding principles.\textsuperscript{68}

On the other hand, the Constitution adopted on 19. October 2007 – with the support of the above-mentioned parties’ MPs – established Montenegro as a civic state. As stated in Article 2, the “bearer of sovereignty is the citizen with Montenegrin citizenship”.\textsuperscript{69} It is therefore hard not to notice the collision between the basic legal norm and the increasingly applied practice, defining the character of the political system. It is even harder to presume how the two will be reconciled in the future, particularly in view of the complicated process of constitutional revision in Montenegro, on the one hand, and the growing demands for minority rights protection in the process of its European integration, on the other.

\textsuperscript{66} As a part of the “unification” of Serbia and Montenegro in 1918, the autocephalous Orthodox Church in Montenegro was abolished and integrated into the Serbian Orthodox Church. In 1993, the Montenegrin Orthodox Church was officially restored. However, the Serbian Orthodox Church is still in the possession of nearly all monasteries and churches in Montenegro. See more in Đžankić, \textit{Cutting the Mists}.

\textsuperscript{67} See footnote 9.

\textsuperscript{68} The original document is available \url{here} (accessed: 1. November 2015).

\textsuperscript{69} The full text of the Constitution is available \url{here} (accessed: 1. November 2015).
Concluding remarks
Within the last one hundred years, Montenegro has experienced an unusually turbulent political development. In between the loss of state independence in 1918 and its renewal in 2006, the country had, under very distinct circumstances, entered the three politically very different Yugoslav states. As a consequence, even without significant demographic changes, Montenegro’s declared ethnic/national composition has been altered substantially throughout this time. Montenegrins, politically unrecognized after WWI, became the largest national group in Montenegro after WWII. This, again, was causally linked with the variation in number of Serbs in this country. In addition, Yugoslavs, Muslims, and somewhat later Bosniaks emerged as its distinct nationalities.

This paper sought to explain the interplay between the aforementioned dynamic political processes and Montenegro’s constant ethnic/national reconfiguration. It found the diverging results of the population censuses to reflect the character of political changes which the country had undergone throughout the observed period. Certainly the most interesting finding in this regard concerns the negative causal relationship between the percentages of Montenegrins and Serbs in the population of Montenegro. Contingent upon a political context in which the censuses took place, Montenegrins would increase in number while Serbs would proportionally drop, and vice-versa. Similar tendencies could lately be observed within the Bosniak-Muslim group in Montenegro.

The paper also demonstrated that in recent years, as a result of the political activity of nationally-oriented party organizations, census results became highly politically salient and, even began to affect the very nature of the political game in Montenegro. A number of Albanian, Bosniak, and Croatian parties took part in every Montenegrin government formed subsequent to the 2006 referendum in which they played an active role in the pro-independence movement. This fact gives them considerable political leverage and, notwithstanding the constitutional definition of Montenegro as a civic state, allows them to demand proportional political representation of their peoples. Census-determined percentages of their participation in the country’s total population are at the core of such political aspirations; how such ethnic/national and civic aspirations will be reconciled remains to be seen.

Bibliography


A Tale of Two Serbias?
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Research Article

Mina Djurić Nikolić
Independent Research
mina.djuric.kg@gmail.com

Laura Trimajova
Accredited Parliamentary Assistant, European Parliament
laura.trimajova@europarl.europa.eu

http://www.suedosteuropa.uni-graz.at/cse/en/djuric_trimajova
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A Tale of Two Serbias?
Census-taking in 2002 and 2011

Mina Djurić Nikolić and Laura Trimajova

The challenges implicit in census-taking are especially pronounced in the Western Balkans and, very specifically, in Serbia, considering this country's multi-ethnic and multi-religious makeup, as reflected in territorial delineations, as well as its political past. Minorities, in particular, have suffered from ongoing discrimination, which is brought to the fore by the politicization of census taking exercises by political elites, as seen in 2002 and 2011. These political elites have leveraged census taking in order to promote their own agendas, often to the detriment of citizens belonging to minority groups. The administrative and monetary influence of the EU in census taking exercises marked a slight shift toward better integrating minorities into these exercises in 2011. The prospect of EU accession will continue to influence Belgrade’s decisions in making further strides towards minority integration.

Keywords: census-taking, Serbia, European Union, minority rights, demographics

Introduction
Due to the sensitive nature of the collection of data on the private life of citizens, a census-taking exercise is a complex undertaking. Even in those jurisdictions with a high level of ethnic or religious homogeneity, census-taking can easily become a politicized exercise with nationalistic undertones. The matter becomes further complicated in the Balkans, where one must take into account the ethnic, religious, and political diversity within a post-war context. Serbia, despite a strong central government in Belgrade, has a substantial number of minority groups of various sizes, located throughout the country. Census-taking in Serbia is particularly important as the results dictate budgetary fund allocations for each respective ministry; as such, the need for accuracy cannot be overstated. The seriousness of certain minority issues in parts of Serbia were brought to the fore as a result of the 2011 census, the importance of which is politically and socially critical. Within this framework, this article will analyze how the Serbian censuses of 2002 and 2011 proved to

* Mina Djurić Nikolić received a Bachelors degree cum laude in Romance Languages and minored in International Politics at New York University (NYU). She received a Masters degree from Columbia University in Russian, Eastern European, and Eurasian Studies. She was Senior Editor of the Journal of International Affairs for the School of International and Public Affairs (SIPA) at Columbia University. Mina Djurić Nikolić also spent semesters at Sciences-Po in Paris and NYU’s campus in Florence, Italy.

Laura Trimajova pursued a Master's degree in International Security at Sciences-Po in Paris as a fellow of the French government, during which she spent a semester at SIPA. Returning to New York City as a Fulbright Fellow, Laura Trimajova graduated from Columbia University’s Harriman Institute with a Master's in Russian, Eastern European, and Eurasian Studies in 2013. She currently works in the European Parliament in Brussels, Belgium.
be sources of contention and were, indeed, “marginally contested” due to a boycott by the Albanian and Bosniak minorities.¹

The aim of this paper is to analyze the complexity of the two censuses in post-Milošević Serbia through a comparison of the different political reactions of leading figures in different ethnic communities. As the case study of Serbia will demonstrate, a rather simple technical exercise can entail various political challenges where minority issues overshadow the technicality of the process. The article begins with a brief overview of these technical exercises as they took place in Serbia in 2002 and 2011. This article will then consider the extent to which Serbia’s political elites strategically utilized the census. Specifically, we will analyze whether the census was approached as a depoliticized exercise, or leveraged to promote respective strategic nationalist agendas. We will look at the role of the European Union (EU) in this process, discussing whether it was sufficiently constructive considering its perceived role as a crucial player in both censuses. Lastly, we will sum up by offering a recommendation on how census results can be used instrumentally in the future.

Two different tales?
Census-taking is an important and complex statistical exercise. It becomes a more demanding exercise when a country is decentralized and heterogeneous. In heterogeneous societies, the census also becomes a barometer for the country’s policy towards minorities and vulnerable groups, who might fear the impact of the outcomes of this technical exercise. The political structure of Serbia and its numerous nationalities and ethnic groups ensures that the census continues to be debated, especially in respect to sensitive questions on ethnicity, religion, and language. The disintegration of Yugoslavia and the ethnic politics of the Milošević regime have given Serbia an international reputation which revolves around nationalism with right-wing extremism and the oft-quoted underlying discourse of Greater Serbia.² Serbia is a diverse country, home to many ethnic and linguistic minorities, both bigger (like the Hungarians) and smaller (like the Czechs or Egyptians). Additionally, and perhaps most importantly for the purpose of this study, external influence in a country’s highly internal undertaking (which the census undisputedly is) can play an instrumental role in both the preparation and the conducting of the census.

European countries were preparing for the 2001 round of census-taking since the end of the 1990s. Serbia at the time was undergoing a radical political transformation; with the crumbling of the Yugoslav state, the aftermath of the Kosovo conflict, and the October 2000 ousting of Slobodan Milošević. At this period the census-taking exercise was a major challenge that had to be undertaken by legislators, state agencies, and people in the field. At each of these stages, even the simplest ones, problems were expected. But the census-taking was critically necessary, as the Yugoslav wars led to significant

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demographic and border changes. It was also a test for Belgrade, which had to take into account the discontent expected from minorities throughout Serbia.

A decade later, in line with the 2011 censuses that took place throughout the EU and reflecting its EU aspirations, Serbia held a census as well. The EU legislation on population and housing foresees census-taking in ten-year cycles. The preparations for the 2011 census had been underway since 2008, when, for the first time, the census was covered by EU regulation and guidance. As all countries in the Western Balkans are viewed as future EU member states, the EU’s involvement in their domestic politics is much more pronounced than in other parts of the world. This translates into the EU’s support in technical exercises, such as census-taking, while expecting convergence in the acquis communautaire related to the census. Flexing its soft power in its immediate neighborhood, it is in the EU’s interest to help countries prepare for membership and assist in technical matters, to ensure consistency of methodology and collected data. Serbia, after years of political turmoil following the ousting of Milosevic, is an EU candidate country. Preconditions for successful accession negotiations necessitate reliable information reflecting the actual demographic composition of each country.

National minorities and ethnic groups in Serbia

In order to study the approach to the census in both 2002 and 2011, one must understand the heterogeneous ethnic mosaic of the country. While Central Serbia remains predominantly Serbian, Vojvodina is home to a diverse population, and some other geographical parts of Serbia, such as Sandzak, are affiliated with particular national minorities, mostly linked to similar populations in neighboring countries. After the demise of the Milosevic regime, Serbia fast-tracked its obligations toward minorities and adopted comprehensive laws on their freedoms and rights, regional and minority languages, and launched bilateral agreements with neighboring countries on minority protection. The Serbian Constitution affirms the protection of national minorities in its Constitutional principles under Article 14, pledging to “[...]

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3 “Initially all the countries in the Western Balkans planned to carry out their population censuses in April 2011. However, for different reasons censuses were only carried out in Croatia, Montenegro and Kosovo at that time. The censuses in Serbia, Albania and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia were postponed till October 2011. The censuses in Serbia and Albania commenced as planned whereas the census in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia was cancelled after a few days of field operations. For Bosnia and Herzegovina the population enumeration phase took place in October 2013 and the following census phases are yet to follow.” Everaers, Pieter. Annex to: The 2011 round of Population and Housing censuses in the Western Balkan countries in the context of the political situation and technical preparedness: a comparative analysis with a main focus on ethnicity and citizenship. Paper presented at ASN World Convention 2014, 2.


5 Identity formation is an ongoing process in Serbia, due to the aftermath of the dissolution of Yugoslavia. Despite the fact that it is an inevitable part of the ethnic picture of present-day Serbia and closely linked to the study of censuses, this paper will not be concentrating on the trends of identity-formation for reasons of length and scope.
guarantee special protection to national minorities for the purpose of exercising full equality and preserving their identity.\textsuperscript{6}

Apart from national minorities in Serbia, one also needs to distinguish among Croats, Bosniaks/Muslims, Macedonians, and Slovenes, and after the 2006 independence vote, Montenegrins, "[...] who were considered “constituent nations” and did not enjoy minority rights which were secured for so called “nationalities.”\textsuperscript{7}

There are other distinctions as well. While the Hungarian minority living in Vojvodina is considered to be economically and socially well-off, with their minority rights exercised consistently, the situation for other minorities remains difficult. Those residing in Eastern Serbia, as well as Bulgarians, Romanians/Vlachs, and Albanians concentrated around the poor regions of South Serbia, have experienced high unemployment rates and the overall economic decline of the regions they inhabit.\textsuperscript{8}

The situation remains complex and indeed, multifaceted: the economic disadvantages of the population in poor regions feed political, social and cultural discrimination in a vicious cycle.

Increasing regional autonomy is still a contentious issue in Serbia. Serbia’s mainstream elite “still believes that unification of all Serbs would be possible sometime in the future [...] for them, autonomists, particularly those in Vojvodina, are ‘tearing apart the unique Serb national being’.”\textsuperscript{9}

The large Hungarian minority has been successful in presenting a united front when dealing with issues of concern to them, though not without controversy. The adoption of the Law on Rehabilitation drew a sharp reaction from Hungarians due to its link to the restitution of property dating to the Second World War. In respect to the EU, the opening of the Vojvodina European Office in Brussels in early 2011 triggered controversy in Serbia, with many insisting that this action was yet another step on Vojvodina’s path toward secession. While then-Foreign Minister Vuk Jeremic had pledged his support for this initiative, it took over three months for the government to formally give its consent; likewise, the opening of the Office was continuously postponed. The divisiveness in public opinion as far as Vojvodina is concerned highlights the importance of the autonomy debate in Serbia, and its resolution is essential for progress on the EU accession agenda. Lingering issues such as these show that sub-groups of the Balkans often have a long memory, and that injustices against minorities cannot just be swept under the carpet.

Census-taking as an exercise is instrumental in re-exposing these various injustices and grudges; however, it is left to each state’s respective government to deal with these issues in a proactive manner. Failing to do so has very definite implications for Serbia’s EU accession; Hungary, for example, has warned Serbia that denying Hungarians the right to property restitution seized after World War II, might compromise Serbia’s accession effort. Other issues encountered by the Hungarian population include the inability to receive

\textsuperscript{8} European Centre for Minority Issues, Minority Issues Mainstreaming: A Practical Guide for European Agency for Reconstruction Programmes. Thessaloniki/Flensburg, 68.
\textsuperscript{9} European Center for Minority Issues, Minority Issues, 18.
instruction in their mother tongue, along with difficulties in media representation.

**Federal Republic of Yugoslavia 2002**

The three most recent pre-war censuses were carried out in 1971, 1981, and 1991. Serbia's first post-war census was anticipated in 2001, the year that all other European countries held censuses. However, the Serbian census was launched a year later than originally planned due to “[t]he political situation in the country and the lack of financial resources”\(^\text{10}\). The legal basis for the census was the 1999 Law on Census\(^\text{11}\). The political situation in Serbia in 2002 could be described as a time of maximal euphoria following the ousting of Slobodan Milosevic in October 2000, and the agony of not reforming quickly enough in the wake of this change. The Milosevic administration was out of office, but its structures remained. Though the EU was open to communication with Serbia, the Stabilisation and Association Agreement was not yet signed, nor had the country been invited to join the Council of Europe. The opposition figures that had rallied around the one common point in their agenda – ousting President Milosevic – were now increasingly populist and radical.\(^\text{12}\) The complex disillusionment in Serbia was reflected in the 2002 Presidential elections;\(^\text{13}\) with all three rounds void, the Speaker of the Parliament assumed the role of the Serbian President on 29 December 2002.

