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# ***Social Impact of Emigration and Rural-Urban Migration in Central and Eastern Europe***

## **Final Country Report**

**Kosovo<sup>\*</sup>**

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<sup>\*</sup> This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/99 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

### **Abbreviations and Acronyms**

AFK	Arbeits-Förderung Kosovë
BoP	Balance of Payments
EC	European Commission
EU	European Union
FDI	Foreign Direct Investments
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HBS	Household Budget Survey
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
KDHS	Kosovo* Demographic and Health Survey
LDK	Democratic League of Kosovo*
LFS	Labour Force Survey
MEST	Ministry of Education, Science and Technology
MLSW	Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare
MSC	Migration Service Center
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
RAE	Roma, Ashkali, Egyptian
SEP	Students' Employment Program
SFRY	Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia
SOK	Statistical Office of Kosovo*
UNMIK	United Nations Mission in Kosovo*
UNSC-R	United Nations Security Council Resolution
WB	World Bank

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## **1. Socio-Economic and Political Overview**

**Political overview:** Kosovo\* is located in South-East Europe and has a mixed population of which the majority is ethnic Albanians. Until 1989, Kosovo\* enjoyed a high degree of autonomy within former Yugoslavia, when the Serbian leader Slobodan Milosevic altered the status of the region, removing its autonomy and bringing it under the direct control of Belgrade, the Serbian capital (Elsie, 2004). A long period of peaceful approach was followed by fighting from the Kosovo\* Liberation Army in 1998. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) intervened by bombarding Serbia between the end of March and the beginning of June, 1999. Serbia had to withdraw troops in June 1999 (Elsie, 2004). On 10<sup>th</sup> of June 1999, at its 4011<sup>th</sup> meeting, UNSC adopted Resolution 1244 (UNSCR 1244) through which was established and regulated the presence of UNMIK in Kosovo\*, which was practically the government of Kosovo\*. By August 1999, 850,000 Albanian refugees returned to Kosovo\* and around 100,000 ethnic Serbs, approximately half of the ethnic Serbian population, fled to Serbia (Elsie, 2011). By autumn 1999, political parties were formed and an Interim Administrative Council began functioning in early 2000. In October 2000, local elections took place and the majority of population voted for the Democratic League of Kosovo\* (LDK). During period 2000-2007 in Kosovo\* four local and three parliamentary elections took place (Elsien, 2004). On 17<sup>th</sup> of February 2008, Kosovo\* Parliament declared Kosovo\* independence as Independent Democratic State (Rexhepi and Demaj, 2009).

The establishment of a parallel administrative system in the Serb-populated Northern part of Kosovo\* and a number of Serb-speaking territories/Serb enclaves<sup>2</sup> since 2003 have provided a clear threat to the official “state” authority in Prishtina (Narten, 2009). In these Serbian enclaves parallel to the Kosovan institutions there exist governance structures on security, health care, pensions, and education influenced by the Government of the Republic of Serbia (OSCE, 2003). There are ongoing disputes between Serbian enclaves and the Kosovar state authorities. The latest tentative of the Kosovo\* government to enforce the law supporting the Constitutions was undertaken on 25<sup>th</sup> of July 2011 but that was not fully successful due to blockades done by Serbs in Mitrovica<sup>3</sup>.

**Territorial organisation of Kosovo\*:** According to Statistical Office of Kosovo\*, Kosovo\* is divided into 7 regions: Prishtina; Ferizaj, Gjilan, Peja, Gjakova, Prizren and Mitrovica (map attached in Annex 1, Figure 1).

**Demography:** After decades of no census in 2011 Kosovo\* organised the Population and Housing Census. Preliminary findings provided by the Statistical Office of Kosovo\* suggest that there are 1.733,872 inhabitants with almost equal numbers of male and females (SOK, 2011a). According to preliminary results from the Population and Housing Census of 2011 the average size of households in Kosovo\* is 5.9 members (SOK, 2011a). Kosovo\* is a country with a very young population with about one third under 15 years of age; two thirds (65%) belong to the 15-64 age group which is known as economically active or working age population. People age 65 and older represent only 7% of the household population (SOK, 2011b). Table 1 in Appendix provides data for period 1921 until 2011 where it can be noted that in 1921 there were 440,000 thousands inhabitants reaching around 1.8 million in 2011.

**Ethnic composition:** According to the Living Standards Measurement Survey (LSMS) in 2000 Albanians accounted for 88% of the resident population, with Serbs making up 7% and other

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<sup>2</sup> Areas where majority of population is Serbian and the area is surrounded by areas with majority of population being Albanians.

<sup>3</sup> These enclaves are mainly in the North bordering Serbia but also include parts of other municipalities (European Commission, 2008). In reaction to Kosovo\*'s unilateral declaration of independence in February 2008, Belgrade increasingly took over state powers in northern Kosovo\* and the Serb enclaves in the south and put heavy pressure on Serbian policemen and other officials to stop their cooperation with the authorities in Prishtina (ICG, 2008).

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ethnic groups about 5%, including Bosniaks, Turks and Roma (European Commission, 2008)<sup>4</sup>. The SOK figures of 2009 (SOK, 2011b) suggest that ethnic Albanians make up to 92.2% of the population in Kosovo\*, while Serbs account for only 4.1% of the population.

**Economic overview:** Kosovo\* remained an underdeveloped territory throughout the history of former Yugoslavia with its growth being the lowest in Yugoslavia. The per capita Social Product<sup>5</sup> was 49.2% of the Yugoslavia average in 1947, which fell to 26.3% by 1984 (European Commission, 2008). Statistics reveal that output declined by over 50% in the early 1990s and by at least a further 20% during the conflict of year 1998-1999 (WB, 2004). In former Yugoslavia, the Kosovan population tended to lack basic necessities more than elsewhere in Yugoslavia. Poverty in Kosovo\*, measured by a consumption poverty line consistent throughout former Yugoslavia fell from 44.4% in 1978 to 39.8% in 1983, but then rose considerably to reach 81.9% in 1989, compared to the Yugoslav average of 23.5% (cited in European Commission, 2008).

Following the post-conflict economic boom, economic growth has been moderate. Between 2005 and 2007, growth averaged around 4% and was driven by strong increases in investment and consumption. Growth peaked at 5.5 % in 2008, mainly due to an expansionary fiscal policy, and slowed slightly to 4% in 2009 (Ivlevs and King, 2009). Kosovo\* and Albania are the only countries in South-Eastern Europe to record growth in GDP per capita during 2009 (WB, 2011a). However, with GDP per capita in 2009 of €1,760 Kosovo\* is the lowest in SEE by a wide margin, and places it as one of the poorest countries in all of Europe (WB, 2011a).

According to the Ministry of Finance in Kosovo\* projections for real GDP growth are as follows: 4% has been projected for 2010; 5.3% for 2011; 4.8% in 2012 and reaching 5.2% by 2013 (Ministry of Finance, 2011, p. 39). The global financial and economic crisis has had relatively little impact on the economy, reflecting Kosovo\*'s limited international integration. However, the negative effects of the crisis were transmitted through three channels: exports, FDI and remittances. Although Kosovo\*'s exports suffered a sharp decline (about 18%) in 2009, their still-small share in GDP (of about 5%) meant the impact on overall growth was relatively small. Also, according to preliminary data, FDI fell by 22% and remittances by some 8% (Ivlevs and King, 2009).

Based on the 2005/06 Statistical Office of Kosovo\* (SOK) Household Budget Survey data it was estimated that around 45.1% of the Kosovan population live below the consumption poverty line, including some 16.7% living in extreme poverty. This is extremely high by regional standards, particularly in terms of extreme poverty defined as having difficulty meeting nutritional needs (EU Commission, 2008, p. 7). Data from the Household Budget Survey in 2009 indicate that slightly more than one-third of the population (34%) lived below an absolute poverty line of €1.55 per adult equivalent per day, and 12% lived below the extreme poverty line of €1.02 (WB, 2011a).

**Labor force:** The high unemployment rate has a long history in Kosovo\*; even at the peak of its industrialization in 1988 Kosovo\*'s unemployment rate was 36% (Statistical Yearbook of Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (cited in WB, 2010, p.12). Data presented in Figure 1.1 reveal the persistence of high unemployment rate: from 57% in 2001 to 45% in 2009. According to the World Bank's more recent Country Economic Memorandum employment rate is only 26% (WB, 2010)

Kosovo\* is known to have Europe's youngest population, which although in principle, holds the potential for energetic nation-building; it also holds the potential for emigration in search of better fortunes (Ivlevs and King, 2009). While all groups face difficulties in finding jobs, people living in

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<sup>4</sup> According to SOK, in 1981 census 77.4% were Albanians, while 13.2% were Serbs (SOK, <http://esk.rks-gov.net/mbikosoven/perberja-etinke>, accessed 08.12.2011).

<sup>5</sup> Notwithstanding difficulties of comparing calculations of 'social product' with today's notion of GDP (European Commission, 2008).

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rural areas<sup>6</sup>, young people, people with low level of education, and especially women, face the greatest challenges. Women account for 48% of the working-age population in Kosovo\* (WB, 2010). Only 11% of the working-age women are employed, significantly below that of men and by far the lowest in the region, and at a long distance from the Lisbon target for female employment (60%) (WB, 2010).

Most working-age women are neither working, nor looking for a job or going to school (61%), but a large proportion (44%) of these women appears to be willing to work. In addition to the high unemployment rate, a quarter of the young population (15-24) has given up on seeking employment (and neither go to school) (WB, 2010). Unemployment is mainly a structural phenomenon, as more than half of the unemployed have been looking for a job for more than four years. About 63% of the unemployed have been looking for a job for more than two years (long-term unemployed), and 53% have been looking for more than four years.

Related to poverty and social exclusion data from the 2009 Household Budget Survey (HBS) indicates that although the poverty rate is almost the same in urban and rural areas nearly two-thirds of poor people live in rural areas, simply because Kosovo\* is predominantly rural (WB, 2011a). Overall inequality in Kosovo\* is found to be relatively low whereas consumption inequality is considerably higher in urban areas than in rural areas.

Data presented in this section leads to the conclusion that the current high poverty and unemployment rates continue to make migration an attractive option for many people, especially the young ones. Around 200,000 young persons are ready to enter the labour market in the next five years in Kosovo\* (EC, 2009). Kosovo\*'s labour market is unable to absorb this high number. One mechanism to support employment reduction is by promoting and institutionally supporting circular migration of Kosovars abroad. Poor socio-economic conditions, high levels of unemployment, lack of economic activity will drive a high number of young people to migrate. In 2007, a survey conducted by Riinvest found out that 26.2% of respondents<sup>7</sup> said they hoped to emigrate (Mustafa et al., 2007). On the other side Kosovo\* will have to sign re-admission agreements with countries that are eager to send Kosovars back to Kosovo\*. This will even further put pressure on the labor market and socio-economic indicators.

## **2. Main emigration and internal migration trends and patterns**

Migration has been an important livelihood strategy for a significant share of Kosovo\*'s population and is likely to remain so for the foreseeable future.

Kosovo\* has one of the highest emigration rates in Eastern Europe, although there are no reliable data to show the exact number of emigrants (this could change after the results of the April 2011 census are published). Estimates vary from 415,000 (Mustafa et al., 2007) to 800,000 (Haxhikadrija, 2009), of which nearly 63% are concentrated in Germany and Switzerland (De Zwager et al., 2010). Other larger communities are established in Italy, Sweden, Slovenia, Austria, the UK, France, Norway and the US (WB, 2011b). According to the Kosovo\* Migration Survey 2009 one of every four households in Kosovo\* has at least one member living outside the country (ibid).

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<sup>6</sup> In order to understand how rural and urban areas are defined, the Statistical Office of Kosovo\* and the Prishtina University Professor in Geography Dr. Tefik Basha were consulted. According to the two sources the definition is based on four main factors: number of inhabitants (minimum of 2,000 inhabitants to be classified as urban); type of activity undertaken by inhabitants and the share differs according to the number of inhabitants; morphology of the place-buildings; roads; free zones; parks, etc.; the way of living and this is mainly based on whether inhabitants have the market as the main source of supplying food or have their own products as the main source. In Kosovo\* 35 out of 1,466 are urban areas. An example: if an area has between 2,000-2,999 inhabitants and than to be classified as urban, more than 90% of inhabitants should be engaged in non-agriculture activities; for those between 3,000-9,900 participation of non-agriculture should be more than 70%; for 10,000-14,999 more than 40% of inhabitants; and for areas above 15,000 the share should be more than 30%.

<sup>7</sup> Respondent from the household was the person with the date of birth closest to the interviewing date.



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The Kosovo\* Demographic and Health Survey (KDHS) conducted in 2009 and published in 2011 (SOK, 2011b) revealed that on average each household surveyed had 4.061 persons living abroad. This is 17.1% of the total household population represented in the survey sample which suggests (subject to survey imitations) that the population of Kosovo\* would be about one sixth larger if these people not had left Kosovo\*, or if they all were willing to return<sup>8</sup>. More than one fourth (27.0%) of emigrants left between 2005 and 2009, and 22% left in each of the two five-year periods before that (SOK, 2011b).

In terms of internal migration, the KDHS conducted in 2009 and published in 2011 (SOK, 2011b) revealed that 6.4% of the respondents were lifetime migrants i.e. lived in a different region at the time of the survey from where they were born.

### 2.1. Main emigration trends

Historical trends of emigration among Kosovo\* population are described to allow comparative analysis whether different policies, both in host and destination countries contributed to different waves of emigration, and also whether different waves of emigration had a different social impact on the communities left behind. The wave of “Gastarbeiter” (guest workers) in the 1960s was dominated by rural men who went to work in Western Europe almost solely to send money back home, while the 1990’s wave dominated by better-educated, skilled and better off Kosovar Albanians from urban areas, who emigrated primarily to avoid military service in the Yugoslav army during the wars in former Yugoslavia, was primarily concerned with their own education and far less on remitting. Finally, the last wave of migrants in the 2000s who reached the destination countries through family reunification was dominated by women and children; hence it may have contributed more on decreasing remittances since their arrival leaves fewer reasons for the head of the immediate family to send money back home as his entire immediate family moves to live with him.

While it is hard to find reliable written accounts for migration from Kosovo\* before 1945, five historically complex and distinct phases of migration can be documented in Kosovo\* since then:

The **first phase** of emigration occurred between 1945 and 1966 when many Albanians left Kosovo\* and fled to Turkey due to the repressive politics of the Serbian security chief Aleksandar Ranković<sup>9</sup>, who signed an agreement with Turkey in 1956 that foresaw the deportation en masse of ‘Turks’, among them many Albanians from Kosovo\* (Petrisch et al., 1999, p. 138). The Yugoslav government had made repeated attempts to initiate talks with Turkey and Albania about the admission of some of Yugoslavia’s Muslim population mainly Turks and Albanians and showed readiness to conclude such arrangements and to cover the costs and compensations. A plan for resettling 200,000 Muslims from Yugoslavia to Turkey was drafted in Ankara in July 1938. (Bjelajac, 2008) The beneficiaries of this agreement were to be some 40,000 families of “Yugoslav Muslims”. According to the draft the resettlement programme was to be completed within six years (1939-44) (Bjelajac, 2008). This plan was re-initiated in the 1950s and was implemented by the ruthless minister of interior Aleksandar Rankovic. This group of migrants was destined to become permanent migrants from the onset as most of them sold their properties in Kosovo\* before settling permanently to Turkey. According to Miranda Vickers some 195,000 Kosovo\* Albanians left for Turkey in the years 1954-57 (Vickers, 1998, p. 157)<sup>10</sup>.

