PUBLIC OPINION POLL
DECEMBER 2018

COMMUNICATION AMONG MEMBERS OF SERBIAN AND ALBANIAN COMMUNITIES IN KOSOVO

the issue of languages
Introduction

Dear friends,

We are pleased to share with you the research conducted by the Center for Social Initiatives, in Kosovo in autumn 2018, where we tried to look at the general state of social relations and the state of two of the largest ethnic communities through the prism of language and communication.

The research is a part of the project "Support to Social Inclusion of Minority Communities" funded by the Embassy of the United Kingdom in Pristina and implemented by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in cooperation with the Office of the Language Commissioner under the auspices of the Prime Minister's office.

We tried to comprehend the reasons, perspectives and general views of citizens on the most important issues of language, communication and language rights in Kosovo. Looking at the integration process through the prism of language, we noticed significant challenges, especially among youth. The situation is unfavorable and the trends are almost alarming.

However, there are reasons to believe that the situation can be remedied. Whether or not they speak the language of their neighbors, there is a critical mass of people among both Albanians and Serbs who understand the importance of language competence. It seems that the number of these people is smaller because they are on the defensive against the loud opponents of establishing connections between people, where the language is the first barrier.

We would like our analysis, data and recommendations to be of benefit to every institution or individual that can make life among these people go on with respect, cooperation and communication, despite the differences that exist.

The research did not include languages other than the two officially recognized languages and, therefore, it does not contain the opinions of the members of other communities on this topic. We feel the need, in some future analysis, to include all the languages spoken in Kosovo, as we believe that multilingualism is one of the valuable resources of Kosovo.

All the information contained in this report represents exclusively the attitude of the Center for Social Initiatives and it does not necessarily represent the official attitude of the IOM and the Embassy of the United Kingdom in Pristina, so that they do not assume any liability for any loss which may arise from reliance on information contained in this publication.

We would be grateful for any comment, suggestion or advice you might be able to give us, and if you could forward this document to anyone you think would be interested in.

Sincerely,

December 2018

Center for Social Initiatives
COMMUNICATION AMONG MEMBERS OF SERBIAN AND ALBANIAN COMMUNITIES IN KOSOVO

- the issue of languages -

Independent report commissioned by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the Embassy of the United Kingdom in Pristina, drafted by the Center for Social Initiatives
Methodological Notes

The public opinion poll was conducted by the NGO Center for Social Initiatives with the support of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the British Embassy in Pristina.

The research was conducted in the time-frame from September to October 2018 in the territory of Kosovo among the citizens of Serbian and Albanian populations over the age of 16, on a representative sample of 418 citizens.

A questionnaire consisting of 27 questions was used as a research instrument. For each region and community within the research, a special questionnaire was made, differing in the questions regarding the relations with the institutions they communicate with.

Interviews with citizens were conducted face-to-face, in direct contact with the interviewees. During the training of interviewers, instructors insisted on implementing and respecting two very important rules that, along with the sample itself, significantly influenced the representativeness of the research – the rule of following the interview steps and the rule of the first birthday* (see the explanation in the following paragraph, line 5-6).

The rule of following the interview steps ensured the comprehensive coverage of the complete research task by the interviewers, while the rule of the first birthday*(see the explanation in the this paragraph, line 5-6) excluded the possibility of interviewing only the citizens who first opened the door to the interviewer. Namely, the interviewers were required to interview the person over the age of 16 whose birthday* is, among household members and as from the date of the interviewers’ visit first to come. In this way, the representativeness of interviewees is guaranteed in term of gender, age and educational attainment.

Sample Description

Based on the methodology established for implementation of this research, the following categories of the interviewees were included:

Gender structure of the interviewees: 43% women and 57% men;

Age structure:
between the ages of 16 and 24 years - 25% of the interviewees; between the ages of 25 to 39 years - 24%; between the ages of 40 to 49 years - 21%; between the ages of 50 to 59 years - 17%; 60 years and over - 13% of the interviewees.

Educational structure of the interviewees:
Primary school or less - 4% of the interviewees; two-year/three year middle school - 5% of the interviewees, four-year high school - 49% of the interviewees, college/university - 23% of the interviewees, pupil/student - 19% of the interviewees.
Occupation of the interviewees:
housewife - 12%, farmer - 13%, unqualified worker - 11%, qualified worker 20%, technician - 5%, clerk - 16%, pupil or student - 15%, expert - 8%- 

Ethnic and regional structure:

- Members of the Serbian community in the predominantly Serbian municipalities 42% (of which north of Kosovo 41%, Gnjilane/Gjilan region - 59% of the sample)
- Members of the Serbian community in the predominantly Albanian municipalities 12% (municipalities of Peć/Pejë, Istok/Istog and Klina/Kllina)
- Members of the Albanian community in the predominantly Albanian municipalities 38% (municipality of Priština/Prishtina)
- Members of the Albanian community in the predominantly Serbian municipalities 8% (Leposavić/Leposaviq and Northern Mitrovica 60% and Klokot/Kllkot, Parteš/Partesh, Novo Brdo/ Novobërdë 40%)
- Serbs in Kosovo 54%, Albanians in Kosovo 46%

The comparative analysis of the most important research areas within this document was carried out per ethnic criterion (total of Albanians and Serbs), per criterion of ethnic majority/minority in the municipality, as well as per age structure (the turning point was the age of 24 – the young and the older ones).