Assessing the census in Serbia in April 2002, one must understand the particularity not only of the political climate at that time, but the actual state structures and relationships between various levels of government that resulted from the demise of Tito’s Yugoslavia. The situation in Serbia was complex at the FRY, state, and regional levels, and could best be described as a “provisorium” coupled with “a crisis of identity.”\(^\text{14}\) Despite the 5 October events, Serbia was still officially part of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY), which it formed with Montenegro in April 1992.\(^\text{15}\) Additionally, the status of the two autonomous provinces of Vojvodina and Kosovo remained contentious, with tensions rising between Novi Sad and Pristina versus Belgrade. Indeed, Kosovo was under international administration since 1999 until unilaterally declaring independence in 2008—the legality of which is still contested in Belgrade.

Additionally, the census in FRY was not performed in all parts of the country at the same time; while in Serbia it was carried out at the beginning of April 2002, in Montenegro\(^\text{16}\) it only took place a year and a half later, in October

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\(^{11}\) Full text of the law [in Serbian] available [here](link).


\(^{13}\) OSCE, *Ethnic Minorities in Serbia*.


\(^{15}\) The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) was reconstituted as the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro in 2003, following an orchestrated effort of the European Union. This Union ceased to exist in 2006 when Montenegro formally declared independence, following a referendum.

\(^{16}\) Please also see the paper on Montenegro in this special issue on this topic.
2003. Additionally, the census in Kosovo was not carried out at all, continuing the difficult census tradition there since 1981: “[A] census of population, households and dwellings has been carried out in the area of Central Serbia and Vojvodina, while the Census in Kosovo and Metohija is predicted when conditions are more favourable or, in another words, after the end of the United Nations Mission for temporary administration (UNMIK).” The census in Serbia was finally carried out from 1-15 April 2002. The results of the census showed a total of 7,498,001 inhabitants in Serbia (including Vojvodina), out of which almost 83 percent accounted for Serbs, with the rest being national or ethnic minorities. The questions on national affiliation, mother tongue and religion were open questions in the 2001 form, while the "citizenship" question was a closed one. Unfortunately, data comparison to the 1991 census proved to be difficult due to substantial demographic changes caused by both the Yugoslav wars and the disastrous post-war economic situation and subsequent economic migration.

The first census after the Yugoslav wars was expected to be difficult, and many challenges appeared: defining respondents’ usual place of residence; colossal migration movements of population with groups of people of different statuses; ambiguity in economic activity due to the collapse of the state-run economy and the grey economy that thrived during the international isolation of Yugoslavia; blurred lines between household members and households; and the general mistrust of the population toward the census takers due to the possibility of data misuse. Indeed, it was noted that “[m]assive forced migrations of population, […] as well as the departure of a large number of young and educated persons from the country, due to the unstable economic situation, have contributed to a very unclear picture of demographic reality in Serbia and emphasize the need for data from the Census.”

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17 Please also see the paper on Kosovo in this special issue on this topic.
18 UN Economic Commissioner for Europe, Experiences in Preparation.
20 The possible answers were: FRY and Republic of Serbia; FRY and Republic of Montenegro; FRY, Republic of Serbia and foreign country; FRY, Republic of Montenegro and foreign country; Foreign; Without citizenship. Questions on national affiliation and religion were not obligatory in the 2001 census forms, as per the Constitution of the FRY. In the 2001 "Accessory questionnaire for Yugoslav citizens working abroad with foreign employer or working independently and for the members of the family living with them", the citizenship question was a closed question (citizen of FRY, citizen of FRY and other, without citizenship), while the national affiliation (not obligatory) and the native language were open questions. It appears there was no question on religious affiliation. This questionnaire also involved a question on whether the person was displaced from Kosovo, or a refugee from another part of former Yugoslavia.
21 As the Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia has explained: “Permanent population by the definition from 1991 census includes the population in the country and the population temporarily employed abroad, as well as members of their families who accompanied them there. In line with international recommendations, the 2002 census includes the population in the country, Yugoslav citizens who had been employed abroad for less than a year, as well as foreign citizens who had worked in Yugoslavia for more than a year and their family members.” Ibid.
22 Either IDPs or refugees.
24 UN Economic Commissioner for Europe, Experiences in Preparation.
Difficulties in obtaining clear answers with respect to determining the “place of usual residence” were linked to the specific case of refugees: “The refugees were enumerated as permanent residents of Yugoslavia, and also as a population who migrated, under threat and pressure, from the (presently) foreign countries that were formed on the territory of former Yugoslavia.” Matters were further complicated when it came to the status of refugees from within the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY), as the census would seek to count all refugees from former SFRY republics and internally displaced persons from Kosovo and Metohija, “regardless of whether they have acquired the FRY citizenship or not.” An extraordinary challenge presented itself in the Kosovo/Metohija case, despite the fact that the 2002 Census was not carried out on that territory, which resulted in the FRY authorities reasoning that, “this region is a constituent part of Serbia and Yugoslavia, and the population that fled to other parts of Serbia and Montenegro under pressure and threat, could not be considered as refugees in their own country. However, in order to secure all relevant data on these persons, they were conditionally treated as migrants, and they were obliged to furnish data on place of permanent residence in Kosovo and Metohija, and the time of arrival to present residence place.”

Challenges were also present in the monitoring of economic activity, mostly due to the abrupt change in the economic system of the country (with the entire Yugoslav-run economy still tied to the FRY). The status of (formally) employed, (formally) unemployed and all those in between “[…] necessitated monitoring of the economic situation and employment in a shorter sequence of time. The period of one year, which is typical for the approach of usual activity, cannot express the wide variety of work curricula of many employees in Yugoslavia.”

In addition, people were mostly “[…] reserved about data of agricultural holdings,” while pointing out the distrust of the population to authorities and the possibility of the misuse of data. Despite the fact that the wars in Yugoslavia did not specifically take place on the territory of Serbia proper, “[…] Muslims, Croats, Hungarians and Albanians were subject to intimidation, harassment, discrimination and forced displacement, mainly by paramilitary groups.” Thus, it is imperative to understand the differentiations among the main minorities in Serbia, whose economic and social status “vary greatly”.

Roma, as stated above, are considered to be the most numerous ethnic minority group in Serbia (excluding Kosovo), despite the fact that according to the 2002 census data, they numbered only 108,193 (1.4% of the population), which would make them the third largest minority after Hungarians and Bosniaks/Muslims. Unofficial estimates vary anywhere from 300,000 to 800,000. Counting this population is consistently difficult. The Roma are arguably the most discriminated and impoverished ethnic group in Serbia, with the highest
unemployment and illiteracy rates in the country, at approximately 80 percent of the overall population.\textsuperscript{32} Due to these factors, the challenges that the Roma community faced regarding participation in the census, and response to identity questions, were of a different nature than those of other minorities, who were much more effectively politically organized in particular regions of Serbia. Additionally, the political organization of the Roma is somewhat fragmented as the Roma population is spread across the country, unlike other minorities who are geographically more concentrated.\textsuperscript{33}

According to demographers, Vojvodina is becoming a less multicultural region, with 90 percent of the population identifying as ethnically Serbian by the end of the century and the remainder being split between Hungarians and Roma.\textsuperscript{34} Counted at 293,299 in the 2002 census, or 3.91\% of the population, the numbers of Hungarians living in Serbia who are concentrated in Vojvodina, have slowly yet consistently been dropping over the decades. Individual Hungarians’ participation in the census exercise varied largely by municipality, with more than half of these municipalities showing a less than 10 percent participation of their respective citizens in the census. Traditionally the biggest and most organized ethnic minority in Vojvodina, and by official numbers the most populous minority in all of Serbia, the Hungarians participated in the census-taking exercise on both occasions. The reasons for the decrease are not necessarily political in nature, but are rather more straightforward: the population is aging, and many have left (or are leaving) for either Belgrade or other EU member states.

Vojvodina saw a change in its status in 2002 after shifting levels of autonomy in the preceding decades. Though it had been endowed with more extensive rights of self-rule in the 1974 Yugoslav constitution, its parliamentary influence decreased during Milosevic’s time, when many of its autonomous powers were transferred to Belgrade. The fall of Milosevic in 2000 created a more open atmosphere of reform, resulting in the passing of the omnibus law which gave Vojvodina increased freedom to establish and administer its own institutions, allowing local policymakers to better address the needs of the citizens of this province within the oversight of central governmental bodies.\textsuperscript{35}

The Albanians in Serbia’s south have boycotted the census since 1981, and the refusal to participate in political life in Belgrade spiraled out of control in 2000 when an armed conflict erupted after Serbian troops retreating from Kosovo clashed with local paramilitaries. The initial objective of the Liberation Army of Presevo, Bujanovac and Medvedja (UCPBM), was to join the three municipalities with Kosovo.\textsuperscript{36} With tensions high in the economically poor Presevo valley, the participation of the Albanians in the 2002 census exercise

\textsuperscript{32} OSCE, \textit{Ethnic Minorities in Serbia}, 20.
\textsuperscript{34} Orlovic, \textit{Politicko predstavljanje nacionalnih manjina}.
became an important issue to political leaders in Belgrade as well as in the Serbian South. Ultimately, the OSCE Mission to the FRY brokered a deal with local leaders and agreed to complement the municipal census commission with OSCE representatives through a “confidence-building” measure, in which a decision was made to send in “small teams of international staff members complemented by experienced local staff” as per the appeal of both Serbian authorities and representatives of the Albanian community in Southern Serbia “for the OSCE to facilitate and assist the census process.” At the signing of the deal with central authorities in Belgrade, Riza Halimi, mayor of Presevo and leader of the Party of Democratic Action (PDA), declared that “[a]fter 21 years we have made moves towards having a proper census in this area and we hope displaced people can take part in the forthcoming extraordinary local elections as well.” This also provoked a reaction from the Serbian community living in the Presevo valley, as fears escalated that the census would show their decline in numbers and lead to “[...] an Albanian take-over in local government.” Thus, the census was a strongly politicized exercise, with people taking part in the discussions based solely on their ethnic affiliation.

The Albanian community numbered 61,647, with an absolute majority population in Presevo (89 percent) and Bujanovac (55 percent), and 26 percent in Medvedja. Census forms were in both the Serbian and Albanian languages. The organization of the 2002 census should be seen as a sign of significant progress in Southern Serbia, as it was the first formal cooperation between the central authorities and the local authorities in that region since the Kosovo war. It formed a base for future political dialogue, despite that fact that the Albanian community did not formally establish the National Council of the Albanian National Minority (as other minorities have).

One of the most interesting communities in Serbia are the Bosniaks, who distinguish themselves on an ethnic, religious and linguistic platform. The Bosniak community, predominantly located in Sandzak in Serbia, found itself in a complicated situation during the census rounds with multiple factors to take into account. These include the stigma and flight of refugees from the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina and their self-identification; a heated debate on the name of the language (Bosniak versus Serbo-Croatian, and later Serbian); and confusion on the distinction between Muslims and Bosniaks, and whether this

38 Adams, Serbia: Census Deal Resolves Presevo Crisis.
39 Adams, Serbia: Census Deal Resolves Presevo Crisis.
40 OSCE, Ethnic Minorities in Serbia, 7.
41 Janjic, Dusan. n.d. Challenges of the Peace Process in the South of Serbia, 73.
42 The OSCE and the international community were then subsequently involved in organizing the extra-ordinary local elections in Presevo Valley, which “[...] resulted in Albanians leading local government in Bujanovac and Presevo and the participation of the Albanian ethnic party in the Medvedja municipality since 2002, in OSCE, Ethnic Minorities in Serbia, 7.

With regards to continued cooperation with Belgrade, the presidential elections held later that year were met with very low enthusiasm from the Albanian population. The Party of the Democratic Union of Albanians and the Movement for Democratic Progress called for a boycott. On the other hand, the PDA called on its supporters to participate. OSCE/ODIHR Election Observation Mission Final Report. 2003. Presidential elections and repeat presidential elections 2002. 18 February 2003 (accessed: 25 October 2015), 12.
was even a distinction to be made. Most Bosniak leaders advocated for self-identification as “Bosniak” and urged the population to declare Bosniak as their native language, thus replacing the traditional pattern of Bosniaks identifying themselves as “Muslims” since the 1971 census. This was propagated as a key theme by Rasim Ljajic, leader of Sandzak’s Democratic Party, and Esad Dzudzevic of the Bosniak Democratic Party of Sandzak. Contrary to the reaction of Bosniaks in the Sandzak region, the Muslims in Belgrade and Novi Sad were not so keen on following these calls, and chose instead to continue to self-identify as Muslims.

The 2002 census saw the identification of 136,087 citizens as Bosniaks, and 19,053 as Muslims, with a majority Bosniak population in Novi Pazar, Sjenica, and Tutin, while Serbs were the majority in Priboj, Prijepolje and Nova Varos. The Sandzak region as a whole experienced the departure of many Serbians, but this was largely explained by economic reasons (structural unemployment), an argument put forward by Bosniak parties who have argued that Sandzak’s demographic changes were neither a result of political nor national pressure.

The 2002 census was conducted in a highly volatile political, social and economic time in Serbia, then still a constituent entity of the FRY. Due to significant population shifts following the end of the conflicts in the Balkans, coupled with the October ousting of Milosevic, tensions among minorities were exacerbated. Contestation was practically inevitable, particularly with respect to the south of the country and the Albanian minority. Initially unwilling to take part, the participation of the Albanian minority was largely brokered by the OSCE in what should be seen as a successful initiative. Thus, overall, the conducting of the 2002 census can be considered to be a successful technical exercise despite the initial contestation by the Albanians.

Serbia 2011
The organization of the census in 2011 was particularly significant for the state, both politically and otherwise, as it was the first census undertaken after Kosovo’s declaration of independence in 2008. The question of its exclusion from the 2011 census was contentious, as Belgrade’s refusal to recognize Kosovo as a separate country did not automatically exclude its citizens from being counted. Indeed, census-taking in Kosovo had been problematic for years; ethnic Albanians boycotted the census of 1991, and the conditions in place for the 2002 census precluded it from being counted. Belgrade cited this same reason for excluding Kosovo from the 2011 census, stating that there were “no conditions on the territory of [Kosovo] for the implementation of the census.”