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<sup>8</sup> These data refer to family members who are still abroad – they do not include people who have returned to Kosovo\*. Also, the question has been asked only about family members who had been abroad for more than 12 months. Hence, those who emigrated more recently are not included. Finally, entire families that emigrated were missed because there was no one left behind in Kosovo\* to report about them in the survey.

<sup>9</sup> Aleksandar Rankovic was the minister of the interior and head of the military intelligence OZNA (Odeljenje za zaštitu naroda / Department for Protection of the People) and secret police UDBA (Uprava državne bezbednosti / Department of State Security).

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**The second phase** of emigration occurred during the late 1960s as part of the regular Yugoslav labor emigration to Switzerland, Germany and other Western European countries. After WWII, European countries needed foreign labor force and former Yugoslavia became, after Italy, Spain, and Turkey, as of the 1960s, a central recruitment region for Germany and Switzerland especially for unskilled and manual labor. The SFRY's decision to open up its borders for emigration in line with the launching of liberal reforms in 1965 contributed to this wave of emigration as well.

The majority of migrants during this period came from rural parts of Kosovo\*, mainly as unqualified male workers with limited education who often lived in barracks with other foreign workers. They considered themselves as temporary migrants and their objective was mainly to earn enough money to overcome the economic hardship at home and to return after a few years. The host society also saw them as temporary laborers who were not thought of as people destined for integration in the host society. There are no reliable data about the exact number of guest workers from Kosovo\* who emigrated during this period as they were all registered as Yugoslavs at that time.

**The third phase** of emigration began in the 1980s and ended in 1998 and was prompted by a political crackdown after the Albanian demonstrations of 1981, but also due to persistent underdevelopment which was a steady push-factor for emigration. From the 1980s on, the political and economic situation in former Yugoslavia in general, and specifically in Kosovo\*, deteriorated drastically. In the aftermath of Tito's death in 1981 and the abolition of Kosovo\*'s autonomous status in 1989, there was political unrest and emigration pressure increased. The Serbian Parliament, revamped the education curriculum, made Albanian teachers sign loyalty oaths, proscribed most Albanian language instruction and fired large numbers of Albanian high school teachers. Later on the Serb regime responded with more draconian regulations and police repression. Universities and schools were closed, family size was subjected to limitations and ethnic Albanians were persona non grata as far as jobs in the public service were concerned. Kosovo\* became a police state run by Belgrade. Human Rights Watch notes that "the deliberate social and economic marginalization of ethnic Albanians forced the emigration of an estimated 350,000 Albanians between 1991-1998" (Human Rights Watch, 2001, p. 28). Meanwhile the Milosevic government was providing incentives for Serbs to settle in Kosovo\*. Members of the nationalist elite among Albanian students were increasingly persecuted and forced to leave Kosovo\* (Malcolm, 1999). Europe (mainly Switzerland and Germany, with its already established Albanian Diaspora), witnessed the first Asylum seekers from Kosovo\*. Better-educated, skilled and better off Kosovar Albanians from urban areas, including young men seeking to avoid military service in the Yugoslav army during the Balkan wars, also left Kosovo\* during the early 1990s, of which the largest group settled in the UK. The United Kingdom hosts around 17,000 Kosovo\*-Albanians (House of Commons, 2000).

The 1990s saw also a shift in immigration policies, as in the case of Switzerland, which introduced the 'three circles' model in 1991 thus making the recruitment of workers from former Yugoslavia almost impossible, these immigrants were now categorized as members of the third circle and had no rights to obtain a work permit according to Swiss Federal Council decision of 1991. As of that moment, immigration to Switzerland from former Yugoslavia was only possible by seeking asylum or through family reunification (Dahinden, 2008).

**The fourth phase** occurred in 1998 during the outbreak of the war in Kosovo\*, which led to a phase of mass emigration to Europe and other countries. Between March and June 1999, an estimated 850,000 refugees fled into neighboring Albania, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Montenegro, threatening wider regional instability (Haxhikadija, 2009). Some 200,000 people were internally displaced or homeless inside Kosovo\* itself. While the majority of refugees remained in Albania, Macedonia and Montenegro, approximately 90,000 (Miall et al.,



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2010) moved to over 25 countries around the world through legal arrangements<sup>11</sup>. Usually, these resettlements were seen by receiving countries as temporary, and the refugees were treated as such.

**The fifth phase** began after the end of the conflict in 1999 and is ongoing. Return and repatriation are the main migratory movements of this phase, although emigration and re-emigration of returnees is also a significant feature of this phase. Whereas during the escalation of violence in Kosovo\*, most EU countries (Germany and Switzerland in particular) 'tolerated' Kosovo-Albanians arriving in Europe and gave them provisional or permanent asylum status, after the end of Serbian control of Kosovo\* in 1999 many chose to return and/or were repatriated and regular migration became severely restricted, usually to family reunification policies. Between 1999 and 2000, the Kosovar population in Switzerland showed a rapid decrease due to the return of refugees and asylum seekers. About 30,000 Kosovo-Albanians left the country during the year 2000. Since 2001, however, this population is increasing again (Lerch et al., 2007). Other countries followed similar policies. According to figures from the German Federal Government, between 1999 and 31 August 2009 a total of 114,092 people returned from Germany to Kosovo\* (UNICEF, 2010) primarily as voluntary returnees, although as many as 19% of them had been forcibly repatriated.

According to IOM Kosovo\* data from the Assisted Voluntary Program ([http://www.iomkosovo.org/AVR\\_Project.html](http://www.iomkosovo.org/AVR_Project.html)), a total of 195,596 Kosovar returnees were assisted from June 1999 to February 2010<sup>12</sup>, of which the largest number came from Germany 84,582 returnees or 43.2%, Switzerland (17.5%), Norway (3.7%), Austria (3.6%), Belgium (2.6%), UK (2.3%), the Netherlands (2.1%), as well as a smaller number of returnees from other countries<sup>13</sup>.

Parallel to repatriation processes, a new form of emigration has taken shape: a temporary migration of highly skilled Kosovo-Albanians going abroad to accomplish their studies in European or US-Universities, often returning afterwards. Both groups have continued to migrate in the post conflict period, as low or semi-skilled workers have left illegally, whilst students and the highly skilled have used study abroad or work in international organizations as routes out of the country (Vathi and Black, 2007).

According to a recent report (WB, 2010) about 3.5% of the working population aged 15 years and older reported that they are likely to migrate during the next 12 months and 2.1% stated that they are likely to migrate within the next five years. The same report however reveals that in 2007, which saw the peak of out-migration since 1999, only about 11,000 migrants left Kosovo\* (approximately 1% of the working population) confirming that often self-reported data on the intention to migrate overestimate future flows. Favored migration destinations remain Germany (23%) and Switzerland (23%), the traditional countries of Kosovar migration, and now also the UK, Italy, Austria and the USA (De Zwager et al., 2010).

The pace of migration has not been affected much by the economic crisis. Following the end of the conflict, migration increased until 2007, and then slightly decreased in 2008. However, it is not clear whether the trend reversal in 2008 was a result of the economic crisis. This might have been just a temporary phenomenon because the migration survey results show that in 2009, the

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<sup>11</sup> On April 4, 1999 it was announced that 100,000 Kosovars would be airlifted to temporary safety, including 20,000 to the US and to Turkey; 10,000 to Germany; 6,000 to Norway; and 5,000 each to Austria, Canada and Greece. There were calls for each EU nation to accept a quota or share of the refugees, but Great Britain, France and Italy opposed such a quota scheme ([http://migration.ucdavis.edu/mn/more.php?id=1801\\_0\\_4\\_0](http://migration.ucdavis.edu/mn/more.php?id=1801_0_4_0), accessed on January 15, 2012).

<sup>12</sup> IOM assists only voluntary returnees, hence this number does not include forced returnees.

<sup>13</sup> Albania, Australia, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, FYROM, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Luxemburg, Lithuania, Malta, Montenegro, New Zealand, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, Uruguay and USA.

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level of migrants reached at least the level of 2007. During this same period, remittance flows remained stable (WB, 2010).

### **Return migration**

In 2010, a total of 5,198 persons returned and 60% were forcibly returned whereas between January and August 2011 a total of 2,872 persons returned, a figure much lower than the one for 2010 for the same period (3,464 persons). In 2011, the highest number of forcibly returnees is from Germany, Sweden and Switzerland whereas the majority of readmitted people came from Belgium, Austria and France. The majority of returnees were Albanians (75%), mostly men (79%) and in the age of 18-34 years (61%) (unpublished report of Assessment team of EC). It was not possible to obtain data about returnees that possessed legal permission to stay in foreign countries and even less possible to understand reasons behind their decision to return. According to the Migration Survey of 2009 conducted by the World Bank found that the majority (32.6%) of migrant returnees came back to Kosovo\* because of family reasons and 19.9% returned because they were expelled from the host country. More than 12% returned due to homesickness. Among returned migrants, women migrants in particular improved their education level while abroad. In addition the migration survey shows that 3.2% of migrants acquire a bachelor and above degree abroad and as many as 10% of migrants improved their completed education level from primary to secondary or from secondary to vocational.

### **2.2. Main internal migration trends**

Internal migration trends in Kosovo\* can be divided in several distinct phases:

**The first phase** occurred in the 1970s and to a lesser extent in the 1980s included primarily the migration of better educated rural professionals who were seeking better employment opportunities in the wealthier or other partly industrialized urban centers in Kosovo\*. For a brief period in the 1970s, it appeared that the benefits of socialist industrialization might offer an alternative to emigration. Education began to be seen as a route to economic security, and its popularity soared, even among the most traditional families. New jobs began to appear in public administration and socially owned companies. For a decade or so, some rural Kosovo-Albanians were able to move into employment in Pristina, Prizren or Peja (ESI, 2006b). It is worth noting that under the 1974 Yugoslav Constitution, internal movement of people was broadly allowed although detailed data on the direction or intensity of movements are missing.

The United Nations Population Fund (UNPFA, 2000) reports that in the period up to 1998 internal movements were dominated by rural-urban migration, although the number of those moving between rural areas was also high. According to ESI (ESI, 2006b) there was an annual average migration of between 2,200 and 2,400 persons in the 1970s and 1980s respectively to Prishtina.

Confronted with a low level of industrial development and high unemployment rate, an important internal labour migration of Kosovo-Albanians and Kosovo\* Gorani's had taken place also towards more developed Federal Republics of Former Yugoslavia, primarily Croatia (Zagreb and coastal towns), Serbia and Slovenia. They were famed for their patisseries, bakeries and jewelry shops.

The crisis of Yugoslav socialism from the early 1980s brought urban job creation to an abrupt end; the repression of Milosevic reversed any progress that had been made. By the end of the 1980s, once again only emigration appeared to offer Kosovo\*-Albanian families any hope of material advancement (ESI, 2006).

**The second wave** of rural-urban migration occurred during the conflict of 1998-1999. As mentioned earlier, the conflict had a considerable impact on massive internal movements, with around 200,000 or 20% of those displaced by the war moving within Kosovo\*, mainly towards urban areas, which were considered safer and less affected by the conflict (Haxhikadija, 2009). Many of those rural-urban migrants fled later on together with their urban host families, as the

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escalation of the conflict in Kosovo\* degenerated, to the neighboring countries and to the countries further afield (see the fourth phase of emigration above).

**The third wave** – the post-conflict period (after June 1999) shows a further increase of rural-urban migration. The destruction of many villages during the conflict has forced the rural population to migrate towards the less destroyed towns. Several major international organizations working in Kosovo\* have spoken about the high pace of ‘brain-drain’ from rural to urban centers and overcrowding in the education system in urban areas (Vathi and Black, 2007).

According to a recent study, less than one percent (0.7) of all surveyed respondents in 2009 were living in a different region (or country) than the one where they lived five years earlier (SOK, 2011b). The region experiencing the highest level of in-migration is Prishtina region, with nearly 1.2% of its 2009 population being people who have lived in another region of Kosovo\* five years earlier (SOK, 2011).

This period was also characterized with considerable internal displacements and fleeing out of Kosovo\* of predominantly Serbs and Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians (RAE) due to insecurity. Most urban Serbs displaced in Kosovo\* moved from towns to safer rural areas in central and south eastern Kosovo\*, while displaced Roma moved closer to town suburbs, joining existing local Roma communities. Most internal displacement within Kosovo\* and fleeing out of Kosovo\* took place in 1999, followed by a smaller internal and external movement in 2004.

The UNHCR indicates that the total figure for IDPs in Kosovo\* is 19,088 people (UNHCR, 2010), of which 53% are Serbs, followed by Albanians (39%), Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians of Kosovo\* (RAE) (8.5%), and others (0.5 %). The most IDPs in Kosovo\* are in the Mitrovicë/a region (14,753). Around 7,000 Serb IDPs from South Mitrovicë/a and other municipalities are displaced in towns in the north of Mitrovicë/a district such as Zubin Potok, Leposaviq/Leposavic and Zveqan/Zvecan; there are 1,894 Serb IDPs in the towns of Pristina and Gracanica and in surrounding Serb villages, and some 1,200 in Gnjilane/Gjilan. Over 98% of Albanian IDPs (7,451 people) were displaced from the northern to the southern suburbs of Mitrovicë/a. Roma and Ashkali IDPs are mainly located in Pristina and Gjilan/Gnjilane, and Egyptian IDPs in Peja/Pec. Displacement of Kosovo\*-Albanians mainly took place from North Mitrovica/ë. The majority of Albanian IDPs took refuge in South Mitrovica/ë, which is predominantly of Albanian ethnicity. In terms of other minorities living in Kosovo\* the overall situation is considered good for Ashkali, Egyptians and Bosniaks (please see table 2.2. in the annex for more details).

Finally, it should be noted that a small part of Kosovo\* emigrants who currently live abroad are not planning to return to their places of origin, preferring instead Pristina and other urban places. The main reasons for this preference are greater employment opportunities, investment opportunities and better prospects for their children (De Zwager et al., 2010). Consequently, this will increase further population pressures on urban areas.

### **2.3. Main characteristics of migrants**

It is understandable that Kosovo\* migrants are by no means a homogenous group or population. They are heterogeneous with respect to ethnicity, religion, social status, gender, political affiliation, education, legal status, timing and motivation for leaving (ranging from economic and discriminatory factors to forced migration for political reasons). Most data available about characteristics of migrants is related to emigrants therefore the description of migrant characteristics below relates entirely on them.

Emigrant’s characteristics have changed between the different waves described above. Legal labour emigrants who left Kosovo\* in the 1960s were mostly low-skilled young men, recruited from rural areas or the least developed urban regions. However, with the sharp economic decline in the 1980s, and the targeting of professionals and students by the repressive policies of the Milosevic regime, the proportion of skilled migrants rose over time (Vathi and Black, 2007).