Although the gender structure of the sample was made within the analysis of the results, the survey did not detect differences in attitudes between the male and female citizens of Kosovo on any issue in the questionnaire. Therefore, it can be concluded that the attitudes within this survey are gender non-sensitive.

It should be emphasized that all the answers express personal perception of the interviewees, especially to questions regarding their knowledge of the language. In order to understand this analysis, it is important to know that the answers to questions about the language competence (level and quality) are merely personal self-evaluation of the interviewees.
Research Summary

At the beginning, we would like to highlight some of the results obtained, although for the understanding of this survey, one needs to look at the entire document.

- Serbian population in Kosovo hardly has any knowledge of Albanian language. According to their own assessment, 5% of them speak Albanian, 31% partially understand the language, and 64% of the interviewees do not speak the language. Albanians speak Serbian language in higher percentage, 18% of them speak Serbian, 49% partially understand the language, and 31% do not speak the language. However, this percentage decreases notably among the young, especially among young Albanians, 96% of whom say that they do not speak Serbian, and only 4% partially understand Serbian language.

- 71.3% of Serbs would like to know Albanian language, but this trend decreases among the young (62%) 73% of Albanians would like to know Serbian language, but only 27% of young Albanians.

- 46% of Serbs have a frequent opportunity/need to speak Albanian (daily and at least once a week), while 36% of Albanians have a frequent opportunity/need speak Serbian. 39% of Albanians and 31% of Serbs do not have contacts with another community.

- In communication with each other, Serbs and Albanians speak in Serbian (82% of communication), in English (9%), in Albanian (7%) or exceptionally in other languages (2%).

- Only 19% of the interviewed Serbs are sure that they would communicate more with Albanians if they knew Albanian language. The largest number of the interviewees estimated such a possibility as "probable" ("I would probably communicate more if I knew the language" - 60 %.), 37% of Albanians would communicate more with Serbs if they knew their language, 22% would not communicate with Serbs even if they knew their language, while 41% estimate such a possibility as "probable".

- Almost half of the interviewed Serbs (45%) responded that it would not affect the frequency of their visits to predominantly Albanian areas, 12% that it would, 31% estimate such a possibility as probable. 30% of Albanians reject the possibility of more frequent visits to predominantly Serbian areas, even if they knew Serbian language, 10% of them would go more often, and 42% allow the possibility.
• To the question "Would you agree for the Albanian language to be introduced as an elective subject in schools?" 34% of Serbs have a positive answer or restrictively positive answer (answers "Yes" and "Yes, but not yet"), 39% are against this idea, with a decisive negative answer ("No"), and 27% do not have an opinion on the issue. Regarding the introduction of the Serbian language as an elective subject, 44% of Albanians agree, 45% of them do not agree and 12% do not have an opinion on the issue.

• Only 15% of Serbs and 31% of Albanians think that the mutual knowledge of languages would reduce the ethnic tensions.

• 62% of Serbs consider that their language rights are very restricted, while 52% of Albanians consider that they are unrestricted.

• The vast majority of interviewees from the Serbian community had a negative experience in institutions, where there was no official who spoke their language (44% often, 43% rarely and 13% never).

• 63% of Serbs (27% directly and 36% partially) and 40% of Albanians (7% directly and 33% partially) see the link between language ignorance and personal security.

• Citizens of the Serbian community in Kosovo mostly communicate with the municipality (23.8%), police (20.3%), public services (post office 18%, KEDS 10.9%, bus station 11.2%), and court 7.7%. According to the assessment of Kosovo Serbs, no particular institution stands out in terms of (dis) respecting the Law on Languages, assessment. The average grade on a scale from 1 to 5 is unsatisfactory 2.42.
Analysis of the Obtained Results

Serbs do not speak Albanian

The results of the research point to the striking fact that only five percent of the interviewed Kosovo Serbs said they spoke Albanian. Bearing in mind the fact that only 2% of young Serbs under the age of 18 declare that they speak Albanian, and that there are no such interviewees in North Kosovo (none of the interviewees), it is clear that this total number of Albanian language speakers will decline over time. In the area of Gnjilane/Gjilan region, the percentage of those who said they spoke Albanian is slightly higher than in other Serbian areas (7.4%).

The fact that 31% of those who say they partially understand Albanian (without the analysis of the level of this understanding) certainly cannot be satisfactory, but the fact that 71% of interviewees would prefer to speak Albanian can be encouraging, which indicates that there is awareness of the need for learning Albanian language. Gnjilane/Gjilan region is again in the lead regarding the percentage of those who would like to speak Albanian (85.2%).

One should perceive the difference between the two statements of the interviewees "I would like to know Albanian language" and "I would like to learn Albanian language." Therefore, this information should be considered regarding the fact that almost one third of the Serbian community members declare that they still do not want or feel the need to know Albanian language.