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43 The evolution of the identity of Serbia’s Muslims and/or Bosniaks remains an important issue to be studied in more detail, and future publications will certainly contribute to the literature.
44 Biserko, Human Rights, 339.
45 Biserko, Human Rights, 340.
46 Biserko, Human Rights, 338.
47 Biserko, Human Rights, 338.
The Serbian census was launched on 30 September 2011, and lasted from 1-15 October, with enumeration extended from 16-18 October and until 20 October in the bigger cities. (Initially, the census was to take place in the first two weeks of April, but was postponed due to funding.\footnote{"Pursuant to the Law on the Census of Population, Households and Dwellings ("The Official Gazette of the RS," no. 104/09), the 2011 Census was envisaged for the period from 1–15 April 2011. However, the sufficient funds for its preparation and field implementation were not provided in time in the budget of the Republic of Serbia. After an agreement had been reached between the Government of the Republic of Serbia and the European Commission (the Delegation of the European Union in the Republic of Serbia) on the joint financing of the census activities, the Law on the Amendments to the Law on the Census of Population, Households and Dwellings 2011 was passed ("The Official Gazette of the RS," no. 24/11) and thereby the enumeration was postponed by six months." "Annex to: The 2011 round of Population and Housing censuses in the Western Balkan countries in the context of the political situation and technical preparedness: a comparative analysis with a main focus on ethnicity and citizenship", 25.}) The census was a traditional face-to-face census with interviewers, based on the Census Law adopted in December 2009 and amended in March 2011.\footnote{The budget for the 2011 Census in Serbia was EUR 24.8 million. The Census was financially supported by the European Union with an IPA 2011 grant of about 14 million €, which covered approximately 60% of the total cost.} International funding was secured mostly through the support of the EU.\footnote{Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia. 2012. 2011 Census of Population, Households and Dwellings in the Republic of Serbia: Ethnicity (accessed: 25 October 2015).} The census forms were available in English and in eight languages, reflecting the largest national minorities (Hungarian, Albanian, Roma, Slovakian, Ruthenian, Romanian, Bulgarian, and Macedonian). The results confirmed a population of 7,186,862 (a decline of 4.2% from 2002), with 83 percent of the population declaring itself as Serbian.\footnote{Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia, Population: Religion, Mother Tongue and Ethnicity, 21.} There was a slight decline in the overall population of Vojvodina, from 2,031,992 in 2002 to 1,931,809 in 2011.

The Hungarian population in the north, representing the largest official minority in Serbia by census figures, has taken issue with the Serbian government, slamming heads on topics such as post-Second World War reparations, among others.\footnote{Caloianu, Ioana / Druker, Jeremy / Frye, Barbara and Ky Krauthamer. 2014. Vucic Invites Hungarians Into Serbian Government, Chechen Warlord 'Neutralized. Transitions Online, 9 April 2014 (accessed: 25 October 2015).} The Hungarian minority has consistently been fighting for more minority rights, but on a politically more advanced platform than other minority parties. For instance, Prime Minister Vucic has invited the Alliance of Vojvodina Hungarians (SVM) to join the coalition government in 2014\footnote{Caloianu, Ioana / Druker, Jeremy / Frye, Barbara and Ky Krauthamer. 2014. Vucic Invites Hungarians Into Serbian Government, Chechen Warlord 'Neutralized. Transitions Online, 9 April 2014 (accessed: 25 October 2015).}, which resulted in a functioning partnership between the coalition and the Alliance. The Alliance holds seats in both the National Assembly and the Assembly of Vojvodina (where it is part of the coalition government), thus capitalizing on their political weight to push for their national interests. Active participation in the census is part of this. Such initiatives have helped the Hungarian minority become more integrated into political life, reflected in greater participation in the 2011 census.

As seen in the 2002 census, some minorities in Serbia are prone to greater difficulties and even to discrimination as a result of their preferred self-
identification. These problems are persistent and equally true for the 2011 round, and have been documented extensively by the media, NGOs, and international organizations.\textsuperscript{55} Roma, perhaps the most numerous of these minority groups (when taking into account other numbers estimated to be much larger than reflected in the census), continue to be discriminated against and subjected to human rights abuses and negligence. The census numbers for Serbia’s Roma population are estimated to be two to three times larger than reflected, even when considering the relative success of the 2011 census in increasing the number of registered Roma participants by 40%.\textsuperscript{56} Recorded numbers for Roma in the 2011 census total 147,604; the Council of Europe estimates actual numbers to be around 400,000, making the Roma the second largest minority group within Serbia (after the Hungarians).\textsuperscript{57} The 40% increase in numbers since the 2002 census is of particular significance administratively, as these figures translate directly into assigned quotas for state administration and police employment. Thus, the higher number necessitates increased hiring of Roma in positions in public enterprises, institutions, and the media. However, the Roma as a group continue to have considerably weaker political lobbying power and are often shunted to the side as more “pressing” issues are discussed by elites. Indeed, they represent the majority of “legally invisible” persons in Serbia, encountering immense difficulty in obtaining personal documents. While some programs and initiatives have been instituted to aid the Roma population, mere gesturing on the part of political elites has more often been the norm, as will be discussed.

The plight of the Roma continues to be overlooked, as the problems that this “silent” minority faces are politically over-shadowed by the issues presented by another minority: the ethnic Albanians, largely concentrated in Southern Serbia. As noted above, they constitute the majority in Bujanovac and Presevo, and tensions again came to a head in late 2012 and early 2013. The illegal erection of a monument to fallen KLA fighters, spearheaded by ethnic Albanians in Presevo and located in the town center, led to an uproar in Belgrade. After weeks of vacillation on the part of the Serbian government and numerous requests to have ethnic Albanian authorities move the monument, which fell on deaf ears, authorities in Belgrade eventually removed it. Compounded with issues such as language instruction in schools, as well as tensions left over from the conflict in Kosovo, ethnic Albanians are often viewed with distrust, and Serbia’s political elites have capitalized on this distrust in anti-minority rhetoric that they enshroud with pro-Serb, nationalist terms. The 2011 census only underscored the growing tensions in these areas. Notably, it was not the official census results that worried politicians; it was the lack thereof, as ethnic Albanians largely boycotted the census. Additionally, it was reported that no one collected census materials from purely Albanian villages.\textsuperscript{58} While the number of Albanians in Serbia is estimated to number


\textsuperscript{57} Jovanovic and Haliti, Roma Feel Less Fear.

\textsuperscript{58} Danas, 5 October 2011, cited in Biserko, Human Rights.
around 50,000, only 5,809 were counted in census results. The monument incident in Presevo highlighted the potential for conflict that arises as a result of demographic and ethnic tensions. More significantly, the 2011 census showed how a task that is purely administrative in theory can quickly take on ethnic, religious, and political overtones in practice, leading to division and dissent within a state and within a society. The 2011 census was useful not only in providing data, but also in bringing to light tensions that had been simmering quietly – including, but not limited to – questions of language instruction, alphabet, religious freedom, and others. Belgrade’s resolution of the incident has only temporarily quelled a growingly problematic situation. The EU applauded Serbia’s attempt to be more inclusive of minorities during the census-taking exercise, noting that it “included provisions facilitating the participation of minorities.” However, it likewise notes that implementation of relevant legislation needs to be undertaken before any true progress can be made in the long-term.

Further evidence of posturing by political elites in respect to the minority question heated up in the time before parliamentary elections were held in March 2014. Rasim Ljajic, Minister of Foreign and Domestic Trade and Telecommunications, visited the area around Pirot in Southern Serbia in February 2014. In a speech given there, he told attendees that his party, in coalition with the leading Serbian Progressive Party (SNS), would give more attention to the plight of minorities in Serbia, focusing in particular on Roma citizens and the elderly. Ljajic’s rhetoric is commendable and his position as not only a member of the political elite, but also as a Sandzak Muslim, gives him credibility and leverage in respect to minority rights. However, it remains to be seen what policies will be put in place to effectively address minority issues, particularly in light of the resounding success of SPS in the parliamentary elections held a month later.

Ljajic’s position in respect to the Albanian minority in South Serbia has been more clearly delineated, in keeping with the greater complexity of the situation and the events that had gone on in Presevo. The lack of participation by this minority in the 2011 census only underscored ongoing problems in the area, and the subsequent Presevo incident just brought these tensions to light. On the January 2013 morning of the removal of the controversial monument in Presevo, Minister Ljajic stated that it would be impossible for South Serbia to ever move its borders so that these Albanian-majority towns could become part of Kosovo. More importantly, he cautioned that it would be in ethnic Albanians’ best interests to align themselves with Belgrade instead of with Pristina or Tirana. He also stated that the removal of the illegally erected monument was the only option left to state authorities, as requests to have it moved from the center of town to a more appropriate location went unheeded. Ljajic’s words

were heavy, yet used strategically as Belgrade sought to avoid repeating any potential conflict that could ensue.

The importance of such rhetoric in respect to EU aspirations is high, as Belgrade must tread a thin line between sounding authoritarian and condoning discrimination, versus potentially sacrificing its sovereign rights in deference to incendiary and/or illegal actions. The wariness of the government, especially in regards to its Albanian minority, cannot be overstated, especially given the events of the past ten years, and Belgrade seeks to minimize the potential for any future problems. Belgrade risks angering the EU by dealing with these issues with too firm a hand, and as such, increased prudence and more proactive attempts to deal with minority problems have been encouraged. Carried out nine years after the prior census, the 2011 census was undertaken in a different context, with the EU heavily investing both in this census and in those undertaken throughout the rest of Europe. Indeed, it funded 60 percent of the exercise in Serbia. The change in contestation among ethnic Albanians between the censuses of 2002 and 2011 underscored that the issues present in the 2002 census remain extant and continue to be of concern, especially insofar as they continue to be politicized and leveraged by political elites. Indeed, as it stands now, the contestation of the census in 2011 foreshadowed the continuing issues of contention, as seen not only in 2013, but even today, such as with the Albanian push to set up an association of municipalities in southern Serbia, similar to the association of Serbian municipalities in Kosovo.63

**Conclusion**

Census-taking is considered to be a statistical and technical exercise of considerable importance to every country, as the data it provides is crucial to policy planning in key sectors. Census-taking also requires repetition, because it establishes a continuum of vital socio-economic data. In the context of multiethnic and multi-religious states, however, the census exercise becomes a more delicate and politically challenging question, bringing questions of identity to the forefront of debate in a society. This can be exacerbated in polarizing settings and in countries where conflicts have resulted in a large displacement of persons and where the consequences of the war are still visible, as with the unfinished returns of refugees. It has equally proven to be a contested exercise in countries with sizeable minorities where the “central” power has proven to be close to the country’s majority.

It is in the Western Balkans that many of these challenges are omnipresent. Additionally, the region is under the close auspices of the European Union, which, through the prospect of membership, offers clear incentives and funding to complete tasks deemed problematic. Though uninvolved in the 2002 round of census-taking, the EU heavily invested in the 2011 European-wide census, ensuring that they both comply with European standards. Not only has the European Union provided technical and substantial financial assistance, it also funded 60% percent of the census exercise in Serbia.

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Both rounds of censuses have seen important contestation from minorities in Serbia. Resulting from border changes, dramatic movements of population, and fear of centralization of power in Belgrade, Serbia’s minorities have been in doubt about their future in the country. This had not entirely changed in the nine years between the 2002 and 2011 censuses, and the results reflected the internal dynamic in ethnically mixed areas in Serbia. While on one hand, some national minorities remain well-integrated in Serbia, such as Hungarians or Slovaks in Vojvodina, others feel threatened and abandoned by the central government, such as Albanians and Bosniaks, while a third group, the Roma, are not genuinely reflected in their actual numbers, nor effectively organized on a national level.

The implications of these findings are thus two-fold: they both define the state-of-play of “majority versus minority” dynamics in Serbia and demonstrate that unresolved issues can begin to be addressed through approximation with the EU *acquis communautaire* and further advances in the EU integration process, increasing the likelihood that the objective of EU integration can help facilitate advances in minority rights. Firstly, both census rounds in Serbia illuminated the outstanding issues that persist in the country, particularly related to minority questions. The lessons from these censuses should oblige the Serbian authorities to create a more favorable and inclusive environment for its minorities. In fact there was a clear difference in the general tone and the atmosphere in which the 2002 and the 2011 censuses were conducted: the former took place in a soul-searching phase between the East and the West, while the 2011 census exercise took place during Serbia’s increased orientation towards the European Union and Western values. However, there is still much room for improvement in both enumeration and the use of the results in policy-making.

EU regulation, guidance, and monetary support for the 2011 census helped ensure that the administrative component of census-taking was more in line with the interests of Serbia’s minority citizens, making it easier for them to participate (though whether they chose to actually do so was a different matter). Providing census forms in multiple languages, for example, as per the stipulations of the *acquis communautaire*, helped facilitate a more inclusive census-taking exercise the second time around. This effort was recognized by the EU, as noted, and future efforts to ensure minority integration will likely continue by proxy through Serbia’s continued interest in staying on the path to accession. Thus, the direct aid of the EU, as well as its indirect influence with the “carrot” of accession, have allowed for small steps in minority integration into censuses and will potentially facilitate greater inclusion in the future.

In conclusion, Serbia has proven to be an interesting case study for the analysis of a complex census-taking exercise: heterogeneous populations with varying degrees of polarization; contestation of census conduct; politicization of the exercise itself; and the ubiquitous presence of the European Union in the 2011 round. What will be the biggest challenge for the next round of census in Serbia, most probably taking place in 2021? To create an environment in which all ethnic minorities will participate in the exercise and feel included in the state.
Bibliography:
A Tale of Two Serbias? Census-taking in 2002 and 2011


Slovenia and the Census: From the 20th Century Yugoslav Counts to the Register-based Census of 2011

Research Article

Damir Josipovič
Senior Scientific Associate, Institute for Ethnic Studies in Ljubljana
damir.josipovic@guest.arnes.si

http://www.suedosteuropa.uni-graz.at/cse/en/josipovic
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Slovenia and the Census:  
From the 20. Century Yugoslav Counts to the Register-based Census of 2011  

Damir Josipovič*  

The article critically examines censuses in the Republic of Slovenia. Owing to its Yugoslav past, the censuses after 1945 have been closely scrutinized, and the common Yugoslav census methodology had a strong influence on the 1991 and 2002 censuses. The 1991 enumeration was carried out within the Yugoslav state; however the data processing and result publishing was done under the newly independent Slovenian state. The 2002 census was the last census to be carried out using classic door-to-door enumeration, since the 2011 census was completely register-based. The paper explores censuses in Slovenia since 1991, noting numerous changes and controversies. In 2002, in contrast to 1991, the applied definition of the resident population left out some 35,000 people working temporarily abroad. In addition, the 2002 census witnessed the highest ever number of ethnically non-affiliated respondents. An even bigger controversy was related to the erasure of some 30,000 people from the register of permanent residents for failing to apply for Slovenian citizenship after the break-up of Yugoslavia. The article also briefly reviews the difficulty in addressing the status of the constitutional national minorities and other unrecognized former Yugoslav nations in a situation in which specific data on their number, social and economic structure are no longer collected.  