*Who are the emigrants?*

Statistics show that 73% of Kosovo\* emigrants come from rural areas (WB, 2010). Regional differences are not very large; the largest number of migrants originates in the rural areas of Prishtina, Prizren, Gjakova and Mitrovice and for the largest part belongs to the Albanian community. About 25% of current migrants originate in Prishtina. People in this region, which includes the capital city, Prishtina, may include some who have moved from other parts of Kosovo\* to Prishtina before migrating beyond Kosovo\* (ibid).

In terms of education, the majority of migrants have completed secondary education (Mustafa et al., 2007; Vathi and Black, 2007) while only 5 % of migrants had a University degree at the time they left Kosovo\* (WB, 2010).

Kosovo\*'s model of migration has been until 1990s predominantly male-led. However, this trend has changed in later phases, which were dominated by women and children (family reunification). Yet, according to KDHS data, well over half (57.5%) of migrants in 2009 were males (SOK, 2011). The same report reveals that 29% of emigrants were under age 15 in 2009, 70.5% were of working age (15-64), and 0.5% were aged 65 or older. This compares to the 28%, 65%, and 7% for the 2009 resident population of Kosovo\*. Thus, the population abroad is more likely to be of working age and less likely to be age 65 or older than the resident population. This is particularly true for males (SOK, 2011a).

Overall, 80.4% of Kosovar migrants are married and nearly 97% of them have achieved family reunification (De Zwager et al., 2010). Approximately 1.96 persons per migrant household are employed or otherwise generating an income (ibid).

Kosovo\*-Albanians account for the vast majority of the Kosovo\* migrants (the data above refers mainly to them) although migration was also a feature of other ethnic groups for decades, primarily Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians and Goranis. A recent report from UNICEF has estimated that around 50,000 Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptian from Kosovo\* live in Germany alone (UNICEF, 2010). Although they are mainly mentioned in host country discussions as war refugees it should be noted that a considerable number of them also migrated in the 1960s as 'guest workers' largely to Germany and Switzerland.

Kosovo\* Serbs also tend to migrate, but their migration started mainly during and after 1999 – a period of conflict in Kosovo\*. Data from the Riinvest study from 2007 show that 18% of Serb respondents indicated that a household member is living abroad. Over three quarters of them have settled in Serbia; 3% in Montenegro, and 18% in other countries, including Germany and Switzerland (Mustafa et al., 2007). Among Serb emigrants 56% are female and 44% male, the average age is 38; 68% are married and 81% have completed secondary school (ibid).

The difficulty with recent Serb emigrants from Kosovo\* is related to the fact that Serbia still considers Kosovo\* to be a part of its own republic, hence Kosovo\* Serbs were given IDP (rather than refugee) status by the Serbian government.

*Emigrant's status in the host country*

According to the World Bank (WB, 2010) almost 80% of Kosovo\* migrants are citizens or permanent residents of the destination country. Over 70% of them have already stayed more than five years in the receiving countries. This is slightly different from Mustafa et al., who reported that about 60% of Kosovo\* migrants have gained citizenship in the destination country, about 34% have temporary stay permits (2-10 years) of which 1.3% have student visa and the rest of 6% have an undefined status (Mustafa et al., 2007).

Kosovar migrants work mainly in construction (44%), service/tourism (19%) and manufacturing (14%). There are variations among the different countries of destination. In general, Kosovo\* female migrants work mainly in the service sector (39%), manufacturing (26%) and domestic

help (18%) (De Zwager et al., 2010) and as many as 70.7% of them are unskilled laborers (Lerch et al., 2007).

#### *Maintaining links with home*

In general it is well documented that Kosovar migrants maintain strong relations not only with their families but also with their friends and neighbors in Kosovo\*. On average, 85% of migrants visit Kosovo\* once or twice per year, mostly in July (19.8%), August (18.3%) and in December (41%). At the same time 41% of migrants from Kosovo\* communicate with their families and friends in Kosovo\* by Internet on daily basis and 54% of them communicate by telephone and 33% by SMS on weekly basis (De Zwager et al., 2010).

### **3. Nation-wide labor market and social development trends under the influence of emigration**

#### **3.1. Economic and labour market developments**

##### *Impact on labor market*

In Kosovo\* households with migrants participate less in the labor market than households without migrants. The labor force participation rate for households with migrants is 14 percentage points lower than that of non-migrant households (45% versus 59%) (UNDP and USAID, 2010, p. 75). In addition, unemployment in migrant households was found to be much higher than in non-migrant households.

There is some evidence of a brain gain for Kosovo\*. Among returned migrants, those in high-skilled occupations are more likely to have increased their education level and be contributing to Kosovo\*'s labor market (WB, 2010). Of those working in high-skilled occupations, 25% improved their education level compared to 10% in medium-skilled occupations and 6% in low-skilled occupations. Out of all returned migrants, 8% improved their education level while abroad (ibid.). Women migrants improved their education level more than men while abroad; 14% of women compared to only 6% of men (ibid.).

In terms of migration's impact on skills composition of workforce the type of migration that Kosovo\* has experienced so far cannot be qualified as brain drain because the majority (92%) of migrants have attained no more than a secondary level of education (WB, 2010a). In Kosovo\* almost 41% of males and over 65% of females aged 15 years and above have completed less than secondary school (SOK, 2010). This implies that migration did not negatively influence the labor force composition in terms of skill level. Only 5% of migrants had a bachelor degree at the time they left Kosovo\* compared to the 38% of the 15+ population. However, given the high rates of young people (aged 15-24 years) in unemployment in the country (72%) (WB, 2010a), and the prevalence of unemployment among educated young people it is expected that migration will cause brain drain in the future. A youth study (WB, 2008) suggests that it takes on average 10 years for an individual to find work after university.

##### *Remittances: size and trend*

The level of recorded migrants' remittances has increased substantially since the late 1990s. According to Balance of Payments (BoP) statistics, remittance flows increased by about 270% between 2000 and 2004<sup>14</sup>, reached a peak in 2007 after that they decreased (Table 1.1). However, most of these flows come via informal channels so the balance of payment statistics does not capture all flows.

According to the Central Bank of Kosovo\*, remittances reached 505 million Euro or 13% of Kosovo\*'s GDP in 2009. If we refer to the results of the Kosovo\* Remittance Study (UNDP and USAID, 2010) the level of remittances in 2009 was smaller – only 442.7 million Euro, including in-kind contributions and migrant expenditures in Kosovo\* (Diaspora tourism meaning

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<sup>14</sup> The only official available data is from 2004.

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expenditures that Diaspora makes during their holidays in Kosovo\*). The average amount of remittances per household received in a month in 2009 is close to the average monthly salary of 320 Euros in Kosovo\* (ibid.). The Migration Survey (ibid.) asked respondents to report the total amount of remittances received *during the last 12 months*. The national average of reported household remittances was €320 per month. The amount is not significantly different between urban and rural areas. This is based on total remittances captured by the Migration Survey (in the amount of €216 million). However, it is common in such surveys for respondents to under-report their income. According to the BoP data from the Central Bank of Kosovo\* (WB, 2010), remittances in 2009 were about €500 million, equivalent to roughly €500 per month / per household.

The decrease in remittances from 2008 to 2009 could be partially attributed to the global economic crisis of 2009, although, the results from the UNDP and USAID study (ibid.) revealed that despite the global financial crisis the majority of Kosovo\* migrants have full time jobs – as many as 89% of migrants were either employed in the public sector or they were employers themselves. Hence, the reasons for fewer remittances might lie somewhere else. According to another study (Haxhikadrija, 2009) the majority of migrants in Switzerland have revealed that they have reduced the amount of money which they send home. One of the main reasons mentioned during the interviews was the fact that many of them have brought their closest family to Switzerland, therefore the number of dependents back home has been reduced and consequently the amount of remittances is also reduced. It is found that the share of households that receive remittances is highest among households of the Albanian community (UNDP and USAID, 2010).

Migration survey of 2009 (UNDP and USAID, 2010) found that most of the assistance received in the form of remittances is used to finance the immediate consumption needs of households. Over 45% of the total cash remittances received are used for consumption, while only 11% are used for business investment. Another 12% of remittances are used for housing investment.

The education level of the head of the households differs between households that receive remittances and those that do not. The UNDP and USAID survey (2010) found that the heads of households that do not receive remittances have, on average, completed one more year of education compared to the heads of households that receive remittances (ibid.). This might indicate that expecting remittances family members are less worried about their employment prospects hence they invest less in education compared to non-receiving remittance households or it may as well suggest that migration is more pronounced among lower educated families i.e. with lower educational background of household head. Namely, the unemployment within remittance-receiving households was found to be 57% whereas the unemployment within households that do not receive remittances was found to be 50%. The average monthly income of a household in Kosovo\* was found to be 442 Euros. Excluding income from remittances, remittance-recipient households were found to earn less than households that do not receive remittances. In terms of education households with migrants or receiving remittances do not seem to have higher enrolment rates compared with households that do not receive remittances.

The UNDP and USAID (UNDP and USAID, 2010) did not find strong evidence for the relationship between remittances and reservation wage<sup>15</sup>. Specifically, unemployed head of households who receive remittances did not require higher salaries as compared to unemployed head of households who do not receive remittances. Thus in Kosovo\* remittances do not increase the reservation wage (ibid.).

With regard to educational prospects the Kosovo\* Remittance Study (UNDP, 2010) found that households that receive remittances on average spend 7% more on education than households that do not receive remittances. Households in rural areas in general find it harder to meet the costs of travelling to educational facilities than households in urban areas. Remittances however

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<sup>15</sup> Reservation wage is a wage below which a person will not be willing to work.



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ease the difficulty of meeting these costs in rural areas both among men and women heads of households (ibid.). The same survey (UNDP, 2010) found out that households that receive remittances spend, on average, 22% more on healthcare than non-recipient households. The study found as well that remittances ease the difficulty of meeting the cost of seeing the doctor if the household head is female.

In relation to investments in Kosovo\* from migrants, Riinvest study on Diaspora in 2007 (Mustafa et al., 2008) asked migrants (1,091 interviews conducted with migrants at border points during summer and winter holidays) found that one fourth of the respondents have invested in a business or infrastructure in Kosovo\* and in around 86% of those who have invested rely on their relatives to manage the business in Kosovo\*, 7% declare to manage the businesses directly and travel frequently to Kosovo\*, 3% employ non-relatives or have a managing board to run their businesses. Another study supports contribution of migrants in business development: based on self-declaration of 500 business owners in Kosovo\*, a quarter of all their businesses were opened with the support from migrants in the form of cash support (42.9%), through joint investment (11.5%) or through support in the form of vehicles, equipment, raw materials etc. (6.5%) (Haxhikadrija, 2009).

According to the visitors survey 2007 (Mustafa et al., 2008), the main reasons for not planning to invest include the lack of information by Kosovo\* institutions on business opportunities (30.5%), corruption (26%) and unfavorable fiscal policies (18.6%). Linked to this, visitors were asked about their perceptions for the business environment in Kosovo\* around 28% of visitors from Diaspora indicate that they are not informed at all; half of the visitors note that the business environment is unfavorable, whereas the rest consider the Kosovo\* business environment as favorable for investment.

### **3.2. Social Security**

Most returnees have until recently benefited from bilateral agreements that were signed between their host countries and Yugoslavia in 1968. However with Kosovo\*'s declaration of independence in 2008, they are now frequently facing challenges in receiving their pensions and other benefits from the countries where they have worked.<sup>16</sup>

Currently not all agreements are active. The agreement with Germany is still running and is being fully implemented. According to this agreement person that have had social contributions in Germany and decide to return can claim their contributions back under some conditions one of which is to wait for at least 24 months after the last date of social contribution in Germany. As regards pensions because of the introduction of a pension system based on individual capital savings in Kosovo\* in 1999, pension contributions made to this system and payments made are not anymore coordinated in the frame of this agreement.

By the end of year 2009 the agreement with Austria was partially implemented – this means that Austria was not considering the working experience that persons have had from Kosovo\*, but only account for the experience in Austria. Hence, if a person has worked for less than 15 years in Austria he/she will not be eligible for pension. Previously the 15 years were made up of a sum from working experience in Austria and Kosovo\* as well. As a result of discussions between Austrian and Kosovo\* authorities in 2011 an agreement was reached to use the old agreement and all cases that were refused from 2009 during November and December 2011 were analyzed and positively appraised.

As for Switzerland the previous agreement signed with Yugoslavia is not anymore valid for all persons who reach their retirement age and decide to return to Kosovo\*. Indeed in May 2010, Switzerland stopped implementation of the social security agreement with former Yugoslavia - a decision that affected severely a large population of Kosovan migrants in Switzerland who

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<sup>16</sup> Information for this Chapter has been obtained from the interview undertaken with the Head of the Pension Administration Department within the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare Mr. Izet Shala (Table 2.3).

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represent the biggest share of Kosovo\*'s migrants abroad. All persons that reached retirement age before the 1<sup>st</sup> of April 2010 and decided to return to Kosovo\* are entitled to their pension, but this does not hold for those that reach the retirement age after 1<sup>st</sup> of April 2010. According to the Head of the Pension Administration Department of Kosovo\* this decision has been decided with the explanation that the agreement does not correspond with legislation of both countries. The Ministry is currently in discussions with the Swiss authorities and a meeting was held in 2010. One of the preconditions made by the Swiss authorities in order to sign a new agreement is the approval of the Law on pension schemes, the Law on Pension Fund and approval of the Law on Social Insurance by the Kosovo\* parliament, which laws will regulate issues for Swiss citizens.

Within the Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare there is a Pension Administration Department that is in charge of receiving and processing claims of Kosovars who used to work abroad but who are living in Kosovo\* at the time when they reach retirement age. The Division is located in Prishtina and treats claims for whole Kosovo\*. According to the Head of Division there is a big number of claims each year and majority are related to Germany, followed by Austria, Switzerland and fewer from France, Italy and other countries. The Division receives a vast number of claims related to family pensions (e.g. wife claiming the pension of her husband after his death), disability; retirement pension and return of contributions made. Claims are carefully treated and passed to countries where the person used to work and now wants to exercise his/her right to pension. One concern raised by the Head of Division is that people are not informed that the Department is the only institution that can receive and treat claims. Due to lack of information people use private lawyers to work out their claims which, once received by authorities in foreign countries, usually get sent back to the Division, where they again need to be treated. This is also causing extra work for foreign authorities. Additionally due to a high number of claims received it is considered that there is a need for capacity development and supply of equipment.

### **3.3. Poverty and Social Exclusion**

As indicated in Section 1, the poverty rate in Kosovo\* was higher than the average rate for Yugoslavia. In 2001, using data from the Living Standard Measurement Survey (LSMS) of Kosovo\* it was estimated that 50% of population lived below the poverty line (WB, 2007). In 2005, in a report based on the Household Budget Survey conducted in 2002/03 the poverty rate was estimated at 37%, whereas in 2005 it was estimated that the poverty rate was about 45%. However these figures should not be directly compared with each other due to methodological differences in all three estimation waves. The latest poverty estimate produced by the World Bank (2011a) for 2009 reveal that 34% and 12% of population lived below absolute and extreme poverty lines respectively. Again due to sampling differences the 2009 and 2005/06 and 2003/04 waves although based on the data from HBS are not comparable.