**Keywords:** census in Slovenia, minorities, ethnicity, discrimination  

Introduction  
This article analyses the development of statistical practices in Slovenia since 1991. In order to understand the post-independence period, the article examines the origins of the census structure and content, including Slovenia’s development of census methodologies over time. The article also deals with the issue of the so-called “ethnic” questions, with special scrutiny of developments in the Yugoslav era in light of the impact of the Yugoslav legacy on contemporary census methodology and results.  

The history of modern censuses in the present day Slovenian territory dates back to the 19th century, when the first general Habsburg census was carried out in 1857. The historical developments of different parts of the region (Austrian, Hungarian, Venetian Italian) led to varied practices in census  

* Damir Josipovič is a social geographer and demographer. He graduated from the University of Ljubljana Faculty of Letters, in the Department of Geography, in 1998, and received an M.A. in 2002, and a Ph.D. in 2005. His research interests are cross-disciplinary and cover a variety of topics within social and human geography. He works as a senior scientific associate at the Institute for Ethnic Studies in Ljubljana.
methodology and execution. With the census of 1869, the former inner Austrian lands (Styria, Carniola, Carinthia, the Littoral, Gorizia, Triest and Istria) developed different methodologies in comparison with the Hungarian parts east of the Mura River. For example, one of the most important differences was the language question. In the Austrian part, the population was asked about its *Umgangsprache* (colloquial language), while in Hungary the methodology included a question about *anyanyelv* (mother tongue). Since the creation of the Yugoslav state after World War I, the census methodologies and the questions posed were intrinsically related to the political characteristics of a multi-ethnic state. Nevertheless, the core methodology was transferred over from the Austrian and Hungarian practices.

Censuses in the independent Republic of Slovenia cannot be examined without knowing its Yugoslav context. Constitutionally, the former Yugoslavia was a socialist federation consisting of six republics with one of them (Serbia) including further sub-units (the two socialist autonomous provinces, Vojvodina and Kosovo-Metohija). Slovenia was the westernmost of the six republics, bordering the rest of the former federation only through Croatia. Though relatively small in size (20,273 km² or less than a twelfth of Yugoslavia’s 256,000 km²), Slovenia occupied a geopolitically and strategically important area (Table 1). It was the only Yugoslav republic to border a capitalist country (232 km with Italy and 318 km with Austria). Geographically situated between the Adriatic Sea and the Pannonian basin it also shared a north-eastern boundary with Hungary (102 km).

The territorial boundaries of Slovenia changed a few times during the period after World War II, and these changes affected the census results, making comparisons more difficult. In 1945, many westward lying areas inhabited by a Slovene-speaking population were ceded from Italy to Yugoslavia and Slovenia respectively. After an initial post-war crisis - the short-term formation of the Free Territory of Trieste (1947–1954) - the Slovenian territory was increased from the pre-war 15,809 km² by almost a third, until 1956 when it more or less gained its present-day size. The immediate consequences of the new delimitation raised many questions, including population settlement throughout the country, but especially in the northeast (Prekmurje i.e. Trans-Mura region) and southwest (Istria, the Littoral).

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2 While Vojvodina held the status of an autonomous province (*autonomna pokrajina*) from the beginning, Kosovo first had the status of a special district (*kosovsko-metohijska oblast*) within Serbia.

3 The contemporary boundary dispute between Slovenia and Croatia is to be solved by an ad hoc Arbitration Tribunal in the Hague. It is expected that the verdict will be reached in 2015. It must be noted that except for a Macedonian-Serbian agreement on their mutual boundary, all other former internal Yugoslav boundaries remain subject to dispute.
Table 1: Territorial coverage, division, and changes of the former Yugoslavia from 1981 to 2002

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<td>21.506</td>
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</tr>
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</tr>
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<tr>
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<td>20.273³</td>
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Historical review - censuses in the former Yugoslavia

Yugoslav censuses have been held since the formation of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, with the first carried out on 31 January 1921. Unfortunately, the population was not enumerated completely due to the partial occupation of Dalmatia by Italian armed forces after the break-up of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The new Kingdom changed its name to Yugoslavia through the constitution of King Alexander I in 1929. The first census under the new name was carried out on 31 March 1931.

The main characteristic of both censuses was the absence of a specific question on ethnicity; however, it included a question on religion. The statistical methodology of the 1921 census used the respondents’ mother tongue as a basis or proxy for ethnic affiliation. Based on the assumption of the common Serbo-Croatian language, the Serbo-Croatian ethnicity was therefore generalized. Since the Slovene language was recognized as a distinct category, it was possible to assume the linguistic difference amongst the Catholic population (e.g., Slovenian or Serbo-Croatian speaking Catholics). However, while it was possible to determine religious differences among the Serbo-Croatian speakers (Orthodox, Catholic, Muslim, Evangelical, etc.), it was not possible to distinguish ethnic differences among the Yugoslav Orthodox population since the Macedonian language was not officially recognized. Another important shortcoming of the census methodology was the incomparability of the administrative division of the territories included in the new state due to their different historical backgrounds (Habsburg versus Ottoman legacies).

Many of these shortcomings were present in the next census as well. The census of 31 March 1931 included both a question on religion and a question on mother tongue, but the census results (published after the war in 1945) reflected only the Yugoslav language by aggregating the Slovenian, Croatian and Serbian responses. In fact, cross-tabulations on mother-tongue and religion were prepared in 1940 but remained unreleased for political reasons and due to

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⁴ The cadastral measurement accounts for only 20.253.12 km²
³ The new planimetric cadastral measurement used in 2002 census accounts for 20.273.00 km²
the outbreak of World War II. This major change was implemented by the September constitution of 1931 (oktroirani ustav). It fostered the use of “Yugoslavhood” (jugoslovenstvo) as a unifying concept for all the South Slavic peoples of Yugoslavia except for Bulgarians. Other linguistic census categories remained intact (German, Hungarian, Rumanian, Arnaut (Albanian), Greek etc.). The published census data in 1938 included only the religious affiliation of individuals, and no data on ethnicity. It is again difficult to compare data, as many political and administrative changes occurred in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia in the 1930s resulting in the reorganization of the banovina system.

Due to the outbreak of war on 6 April, the 1941 census was not carried out completely. The war further prevented the publication of combined religious-linguistic tables based on data from the 1931 census. The few surviving originals were taken to Vienna by the occupying Nazi-German army.\(^6\)

The successor of the Kingdom, the Democratic Federal Yugoslavia was proclaimed a socialist republic on 29 November 1945, based on the AVNOJ (Anti-fascist Council of the National Liberation of Yugoslavia) congress held in Jajce (in Bosnia) on 29 November 1943 shortly after the Italian capitulation on 8 September 1943. During its post-war existence, Yugoslavia adopted four constitutions and held six censuses. Following the Declaration of Independence, the first constitution was proclaimed on 31 January 1946. The first thorough population census was carried out only in 1948, three years after the war, partly due to the difficult installation of the new state, the massive physical destruction, and the unfulfilled elements of peace treaties, but also in order to conceal huge demographic losses (about one million people, or 8% of the population).\(^7\) The Decree on the Short Population Census in the Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia (published in The Official Gazette Nr. 22 on 10 March 1947) provided the legal basis for its implementation. Due to the severe political crisis in the country it was not until March 1948 that the census was finally conducted. For the first time the question of ethnicity (called narodnost or nationality) was posed to the population.\(^8\) The methodological peculiarity of this census was the institutionalized admittance that one’s “national affiliation” was of a “subjective nature” in contrast to the pre-war “objective” indicator based on the mother tongue.\(^9\)

The modernization of the census methodology was in line with Soviet views on the matter at the time. However, the “Cominform” crisis started that same year, and led the Yugoslav leadership away from its Moscovian tutorship. As a result, Yugoslavia introduced a socialist system with the focus on self-governance, so-called communal ownership (collective instead of state ownership), and abolished the presidium (predsedništvo) as a consulting body.

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\(^7\) On the war losses see Kočović for the Serbian perspective and Žerjavić for the Croatian perspective. In the aftermath of WWII the official number was considerably higher at about 1.7 million casualties. This number was seriously questioned in the 1980s.

\(^8\) For the Muslim population, three options were available: Serb – Muslim; Croat – Muslim; or unaffiliated – Muslim.

\(^9\) Josipović, *Slovenci na Balkanu*. 

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of the president. The new constitutional law was adopted on 13 January 1953. The same year a new thorough census was carried out to record the outcome of the first petletka – the five-year economic plan 1946–1951 (interrupted by the conflict between the Warsaw Pact states and Yugoslavia). The legal base was represented in the Act on the Population Census on the Territory of the Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia, 31 March 1953 (published in the Official Gazette, Nr. 60 in 1952). The census methodology generally remained the same, though many census questions and additional data elaborations were added.

It is important to stress the somewhat special position of Slovenia within Yugoslavia. At that time the question on the Trieste territory had not yet been resolved, and the Koper district in Zone B, administered by the Yugoslav military, was not under Slovenian administration. Despite the second Trieste crisis, the on-going dispute with the Soviet Union and the embargo imposed from the COMECON countries to Yugoslavia, the country continued with the census exercise. Furthermore, it introduced a question on religious affiliation, not just to assess the degree of “atheization” in the secular country, but also to persuade its western allies of its neutral political status. According to Edvard Kardelj, seeking neutral status was the only way to ensure the socialist state’s existence since the break from the USSR. However, this did little to persuade western partners (especially the USA and UK), since Yugoslavia was constitutionally an atheist country, and it was not until 1991 when a question on religious affiliation was posed again – this time on the eve of the dissolution of the federation.

The census of 1953 was very important for Slovenia from the perspective of territorial coverage. Among sixteen volumes of published results, book XV (issued in 1960) covered for the first time the whole area of Slovenia, Croatia, and consequently the whole of Yugoslavia (cf. Table 1). In 1954 the former Zone B of the Free Territory of Trieste was divided between Slovenia and Croatia, following another change in Istria in 1956, where parts of three cadastral municipalities formerly under the short-term Croatian administration were annexed to Slovenia.

The 1961 census was the first to ensure the same methodology was used throughout the country. It was carried out according to the Act on the Population Census in 1961 (published in the Official Gazette Nr. 53 in 1960), around the time of the adoption of the third Yugoslav Constitution (7 April 1963). In addition to the change of the name to the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY), the constitution gave a further degree of self-governance to its republics, as well as to the autonomous provinces in Serbia. The publication of the results had a certain orientation towards migration trends, and in support of such analysis, special demographic macro-regions (demografski rajoni) were formed within the republics and provinces. The

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10 The census question asked about one’s “personal relation towards religion.” The question was removed from the questionnaire for the next three censuses (1961, 1971, and 1981).
census results confirmed the tangible effects of industrialization and urbanization, but they also revealed the first signs of depopulation in the countryside and pronounced differences in fertility rates. Slovenia was seen to be transforming into an immigration destination, as the urban centres received many people from other republics, predominantly Croatia.

The 1960s also marked a period of extensive guest-worker emigration, predominantly to Germany and Austria. This emigration mostly affected the eastern and north-eastern parts of Slovenia, though workers streamed north from throughout the SFRY. This massive “temporary work” emigration led the federal statistical office to introduce changes in the census methodology. To avoid enumerating a considerable population outflow (estimated at some 5% at the time), the census of 1971 included a category for the absent “guest workers” (zdomci) and their family members on the basis of one’s permanent residence, which remained in Slovenia or elsewhere in Yugoslavia.

The 1971 census was carried out in accordance with the Act on the Census of Population and Dwellings in 1971 (published in the Official Gazette Nr. 32 in 1970), and it recorded a number of evolving changes. The membership of Slovenia in the Yugoslav federation had a massive impact on its overall development. Especially after the second period of industrialization in the 1960s, Slovenia became the most developed part of Yugoslavia, with strong immigration from other republics. The planned immigration was directed to strategically important infrastructure sites including the military, hospitals, railways, customs, police, etc.; or towards the developed urban centres, through a policy of so-called pseudo-voluntary migration.13

Due to its geographical position, proximity and open border to the west, and small population, Slovenia was a convenient subject for a series of more or less successful experiments related to counting the population. For example, it was the first republic to establish an electronic population register in the 1970s based on the Introduction of the Central Register of Permanent Population Act (published in the Official Gazette Nr. 46 in 1970). The register’s database was partially used in the 1971 census, while the census data were in turn used to correct the initial inputs into the Register’s database. The electronic processing of the collected data was another important achievement of the 1971 census, which became a standard for future censuses. As far as the results themselves are concerned, the census revealed high temporary emigration from Slovenia to the west (60,000 people or about 7% of the economically active population in Slovenia).

The censuses of 1981 and 1991 were in line with the foundations laid out in the 1971 methodology (in terms of the principle of permanent population), and considered together with the changes in the 1974 constitution, occurred against a backdrop of continued decentralization which, with the benefit of hindsight, paved the way to the independence of various Yugoslav republics and the

dissolution of the Yugoslav federation. Decentralization stretched to census administration as well. These developments allowed for the autonomous execution of the 1981 census by the Slovenian Statistical Office based on a separate republic Act on the Census of Population, Households and Dwellings in the Socialist Republic of Slovenia in 1981 (Published both in the federal (Nr. 41) and in the Official Gazette of the Socialist Republic of Slovenia (Nr. 25) in 1980). However, this was not the case in other republics, which, with the partial exception of Croatia remained dependent on the central statistical office in Belgrade. The development of a complete electronic database for the 1981 census allowed for broader access to data (including by the research community), especially after 1991.

The 1981 census marked the end of a peak period in immigration to Slovenia. However, the results somewhat blurred the picture since some temporary emigrants (zdomci) eventually turned into permanent emigrants (the 1981 census showed more than 70,000 working legally abroad, while only around 26,000 persons who had been temporarily abroad had returned). Taking into account the number of temporary emigrants, the share of self-identified Slovenes dropped under 90% for the first time after World War II. Moreover, perhaps owing to Tito’s death in 1980, the number of “Yugoslavs” soared from less than 7,000 in 1971 to over 26,000, mirroring ideological trends in other republics (“Tito after Tito”; po Titu Tito/iza Tita Tito). Another important census result was an unexpectedly high number of people temporarily present in Slovenia (82,000 or 4% of the population), i.e. present but without permanent residence.

The 1991 census was carried out at the end of the Yugoslav era. Except for the basic publication of the first results published by the federal statistical authority, all other results were published only later by the Slovenian Statistical Office as the region descended into war. The legal basis was very complex since the Act on the Census of Population, Households, Dwellings and Agricultural Holdings in 1991 (published in the Official Gazette Nr. 3 in 1990) was amended and published the same year (Official Gazette Nr. 72). The federal Act was supplemented by the republic Act published in the Official Gazette of the Socialist Republic of Slovenia Nr. 8 just before the adoption of amendments to the Slovenian Constitution which ultimately allowed for independence. It is fair to say that the last Yugoslav census of 1991 was simultaneously the first independent Slovenian census, at least as far as the data analyses and the scope of publication are concerned.

Post-1991 censuses: The census of 2002
After the simultaneous declaration of independence of Slovenia and Croatia and the outbreak of the Yugoslav wars, Slovenian statistical policy slowly started to divert from the Yugoslav statistical practices and doctrines. However, it was not until the 2011 census when Slovenia officially made a final break with the previous methodology. The census of 2002 was still very much like the census of 1991; only increased automation made it much quicker to collect, analyse, and publish the data.

The legal provisions and protocol in 2002 were much more complicated compared to previous censuses. First of all, in comparison with the preceding census of 1991, agricultural households were enumerated separately, a process that began already in 2000. Second, the definition of the Slovenian population changed in 1995, and so did the counting procedure. Namely, all persons temporarily residing in Slovenia were to be included in the population, while persons away for more than one year, regardless of possession of permanent residence in Slovenia, were not counted. Third, based on the Personal Data Protection Act from 1999 (published in The Official Gazette Nr. 59), the Census Act from 2000 was heavily disputed as was the financing for its execution. Fourth and foremost, due to political and public constraints, the census was carried out a year later than anticipated.

The main problem in 2002 was the debate on whether to ask people highly personal, subjective questions on their religious belief and ethnic/national affiliation. Tensions arose between the left and the right wing parties in the national parliament. On the one hand, the right wing politicians maintained it was of essential importance to know the situation of the ethnic Slovenes and the status of the dominant religious group (Catholics) in order to adopt some protective legal measures if it happened to be that the share of either Slovenes or Catholics might decrease. On the other hand, the left wing parties focused their argument on human rights standards and opposed any intrusion through the inquiries related to a respondent’s beliefs, or of one’s ethnic persuasion. Among the proponents for posing questions on religious belief and ethnic affiliation were representatives of different churches and mosques (Catholic, Protestant, Orthodox, and Muslim) as well as the members of ethnic minorities, either very small minorities protected by the constitution (Italians, Hungarians, and Roma, each with less than 10,000 declared), or the larger minorities (Croats, Serbs, and Bosniaks, each about 50,000 strong). The politicisation of the “personal questions” was so harsh that the parliament even failed to reserve finances in the national budget for the execution of the census in 2001, as there was no agreement.

After additional public debate, a compromise was achieved and the Act on the Census of Population, Households and Dwellings in the Republic of Slovenia in 2001 (published in the Official Gazette Nr. 66 in 2000) was amended in 2001 (published in the Official Gazette Nr. 26). The changes provided for non-obligatory questions on religious belief and ethnic/national affiliation. A special category was included for persons not wanting to answer. The question would be posed to all respondents aged 15 and above. In case of an absence at the time of the census-taking, people could send their statements on both questions separately on a special form. This procedure reflected the sensitive nature of these questions, as for other census questions, a family or a household member could supply answers for those absent.

Due to these changes, the National Statistics Act from 1995 (OG 45) was amended in 2001 (OG 9) in order to reflect the new requirements. In the preparation of the 2002 census the Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia (SURS) acknowledged taking into account pertinent international recommendations. A UN Resolution on censuses and statistics (adopted on 19
July 1995 at the 44th plenary) aimed at fulfilling the expectations for censuses in the period 1995–2004, and to ensure advanced planning and timely dissemination of census results to all users. Another important programme affecting the data release, availability of results and publication was the 2000 World Population and Housing Census Programme adopted by the UN Economic and Social Council. According to its provisions, the state should take care of data dissemination, reporting to the UN and involving appropriate intergovernmental and other organizations to assist in studies on population development, the environment and socio-economic development. Slovenia also followed the European rules on statistics since it was progressing through the accession process.

The enumeration period began on 31 March 2002 at midnight. The data collection procedure was divided into three separate sub-censuses, for population, households, and for dwellings. To reduce costs, the Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia pre-prepared forms within the questionnaires with data already gathered from various administrative and statistical sources. The pre-census database was prepared using data from the Central Population Register, the Permanent Population Register, the Register of Spatial Units, the Statistical Register of Employment, the Business Register of Slovenia, the Unemployment Register of the Employment Service of Slovenia, the Pension and Disability Insurance Database, the statistical survey data on students and graduates, and the 1991 Census data. Thus the census form was pre-filled and consequently much shorter. The pre-filled content included: place of birth, last migration, citizenship, marital status, field of education, employment status, occupation, job, usual working hours, and place of work. Along with these data sets, some data was partially used depending on prior availability: gender, the address of residence one year before the census, first residence after birth, educational attainment and place of education. The pre-filling process did not raise questions of data privacy since the data related mostly to date and place of birth, year of migration to present locality etc.; furthermore, the enumerators were bound to secrecy. Every enumerator had a maximum of 100 people to count.

The field work consisted of two possible approaches. The possibility of self-enumeration foresaw that answers to most questions on the P-2 census questionnaire for dwellings and the P-3 census questionnaire for persons were answered by the respondents themselves (for the reference persons of the household and for other household members). The person enumerating a given household would have to establish the number of its members and upon their request deliver a pre-filled census form. In practice this was not very common. Instead, a classical enumeration technique was predominantly used. In the latter case, census questionnaires would be filled in by specially trained enumerators on the basis of interviews with respondents or by an adult member of the household responding for absent household members and children under 15.\footnote{Source: Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia.}

The Population Census of 2002 was unique in many ways. Apart from the changed population definition, it also contained the last data collected on
ethnic and religious structure (though as noted above, these questions were not obligatory). It was also the first census to reveal a decrease in the total population – 1,965,886 in 1991 as opposed to 1,964,036 in 2002, which rendered public opinion very critical to the census results as a whole. According to its methodology, the census enumerated only the resident population (the Slovenian citizens and the foreign citizens with a permanent residence in Slovenia at the time of the census), while this was not the case in the former census. The Slovenian Statistical Office (SURS) restructured the results of the 1991 census to make it comparable to those of 2002. In doing so it subtracted all temporary migrants abroad (52,000) from the number of the total population. Thus it rendered a new total of 1,913,355 inhabitants, thus the total number of the population reportedly increased by 50,681 persons or +2.6% between 1991 and 2002. Despite the negative natural increase (~3, 500 persons during this period) this increase may be attributed to immigration (28,000 persons since 1991) and the legalisation of residence of former Yugoslav citizens who already lived in Slovenia at the time of the 1991 census.16

Thorough analyses, on the contrary, showed that the inter-census period produced an increase of +14,000 citizens permanently living in Slovenia. In the meantime, the natural increase was reduced by only 2,000 persons, and net immigration amounted to only 15,000 persons.17 Apart from 1,924,000 citizens, the census enumerated about 40,000 permanent residents (without citizenship), but did not enumerate those persons with a temporary residence permit regardless of the length or nature of their stay (e.g. continuing extensions). Thus the time-series was broken and the census data cannot be simply compared with previous censuses.

Another huge obstacle in data analyses was the question of the “erased” population. Slovenia erased some 30,000 persons from its population register as a reaction to (some would say punishment for) not applying for Slovenian citizenship when Yugoslavia began to fall apart.18 The majority of the “erased” was born in one of the former Yugoslav republics and were ethnically mostly Serbs and Muslims, but included Slovenes, Croats, and others as well. Due to its clear anti-Yugoslav perspective (the orchestrated but hidden procedure was applied to no other foreign citizens at that time living in Slovenia) this eradication has been referred to by some as an “e-genocide”.19 While drawing criticism for being overly dramatic and therefore devaluing the actual violent impact of the wars in the region, some said that the practical consequence of such a demographic “genocidal process” was the subordination of certain groups, through extermination, removal or suppression.20 However, while the

appropriate terminology is debatable, the process had undeniable demographic consequences. A careful reading of the above-noted information on the inter-census population increase shows that the National Statistical Office admitted the existence of more than 26,000 of the previously erased people, whose existence has finally been recognised and legalised (though the process is not yet finished).

Another change was related to data retrieval and subsequent analyses. The introduction of confidentiality (as part of the outcome of the aforementioned public debate) was regulated by the amended Act on the 2002 census (OG 26 in 2001). Data confidentiality was operationalized through the substitution of the small aggregate numbers or the individual data (based on the aggregate data for the settlement, category, or other statistical grouping) with the letter “z” (zaupno or confidential). The total numbers under 4, say, per village was not shown due to a possibility of cross calculation. When dealing with the ethnic and religious data, the minimum aggregate number was 10, for example, per municipality. In previous censuses, all data were published to the level of a settlement (e.g. village).21

The 2011 census
The population census of 2011 was the first entirely register-based census in Slovenia. There was no door-to-door enumeration. It was also Slovenia’s first census as a member of the EU. Its legal basis was covered with the Programme of the statistical research and the Act of the National Statistics from 2001. The decision on a register-based census was adopted in 2004 with the final report of the 2002 census. The problems in carrying out a classical census and the questionnaire content, as well as substantial financial savings, were among the main reasons for this decision. Methodologically the Statistical Office followed the EU regulations on censuses from 2008, as well as relevant regulations from 2009 and 2010. By 2011 Slovenia was one of nine countries in Europe to introduce this form of census-taking.22 The register-based census is basically not a census but rather a critical moment based break-down of the population situation in Slovenia according to the collected data of various registers.

The critical date was 1 January 2011, and the data sources for this aggregative process were broad. It included official statistical databases produced or administered by the Statistical Office (Statistics of births, migration, employment, student enrolment in tertiary education, recipients of scholarships, and the 2002 census database); Administrative registers managed by the Ministry of the Interior, including the Central Population Register and the Household Register; data from the Surveying and Mapping Authority of the Republic of Slovenia including the Real Estate Register, the Register of Spatial Units; and the Business Register of Slovenia maintained by the Agency for Public Legal Records and Related Services. There are several

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21 The marginal aggregate number of any statistical appearance was 4. Numbers 1, 2, and 3 were deemed “unsafe” and replaced by “z” values. However, the marginal number with ethnic statistics was 10 and all aggregate numbers below 10 were replaced by “z”. This procedure was applied for the first time in the history of modern censuses in Slovenia.

22 Beside Slovenia, Denmark, Finland, the Netherlands, Iceland, Belgium, Sweden, Norway, and Austria use this approach.
other databases and registers supervised or covered by other public offices: recipients of social transfers by the Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs, income tax by the Tax Administration of the Republic of Slovenia, unemployed persons by the Employment Service of Slovenia, national examination and graduates by the National Examination Center, recipients of pensions by the Pension and Disability Insurance Institute, and insured persons by the Health Insurance Institute of Slovenia.

This practice helps to cut costs, enhances data analyses and publication, and reduces the potential for harassment or a person’s exposure to the intrusion of face-to-face inquiry. However, it also assumes a trustworthy system of gathering and entering data and transferring it to higher level data bundles, as well as effective quality control mechanisms. This method of collecting census data can lead to problems of presupposed data, untrue entries, as well as questions regarding the validity of the data (such as actual occupation of dwellings, fictitious population, etc.) some of which can only be supplied through direct interviews with the target population.

The census data covered a wide variety of features from the field of population, household and families, and dwellings.23 It did not cover questions on ethnicity, religions, and language, since the various registers do not systematically collect this type of data. The census results were relatively quickly available and obtainable online in 2011. It was the first census to have published all the results exclusively electronically with no paper publication.

**Conclusion – controversies and challenges**

Slovenia’s census history reflects its changed position and status throughout the past century, while its most recent census reflects its status as a member of the EU. However, as Slovenia moves forward with statistical data collection and analyses, a number of issues must be considered and improved if public policy is to be grounded in solid data. Three main groups of challenges and issues are noted below.

The views of ethnic and religious communities about ethnicity and religion statistics

The last register-based census of 2011 was carried out rather quietly, and due to its register nature was rather detached from the public. Considering the

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23 Split into three major parts (Population, Household and Families, and Dwellings), the census covered exclusively the data already gathered by various registers and databases: Demographic characteristics (gender, age, legal marital status, de facto marital status, live born children, citizenship, usual residence); Migration (place of birth, ever resided abroad, year of arrival to Slovenia, previous usual residence, year of last migration, migration status of parents, immigrant background); Activity (activity status, status in employment, occupation, industry, size-class, type of sector, place of work); Educational attainment; Households (relation to the reference person, type of household, size of household, household status, tenure status of household, generational composition); Families (type of family, size of family, family status, position in family); Dwellings and equipment (type of living quarters, location of living quarters, housing arrangements, type of ownership, useful floor space, number of rooms, kitchen, electricity supply, piped gas, water supply system, toilet facilities, bathing facilities, sewage disposal, type of heating, type of building, number of floors, lift, construction materials, period of construction, occupancy status, number of occupants, number of households, density standard, seasonal and secondary use).
financial position of the central government, the economic crisis and austerity measures (regular door-to-door enumeration would have cost around 14 million Euros), the decision to implement a register-based census was politically well accepted. Owing to European regulations and the non-obligatory status of questions on ethnicity and religion, the census was performed without much publicity. However, this was not so well accepted among the general public or within religious and ethnic communities, as many wanted to have a classical personal enumeration in order to gain some insight into recent changes and trends in the ethnic and religious structure.

One possibility to overcome this issue was to include the ethnicity data where possible. While many registers do not systematically include data on ethnicity, some are available; the system does collect data on ethnicity including statistics on births, conjugal status, deaths, migration etc. These data became highly volatile in recent years, since the ethnic affiliation of mothers giving birth was not noted in 70% of cases. According to official sources, about one fifth of the population has a registered ethnicity in some register. Use of such data would be problematic since ethnic affiliations can be subject to change. Such an approach would also not be consistent.

The constitutionally protected privileged Italian and Hungarian minorities have very little insight into the quantitative and demographic development of their communities. Traditionally inhabiting the Littoral (Italians) and Prekmurje (Hungarians) in the east, over time, they lost a substantial portion of their former population. According to the last available data from 2002, there are about 2,300 Italians (3,800 with Italian mother tongue), and 6,200 Hungarians (7,700 with Hungarian mother tongue). In spite of these low numbers, Hungarians and Italians enjoy guaranteed representation in the National Parliament (one member per each minority).

In addition, the Roma population is also constitutionally protected, though to a limited degree. The first appearance of Roma as a category recognized in the Slovenian legal system was in the constitution of 1991, when they were noted as a protected minority at the same time as the new constitution introduced the term “autochthonous” for Hungarians and Italians. The constitution anticipated a special act on Roma, which was adopted in 2007. The 2002 census was thus a kind of a stimulant for relevant legislation since the census enumerated as twice as many Roma as in 1991, even though the question was non-obligatory, and even though the census data were not used to determine the areas of Romani settlements. In 2002 there were 3,200 Roma (3,800 with...
Romani mother tongue). In contrast with the legal position of Hungarians and Italians (where bilingual settlements were recognized for legal protection), Roma were allowed a municipal counsellor in every municipality (and not settlement or locality), where Roma traditionally live, again regardless of census data. Roma do not have the right to a Parliament member.