Kosovo\*'s youth is disproportionately poor. Kosovo\* has an exceptionally young population by European standards, with an estimated one-third under the age of 15, and approximately one-half younger than 24 (WB, 2011a). As young people have both high poverty rates and constitute a large share of the overall population, they are a sizeable quota of the poor population. In 2009, more than 40% of the poor were below age 20 and 60% were below age 30 (WB, 2011a). This compares to 38% and 56% of the total population in those age groups, respectively. Persons living in female-headed households tend to be slightly poorer than those in male-headed households. According to the 2009 HBS approximately 5% of the population lives in households headed by women, and poverty is three percentage points higher in those households than in households headed by men.

There is a correlation between education and poverty in Kosovo\*. Completing primary education leads to slightly better poverty outcomes than not completing primary, and the incremental gain is larger when going from complete primary to complete secondary, and even larger when going from complete secondary to complete tertiary education (WB, 2010). According to the World

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Bank, in 2002, the risk of extreme poverty among smaller groups of ethnic minorities (namely Roma) was more than two times higher than that of the Albanians and the Serbs, while in 2003, school enrolment rates in secondary education among them were two times below the rates of Albanians and Serbs (WB, 2005).

There have been a number of impacts of migration on the social situation in Kosovo\*. Migrant remittances for instance have to a certain extent filled the gap in the social benefits system. According to World Bank Poverty Assessment Report about 1 in 5 households in Kosovo\* reported having received remittances from abroad (WB, 2007). By comparison only 13% of the population received social assistance benefits (WB, 2007).

Remittances are important source of income hence support reduction of poverty in Kosovo\*. Removing remittances sent from abroad, the poverty rate in Kosovo\* would increase by 2.2 percentage points, and the impact would be much larger, expectedly, to the remittance-receiving households (ibid.).

The incidence of poverty for the sub-population with migrants was found to be lower by 7 percentage points compared to the general population (WB, 2007). The higher level of consumption and the lower incidences of poverty for households with migrants were found even larger for rural areas. For instance, the incidence of poverty for households with migrants abroad was 20% points lower than similar households in rural areas without migrants. Findings of the World Bank in 2007 suggest that without migration poverty incidence would be higher and more concentrated in rural areas. So any efforts that lead to drastic reductions in the current migration patterns has the potential to worsen the well-being of the Kosovo\* population, to widen the already emerging rural-urban disparities in well-being, and possibly to lead to instability, especially in the rural areas (ibid.).

Two researchers (Shaorshadze and Miyata, 2010) using HBS and Migration survey data from 2009 empirically analyzed the impact of remittances on poverty in Kosovo\*. Their findings suggest that remittances had significant effect in improving welfare in Kosovo\*, and were predominantly allocated towards individuals with truly low welfare level. Results also indicate that the welfare improving effect of remittances is primarily driven by selection into migration by individuals from households of genuinely low level of welfare and human capital. Their empirical results also revealed that despite being allocated primarily to households whose characteristics are correlated with low levels of welfare; remittances do not have significant effect on aggregate inequality, which is mostly determined by unobserved heterogeneity.

Meyer et al., 2010 analyzed the impact of remittances on poverty with a focus only on the rural households. What is found is that the family size is smaller in households without remittances and the dependency ratio is significantly lower. It is found that households that do not receive remittances have higher per capita income compared to households that receive remittances. In households with remittances it is found that half of income comes from remittances. Related to the impact on poverty it is found that poverty level would rise substantially if families would not be financially supported by their migrated family members. Another finding from this study is that remittances contribute to a more equal income distribution in rural areas.

Using data from the 2006/07 Household Budget Survey conducted by SOK, Chzhen (2008) found that households with remittances from abroad as the main source of income have the lower child poverty rate of 38% than households with private sector wages as the main source (43%; 49% of children in Kosovo\* are poor considering the total poverty line and 19% are classed as extremely poor using the food line). Although 10% of all children live in households relying on overseas remittances, the corresponding proportion of all poor children is 8%.

In terms of non-material exclusion, a significant part of the population appears to suffer multiple deprivations, material and non-material, with 8% of the population both poor and lacking indoor water and sanitation, and 9% being poor and lacking a telephone and a bathroom (WB, 2007). Lack of access to and poor quality of many essential services is important also, especially in

rural areas. In 2004, 48.12% of the rural population lacked access to piped water compared to just 6.08% of urban dwellers. Another significant gap emerged in terms of the percentage of people whose nearest health centre is over 5km away, being 14.23% in rural areas compared to 0.69% in urban areas. Health outcomes show a marked difference, too, with 18.26% of the rural population expected to die before age 60, compared to just 4.21% of the urban population (EU Commission, 2008).

#### **4. Labour market and social development trends in net migration loss/gain regions**

##### **4.1. Identification of net migration loss/gain regions**

To identify the net migration loss and gain regions data are used from the recent report published by the Statistical Office of Kosovo\* (SOK, 2011b). This report is developed based on data from the Kosovo\* Demographic, Socioeconomic and Reproductive Health Survey (KDHS) of the year 2009<sup>17</sup>. The KDHS asked all respondents whether they were born in a different municipality than the one where they lived at the time of the survey. If they did they were asked about the municipality, region and country of birth. From this question lifetime migration rates can be defined at the municipality, regional and international levels. For lifetime migration the comparison is made between where the person lives at the time of KDHS survey to the place where they were born. If those places differ than the person is considered a lifetime migrant. The KDHS also asked respondents where they lived one year before the survey and five years<sup>18</sup> before survey and responses were again recorded at three levels of geography. Since very few people moved during the one year before the survey the report (ibid.) does not report data. Using data from this survey finding for lifetime internal migration are presented in Table 4.1 (this table refers to the in and out migration from each region during the whole lifetime).

Altogether 6.4% of 2009 KDHS survey respondents are lifetime migrants i.e. lived in a different region (or country) at the time of the 2009 KDHS survey. From data outlined in Table 4.1 it can be noted that Prishtina is the region with the highest in-migration where nearly 11% of respondents now living in Prishtina region were born in other regions.

On net, the population of Prishtina is 7% larger because of the net internal net lifetime migration. Net gain regions are also: Peja; Ferizaj and Gjilan. However due to its significance we will focus on Prishtina only as a gain region which has occurred due to high in-migration since the end of the 1999 conflict.

The net loss regions are: Gjakova with 6.4%, followed by Mitrovica of 5.2% as regions that have been subject to relatively high losses of lifetime migrants over the years. This is not a surprise given the poor economic conditions in these two regions (SOK, 2011b).

Another important source of information is derived from the question asked about inter-regional migration over the five-year period between 2004 and 2009 (last five years). The patterns found are quite similar to those shown about the lifetime migration (which includes also moves conducted in the last five years as well as earlier moves). Data are presented in Table 4.2 including inter-regional in the last five years (see Annex).

The data in Table 4.2 indicate that again Prishtina is the region that has experienced the highest percentage of in-migrants (1.25%) whereas Mitrovica has experienced the highest share of out-migrants.

##### **4.2. Labor market development in net migration loss/gain regions**

Looking at the unemployment figures for year 2010 in the two groups of regions (net migration loss and gain regions) data from the Ministry of Work and Social Welfare (MPMS, 2011) reveal that the situation in the net loss regions is as follows: Mitrovica has the greatest number of

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<sup>17</sup> Interviews were conducted with 3,992 households coming up to 23,695 resident members of these households (and some information on emigrant household members from heads of the sampled households).

<sup>18</sup> The five year question was asked only to persons who were aged five years and older at the time of the survey.

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registered unemployed people (64,790); followed by Prizren with 59,135 and Gjakova with 40,821. With regard to the net migration gain regions the highest number of unemployed people is registered in Prishtina (64,374). However these are absolute numbers and count only those registered as unemployed at Employment Office and are not available as relatives' number based on regions.

#### **4.3. Poverty and social exclusion in net migration loss/gain regions**

Having identified net migration loss and gain regions in this section the focus lies on analyzing poverty and social exclusion in those regions. With regard to poverty data are used from the latest World Bank poverty estimates (WB, 2011a).

Data in Table 4.3 suggest that there is no consistent pattern of poverty incidence in the two groups. The highest rate of poverty is found in the migration loss region respectively in Gjakova region, followed by Ferizaj that belongs to the net gain migration region and then followed by Mitrovica (again a net loss migration region). Altogether it can be noted that the average rate of poverty is higher in the net loss migration region.

Since it was noted that remittances are an important source of family income in Kosovo\* hence contributing to the poverty reduction Figure 4.1 shows information on share of remittance recipient and non-recipient households by region. Analyzing data in Table 4.1 and in Table 4.3 (Appendix) it can be seen that there is no indication of a linkage between poverty and migration i.e. remittance receivers in Table 4.1 by regions.

The data indicate that the highest rate of households receiving remittances is found in Peja and Gjilan that fall in the net gain migration regions followed by Prizren and Mitrovica belonging to the net loss migration regions. The lowest rate is found in Ferizaj. Looking at the data in Table 4.4 it can be noted that among net gain migration regions Prishtina has the highest share of households excluded from the factor markets across regions whereas among net loss regions, Prizren performs worse with almost 10% of people being excluded from the factor markets. The average rate of excluded households is higher among the net gain migration regions: 8.25% compared to 6.4% in net loss migration regions.

With regard to exclusion from basic food and services across the two groups again the average rate of excluded households is found in the net gain migration groups and the leader is found to be Ferizaj region followed by Prizren from the net loss migration group (See Annex, Table 4.4).

The last indicator presented in Table 4.4 is the one related to access to utility services. Similar to two previous indicators the situation is found to be worse in the net gain migration region (with average of 22.1% with 10.5% of households excluded from utility services for the net gain and net loss migration regions respectively).

## **5. Impact of migration on vulnerable groups**

### **5.1. Women**

Very little research has been done regarding Kosovo\* female returnees and even less about women left behind by migrating family members. It should be noted however that the Kosovo\* migration is characterized by relatively high maturity cycle with a very high rate of family reunification in the destination country. The result is that only 3% of married migrants have not yet achieved the family reunification in the destination country (De Zwager et al. 2010). Consequently since 1990s the issue of women left behind is not very critical in the case of Kosovo\*.

#### *Women left behind*

The limited data that exist in terms of challenges faced by women left behind reveal that households that receive remittances spend on average 22 % more on healthcare than non-recipient households (UNDP, 2010). The study found that there are significant differences

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between men and women with regard to access to health care as 51% of the women heads of households in Kosovo\* ranked meeting the cost of seeing a doctor as “very difficult” or “fairly difficult,” compared to 36% of men being heads of households (UNDP, 2010). The women heads of households that receive remittances in general find it easier to meet the costs of seeing a doctor. Specifically, the share of female heads of households who find it difficult to meet the costs of seeing a doctor is 9 % lower among remittance-receiving households. Among male heads of households, the receipt of remittances does not have a significant effect on the difficulty of meeting the cost of seeing a doctor. Therefore, the study found that remittances ease the difficulty of meeting the costs of seeing the doctor if the household head is female (UNDP, 2010). However, research has found out that gender-based differences are significant only for households in rural areas. In urban areas there are no gender- based differences in the reported difficulty of meeting the costs of seeing a doctor with respect to financial support from abroad.

In terms of remittances there is evidence that in Kosovo\* they are dominated by men at both ends – sending and receiving. Almost in 80% of the cases the remitting person is male (in order of frequency: brother, son, father, husband), with less than 10% of cases having a female remitter (sister, daughter, wife, mother). Most importantly, on the receiving end, in 90% of cases, the person who manages the finances in Kosovo\* is male (father, brother, son, uncle etc.), which makes women left behind heavily dependent on the decisions of the male members of the family (De Zwager et al., 2010).

The close studying of two villages in Kosovo\* (Cerçe and Lubishte) by ESI (2006) revealed that although migration has been a link with the outside world it has not brought development and modernization to these two villages (ESI, 2006.). Instead migration has helped to preserve the patriarchal household in Kosovo\* and has contributed to serious underinvestment in education for women and lack of innovation and entrepreneurship (ibid.).

#### *Returned women*

Women who have returned to Kosovo\* face many challenges. According to an author (Dahinden, 2005) women who have returned to Kosovo\* have enlarged their cultural resources thus redefining their roles by picking from the repertoire of global cultural symbols, which in many cases did not correspond with the thinking of the local community. Returned women view themselves and their gender roles as being transformed from one pole – ‘tradition’ – to the other – ‘modernity’, the former pole being connoted negatively, the latter positively by them.

Consequently, Dahinden (ibid.) finds that female migrants who returned to Kosovo\* after 1999 often face difficulties due to their different perception of gender roles and living a ‘modern’ life. They didn’t form any network or became part of any women or men network in their home country. Their main observed feature was “distinction and exclusion” vis-à-vis the women who remained home and did not migrate, remaining at the same time regular contacts with their friends and networks in destination country.

By distancing themselves from the stereotype of ‘the traditional Albanian woman’ they actively created a ‘new’ gender identity on the basis of global cultural symbols. Hence, the Albanian female returnees dichotomized gender representations between ‘European emancipation’ and ‘Albanian traditions’ (ibid.).

#### *Employment*

Since very few women from Kosovo\* migrate for jobs, migration is doing little to alleviate the high female unemployment rate in Kosovo\*. It appears that low female participation in the labor market and their lack of skills are partly due to social and cultural norms biased against women working outside the house (WB, 2010). Most women in Kosovo\* work without any formal contract, and more women than men were fired between 2006 and 2007.

In terms of returned women, employment programs specifically targeting repatriated persons do not exist in any of the regions of Kosovo\*. Officials of regional employment centers and



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vocational training centers who were consulted by Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (2009) in all regions were not aware of any specific government programs set up to assist this group of persons with employment or training measures (OSCE, 2009) No programmes/projects have been developed to enhance employment opportunities of repatriated women at the local level, nor have income generation activities been promoted by relevant local authorities.

### *Internally Displaced Women in Kosovo\**

The effect of displacement on the activity status of women differs among Albanians, Serbs and RAE communities. It should be noted that collectively for all three ethnic groups, gender differences were present even before displacement, but displacement had mixed impact in gender differences. Among Serbian IDPs, there were significant gender differences in employment status before displacement: 46% of women were formally employed, compared to 70% of men. After displacement, the huge drop in employment effectively eliminated these differences: in 2008, the proportion of employed women fell to 18% while the proportion of employed men fell to 21%. During the same period, 42% of women were inactive compared to only 20% inactive men. Among RAE community the proportion of unemployed women increased from 15% before displacement to 27% in 2008 (DRC, 2009). Displacement had limited effect among Albanian ID women.

## **5.2. Children/Youth**

As described above, most Kosovo\* migrants have been reunified with their families, consequently very few children are left behind today. Nearly 97% of married Kosovar migrants have achieved family reunification (De Zwager et al., 2010) therefore most of the migrant's children are living with their parents in the destination country.

### *Children left behind*

There are very rare cases where both parents have migrated and left their children behind in Kosovo\*. In most cases they are left behind with their mother awaiting reunification. With regard to education of children left behind, according to the LSMS 2000 data, the proportion of remittances used for education is low (3% of children are concerned). Such a result confirms the fact that remittances in Kosovo\* are essentially used to finance consumption goods, a result that is also observed in other contexts<sup>19</sup>. These results are also confirmed by the World Bank Poverty Assessment Report (WB, 2007), which concludes that “*comparing urban sub-populations with migrants to urban sub-population without migrants but who have the same or nearly the same observable characteristics, shows no difference in enrolment rates*” (WB, 2007, p. 33). In the international debate recommendations regarding the use of the amounts transferred are made frequently. However, attempts to direct remittances towards education or investments are rarely successful.