In contrast to ethnicity, religious belief is not included in any register-based data collection. It can thus only be indirectly inferred from the data on religious communities. For this reason, many interest groups, i.e. ethnic minorities (especially the Hungarians and Italians, but also the minorities from the former Yugoslavia) and religious communities (Catholic, Protestant, Orthodox, and Islamic) questioned the usefulness of a register census. They expected other ways of assessing the ethnic and religious structure, but the state failed to provide such alternative solutions.

The question of the Erased population of 1992 and the status of ex-Yugoslav minorities

Many ethnicity-based cultural societies, representing mostly the members of former Yugoslav constitutive nations (Bosniaks, Croats, Serbs, Macedonians, Montenegrins) and Albanians (from Kosovo, Macedonia and Montenegro), openly laid claims for constitutional or legal recognition. According to EXYUMAK (The coordination of minorities from the former Yugoslavia in Slovenia), there are more than 200,000 members of the former Yugoslav nations deprived of collective legal protection in Slovenia.

As noted, the so-called Erased population, was and remains controversial. The act of erasure was deemed illegal by the Constitutional Court through several verdicts. Some suggest that the state ought to repair the injustices and return to the Erased the status of permanent residents, notwithstanding the potential application for Slovenian citizenship. Others maintain that the Erased did not want Slovenian citizenship in the first place, and are thus entitled to neither residency nor citizenship. The problem is still not completely resolved. Representatives of civil society organizations working on behalf of the Erased pleaded for a classical census to determine the real extent of the affected population by the erasure.

This problem is in a way connected to the broader issue of xenophobia and public discourse on the idea that the population of ethnic Slovenes is decreasing and at risk of being extinguished. Even though thorough data analysis showed that the share of Slovenes did not decrease in the period 1991–2002, this did not stop public opinion from being somewhat influenced and informed by experts or by parties’ spokespersons claiming the opposite.
main reason for varied interpretations of the 2002 census results, however, is methodological in nature. The number of the ethnically undeclared in the population rose immensely (from 42,000 in 1991 to 175,000 in 2002). Due to complicated census methodology, it is hard to penetrate the public sphere with more argumentative discussion. Domestic politicians are often inclined to misuse results related to ethnic affiliation, and a lower share of the ethnic Slovene majority could possibly increase ethnic tensions and xenophobia in the country.

Hiring quotas and public policy
Another issue was raised by questioning the suitability of the census data to arrange quotas for the state financing of religious personnel (priests, military curates etc.). The only way to roughly assess the share of Catholics was to employ the 2002 census data. A very high proportion of non-responses (persons who did not wish to answer the question on religious belief) led to diminished numbers of the religiously declared population. According to the 57% share in the 2002 census, the Catholic Church was allocated co-financing for 800 priests (health insurance and pension funds). The Catholic Church, however, claims the share of worshippers is around 80%.

In the Slovenian education system there is no general provision on the use of census data to determine quotas on teachers or students. Nevertheless, in the Italian and Hungarian minority areas, there are other legal provisions that ensure the principles of rotation, shares of the minority speakers etc. Among these the question of language use in official procedures is of paramount importance for both minorities. Their rights are based on a territorial principle (areas with legally recognized settlements or parts of settlements). But the lack of administration workers' linguistic proficiency in minority languages has led to a deteriorated position for minority members at the local level since they sometimes cannot efficiently communicate with the officials. Again, the lack of up to date information on these populations make relevant public policy difficult to implement.

The results of the 2011 census are mixed. On the one hand, as an EU member state Slovenia's use of the register-based method was useful in keeping costs down, ensuring rapid publication of results, and gathering the information which was felt to be most needed in the making of public policy. They were able to do this without introducing “sensitive” questions into the discussion that could have distracted from the other data collection goals. On the other hand, the absence of sensitive identity-related information has been criticized by those who believe such information is needed, either for the simple sake of knowledge or to determine certain allocations of public funding or representation. Moving forward, it will be interesting to see how Slovenia strives to strike a balance on this complicated and often controversial issue.

Since independence, the censuses in Slovenia have reflected heavy politicization. Soon after the 1991 census, the issue of the Erased population appeared. Though enumerated within the permanent population of Slovenia in 1991, the treatment of the Erased represented the first massive casualty of anti-Yugoslav and xenophobic sentiment. Only months after the erasure, the census results revealed a surprisingly low number of non-Slovenian, former
Yugoslav-descent respondents, thus demonstrating the practical impact of the policy regarding the Erased. The 2002 census results confirmed this. The Roma were one of the few minority groups who quantitatively benefitted from the constitutional recognition of 1991 and the Roma Community Act in 2007. In addition, it is interesting that these censuses revealed a generally lower share of all ethnic self-determination alternatives, as the non-response option was increasingly used.

In the two decades since independence, Slovenia has gradually moved from the Yugoslav-oriented census policy to a more Scandinavian approach. Previously the questions on ethnicity, language, and religion were censuses’ *conditio sine qua non* – the central issue and by far the most eagerly awaited result. Such expectations endured well after 2002. Only the last census of 2011 breaks with the past and ends this era, though the Yugoslav legacy critically affected the formation of the census methodology and consequently its results in Slovenia. This historic break was informed more by financial shortcomings and considerations than by realistic political and policy preferences. However, the issue – and challenge - of effectively ensuring rights and representation continues.

**Bibliography**


Conclusion: The Politics of Numbers – Censuses in the Post-Yugoslav States

Soeren Keil
Reader, Canterbury Christ Church University
soeren.keil@canterbury.ac.uk

http://www.suedosteuropa.uni-graz.at/cse/en/keil
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Conclusion: The Politics of Numbers – Censuses in the Post-Yugoslav States

Soeren Keil

This conclusion poses a number of questions related to policy issues and the censuses in the post-Yugoslav states. It is argued that censuses are always more than just a technical counting exercise. Census discussions in Western Europe tend to focus on regional funding, infrastructure support and long-term policy planning, and can be as contested and heated as questions over identity, religion and mother tongue in the post-Yugoslav states. However, identity-related questions in an area in which identity is still in flux and in which fundamental demographic changes have taken place recently, prevent any focus on more policy-oriented discussions. In their EU integration process, all of the post-Yugoslav countries will have to concentrate on issues such as economic development, sustainable infrastructure planning, budgeting within the strict rules of the most recent EU agreements and hence policy discussions should be at the forefront of the debates about the results of the censuses. Instead, discussions over who is counted and how remain of key importance in all countries (even those that have joined the EU), and demonstrate unconsolidated nation-building projects.

Keywords: Census taking, post-Yugoslav states, EU enlargement, Ethnicity, nation-building

Introduction

As the papers in this special issue have demonstrated, censuses have been highly contested in the post-Yugoslav states. From the question of the “erased” persons in Slovenia to problems related to the inclusion of minorities such as the Roma, and especially issues related to inter-ethnic relations in very diverse societies – censuses remain divisive, create conflict and contribute to new tensions.¹

Yet, there is little disagreement that censuses also matter in practical terms. Nobody, as Pieter Everaers points out, questions the usefulness of a census as a tool to inform policy-makers about future policy planning in relation to schooling, hospitals, regional development, budget allocation, etc. Indeed, the usefulness of information about how many people live in a state and which


* Soeren Keil is Reader in Politics and International Relations at Canterbury Christ Church University in the United Kingdom. His research interests include the political systems of the post-Yugoslav states, EU enlargement policy and conflict resolution in divided societies. He is the author of “Multinational Federalism in Bosnia and Herzegovina” (2013) and the Co-editor (with Valery Perry) of “State-Building and Democratization in Bosnia and Herzegovina” (forthcoming 2015).
regions they live in (and also how the population has changed over time – for example through migration), are indeed vital for policy-making. Reliable data are of key importance in decisions on complex questions, including budget allocation and regional development issues. Having said this, what is often forgotten is that these policy decisions can have far-reaching consequences. Decisions over who gets what kind of resources, where hospitals and schools are being built and which regions deserve special financial support are deeply political – and contested, even in the established liberal democracies in Western Europe. Censuses, in other words, are never just a technical exercise; they have far-reaching implications for future policy- and decision-making.

In the post-Yugoslav states, there has been a stronger focus on identity-related questions, in particular in relation to ethnicity/nationality, religion, mother tongue and in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) also over the question of citizenship. These questions add an additional layer of complexity to census exercises, because their use is often unclear and in fact is mostly linked to ethnic engineering, confirming the dominance of one group in a territory over another, or ensuring certain rights associated to the numbers represented in the census. What the strong focus on these questions demonstrates is that identity is still a flexible category in the post-Yugoslav states, though there are strong incentives to pressure a more rigid personal affiliation that in turn would enlarge and strengthen certain groups. In the most extreme case, Montenegro, there have been fundamental changes in who declares as Montenegrin or as Serbian in the last 20 years. At the same time population changes resulting from refugees and internally displaced people in the recent wars, as well as internal and external migration, also play a much more important role in the post-Yugoslav states than in many other Western European states.

This Conclusion is focussed on the policy implications of the most recent censuses in the post-Yugoslav states. It will proceed in three steps. In the first part, the contested nature of a census will be described in more detail, before the focus shifts again to the post-Yugoslav states and the sources of contestation in this region. The final part will look at policy implications and lessons learned.

The Contested Nature of Censuses
In their study of censuses and their political impact, Kertzner and Arel have highlighted some of the issues related to population counts. They demonstrate that censuses are particularly contested in diverse societies, in post-colonial countries and in post-war states. Yet, their work clearly highlights that in the game of numbers as to who is included and what categories are being used, there are always contested issues, even in relatively homogenous societies. In Germany, the announcement of a new census in 2011 resulted in numerous interesting and contested results. For once, big cities such as Berlin and Hamburg had a lower overall population than previously assumed. This does not only affect their own budget planning and tax income in the near future, but

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will also have consequences for their financial subsidiaries, which result from fiscal equalisation payments. Furthermore, the German census demonstrated that Germany is relying on immigration for its population growth, and that a greater proportion of the population have immigrated into Germany or have an immigration background.\textsuperscript{4} While some right-wing groups have used these results to demonstrate the threat immigration poses and warn of the loss of German identity, cities such as Bremerhaven have filed legal complaints challenging the results of the census complaining about under-counting, consequently fearing less financial support.\textsuperscript{5} Discussions about intra-German migration, particularly from the East to the richer Western parts of the country, have also surrounded the census, as have further discussions about the financial consequences and its impact on the distribution of seats in the Bundesrat, Germany’s second chamber of Parliament.\textsuperscript{6} Hence, even in a more homogenous and well-established liberal democracy such as Germany, the census has had a big impact and has been contested by different actors.

The situation in countries like Belgium and Spain is even more complicated, as they have a higher degree of ethnic and linguistic diversity. While it is forbidden by law to ask certain questions related to identity in Brussels for example, in Spain groups such as the Catalans and the Basques use the census as a tool to confirm their absolute majority in their “homelands” and confirm demands for autonomy and even secession. Pieter Everaers is right in his article, when he claims that similar discussions about the contested nature of censuses that were observed in the post-Yugoslav states can also be found in other European and non-European countries. Censuses, in short, are always more than a simple population count. While often labelled as a simple technical exercise, they contribute to putting the population of a country in certain pre-prepared patterns (this is most visible in terms of ethnicity and identity, but also includes social categories and patterns related to employment).\textsuperscript{7} This is why it is important to not only look at the use of census data, but at the way in which census questions are designed. The design of a question, – whether it is an open question or uses prepared (some would say limited) categories – the choice of categories offered, the languages in which people can fill in the census, and the methods used for holding the census (administrative data collection, interviews, sending out questionnaires, etc.) all have an impact on the usefulness and the role of a census in nation-building. Ultimately, this is what it is all about: censuses are forms of nation-building\textsuperscript{8} used to confirm who is in a majority in a given territory, who is a minority and which rights and resources should be allocated to different groups. Of course data are important for policy planning, but this policy planning in itself is a form of nation-building. A key criteria for a

\textsuperscript{5} Available here.
\textsuperscript{7} The author remembers the 2011 census round in the United Kingdom. When asked about his employment status he was puzzled by the lack of flexibility in the existing categories, as he was working part-time as a teaching assistant, while also being a self-employed researcher at the same time. There were a lot of discussions which boxes to tick and how to describe this employment status.
nation is not only a shared history, but also a common vision for the future. In addition to demonstrating a certain degree of homogeneity, census data provide a great framework for planning and implementing a common vision for the future. This form of nation-building, in connection with state-building/consolidation and Europeanisation is particularly visible in the post-Yugoslav states, to which this conclusion now turns.

Censuses in the Post-Yugoslav states: Nation-building, state-consolidation and Europeanisation

In the Introduction to this special issue, three common themes amongst the papers are identified: the link of census results and public policy planning, changing and shifting identities and contested issues within censuses. These themes demonstrate that despite the diversity of approaches and topics discussed in each of the post-Yugoslav states’ census, there are still a number of similarities they share. This can be explained by the complex transition that all of these countries have been going through in recent years – the shift to becoming independent, building efficient and democratic structures and of course the process of European integration. This rather complicated mix of different transitions has been labelled as EU Member State Building – an involvement of the EU in the consolidation and EU integration of the post-Yugoslav states. Censuses are of key importance in this EU Member State Building process. As all authors in this special issue have pointed out, the EU played a vital role in the preparation and initiation of the censuses, in some cases it provided financial assistance for the census exercise, expertise on data collection and data processing, and, in some cases (Bosnia and Kosovo) more direct engagement through an International Monitoring Mission.

The EU’s involvement can therefore be classified in three main areas: (a) active state-building by supporting the establishment and training of the government statistical offices; (b) Europeanisation by focusing on norm adoption and providing a European framework and European standards for the census exercise; and (c) democratization by highlighting the importance of the legitimacy of the census and the proper use of census data in the decision-making process. From the perspective of the post-Yugoslav states, a number of observations can be made. As Anna-Lena Hoh and Damir Josipović highlight in the cases of Croatia and Slovenia respectively, the census exercise was not only about providing good data for policy planning, but also for proving that both countries are “good” EU Member States that can fulfil their obligations as members. In particular, Hoh points out that Croatia’s census in this respect was also seen as an example for the other Western Balkan countries. In the cases of Montenegro and Serbia, Vuković and Nikolić/Trimajova explain how census taking formed part of the EU integration and accession process of these countries. The ability to hold a census, despite regional and identity conflicts in

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10 On the link between these, see: Keil, Soeren. 2013. Europeanization, state-building and democratization in the Western Balkans. Nationalities Papers 41(3), 343-53.