### *Returned youth*

With regard to returned youth, some of the observed aspects from Dahinden (Westin et al., 2010) include the fact that youth who returned tend to network primarily with other young returnees. In many cases they use the language they spoke in the destination country to distinct their group from non-migrants. Other differences among girls who returned and the ones who stayed are in the form of going out with their friends. In more traditional societies there is a tendency to limit the going out for young girls and the only ones that continue to go out are the returned young girls. This in many cases has created the division between the traditional Albanian versus European Albanian, the latter referring to returned migrants (ibid).

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<sup>19</sup> See for instance World Bank, 2006 for CIS countries and Oroczo, 2004 for Latino-American migrants, Lerch et al., 2007 for Serbia.

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Forced return has a particularly negative impact on children who have pursued education outside of Kosovo\* for many years, were integrated into different schooling systems and often face language barriers upon their return to Kosovo\*. Many of these children lack sufficient knowledge of the Albanian or Serbian language, and consequently face difficulties in following classes in the native languages as well as in adjusting to a different curriculum and school system. Furthermore, problems arise in the context of securing documents required for enrolment (e.g. birth certificates, recognition of diplomas or certificates issued in other countries) (OSCE, 2009).

Perhaps the most difficult situation is observed among returned youth of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian young returnees. According to a recent UNICEF report, three out of four returned children no longer attend school in Kosovo\*. A considerable number do not possess a birth certificate and are therefore unable to exercise their right to educational, medical or welfare services (UNICEF, 2010). For most of them, Kosovo\* is a distant country they know only from stories told to them by their parents or relatives and from news reports. They hope for nothing more than the legal right to stay in Germany (ibid). And, those who have already been returned to Kosovo\* by force, dream of returning to what they consider their 'home'. As a result many deported children and youths are expected to attempt to return to Germany, where the only prospect awaiting them is the status of an illegal immigrant (ibid).

### **5.3. Elderly**

In Albania, one of the key social issues arising from the age and gender selectivity (mostly young men emigrating) of Albanian migration is family separations and the abandonment of many old people. In Kosovo\* social capital and mutual-help between migrant and home community play important roles starting from pre-departure planning and lasting until eventual return and reintegration. These social networks have played a crucial role in addressing migration-related risks (De Zwager et al., 2010). Interviews with migrants and their household conducted by Haxhikadrija (2009) confirm that the decision to migrate is made jointly with the rest of the extended family and part of the decision is that at least one of the sons or daughters should stay home and take care of parents while the emigrants agree to remit and financially support the rest of the family. Several interviews with households with at least one member of the family who is a migrant revealed that the system has worked quite well so far and that abandonment of elderly in Kosovo\* is not a widespread phenomenon.

This is indirectly confirmed by the 2009 KDHS data, which shows that Kosovo\* households continue to be traditionally large. Households are often comprised of extended family members spanning several generations, especially in rural areas (SOK, 2011b). The overwhelming majority (83%) of households had four or more members, over 53 % had between four and six members, and 30 % had seven or more members (ibid.). The proportion of households with one to two members is relatively small - only 9 % (SOK, 2011b).

In addition, a small fraction of migrants (9.6%), and mainly in Germany, Switzerland and Austria, has their parents living in their migration household (De Zwager et al., 2010).

There are no studies in Kosovo\* regarding the socio-economic challenges faced by the relatively small number of elderly parents who are left alone by children migrants. Some studies from Albania reveal the phenomenon of the socially-isolated 'elderly orphans' and their coping strategies, one of which was to follow their children abroad to provide childcare for their grandchildren, enabling both the working-age parents to engage in paid work. Similar coping mechanisms are probably true in the case of Kosovo\* as well.

Yet, the prevailing phenomenon in Kosovo\* is that of the elderly parents living with other members of the extended family who did not migrate. In this respect remittances sent from emigrant children play a crucial role in addressing the needs of the elderly parents. Discussions with migrants in Switzerland (Haxhikadrija, 2009) have revealed that the sense of obligation to the extended family (read parents) has to a certain extent remained among members of

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Diaspora even now as the majority of them are still remitting in Kosovo\* albeit with decreased amounts. While they remit with the same frequency as before (most of them remit either monthly or twice a year) the majority of them declared to have reduced the amount that is sent home, primarily because they now have less reasons to remit. With shifted priorities of the Kosovo\* Diaspora and global trends of migrant workers facing job losses, anti-migrant sentiment and even violence in the deepening global financial crisis one should question whether the amount of remittances to Kosovo\* will decrease in the near future and how this will affect elderly and other vulnerable groups left behind.

#### **5.4. Post-Conflict Refugees and IDPs**

Regardless of their ethnic origin, IDPs' in Kosovo\* mainly face challenges regarding livelihood opportunities, proper shelter in the place of displacement, personal security and freedom of movement. Other needs include the provision of electricity, water, and heating and public transportation. However, certain ethnic groups face more challenges than others. The lack of personal documentation in Kosovo\* represents a problem only for Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptian (RAE) IDPs, 51.9% of which lack some documentation<sup>20</sup>. The lack of documents affect the ability of IDPs to obtain social benefits (pensions, unemployment, etc.), to exercise property rights and to a certain extent their ability to receive good health care (DRC, 2009).

All IDPs in Kosovo\* are in an unfavorable employment situation. However, the Serbian and RAE IDPs are in a significantly worse position than Albanian IDPs. According to a recent survey (DRC, 2009) displacement had a strong impact on the activity status of IDPs in Kosovo\*. Comparative data on activity status before displacement, one year after displacement and in 2008 indicate a significant deterioration of the labor market position one year after displacement for all three groups. Only modest improvements can be noticed between the two last periods observed, and the activity status of IDPs in 2008 is still much worse than it was before displacement. The proportion of IDPs that are unemployed remains twice the pre-displacement level; the proportions of people who are employed has increased to just half of the pre-displacement level; and while the proportion of informally employed IDPs remains stable, the proportion of inactive IDPs is decreasing, indicating that more people are attempting to provide for their household's livelihood in very difficult situations.

The same survey shows that the three ethnic groups have different income generation options at their disposal. For Serbian IDP families in Kosovo\*, the most frequent primary source of income is the IDP allowance paid by the Serbian government (36.1% families), the second most frequently reported primary source of income is wage (32.8%), and the third is pension (23%). For Albanian IDP families, the most important source of income is a wage (44.8%), followed by casual labor income (22.9%) and a pension (8.6%). For RAE IDP families in Kosovo\*, the most important source of income is social assistance (47.5%), then casual labor (30.5%) and a pension (10.2%) (ibid.).

With regard to education at pre-school age, the level of pre-school attendance is highest among Albanian children (22.2%) and less for Serbian and RAE children (7.6% and 5.8%). School attendance for children aged 7-14 is similar among Serbian and Albanian children (95.6% and 90.9%) but much lower among RAE children (56.5%). At high school level, RAE children are represented to an even lesser extent, with only 25% attending education; this proportion is 76% among Serbian children and 69% among Albanian children. At age 19-30, no RAE IDP in the sample reported attending university, compared to 22% of Serbian IDPs and 22.2% of Albanian IDPs who are students (ibid.).

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<sup>20</sup> The most frequent missing documents among the RAE IDP households in Kosovo\* are passports (55%), driving licences (48%), birth certificates (41%), marriage certificates (31%) and personal ID (21%) (DRC, 2009).

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A significant portion (79%) of remaining Serbs in Kosovo\* also plan to migrate, due to unemployment, due to dissatisfaction with the current political situation and problems related to freedom of movement (Mustafa et al., 2007).

### **5.5. Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians (RAE)**

The Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian (RAE) communities in Kosovo\* are mostly concentrated in Gjakova municipality (around 16%), Fushë Kosovë (around 13%), Prizren (around 13%), Peja (around 11%) and in Ferizaj municipality (around 9%), and much less in other municipalities (KFOS, 2009).

Around 76.8% of them own a house/flat and/or a property with a building permit. Around 7.68% live in settlements without an urban permit.

Unlike the situation with IDPs the situation with the RAE who did not migrate is much better in terms of personal documents. According to a recent KFOS report (ibid.) 83.46% of respondents said that they are registered and possess identification documents. There were no major gender differences in civil registration and in fact women had slightly higher percentage (84.7%) compared to men, 82.3% of whom are registered and possess documents (ibid.).

The concerning element is the lack of civil registration for the age group 0-6, where 14.7% of them were not registered in the birth registers (KFOS, 2009). This age group is exposed to various epidemic diseases, preventable by vaccination, and lack of registration causes has direct impact on the access to vaccination service and health care system, as a whole. It should also be taken into account that individuals of this age group are easy victims of child trafficking and their lack of registration makes it very difficult for law enforcement bodies to find and protect them. The numbers of unregistered children might increase further by repatriation initiatives.

As many as 20% of RAE families have average monthly incomes of up to €50/month, 20.06% have incomes varying from €50-80/month, 19.75% have incomes varying up to €120 a month. 17.33% of families say they have incomes from €120-180 a month, 13.09% manage to have incomes from €181-300 a month only 3.76% of respondents have incomes of over €300 a month (KFOS, 2009). The average monthly income in Kosovo\* is €262 (Investment Promotion Agency Kosovo\*, <http://www.invest-ks.org/?cont=39>).

Illiteracy rate among RAE is 19.93%. There are major gender differences in the level of education to the detriment of the female gender. The level of illiteracy among women is much higher compared to men. While 11.2% of men have not finished any year of education this percentage among women is three times higher. 30.2% of female respondents said they never enrolled in school (KFOS, 2009).

In terms of migration, the same survey reveals that around 20% of RAE households declared that they have a family member living abroad. Those that said they have a family member living in a Western country also said they maintain good contact with those family members either through visits in Kosovo\* or through telephone conversations.

Over half of those living abroad help their families in Kosovo\*, whereas a considerable number of them (around 42%) cannot help their families in Kosovo\*, despite the fact that they live and work abroad because of insufficient finances. Over half, or around 52% of respondents declared that their families are totally dependent or highly dependent on such assistance (KFOS, 2009).

The lack of access to housing and accommodation for repatriated persons remains a major obstacle to sustainable return and reintegration. In many cases, properties have been destroyed during the conflict or are found inhabitable after long periods of absence. In addition, one of the most important problems faced by persons belonging to Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities is their uncertainty or an unregulated legal status related to housing, including issues related to land ownership. Those who used to live in informal property tenure prior to their departure from Kosovo\* face particular challenges in accessing housing or any kind of

accommodation upon return. In many cases, repatriated persons find temporary solutions through relatives. However, many cases remain without long-term housing solutions. Some repatriated persons have only found temporary shelter in collective centers or displaced persons' camps (OSCE, 2009).

## **6. Policy responses**

Although migration has been without doubt a feature of the Kosovo\* society for decades, remarkably very little research and analysis has been carried out to understand the impact that migration had on Kosovo\*'s socio-economic development. Consequently very few policies to maximize its contribution to socio-economic development have been adopted by the Kosovo\* government (WB, 2011).

In fact, Kosovo\* has to address primarily three main migration issues: the high emigration rate, the forced return and repatriation of its own nationals and poor rural development.

One of the main policy documents concerning migration in Kosovo\* is the National Strategy and Action Plan on Migration of the Republic of Kosovo\* 2009-2012. This strategy addresses issues related to emigration but also to immigration to the Republic of Kosovo\*. The main strategic objectives encompass inter alia the promotion of circular migration, the prevention and the fights against all forms of irregular migration by developing legal and institutional mechanism, strengthening of border controls and the development a sustainable system monitoring all forms of migration flows (Benedekt et al., 2011).

### **6.1. Encouragement of circular migration**

As indicated above one mechanism to reduce unemployment in Kosovo\* would be promotion and support of circular migration. This is indicated also in the Kosovo\* Strategy for Migration where "Promotion of legal and circular migration" is defined as one of the main objectives (Kosovo\* Government, 2009). It aims to advance capacities and utilize more efficiently existing centers and employment offices to provide information and services with regard to legal migration. It also looks to include members of the Diaspora in policy development and utilization of remittances and attraction of investments.

Another document that has as its objective the promotion of circular migration is the *Strategy of the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare Sectoral Strategy 2009-2013* (still as a draft strategy). The fourth objective of this strategy is to develop cooperation with countries in the region, Europe and wider to increase employment opportunities for Kosovo\*'s labor force.

At country level only one agreement has existed so far. This is an agreement between France and Kosovo\* signed on 26<sup>th</sup> of June 2008 by the Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare (MLSW) for Kosovo\* and Embassy of France in Prishtina. The aim of this agreement was to foster exchange of work and social welfare aiming to preparing bilateral and multilateral agreements. However according to the Head of Employment Division<sup>21</sup> in the MLSW no employment has happened as part of this agreement. According to Mr. Leka although it is considered that circular migration is an important mechanism to reduce the high unemployment rate no agreements have been signed so far. Recently tentative have been made with Austria but there is no agreement signed yet. According to Mr. Leka a burden for Kosovo\* is that quotas for migrants from Kosovo\* are being used by Serbia since Kosovo\*'s institutions have not worked on making a formal decision to withdraw from the previous agreement with Yugoslavia in which Kosovo\* benefited from quotas which now are being used by Serbia.

In its attempts to reduce irregular migration and optimize the possibilities for legal migration, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in cooperation with the Ministry of Labor and

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<sup>21</sup> Hafiz Leka, Officer at Employment Division, Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, Kosovo\*. The aim of the personal interview was to collect information on agreements on circular migration and activities to sign such agreements in the future (Table 2.1).

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Social Welfare (MLSW) in 2008 opened the Migration Service Centre (MSC) in Kosovo<sup>22</sup>, which was handed over to Kosovo\* Institutions respectively to the Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare (MLSW) in 31<sup>st</sup> of January 2010. In 2011, six more regional MSCs were established. The aim of these centres is to provide information and guidance for people that might want to migrate for the following purposes: education; work; health; emigration (USA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand); study purposes; family unification for countries in the region, Europe and other countries. Asking about the most frequent reason for visitors in the centre the Officer responded that in total in all seven regional centres the main reason for visiting is information on working options abroad, followed by studying in a foreign country and the least noted reason is information on health care in the context of migration. Although in the brochure it is noted that one task of the centres is to provide information to returnees for their reintegration so far this task has not been exercised but it is planned to be covered in the future.

Although there is a lack of country level agreements for circular migration currently there is one program running with Germany<sup>23</sup>. Since 2004, MLSW, Arbeits-Förderung Kosovo\* (AFK) and later also the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports of Kosovo\* in cooperation with the Federal German Agency for Employment (Bundesagentur für Arbeit - BA) respectively with its International Placement Service (Zentralstelle für Arbeitsvermittlung - ZAV) have been running a programme for seasonal employment of Kosovo\* students in Germany called a 'Students' Employment Programme (SEP). Eligible to apply are students aged between 18-35 years old and who have knowledge of German language. Since 2005, around 1,363 students have been sent to Germany for period of 3 months in following sectors: gastronomy; agriculture; production; cleaning; industry, etc. According to the Prishtina centre's officer each year there has been a large number of applicants seeking to go to work and the aim of this program is twofold: to provide employment opportunities for students and second to facilitate skill development.

### **6.2. Encouragement of return migration and support of integration of returnees**

Today, the major challenge for the central and local authorities is to ensure reintegration of Kosovars who continue to return from European countries. However, the number of Kosovars without legal status abroad is estimated at around 100,000, many of whom entered illegally, or whose asylum claim was rejected, or who overstayed their visa entitlement, or whose residence permit was cancelled (Kupiszewski et al., 2009). Data in Table 6.1 outlines data on returns to Kosovo\* where it can be noted that voluntary returns are higher than those of forced returns.

From 1999-2008, United Nations Mission in Kosovo\* (UNMIK) was the main institution managing the readmission and repatriation of persons originating from Kosovo\*. Since 1999, UNMIK had cooperated with over 20 countries to ensure that repatriations are conducted in an orderly, gradual and dignified manner, and to prevent the forcible repatriation. Starting in January 2008, readmission and repatriation competencies were gradually transferred to Kosovo\* institutions. From 1<sup>st</sup> of November 2008 onwards, the Kosovo\* government handled all readmission requests from host countries directly.

In order to be able to respond to the return and reintegration challenges, the United Nations Mission in Kosovo\*/UNSCR 1244 developed a reintegration strategy in collaboration with experts from the local government and international organizations, and approved by the government in Kosovo\*/UNSCR 1244 already in October 2007 (Kosovo\* Government, 2007) and revised<sup>24</sup> the strategy in May 2010 (Kosovo\* Government, 2010) and developed Action Plan (Action Plan for the Strategy for Reintegration of Repatriated Persons) adopted in October 2010.

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<sup>22</sup> Migrant Service Centres: <http://www.migrantservicecentres.org/index.php?page=56>, accessed 16.12.2011.

<sup>23</sup> Teuta Gjylaj Bllacaku, Officer for Intermediation on employment with foreign countries (Table 2.1).

<sup>24</sup> In order to ensure that displaced persons will have the best treatment once repatriated, the Executive Board has decided to evaluate the current mechanisms for reintegration. The assessment was carried out in cooperation with local and international stakeholders, based on the decision of the Executive Board which has established a working group comprised of local and international experts in drafting the questionnaire and as the result analyzed answers provided by line ministries (Kosovo\* Government, 2010).



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The Strategy is based on the general principle of equality and covers all reintegration aspects, such as initial assistance following the admission, legal reintegration, access to health services, employment, social welfare, humanitarian transport for minorities, vulnerable groups, property related issues and social sheltering. It covers instructions for: assistance during initial admission; legal reintegration of repatriated person – access to civil documents; coordination with other Ministries that ensures admission at the arrival site; access to health care; active and passive labour market policies; access to education; school infrastructure; social welfare system; and housing and property issues. Special attention is paid to the needs of vulnerable sections of society and non-majority communities. The Strategy assigns responsibilities to relevant central and local institutions, introduces referral and co-ordination mechanisms between the central and local levels, and calls for the establishment of an inter-ministerial co-ordination board to oversee and monitor the implementation of the Strategy.

The Action Plan of the Strategy for Reintegration of Repatriated Persons<sup>25</sup> includes budgetary projections by each ministry in the specific areas identified by the Strategy, and details outputs and concrete actions by relevant central and local authorities, as well as a timeline for their implementation. Calculations are based on an estimated number of 5,000 repatriated persons per year. The reintegration fund allocated by Kosovo\* Government for 2011 is 3.4 million Euros (including allocation at the local level and expenditure plan). All citizens repatriated before 28<sup>th</sup> of July are eligible to apply for funding from the fund (see Table 6.2 for a summary of all readmission agreements). In 2010, OSCE developed a Booklet for municipal officials on reception and reintegration of repatriated persons which provides an outline of institutions in charge for reintegration of repatriated persons and their roles and responsibilities.<sup>26</sup>

The Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF) in Germany is running a project to support returnees<sup>27</sup>. The project started in 2009 and was initially limited until the 31.12.2011. The project URA 2 (Albanian „bridge“) offers various measures for the integration, care and support of Kosovan returnees and natives in its Return Centre in Prishtina. These persons can benefit of the extensive social counseling or psychological support if needed. Details of the project are outlined in Box 1 in the annex.

Although supporting returnees is welcomed, criticism has also been directed towards these programs. According to Kreickenbaum (2010) returnees will be able to receive a "wage top-up" of €150 per month as part of the deportation package but will often not be able to access this money themselves because the payments are only for five months, and many employers will use them as a reason not to pay any further wages (Kreickenbaum, 2010). After five months are up, they will simply sack the workers, leaving them with no hope of further employment (Kreickenbaum, 2010). The Kosovo\* government's new agreement to repatriate refugees will serve to put even more pressure on those in Germany to consider returning voluntarily. This is because if they wait for a forced deportation, they risk to lose virtually all personal property and assets held in Germany and are only allowed to take one small suitcase with them. After leaving, they will never be allowed to re-enter an EU member country (Kreickenbaum, 2010). The Agreement obliges the government in Prishtina to admit those living without a residence title in Germany. Under the agreement the German side lodges a readmission application for each person who is legally obliged to leave, which the Kosovan authorities use to determine whether the person in question originally comes from Kosovo\*. In the first eight months of 2009 – that is, even before the governments had signed the agreement, Germany had already forwarded 1,580 readmission applications to Prishtina. The Kosovo\* authorities acceded to all but 27 of these, an approval rate of 98.3% (Knaus and Widmann, 2010).

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<sup>25</sup> Ministry of Internal Affairs: <http://www.mpb-ks.org/?page=1,114&date=2010-00-00>, access 16.12.2011.

<sup>26</sup> Booklet for municipal officials on reception and reintegration of repatriated persons: <http://www.mpb-ks.org/repository/docs/Booklet%20for%20municipal%20officials%20eng.pdf>.

<sup>27</sup> Federal Office for Migration and Refugees Germany, Kosovo\* Return Project: <http://www.bamf.de/EN/Rueckkehrfoerderung/ProjektKosovo/projektkosovo-node.html>, access 16.12.2011.

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A coordination mechanism for readmission at the central level has been established and made functional; each relevant ministry has appointed a staff member in charge of coordinating the whole process. A Readmission Law has been approved in 2010<sup>28</sup> which sets out procedures for readmission, documents upon travelling for readmission and other issues related to the readmission process. On 4<sup>th</sup> of August 2010 a regulation on establishing Municipal offices for Communities and Return have been approved, this regulation establishes these offices and makes them responsible for coordination of the reintegration of repatriated persons. This regulation guides municipalities and determines the organization, duties and responsibilities of the Municipal Offices for Communities and Return and ensures that these Offices work in cooperation and coordination with Central Government Institutions and in accordance with the Constitution of the Republic of Kosovo\*, and with the legislation and international treaties applicable in the Republic of Kosovo\*. The Office shall identify, promote, support, implement and monitor policies, activities and programs related to the protection and promotion of communities' rights; equal access of all communities to public services; and the creation of conditions for sustainable return of refugees, returnees, internally displaced persons and repatriated persons.

In 2009, the OSCE published an assessment report (OSCE, 2009) about the reintegration process. The report concluded that Kosovo\*'s local authorities fall short of fulfilling their obligations to support the reintegration of persons repatriated to Kosovo\* from host countries. Criticism was attributed related to the level of information at local level; co-ordination mechanisms between central and local level and budget available for repatriation and reintegration of returnees. The Assessment Team on the Reintegration Process from the European Commission<sup>29</sup> conducted during their visit from 12-16 September 2011 developed a report dated 28<sup>th</sup> of September 2011. The Team noted areas of improvement: the reintegration fund of 3.4 million Euros is in place; criteria for eligibility for funding are finalized; most officials involved in reintegration were trained; temporary services: shelter, transport and medical care are in place; in majority of municipalities offices of Communities and return have been established; guidebook for municipalities return officers is finalized; information guide for reintegration has been developed and information sharing between central and municipal level has been improved. Proposals for improvement were identified with regard to better usage of the reintegration fund, information sharing on availability of the fund, and development of business start-ups for returnees. Another criticism noted is that in some cases people are sent back from receiving countries without any documentation. Education has been mentioned as the weakest service provided to returnees. The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology has recently established a working group for the implementation of the Reintegration Strategy, so more progress in the area of education is expected (for details see box 2 in the annex).

In the first three months of 2010, another 114 Roma and 72 Ashkali have been repatriated to Kosovo\* (Knaus and Widman, 2010).

In December 2008, the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology established a National Program called Brain Gain. This program aims to bring back those intellectuals from abroad to the country of origin by offering good incentives and opportunities for professional development. However there is no data available and it seems that the project was not successful and is not active anymore.

### **6.3. Reintegration of post-conflict IDPs, refugees and forced returnees**

The process of return and reintegration of post-conflict IDPs and refugees (predominantly Serbs and RAE) who are currently displaced within Kosovo\* or in the neighboring countries (Serbia, Montenegro and FYROM) and who left Kosovo\* during 1999 and 2004 is led by the Ministry for Communities and Return (MCR), which is run by a Kosovo Serb. The Ministry is the main national body supporting return and reintegration through community development activities,

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<sup>28</sup> [http://www.mpb-ks.org/repository/docs/Liqji%20per%20Ripranim%20\(shqip\).pdf](http://www.mpb-ks.org/repository/docs/Liqji%20per%20Ripranim%20(shqip).pdf), access 06.12.2012.

<sup>29</sup> Unpublished report provided by the MLSW on 4<sup>th</sup> of October 2011.

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return, social housing and local integration projects. An Office for Communities also exists within the Prime Minister's Office in support of this process. One of the main policy documents in this field is The Protocol of Cooperation on Voluntary and Sustainable Return. The protocol was signed in June 2006 by the Kosovo's Provisional Institutions of Self Governance, the Government of Serbia and UNMIK. As an example of a tri-partite agreement, the protocol represents a powerful statement of the commitment by the Kosovar and Serbian authorities to continue the return process. Its objectives are incorporated in the Manual for Sustainable Return. In 2009, the MCR budget was €7.5 million of which €3 million was dedicated to community development, and the rest to return and local integration in Kosovo\*. This represents a greater emphasis on economic support to facilitate the social integration of minority communities and should indirectly encourage the return of displaced populations. This emphasis is in line with an ongoing revision of the Manual for Sustainable Return which puts more focus on community stabilization and should simplify the cumbersome procedures required to finalize and implement return projects.

Despite well-developed policies, relatively good coordination among stakeholders and a relatively large number of projects developed by national and international actors few of those displaced in 1999 have found durable solutions.: The political, security and economic situation is not conducive to return, and many IDPs face difficulties in repossessing property and obtaining legal documentation. Widespread discrimination against Serbs and Roma people has made it difficult for them to return to areas in which they were in minority (IDMC, 2010).

In general, programmes have focused on return to rural areas, rather than more politically contentious returns to urban areas. An increasing number of projects have started offering permanent housing in the place of displacement.

According to the EU 2011 Progress Report for Kosovo\* (EC, 2011) municipalities face difficulties to provide social housing for returnees without property. The report recommends that the government needs to step up its efforts to take the lead in addressing the issue of IDPs. It states that municipalities alone are still not able to respond to the immediate and long-term needs of IDPs and returnees, due to a lack of funds allocated for that purpose and that there is an inconsistency between municipal return strategies and the action plan prepared by the Ministry for Communities and Returns.

In general, IDPs and refugees who wish to return continue to face a number of risks, particularly lack of personal identity and property documentation, deplorable living conditions and lack of access to basic socio-economic rights. Attacks on returnees are rare. If they happen, they are not always subject to proper follow-up by the police and the judiciary (EC, 2011). In terms of the return process, the main challenges are the continued and heightened socio-economic problems, education and property ownership issues, lack of funding, inter-ethnic tensions in some of the areas and lack of commitment on part of the institutions.

In terms of education, no municipal work plans on education (where they have been developed) foresee the category of repatriated children/youth and their special needs. Financial means have not been secured by the relevant authorities for the implementation of specific reintegration programs, including, for instance, native language courses, catch up classes or other extra-curricular activities (OSCE, 2009). In fact, most municipal departments of education are not aware of existing government strategies for the reintegration of repatriated persons, and none has received central government instructions on the conditions, criteria and procedures for their implementation, or the setting-up of specific programs to accommodate the needs of repatriated children and youth (ibid).

In general, reintegration assistance for repatriated children is limited to the provision of basic information about education opportunities and services available. Only in a limited number of municipalities have departments of education undertaken activities to support low-income students with school books or materials free of charge (OSCE, 2009). In general, municipal

directors for education stated that there is a general lack of funds available for scholarships or additional educational activities targeted specifically at returnee children (ibid). Only a few institutions or offices have conducted activities to raise awareness of repatriated persons about education opportunities, available services, relevant legal provisions and institutions in charge, mainly through conducting outreach activities to rural areas or areas inhabited by non-majority communities (ibid).

#### **6.4. Development of net migration loss/gain regions**

In terms of concrete policies and measures targeting regional development, the most noticeable intervention comes from European Commission Liaison Office (ECLO) through Regional Development Agencies (RDA).

This program aims to enhance Kosovo's regional development activities through the introduction of the Regional Economic Development (RED) approach in five economic areas in Kosovo\* to facilitate local economic and employment generation; strengthening Kosovo's economic regions and expand a regional development framework in line with EU practices; developing institutional capacity to manage the process of economic development; and through supporting economic regeneration, job creation and human infrastructure development in different regions.

In addition, this project is expected to contribute also to foster employment for minorities, women and vulnerable groups, as well as foster civil society and good governance and youth.

Regional Development Agencies have been established in five regions – Prishtina, Mitrovica, Gjilan, Peja and Prizren. The role of these offices so far has been mainly in form of strategy development for the regions and supporting grant applicants for EU funds with regard to training for filling applications and providing relevant information supporting applicants. So far there were few rounds of EU grants throughout Kosovo\* and the assessment of their interventions should give the team a better understanding of facts and figures in terms of improved economic development at the regional level.

Other bilateral donors such as USAID, SDC, GIZ, DFID etc. have contributed to substantial improvements in the infrastructure and in the strengthening of the private sector as a driving force for employment generation. The list of projects is extended and results are mixed. While many positive results were achieved in terms of investments in the poorest regions of Kosovo\* there are still challenges that need to be addressed. Many donors have been focused on investing on young people considering Kosovo's young population – a strategically good approach that should yield its results in the near future.

#### **6.5. Support to vulnerable groups related to migration**

Kosovo\* has made some progress in the field of employment policy. By implementing the Employment Strategy 2010-2012, it has further contributed to creating new employment opportunities, notably through public work schemes. The Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare endorsed a sectorial strategy and its related action plan 2011-13 focusing on job creation policies and the development of active employment measures. Implementation of the employment strategy has started, focusing on young people, persons with disabilities, social assistance beneficiaries and people suffering from poverty. The public employment service has pursued its proactive registration of job seekers. Resources and capacities are not sufficient to cope with all disadvantaged people who are mostly outside of the labor market. Some efforts have been made to modernize employment offices. At the same time, their capacity needs to be strengthened. Social partners have little influence in drafting the employment strategies (EC, 2011).

The existing legal framework in Kosovo\*, and in particular the Law on Gender Equality and Law on Discrimination, have established a basic legal foundation on which to build and promote full and equal inclusion of women into political, economic and social life. The locally based Offices

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for Gender Equality are under resourced and ill equipped to take on the biased, discriminatory and abusive practices which are common behavior in many places (EC, 2011).