11 For more on EU Member State Building, see Keil, Soeren and Zeynep Arkan, (eds.). 2015. The EU and Member State Building – European Foreign Policy in the Western Balkans. Basingstoke: Routledge.
both countries, was seen as an important milestone in their ability to adopt EU law and implement complex European regulations. For Kosovo, Bosnia and Macedonia, the census exercise demonstrated their long road towards state-consolidation, and persistent questions related to ethnicity, citizenship and belonging. It is not surprising that in these three countries the census was most contested, especially in relation to issues of nationality/ethnicity, religion and mother tongue. All three countries remain inherently weak, characterised by political systems which have been influenced by external intervention, and by identity groups that remain contested and fluid. In short, they are unconsolidated states that are still internally and externally contested.

This is clearly reflected in the census exercise, most drastically in Macedonia where questions over methodology and data use resulted in the failure of the latest attempt to hold a census. In Bosnia and Kosovo, too, there are continued pressures on state institutions and territorial integrity. Kosovo’s census remains contested, as a large portion of the Serb population (especially, but not only, in the North) has boycotted the census, because they do not, as Musaj argues, recognise the legitimacy of the institutions of Kosovo to organise such a population count. In Bosnia, it took nearly 20 years after the end of the conflict to hold a census, and even when it was organised in 2013, it was neither a smooth, nor a technical issue. Not only have different political and religious groups contested the results before they are even published; but as Valery Perry demonstrates, it remains to be seen how the results of the census will be used for public policy-making.

The nexus of state-and nation-building, Europeanisation and democratization in the post-Yugoslav states has had a particular impact on the censuses in these countries. While all countries tried to prove their ability to hold a technical counting exercise according to European standards, in many cases this was overshadowed by questions over who is counted, how is the population count done and most importantly, how will the data be used for policy-making. All papers highlight that there have been issues of contestation, and severe effects on inter-ethnic relations, which in some cases have worsened as a result of the census exercise. While the EU, as Pieter Everaers demonstrates, can generally be satisfied with the ability of the states to hold a census, there is nevertheless a growing recognition that these population counts have contributed to contested decisions, and will certainly contribute to contested and problematic policies. It is therefore worth looking at some of the lessons learnt from these censuses.

Policy implications and lessons learnt
The discussion above has demonstrated that the censuses in the post-Yugoslav states raise a number of interesting issues, both from an academic point of view and for future policy planning.

As for the academic issues, the link between state-building, Europeanisation and unconsolidated nation-building projects has been highlighted in numerous

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papers, and especially the relationship of censuses to nation-building and consolidation deserves further examination in academic literature.\textsuperscript{13} Furthermore, the use of censuses as tools of state-building has been demonstrated. Highlighting ethnic homogeneity, changing population patterns and deciding who is part of a polity and who is not, who has what status and what rights are connected to this – these are just some of the questions which remain of key importance in the post-Yugoslav states. The results of the most recent violent conflicts in the 1990s are still being felt in many countries, most visibly in Bosnia and Kosovo. Unresolved issues over ethnic relations have influenced population counts in Croatia, Serbia and Montenegro. Further research on this topic promises to tell us more about censuses and state-building, but also about ongoing nation-building projects and the consolidation of multi-ethnic states, especially after violent conflict.\textsuperscript{14} Finally, the European dimension cannot be underestimated. While EU policies do not require questions on identity, the EU did not effectively dissuade or prevent countries from asking these questions, or even ask political elites to justify the inclusion of these questions. Further, as the EU provided much financial support for the censuses, the fact that EU money supported censuses in which non-essential questions came to dominate the public discourse could be a cause for concern.

The EU enlargement process is in many aspects also a large technical exercise, strengthening state capacity and administrative capabilities. Censuses are the key, not only because they themselves are seen as a technical exercise, but also because of their influence on future decision-making. In the post-Yugoslav states, there has been a strong focus on identity-related issues. It remains to be seen if there will be more focused policy debates once the results of the most recent census round will be fully implemented in policy formulation and decision-making.

In terms of policy implications, one major lesson learnt (or perhaps, confirmed) is that censuses are never just technical exercises. Their design, the methods used and their consequences are political. This is not only the case in the countries discussed in this special issue; but it is of special importance for these countries. It certainly was a mistake to ever regard these censuses as simple counting exercises to provide data for policy planning. The implications and consequences of these censuses are far-reaching, from worsened inter-ethnic relations in Croatia, to new political and religious mobilisation in Bosnia; from questions over minority community funding in Kosovo to the failure of census taking in Macedonia, political issues will continue to dominate the agenda in the post-Yugoslav states, and these are strongly linked to the census round in 2011.

Could anything have been done differently? Certainly Slovenia’s move towards an electronic census based on aggregating different existing registers is an alternative to the standard census interview and can prevent the dominance of

\textsuperscript{13} For a more recent discussion on this topic, see Bieber, Florian. 2015. The Construction of National Identity and its Challenges in Post-Yugoslav Censuses. \textit{Social Science Quarterly} 96(3), 873-902.

\textsuperscript{14} For a discussion on some of these issues, see Džankić, Jelena. 2015. \textit{Citizenship in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia and Montenegro – Effects of Statehood and Identity Challenges}. Farnham and Burlington: Ashgate.
identity-related issues in a traditional census exercise. However, it remains questionable if countries like Bosnia and Kosovo (and even Macedonia) have the administrative capacity and trustworthy data systems needed to be able to implement a population count based on different registers. One way to prevent the focus on identity-related questions and new tensions amongst different groups would be an insistence from the EU and other financial supporters to avoid these questions altogether. This, however, would be problematic, because as the papers on Croatia and Macedonia have demonstrated, minority rights are often connected to a certain share in the population, which is assessed based on census data. Having said this, it is a completely flawed assumption that censuses ever truly reflect the ethnic composition of a country. Not only are some groups continuously undercounted (such as the Roma), but boycotts (Kosovo), questions over diaspora involvement (Croatia and Macedonia) and shifting self-identification (Montenegro) have all resulted in census results which provide a picture, but not the real picture, of ethnic composition in these countries. Identity remains a fluctuating category in these new states that were born out of violent conflict and remain involved in complex state-building and nation-building projects. This is something that the census cannot take into account. But this is also the reason why the results should be analysed with care, and a critical eye for the circumstances surrounding census-taking, counting criteria and ongoing political discussions, should be adopted. A census is a snapshot – and as the discussion in this special issue has demonstrated, a very contested one.

Bibliography
The 2011 Round of Population and Housing Censuses in the Western Balkans: A Comparative Analysis with a Focus on Ethnicity and Citizenship

Event Analysis

Pieter Everaers
Director “Cooperation in the European Statistical System; International Cooperation; Resources”, DG Eurostat
pieter.everaers@ec.europa.eu

http://www.suedosteuropa.uni-graz.at/cse/en/everaers
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The 2011 Round of Population and Housing Censuses in the Western Balkans: A Comparative Analysis with a Focus on Ethnicity and Citizenship

Pieter Everaers

**Keywords:** population census, Western Balkans, facts, quality, costs and benefits

**Introduction**

The censuses in the Western Balkan countries deserve special attention as they are grouped in a region with a conflictual and difficult past. The Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia fell apart in the early 1990s, resulting in the current configuration of independent countries (Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro, Kosovo1 and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia). This dissolution process has troubled the region for years with wars that have cost many lives, and which still remain an important event in the minds of many people in the region as well as in the minds of the hundreds of thousands that have fled the region and built a life in other European countries. Many of these people in the diaspora still feel affiliated with the area; they might still have family or own property, or they simply decided not to settle for life outside the region of their childhood. Even 20 years after the wars there are many traumas and the relations between population groups are difficult.

All the former Yugoslav countries as well as Albania are considered potential members of an enlarged European Union (EU), and for that reason the EU has a special relationship (via Stabilization and Association Agreements) with these so-called “enlargement” countries. The status as an enlargement country brings very strong support to all elements of society, from funding of road infrastructure and agricultural development projects, to poverty eradication and implementation of the rule of law. This relationship also brings obligations in the context of the “European acquis”. For statistics, this acquis is reflected in the set of regulations for European statistics.2 The countries are supported over a period of approximately 10 to 15 years to develop a set of statistics that

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1 This designation is without prejudice on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the International Court of Justice (ICJ) Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence. This footnote is relevant for all references in this document to “Kosovo”.

reflects the content and quality of the statistics in the European Statistical System (ESS). In the work plan for the European Union Member States - as is the case for the potential members - the censuses are an important reference point for population data; data essential as basic building blocks for many other statistics (e.g. Gross National Income). In the European Union, statistics are an important part of the societal infrastructure. The contribution to the common budget of the EU is based on high quality statistics, and subsidies and funds for redistributing the budget are based on sound figures. “Evidence Based Decision Making” is an important cornerstone of European society; new countries joining the Union are expected to have achieved the same statistical standards.

Compared to difficult census operations in countries all over the world, the recent political history of the Western Balkans adds an extra level of complexity. The European Commission, via the Directorate General Eurostat (DG ESTAT) and the Directorate General Enlargement (DG NEAR), is involved in this process, and as a consequence it supported the development of appropriate statistical infrastructures; for the census more specifically this has been done via a series of “Technical Cooperation Meetings.” In these meetings, the Directors General of the National Statistical Institutes (NSIs) of the countries and the various state census experts met with experts from the European Commission to exchange best practices on the population and housing census, create a good understanding of one another's specific situation, and cultivate cooperation with the aim of achieving a certain level of comparability among the results of the individual countries. This support, which was given as part of multiple beneficiary projects to the countries via horizontal projects, forms a part of the efforts to enhance cooperation among the countries themselves, as well as the cooperation with the European Statistical System. An important result of these intensive discussions is a detailed overview of all the choices and decisions, as well as a rich data base of factual information. The European Commission, via the national support programmes installed via the EU delegations in the concerned countries, has also funded many preparatory projects, and in some countries parts of the enumeration itself as well as parts of the processing were funded by the EC. Finally, but of critical importance, several countries (Montenegro, Kosovo, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM), Bosnia and Herzegovina and to a minor extent Albania, have requested the establishment of an International Monitoring Operation (IMO) to guarantee a fair and transparent census-taking.

3 In October 2009, Eurostat established a Technical Coordination Group (TGC) consisting of all census managers in the region aiming at exchanging experience on the census, sharing best practices and harmonising methodologies and definitions on a regional level. The group has had five meetings. For the TCG, a ‘matrix of key census issues’ was created where the countries reported their level of preparedness on a number of areas, ranging from planning and management to census methodology and logistics.
Background on the Western Balkan countries

To better understand the impact and role of the census, the recent history and the current ethnic situation of the region needs to be described in more detail. After the death of President Tito in 1980, ideological and ethnic tensions led to violent confrontations. Starting from 1986, the different republics, reflecting rising Serbian and Croatian nationalism, became increasingly divided. The historical tensions between Serbs, Albanians, Croats and Bosnians over the question of who would hold the power led to the disintegration of Yugoslavia. Over a period of approximately 10 years, the Yugoslav wars played out to the current situation, with different levels of violence and different outcomes. In 1991, Slovenia succeeded in splitting very quickly and without much bloodshed from the rest, and Croatia also became independent in 1992, though there was significant violence in parts of the country. From 1992 the Bosnian War was fought, until a peace agreement confirmed the creation of the country of Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1995. In 1999, Kosovo violently split from Serbia, while in FYROM there was a brief armed conflict which ended in 2001. A couple of years later, in 2006, Montenegro became independent following a peaceful referendum.

The wars of the 1990s resulted in significant population flux. Several agreements ended the conflicts in the region and contributed to improved inter-ethnic relations, for example the Ohrid Framework Agreement in FYROM (2 million inhabitants), the Dayton Agreement for Bosnia and Herzegovina (3.8 million), and rather recently (2013) the specific agreement between Kosovo (1.7 million) and Serbia (7.2 million, excluding the area of Kosovo), which led Serbia towards a breakthrough in its potential membership of the EU. Croatia (4.2 million) followed Slovenia as the second country of the Western Balkans to become a Member of the European Union, acceding in 2013. While FYROM has been a candidate country already since 2005, negotiations have not yet started, while with Montenegro (0.6 m) and Serbia, accession negotiations started recently.

Albania (2.9 million inhabitants) needs a special mention. Established in 1944 as a Socialist Republic based on the Chinese communist model, it transformed into the Republic of Albania with a parliamentary democracy in 1991. An economic and societal crisis in the nineties drove many people to flee from the country, though many have returned in recent years. Albania achieved EU candidate status in 2014; however negotiations have not yet started.

Another specificity of this region is the distribution of ethnic and religious groups. The complicated history of the Balkans, with population shifts which occurred over centuries mixing people from east and west, north and south, resulted in a striking diversity that at time reveals some deeply rooted ethnic and religious cleavages. Croats, Albanians, Serbians, Roma, Turks, Muslims, Christians, Greek Orthodox, Jews, Russian Orthodox, etc, are spread throughout and integrated into various parts of the region. These groups were living over a period of some 50 years in relative peace as neighbours within the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

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4 Detailed statistical information on the Western Balkan enlargement countries is available in Eurostat. 2014. Pocketbook on the enlargement countries. European Commission.
War and extreme social disruption caused a large outflow of the population, degradation of the transport system and dilution of the societal infrastructure. It resulted in a very low interest in foreign investment in these countries; consequently resulting in a relatively high level of unemployment, and the continued high scope of a rural economy. The large population groups that left for countries like Austria, Germany and Switzerland live in a wealthier situation with relatively high incomes. As a consequence, the economy of many of the Western Balkan countries is dependent on remittances, and influenced by groups from the diaspora. Countries that were dependent on Belgrade for certain aspects of infrastructure, political direction and economic development, had to re-start their development from a relatively backward situation as a result of years of violence and warfare, as well as semi-authoritarian governance.

These countries have shown impressive developments resulting in their recognition as potential member states of the European Union. However many visible and invisible remainders of the difficult period of the wars persist. Demolished and empty homes, clearly divided areas and often a feeling of distrust, overall daily lives still are very much dominated by polarisation.