The Strategy for Integration of RAE in Education provides a good framework for inclusive education. Learning centers for Roma pupils are opened. Simplified school registration of Roma pupils is guaranteed through an administrative instruction (EC, 2011).

#### **6.6. Best practise examples of policy responses**

The Protocol of Cooperation on Voluntary and Sustainable Return, which was signed in June 2006 by the Kosovo\*'s Provisional Institutions of Self Governance, the Government of Serbia and UNMIK is a good example of a tri-partite agreement and represents a powerful statement of commitment by the Kosovar and Serbian authorities to continue the returns process. Only such coordinated policies can generate positive results.

The Capacity Building Facility for Kosovo\* (CBF) is a joint initiative between the UNDP and Kosovo\*'s Foundation for Open Society (KFOS), endorsed by the Office of the Prime Minister and financed by the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Initiated in May 2004, CBF has engaged up to now 59 coaches and advisors working with Directors of Departments and CEOs in the ministries and agencies of the Government of Kosovo\*, covering 87 approved requests for assistance. The CBF experts come from Kosovo\*, the Balkans region and other countries abroad, but priority is given to members of the Kosovar diaspora.

In respect to repatriation policies, in September 2010, the Ministry of the Interior of North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW) in Germany issued a special decree regarding the repatriation of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians from Kosovo\* that currently reside in Germany and who are obligated to leave the country. The document requires that the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration during the review process regarding his or her status. The full scope available for decision making is always to be used in favor of the child. The child's level of integration in German society must be considered on its own merit, in particular with respect to his/her education, professional training and other key considerations. Such decisions could send a positive signal for other regions of Germany and beyond (UNICEF, 2010).

Until now only few projects with regard to the protection of migrants have been funded under the IPA. One positive example is the 2007 project "Return, Reintegration and Cultural Heritage in Kosovo\*" that was aimed to strengthen municipalities to develop a climate for inter-ethnic tolerance, sustainable multi-ethnicity and the promotion of human and minority rights (including in a gender perspective) conducive to the return and reintegration of refugees and IDPs to Kosovo\*. Because of this project several initiatives were launched to support returnees to reintegrate at the local level (Benedekt et al., 2011).

Kosovo\*'s current migration strategy and action plan (2009-12) set out the objective of increasing the contribution migration makes to its economic development. However, neither document specifies measures that relate to migration-related development policies. Instead, they deal with the political aspects of migration, such as returning refugees and other Kosovans who have made temporary stays abroad. A new migration strategy should both establish a vision for how Kosovo\*'s diaspora can contribute more to its economic development and set out policies for reaching related strategic goals. The action plan would then elaborate the policies and identify instruments to implement them (WB, 2011).

## 7. Key challenges and policy suggestions

### 7.1. Key challenges of the social impact of emigration and internal migration

1. Firstly, **lack of adequate institutional focus on the role of migrants for socio-economic development of Kosovo\*** will remain a challenge for Kosovo\*. Inadequate analysis and monitoring will affect the prospect of institutions to design appropriate policies and interventions.
2. **Emigration is expected to be a feature in Kosovo\* at least for the near future**, therefore the challenge is how to minimize its negative socio-economic impacts in Kosovo\* while supporting at the same time prospective migrants in their efforts to acquire knowledge of a potential host country's language and culture and equip them with needed skills that the EU market currently demands. While the **Brain Drain** is not studied yet in Kosovo\*<sup>30</sup>, it remains a potential threat for long term development of Kosovo\*. Brain Gain at the same time represents a real opportunity for development and should be nourished. The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology has a project running on Brain Gain aiming to provide incentives for educated migrants to return and contribute to Kosovo\* development. **Tougher immigration policies in EU** will affect the continuation and the size of remittances sent to Kosovo\*. Since migration remains, by far, one of the most effective mechanisms for reducing poverty in Kosovo\*, **reducing migration will directly increase the incidence of poverty, especially in rural areas**. So any efforts that lead to drastic reductions in the current migration patterns have the potential to worsen the well-being of the Kosovo\* population and widen the already emerging rural-urban disparities in well-being.
3. Family reunification of migrant families in host country had an impact on **decreasing remittances** sent by migrants since they leave fewer reasons for the head of the family to send money back home as his entire family moves to live with him. This certainly has an impact on the older members of the family left behind and **increases the pressure on social assistance programs in Kosovo\***.
4. **Repatriation, including forced repatriation** is the biggest challenge for Kosovo\*. To date Kosovo\* has signed Repatriation Agreements with 12 countries and more are expected to come. Repatriation process is not an easy task for Kosovo\* institutions especially because it affects the most vulnerable groups – **young people, women, children and minorities**, many of whom are born in the host country and find it extremely hard to adjust to a new life in a new society. **Three out of four returned RAE children no longer attend school in Kosovo\***. A considerable number do not possess a birth certificate and are therefore unable to exercise their right to educational, medical or welfare services. Kosovo\* institutions in charge of repatriation are still very weak and lack human and financial resources, hence any pressure in terms of the number of repatriated Kosovars will result in inadequate support provided to returnees and therefore will increase chances for remigration. Without adequate programs and coordinated efforts for sustainable return it will be hard to prevent remigration.
5. **Social security agreements**. Kosovo\* migrants during ex-Yugoslavia time were part of social security agreements with countries where they worked. After Kosovo\*'s independence these agreements have **not been extended** hence it is an important issue that needs great attention and a work on one to one country. Many families rely on pensions received from host countries therefore lack of these agreements will put an extra burden on Kosovo\*'s social assistance programs.
6. **Sustainable return of war affected IDPs and refugees are an additional pressure and challenge** for Kosovo\* institutions and Kosovo\* society as a whole. Apart from the security and legal support, returnees need the enhancement of livelihood opportunities and support for self-employment and start-up of own businesses. IDPs, refugees and returnees need also to get equipped with identification documents before they leave the host countries in order to prevent the phenomenon of stateless citizens.

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<sup>30</sup> There is an ongoing study on this subject undertaken by RIINVEST.



7. **Only half of the Kosovar migrants took special efforts in preparing for migration**, an indication that the migration process is not organized. Most of them received training for the language of the host country (70%), some went for vocational training (16%) and a very few were trained in the cultural aspects of their host country (8%) (De Zwager et.al.2010)

#### **7.2. Policies to be taken by different actors**

1. Given the size of the migrants and the growing expectation amongst policy-makers of the role they have to play in socio-economic development of Kosovo\*, Ministry of Diaspora established in 2011 is an important institution for migrants and Kosovo\* as a remittance receiving country. One task of the Ministry would be to **conduct research and become a documentation center** to address all issues related to the Kosovo\* Diaspora, including their social impact. With adequate information and analysis, and with adequate capacities to utilize the information, the government will be better equipped to plan appropriate strategies. **Circulation of Kosovo\* Diaspora experts** (e.g. researchers, professors, students) should be encouraged to generate more academic debate about the issue and preferably promote more research in this field among local institutions.
2. Although the Kosovo\* Strategy on Migration promotes **circular migration**, to date there are no employment agreements in place and no sign of potential agreements in a near future. Kosovo\* institutions in cooperation with host countries who wish to receive circular migrants should work together to set the rights and obligations of individuals that want to work abroad under circular migration programmes. Mechanisms (need to work more on identification of appropriate measures and mechanisms that work best for Kosovo\*) need to be developed by Kosovo\* institutions to guarantee that these agreements are not misused. Kosovo\* institutions should analyse which countries would be in need for skills available in Kosovo\* and tailor an implementation plan. Since many countries have a high-skill immigration scheme Kosovo\* could analyze what type of high-skills its workforce possesses and match with which countries need those skills. Additionally, it should be ensured that Kosovars are not sent to work in low-paid jobs and in jobs that are well below their educational level. This could be achieved through careful design of programs and careful analyses of prepared projects by international institutions and bodies. The Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare is an important player in this respect. Through bilateral agreements projects that promote **the return of highly qualified (young) Kosovars**, through linking with vacancies, and/or credit to set up small businesses should be encouraged.
3. There is not too much government can do to promote remittances short of **facilitating and reducing costs of remittances**. This is the most tangible and least problematic area of policy intervention and requires primarily improvements of the banking system. More information needs to be provided on potential projects, shorter procedures for establishing an enterprise, tax incentives for business start-ups, projects on entrepreneurship skills of households receiving remittances with potential of investing in Kosovo\*. It would be beneficial also to organize trade missions and meetings with employers of our Diaspora since that could also induce joint investments between foreign investors and Kosovo\* Diaspora.
4. Most Human Rights agencies agree that EU and **Western European governments should commit themselves to a moratorium on forced returnees to Kosovo\*** pending an improvement of reception conditions. Any returns should be carried out in accordance with UNHCR guidelines. Kosovo\* government should implement successfully **the Strategy of Returnees and Reintegration** and should: allocate necessary government funding to ensure the implementation of the Strategy and the accompanying Action Plan; establish an inter-ministerial co-ordination board to oversee and monitor the implementation of the Strategy; co-ordinate the work of relevant ministries as well as between central level and local authorities; develop specific instructions to local authorities outlining clear responsibilities and procedures; ensure that relevant ministries responsible for health, education, employment, social care and housing, and local authorities, are informed about



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the readmission/repatriation process; take all necessary measures to implement the Strategy's objectives in the areas of legal reintegration, health, education, employment, social welfare and housing to ensure basic conditions for sustainable return and reintegration; capacity development for municipal officials on the Strategy's contents; to strengthen the legal status of municipal community offices and municipal returns officers within the municipal structure, and provide these offices/officials with adequate resources and support to enable them to discharge their functions; co-operate closely with host countries as well as local and international nongovernmental organizations to co-ordinate financial and technical assistance and to facilitate the development of structured and funded reintegration programmes as well as local authorities' capacities. UNHCR could provide guidance to relevant authorities in host countries and to the Kosovo\* institutions on the international protection needs of individuals from Kosovo\*, and closely monitor that the repatriation process is carried out in line with international human rights standards and finally, host countries should take due consideration of the conditions for the reception and reintegration of repatriated persons and support Kosovo\* institutions in fulfilling their obligations.

5. **Social security agreements:** Kosovo\* institutions should intensively and closely work with countries hosting Kosovo\* migrants to extend previous existing contracts that Kosovo\* had as part of Yugoslavia. These agreements would ensure that migrants benefit from their pension and social contributions when they return to Kosovo\*. Also it would be beneficial for migrants to work with countries that do not account for experience while in Kosovo\* when pensions are granted abroad.
6. **A coherent response** and political will from Kosovo\* government, coupled with the financial support and expertise of international organizations could be a win strategy in terms of housing, employment and welfare rights for returned IDPs and refugees.
7. The focus of EU funded Regional Development Agencies as well as Kosovo\* institutions should put more emphasis on net migration loss regions. This can be done from two sources: Kosovo\* budget and also by working closely with donors and informing them about needs of different regions so kind of priority list is prepared.
8. Since migration is expected to be a long-term feature in Kosovo\*, people wishing to migrate need to be encouraged and supported in their efforts to acquire knowledge of a potential host country's language and culture. In addition, they need skills training in work that the EU countries markets currently demand.

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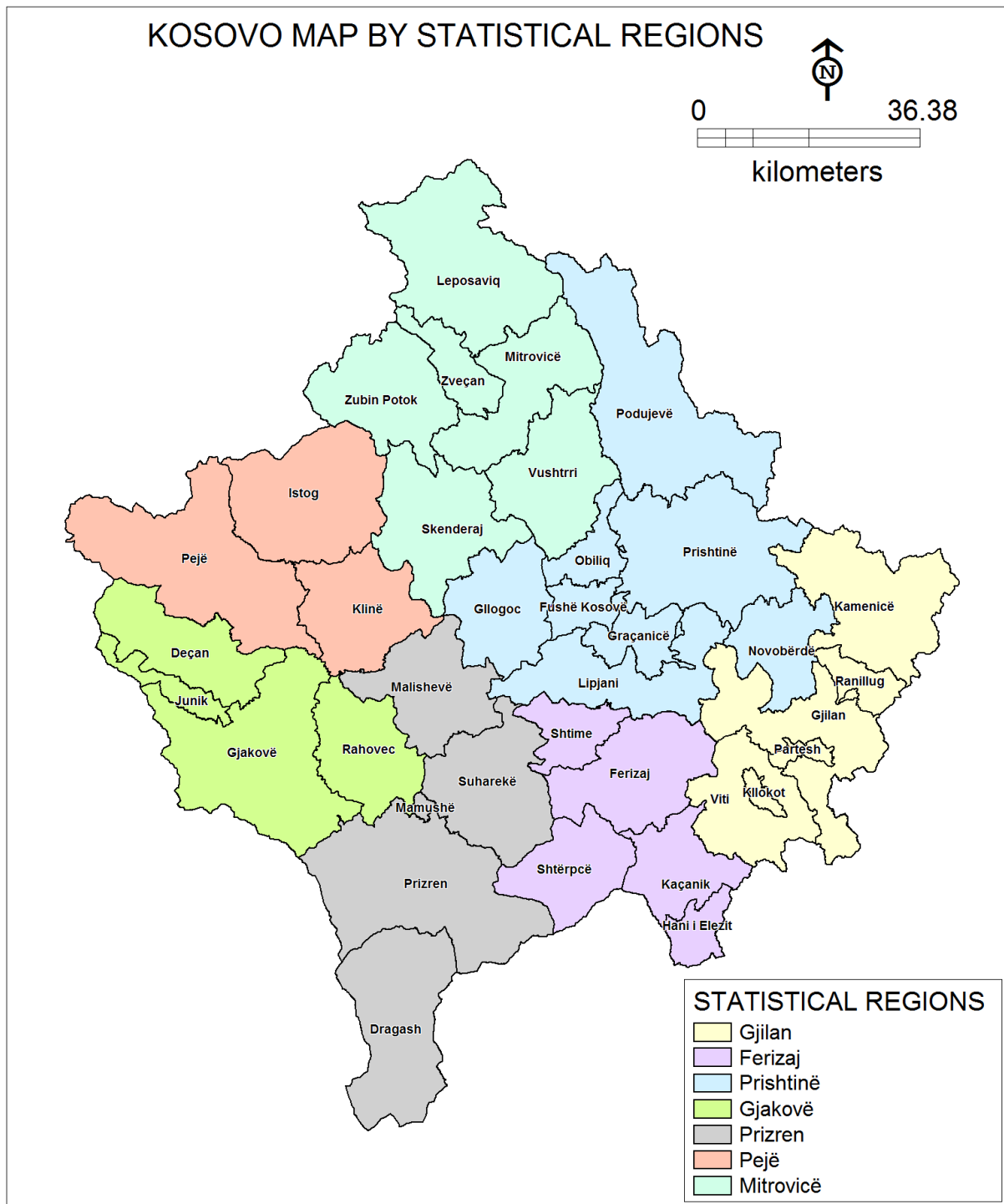
**Appendix**

Table 1: Population development in Kosovo\* since 1921

<b>Years</b>	<b>Population</b>	<b>% change</b>
1921	439,010	
1931	552,065	26
1948	733,034	33
1953	815,906	11
1961	963,988	18
1971	1,243,693	29
1981	1,584,440	27
1991	1,956,196	23
2006	2,100,000	7
2011	1,783,872	-15

Source: SOK, 2008. Note: For 1946,1953,1961,1971 and 1981 data are extracted from census documentation. For 1991 and 2006 the figure is estimated whereas for 2011 it is based on 2011 census.