The reasons for a Population and Housing census
Population and Housing censuses are a common tool for collecting basic information on the size and structure of the population once every five or ten years for a wide range of planning and often also serve political purposes. Under the leadership of the UN, every 10 years, the vast majority of countries hold a census. In many countries, the enumeration is still done via a traditional paper and pencil interview. Since 2000, world Population and Housing census round many countries all over the world began to use modern interview tools for data collection such as handheld computers or the Internet. New technological and societal developments have made it possible - especially in the more developed countries - to integrate results of vital statistics and administrative registers to completely eliminate the role of the census interview. A third group of countries used a combination of data collected via interviews with data aggregated from registers and administrative sources. A handful of countries all over the world do not use a full population count at all, but base their ‘census results’ on sampling techniques and consequently collect thorough information for only a part of the total population. The fact that census results are considered very important by many stakeholders also ensures that the census is an important cause for discussions and even tensions concerning the results. Even in highly developed countries the results and even the basic format of a census lead to difficult discussions, as well as political interventions in the management of national statistical offices. Such challenges can even lead to heavy political crisis, as was the case for FYROM in the Western Balkans, but there are several similar and even more serious examples from the 2001 and 2010 population census rounds in other parts of the world.

However, even when the procedures and outcomes might be contested, the usefulness of a census is in general not contested. The population census is
considered as a crucial basis for many other statistics. In the modern evidence-based society, good quality statistics are a part of the basic infrastructure. In the Western Balkan countries which are also candidate countries for the EU, the need for and use of census data can be seen from several perspectives.

Firstly, in order to join the EU and especially to comply with the governance procedures in the EU statistics are essential. They are important for the calculation of the contribution to the EU and the subsidies from the EU budget, related to a large variety of policies.

Second, from the perspective of internal planning purposes and local funding and support mechanisms, good information on population groups is needed to internally plan health, education systems, and others, in a democratic manner.

Support from international organisations also depends on trusted statistical information.

A fourth perspective includes the obligations set in some agreements that rights and obligations of populations and governments on a local or sub-regional level depend on the number of citizens or distribution of characteristics of the population in certain districts or regions. To implement these obligations, regular data collection in the form of a census is considered essential. This is particularly important when the rights of certain groups (i.e. minorities) are connected to a certain percentage share of the population.

Finally, for some countries in this region - even when not spelled out clearly but nevertheless still important - the Population and Housing censuses serve as a tool for the creation of a national feeling. Part of building or consolidating a nation is to know how many “we” are and what “our” characteristics are. In addition, censuses are sometimes used politically to consolidate the results of wars. The popular saying ‘when you are not counted, you do not exist’ is relevant for some population groups.

It is evident from both a global and EU perspective, as well as for internal and “nationality” reasons, that the Western Balkan countries were under a certain pressure to conduct censuses in the 2011 census round. In fact, almost all countries in the world held a population census in one way or another, so why would the Western Balkans be an exception? Eurostat, on the request of DG Enlargement and also from some of the countries themselves, supported almost all the countries in this census exercise. This support ranged from purely financial to technical assistance, capacity building, political, as well as moral and professional support to the statistical authorities. For this wide network of political and technical contacts in the countries concerned were set up and maintained.\(^5\)

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\(^5\) For the author of this paper this meant that regular (sometimes weekly) contacts with the responsible ministers and other high level stakeholders were needed to discuss main decisions and progress in the preparations.
Factual information on the censuses in the Western Balkans

The systematic technical support from Eurostat via the Technical Coordination Group as well as the involvement in census projects in the individual countries resulted in a rich overview of characteristics of the censuses in the Western Balkan countries. This information is available through a series of ‘Factsheets on population censuses in the Enlargement countries’. The information varies from basic factual information on the number of enumerators, to overall costs and specific costs of parts of the project (for example, communication and outreach policies). The sheets describe “factual” information, so they do not include details on what happened during the preparation, enumeration and the processing stage of the census, nor do they relate to discussions between the main stakeholders, the political parties, government, the census institute (the National Statistical Institute), with the main sponsors of the census and a great variety of other parties interested or involved (e.g., NGOs, the media, universities, religious and ethnic groups and even neighbouring countries). From the first phase of census preparation - the discussions on the census law - until the very last moments on how to disseminate and interpret the results, opinions can differ greatly between stakeholders on how to go ahead. It is common that during all phases there are stakeholders that try (and often succeed) in stepping over the outer line of their responsibility, and in doing so try to impose their influence in areas that should be the sole responsibility of the Head of the National Statistical Institute. Professional independence (particularly on methodological decisions) as requested from the UN Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics is often not that easy to defend in countries with such complex governance systems, weak democratic traditions and complicated ethnic and religious structures as the Western Balkan countries.

The following sections will review various key thematic issues of importance, both to explain certain policies and then to consider how the various countries in the region can be assessed. As the census results in Bosnia and Herzegovina have not been released, this case cannot be considered yet in the regional assessments with the same detail as the other countries.

Population in the diaspora and the treatment of the sensitive questions on ethnicity, religion and nationality

The noted factsheets describe all the stages of preparing the census, from the enumeration itself until the moment of dissemination. Interesting conclusions can be drawn, like the relatively high costs of the communication and outreach in Kosovo, the high number of enumerators in FYROM or the lengthy process of establishing the census law in Bosnia and Herzegovina. They also describe the complexity for hiring census staff, and information on how to measure the population in the Diaspora (this is typically not seen as part of a census exercise) as well as reaching agreement on the inclusion and formulation of the

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7 These factsheets are made available in agreement with National Statistical Institutes of the countries concerned.
sensitive questions on ethnicity, religion and nationality (and state/entity citizenship in Bosnia and Herzegovina) in the questionnaire. These two issues: how to measure/include information on the population living abroad and the inclusion and formulation of these sensitive questions, have created huge discussions and disputes. In all countries concerned these issues had to be tackled, which had an impact on the formulation of the census law, the required communication and outreach and the training of the enumerators, among others. Of course, in each of the countries (and as discussed in the other articles in this volume) there were specific problems and issues which complicated the process.

The measurement of the population in the diaspora was mainly done via a special form at the end of the questionnaire, allowing the households to inform the enumerator on family members living abroad, permanently or at the time of the enumeration. This was done for Kosovo, Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina. In a context where the percentage of a population group in the total population is important for existing agreements, for house and land ownership or simply having sufficiently high numbers to justify certain policies (e.g., the Ohrid Agreement for the Albanian population in FYROM, or the Dayton Agreement for Bosnia and Herzegovina), the issue of the diaspora population caused long disputes. More specifically, there were discussions on how this population group could be approached, how the questions were formulated and how the answers could be checked against other information. However, the final results of these efforts are considered to be relatively minimal. Based on results of a variety of polls a large part of the former residents now living abroad has either no intention to return to the original country (many of them children of the former residents), has no link to the newly established countries (as they left the country before 1991) or they are simply not interested and could/did not want to be reached.

The controversies over the formulation of the sensitive questions raised many more concerns, and might also have affected the final results. These questions are noted in the UNECE/Eurostat recommendations for the Population and Housing Census for round 2011, and are described as non-core questions. This implies that countries are free to decide to include them in the questionnaire, or not. But if they decide to do so, they are strongly encouraged to follow the recommendations on how they are formulated. An essential element of these recommendations is that these questions are asked based on a self-declaration, either via a fully open question (no answer categories) or a combination of a set of predefined answers with also the possibility to give an answer different from the predefined. Furthermore, there should be the possibility, as the response to these questions is considered voluntary, to use the option to actively declare no ethnicity, religion or national affiliation. Considering the context of the ethnic complexity of the Western Balkan countries, the tense discussions between the population groups (via political organisations or NGOs), and the apparent need to have specific information over these population groups for specific agreed policies (as the Ohrid Agreement), the collection of information on these

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variables was considered a crucial element of the census-taking by the decision-making authorities in many of these countries. A remarkable example in this context is the use of the 1991 population census in BiH to ensure positive discrimination for returning minority populations based on pre-war data. The countries have found varying solutions for these questions, ranging from sticking very closely to the UNECE/Eurostat recommendations (Albania, Croatia, Montenegro and Kosovo), to strongly criticized versions (only partly open) like in BiH and FYROM. In most of the countries the ethnic, religious or political institutions and movements have tried to influence the citizens' behaviour on how to answer these questions.

Success factors for the Population and Housing census
Indicators of success of the censuses is also summarized in the fact sheets, though for this purpose additional quality information has to be used to ensure a good level of understanding on the usefulness and effectiveness of the projects. Useful indicators include the acceptance of the numbers of the total population and the numbers for subgroups (as was the case in Albania and Montenegro), as well as the speed in delivering preliminary, first and final results (again Montenegro). Factual information also comes from the Post Enumeration Survey in the form of estimates on the absolute and relative under or over count (representation in the census) of populations groups. This quality information results often from Post Enumeration surveys. The training of the enumerators, as well as the infrastructure and logistics created for the enumeration and the processing of the collected information, also supports the chances of a successful census (likewise the motivation of the census staff can be reflected in, for example, the feeling of being respected and well paid.). In addition, the International Monitoring Operations can provide competent advice and support; a factor that like technical assistance, can contribute to the overall success of a census.

One could assume that the success of a census also depends on factors such as the existence of a well organised state government, the oversight of this government over regions, the trust in state organisations and the experience and skills in the administration, particularly in the National Statistical Institutes. On these issues the countries are all very different (knowing their history). Of equal importance is the societal infrastructure in the country, and how well the society is organised. The internal coherence of the population groups or the awareness of the heterogeneity of the population can be a factor of influence. Likewise, group feeling and the political engagement of the population will play a role; this, of course in combination with more basic issues such as literacy, education and overall interest in a country's issues, and more generally the trust in society, common goals, norms and values and understanding of the common values of a developed democratic society. Media plays a very important role in this context, not only for the official awareness campaigns but also for any opposition groups and movements. A clear example of this impact was seen in the first week of the enumeration in 2012 in FYROM. Based on statements in television interviews, enumerators as well as citizens engaged in declarations on how to interpret certain questions and how to count people, with the result that the government had to stop the census.
enumeration midway through the enumeration stage. Another factor is the overall political situation. Not only is the trust of the citizens in their government and in society in general important, but trust and belief in statistics is important as well, as is the understanding that the government can use the data in the process of development. Specific awareness among a population of how a census can play a role in a country’s EU candidacy can also be critical in explaining the success. In Montenegro and Albania as well as in Kosovo this awareness was very high.

In addition to all this, specific and time bound developments can play an important role in the success of a census project. The role of key leaders, incidents not related but having a big impact (e.g., election campaigns) or even the very personal behavioural issues of stakeholders have to be taken into account in trying to explain the success and outcomes.

The usefulness and effectiveness of the censuses
Discussing the usefulness of the census for each of the countries concerned is difficult from the perspective of the long-term benefits. In most, if not all the countries, the project significantly increased the functioning of the National Statistical Institutes and resulted in an increase in experience and skills. The infrastructure needed to ensure good statistics clearly improved the amount and quality of actual information available on populations, groups, as well as on all kinds of developments in the society (from literacy, urbanisation to health and housing). The basic information collected will support international and state policies. Without a doubt the financial investment will be paid back via international programs that support economic development, as well as through more focussed development and investment projects. The availability of useful and “fit for purpose” statistical information will lead to better spent domestic budgets. The fact that International Monitoring Operations were present in Kosovo, Montenegro, BiH as well as in Albania could send a strong message about the credibility of the census results; this is particularly important for Kosovo.

However, it remains important to consider the effect of a census on the issues of ethnicity, religion and nationality. For most of the countries under consideration, these issues are related to populations residing in the countries being enumerated and - differing from what is practice in most other countries - to the population in the diaspora. Two concrete and relevant factors arise: firstly, regarding the information collected via specific forms on family members residing outside the country; and second whether the information from the non-core sensitive questions where citizens (according to recommendations) were allowed to declare that they do not belong to an ethnic, religious group or nationality. Both questions lead to concerns on whether the census has indeed resulted in credible data. Have the censuses contributed to a process of settling disputes between population groups, and contributed to a more stable society? The extent to which censuses play a role in these dynamics is influenced both by the fact that answering these questions has been influenced by many NGOs, political leaders, religious figures and public

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9 See on this issue also Roska Vrgova’s contribution in this volume.
discussions, as well as the fact that a significant number of the population might not have provided answers for these questions, meaning that their usefulness is questionable. Using these variables as explanatory (independent) variables is not very problematic; however to use them by themselves as absolute outcomes must be done only with great caution.

As mentioned in the introduction a census in any one of the Western Balkan countries does not only affect dynamics within its own borders, as the ethnic and religious groups do not follow the country borders. The Albanian population may have its main concentration in Albania, but Albanians also live in the neighbouring countries of Kosovo and FYROM; similarly, Croats live in Croatia but also in parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Roma population is spread in different concentrations all over the area of the Western Balkans, as well as old Turkish rooted groups in FYROM and Kosovo. The Serbian population lives in Serbia but also in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Croatia, and Kosovo.

Comparable results among countries, especially on ethnicity and religion, are very interesting from the perspective of regional policies and cultures as well as ambitions. In addition, they very much affect the behaviour of local and regional politicians. Compared to difficult census operations in individual countries this situation of countries with strong cross-border ties creates an extra level of complexity. The Directorate General Eurostat and the wider European Commission has tried to steer this process via the regular Technical Cooperation Meetings on the census at the level of the statisticians of these countries, developing a good understanding and cooperation as well as sharing of best practices. These meetings were also aimed at promoting the use of the same approaches to achieve maximum comparability of the results. This maximum comparability, by guaranteeing rather rigidly the principle of place of usual residence for counting the population (therefore not including diaspora) should lead to more credible and exhaustive results overall for the whole region.

However, these policies have not prevented the development of sometimes different approaches and conflicting results. Slightly varying data collection methods, resulting in different under-and over-counting, but also differences in attitudes among individuals enumerated and the impact of the population in the diaspora will not - when summing up the results on the sensitive variables of the individual countries - lead to reliable results for the region.

It is relevant to note that in supporting the census work (with technical support, funding and monitoring) the starting point for the European Commission and other international organisations involved as well as other individual donor countries, was the correct implementation of the international recommendations on Population and Housing censuses and at the same time respecting the details as agreed by the national governments in their respective Population and Housing Census Laws on the details of the topics to be collected (as for example the questions on citizenship, nationality, among other things).
Cost benefit analysis and potential impact
The censuses already have and will continue to provide useful statistical information, but as said above for some variables this information has to be handled with great care. Can we conclude that the censuses in the Western Balkans were an example of value for money? Have the censuses resulted in information that can and will be used? Were they worthwhile or would it have been more useful to resist the international pressure for holding the census?

These questions are difficult to answer: the costs can be calculated easily, however, the benefits cannot. Census results might lead to financial support as well as increased credibility and recognition of the country. But the census can also lead to heated debates between ethnic and religious population groups. Are the societies mature enough to accept the results and how can they transform this information into useful policy information? This is a question that is useful to ask in looking at the efforts, the discussions and the results. The other contributions in this volume attempt to do so. To what extent does it also help the regional cooperation between the countries? Only over a period of years will the impact and real benefit be visible.

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