Figure 1: Kosovo\* map by regions (SOK 2011)



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Figure 1.1:

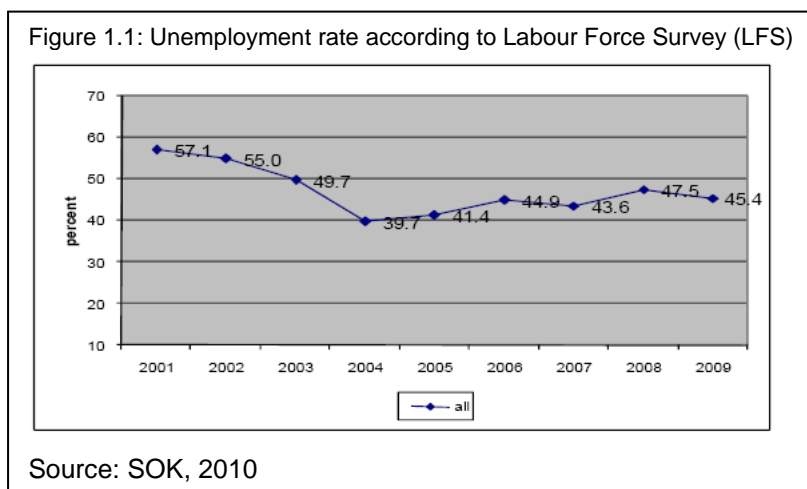


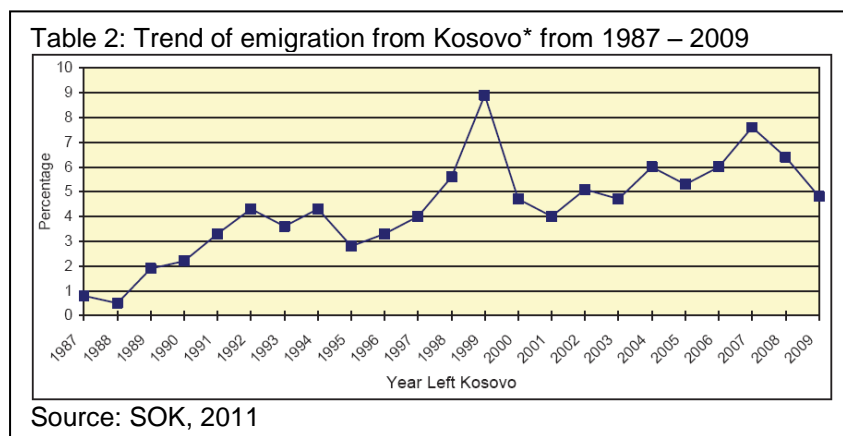
Table 1.1:

Table 1.1: Remittances as percent of GDP

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
<b>Remittances</b>	<b>12.2</b>	<b>13.9</b>	<b>15.0</b>	<b>15.1</b>	<b>13.9</b>	<b>12.9</b>
Foreign direct investment	1.5	3.6	9.3	12.6	8.9	7.8
Exports (of goods)	2.2	2.3	3.9	5.2	5.7	4.2
Donor support	11.5	12.2	10.2	8.7	7.5	8.6
Errors and Omissions	6.2	7.8	8.8	6.8	3.2	6.9
GDP (thousands of euros)	2,928	3,005	3,118	3,411	3,849	3,843

Source: IMF and World Bank estimates.

Table 2:



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Table 2.1:

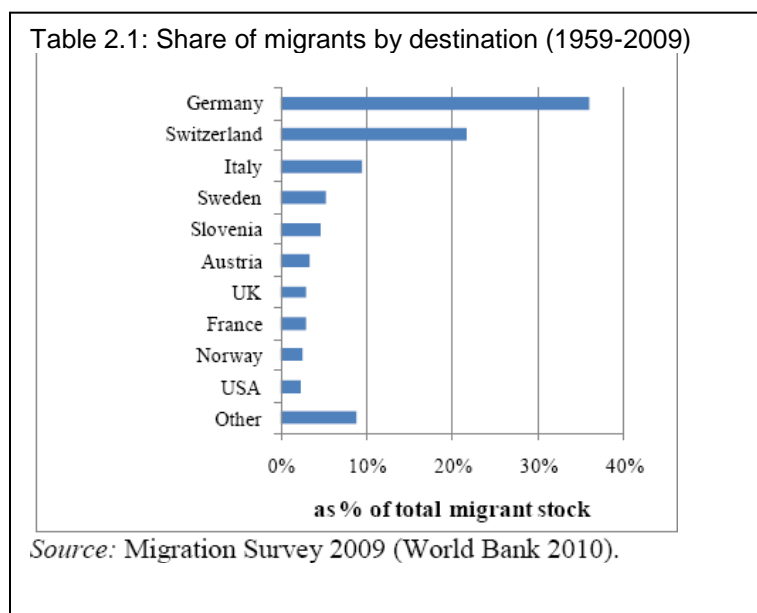


Table 2.2: Geographical distribution of IDP's in Kosovo\* according to ethnicity

Region of displacement	Serbs	Albanians	Ashkalis	Romas	Bosniaks	Gorani	Croats	Egyptians	Turks	Others	Total
Pristina	1894	0	331	153	7	20	4	0	1	28	2438
Peja/Pec	48	7	3	10	10	0	0	268	0	0	346
Prizren	112	0	0	17	0	0	0	0	0	0	129
Mitrovicë/a	6990	7317	96	296	4	15	0	24	0	11	14753
Gjilan/Gnjilane	1175	127	83	32	0	0	4	0	0	1	1422
Total in Kosovo	10219	7451	513	508	21	35	8	292	1	40	19088

Source: UNHCR, 2010

Table 2.3: Interviews conducted

Name	Position	Institution	Interview
Mr. Izet Shala	Head of the Pension Administration Department	Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare	06.10.2011, lasted for 45 minutes
Mr. Hafiz Leka	Officer at Employment Division	Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare	27.09.2011, lasted 40 minutes
Ms. Teuta Gjylaj Bllacaku	Officer for Intermediation on employment with foreign countries	Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare	27.09.2011, lasted 30 minutes

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Figure 3.1:

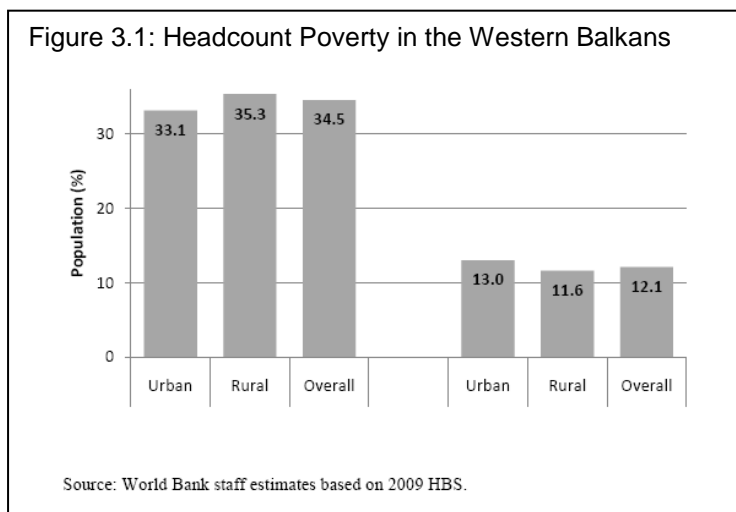


Table 4.1:

Table 4.1: Lifetime In-and Out-Migration rates (%) by region, Kosovo\* 2009

Region of birth	Out-migrants	Net-migrants*
Ferizaj	5	1.8
Gjakova	7.7	-6.4
Gjilan	6	1.7
Mitrovica	7.6	-5.2
Peja	2.7	6.7
Prizren	3.4	-0.1
Prishtina	2.8	7.7
Abroad		

Source: SOK, 2011 using data from KDHS; \* Net gain regions highlighted

Table 4.2:

Table 4.2: 2004-2009 inter-regional in-and-out-migration rates in the last five years and hence for persons aged five and older, by region, Kosovo\* 2009

Region of birth	In-migrants	Out-migrants	Net-migrants
Ferizaj	0.4	0.8	-0.4
Gjakova	0.5	0.9	-0.4
Gjilan	0.4	0.2	0.2
Mitrovica	0.2	1.1	-0.9
Peja	1.1	0.4	0.7
Prizren	0.6	0.4	0.2
Prishtina	1.2	0.3	0.9
Abroad	0.2		

Source: SOK, 2011 using data from 2009 KDHS

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Table 4.3:

	Headcount	
	Full poverty line	Extreme poverty line
<b>Net gain migration regions</b>		
Prishtina	21.8	9
Peja	37.2	13.1
Ferizaj	53.8	17.7
Gjilan	18	3.6
<b>Net loss migration regions</b>		
Prizren	33.9	6.8
Mitrovica	38	17
Gjakova	54	22.4
<b>Overall</b>	<b>34.5</b>	<b>12.1</b>

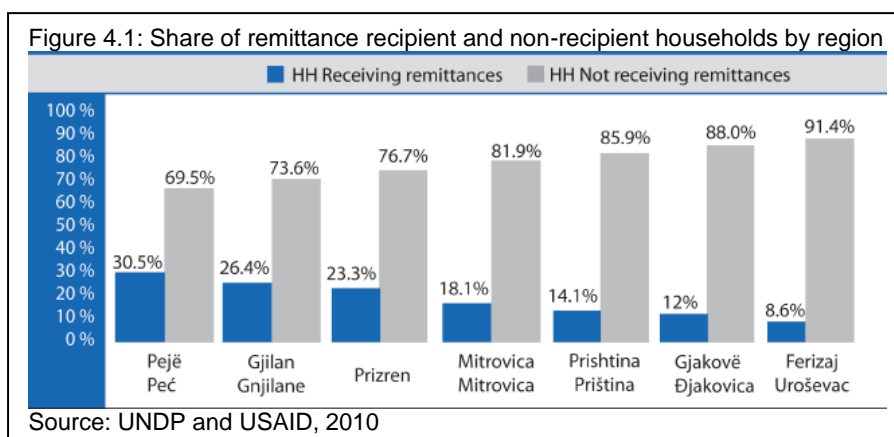
Source: World Bank (2011) based on 2009 HBS survey.

Table 4.4: Social exclusion of net migration loss and gain regions

	% of households excluded from factor markets across regions	% of households excluded from basic food and services across regions	% of households excluded from utility services across regions
<b>Net gain migration regions</b>			
Prishtina	9	18	13.6
Peja	7	9.4	25.7
Ferizaj	6.9	27.1	24.6
Gjilan	9.2	20.4	24.4
<b>Net loss migration regions</b>			
Prizren	9.9	26.9	7
Mitrovica	5	13.6	9.6
Gjakova	4.2	10.2	15

Source: Human Development Report 2010, UNDP

Figure 4.1:



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**Table 6.1: Returns to Kosovo\* 2007-2010**

	2007	2008	2009	Jan-May 2010	Total 2007- May 2010
Voluntary returns*	3,836	2,382	3,544	2,096	11,858
Forced returns	3,219	2,550	2,962	1,249	9,980
	<b>7,055</b>	<b>4,932</b>	<b>6,506</b>	<b>3,345</b>	<b>21,838</b>

Source: UNHCR OCM Prishtina, May 2010; \*including all minorities, Ashkali, Egyptian, Gorani, Bosniaks, Turks, Serbs, Romas and Albanians in minority situations.

**Table 6.2: Readmission agreements signed**

Country	Signed on	Ratified on
Albania	6 October 2009	17 November 2009
France	2 December 2009	21 January 2010
Switzerland	3 February 2010	29 March 2010; entered into force since 16 December 2010
Germany	14 April 2010	25 June 2010
Austria	30 September 2010	
Norway		Into force from 22 December 2010
Slovenia	10 May 2011	
Benelux countries (Belgium, Netherland and Luxemburg)	12 May 2011	11 July 2011
Czech Republic	24 June 2011	
Montenegro	30 June 2011	
Sweden	4 October 2011	

**Box 1. Support provided in the URA project Support with initial aid a reintegration measures:**

**Initial Aid:**

Extensive social counseling and support with administrative formalities, family reunification or finding living space

One-off payment of an interim aid: maximal 50 Euro per person

Support for the rent: up to 100 Euro for six months

Absorption of the costs for furnishings: up to 600 Euro per person for voluntary returnees, up to 300 Euro for forced returnees

Reimbursement for medical treatment or pharmaceuticals: up to 75 Euro per person

**Reintegration Measures:**

Reimbursement of costs for language courses: up to 50 Euro per person

Basic equipment for attending school and payment of a language course for pupils and young persons

One-off payment for job-related training of maximal 120 Euro

Agent for finding employment or finding employment-creation measures and taking over 150 Euro for voluntary returnees or 100 Euro for forced returnees of the salary per month for six months

Potential entrepreneurs may be supported by taking over up to 500 Euro for the job-related training, 100 Euro financial assistance and awarding a start-up grant up to 3.000 Euro for promising business concepts (voluntary returnees only)

The project started in 2009 and is initially limited until the 31.12.2011. The first return project started in January 2007 and ended in October 2008. It was funded by the European Union. This first project already supported the reintegration of returnees.



**Box 2. Action Plan for implementing Strategy for Reintegration of Repatriated Persons**

Objectives of the Action Plan were: Implementation of the legal framework in the field of migration and reintegration in accordance with the International law and Acquis Communautaire; Institutional and human resources capacity building; Establishing institutional communication and coordination-sharing information before and after arrival; Providing services in accordance with applicable legislation in the field of reintegration; Achievement of sustainable reintegration; Administration on determination and implementation of fund priorities in accordance with the applicable legislation and donor rules; and Monitoring and assessment of implementation of the Strategy through coordination and control of activities.

The Action Plan was developed based on estimation of roughly 5,000 persons to be repatriated was the basis of this plan and as a result it was estimated that that 200 families (of 5 members) might need shelter for up to 6 months, 5,000 persons will benefit roughly 43 Euro for medical services while it was estimated that about ten of them will need treatment abroad, this is estimated at about 10,000 Euros per person while 20 persons is estimated that will require approx.. 5,000 euro medications per person. It has been foreseen that in average about 400-500 repatriated persons will benefit from the social scheme and pension scheme. This plan also foresees that about 300 repatriated persons will be enrolled in vocational training programs as well as the estimated number of persons employed or families supported through employment schemes and grants (through project proposals) will be around 200 families. Another forecast was taken with regards to construction of two 400,000.00 Euro social housing buildings for 40 families and 30 housing units to be reconstructed per annum while rent subsidy to be provided for about 50 families.

In 2010, the booklet for municipal officials has been finalized. The purpose of this booklet is to provide municipal officials with an understanding of their roles and responsibilities with regard to the implementation of government policies and strategies aimed at reintegrating repatriated persons into society. It aims to give an overview of the institutional mechanisms necessary for the reintegration process and to guide municipal officials in their day-to-day work in assisting repatriated persons with reintegration in their places of origin.