Unfortunately, the percentage of those young people in the Serbian community who would like to speak Albanian decreases. Even 38% of young Serbs stated that they would not like to speak Albanian, with a huge disproportion between regions, while 62% of the interviewees would like to speak Albanian.

From the first two questions, it can already be concluded that where the integration of the population is stronger, the language problem is also smaller. The surprising fact is that "small enclaves" are almost equally integrated as the large ones. It is logical to expect that in a "small
“enclave”, such as, for example, Goraždevac/Gorazhdec (Peć/Pejë municipality), more people would speak Albanian, when compared to North Kosovo, because they are expected to communicate more with the Albanians (47.4% of Serbs in the north declared that they never had had a contract with Albanians, compared with Goraždevac/ Gorazhdec, where the percentage is 28.6%). However, no matter the size of the enclave, the situation in which they live has not contributed to real integration.

Great disparity in attitudes within the Serbian community can be seen in the review of results by regions.

| Would you like to speak Albanian? |
|----------------------------------|-----------------|---------------|----------|-----------|
|                                  | North Kosovo    | Peć/Pejë region | Gnijlane/Gjilan region | Average | Young people |
| Yes                              | 66,7%           | 61,9%           | 85,2%              | 71,3%    | 62,0%         |
| No                               | 33,3%           | 38,1%           | 14,8%              | 28,7%    | 38,0%         |

There is a distinctive difference between the positive attitude towards Albanian language as a skill which 85.2% of Serbs in Gnijlane/Gjilan region would like to acquire, compared to nearly 20% less in North Kosovo or in the Peć/Pejë region.

Within a short time Albanians will not speak Serbian

This research indicates that the situation is somewhat better regarding the knowledge of Serbian language within Albanian communities. Of all the interviewees, 18% of Albanians speak Serbian, 49% partially understand the language, while 33% say they do not understand the language.

The drastic difference was evident when young Albanians (under the age of 18) were asked whether they spoke Serbian. 96% of the interviewees said that they did not speak and only 4% said they partially understood the language.
Nearly half of young Albanians would like to speak Serbian (56%), while less than a half of would not like to speak Serbian (44%). There is a trend of rapid decline in interest in the Serbian language. This can be seen when data is compared with the opinions of the total population, where 73% would like to speak Serbian, and 27% would not.

This 17% decrease in motivation to speak Serbian, along with the fact that young Albanians (senior high school students) do not speak Serbian almost without exception (and only 4% understand it partially), clearly indicates that, without drastic change in language policies, the perspectives of communication between the two communities lead to a complete change of existing ways of communication among communities.

How much do Albanians and Serbs communicate?

One third of the Serbian community in Kosovo has never had a contact with Albanian communities, and most of them are Serbs in North Kosovo, where almost half of the citizens do not have contact with members of the majority population. The divided city on the Ibar River played here an important role in the (un) mixing of the population.
In the Gnjilane/Gjilan region, the percentage of those who have never had contact with Albanians is about 18.5%, and in "small enclaves" that percentage is the astonishing 28.6%. 46% of Serbs have frequent contact (daily and monthly) with Albanian language.

To understand the same analysis in the sample of the Albanian community, one should start from the fact that it is significantly larger than the Serbian community. Bearing this in mind, the obtained results in the table below indicate that the Albanians actually have a more open attitude towards Serbian language, and not vice versa.

Of 36% of Albanians who have the opportunity to regularly speak Serbian, the Albanians in North Kosovo communicate by far the most - 30% daily and 40% at least once a week.

In the Gnjilane/Gjilan region, the percentage of those who have never had contact with Albanians is about 18.5%, and in "small enclaves" that percentage increases to reach 28.6%. 46% of Serbs have frequent contact (daily and monthly) with Albanian language.
The research confirmed that the division between Serbs and Albanians is great, and the issue of language is perhaps the best indicator. In fact, **41% of the interviewees state that they do not have any Albanian speaking friend/acquaintance.** The term "friend/acquaintance" defines a person about whom the interviewee knows at least three more things in addition to his/her name (e.g. his/her surname, where does he/she come from, is he/she married, his/her occupation).

The situation among the young Serbian community is even more rigid. **Even 71% of young Serbs do not have any friends/acquaintances among the Albanians of any age.**

Also, the frequency and level of communication with a friend or acquaintance is extremely low. Serbs meet people whose native language is Albanian mostly in public institutions, in banks and post offices, government institutions, or for the purpose of business (commerce, business, employment), in traffic (bus stations, parking lots) and again, the least in North Kosovo and the most in Gnjilane/Gjilan region.
Much better knowledge of Serbian language among Albanians than the knowledge of Albanian language among Serbs leads to a more open attitude in communication. Thus, 36% percent of Albanians have the opportunity to regularly speak Serbian (by far the most, the Albanians in North Kosovo - 30% daily and 40% at least once a week)

As the above table shows, the most obvious evidence of the existing division of Kosovo is the young people and their contacts.

Please note that one does not speak here about the contact of a young person with another young person (that would, logically, show even lower statistical score), but about the contact of young people with the total population of another community.

**How do Albanians and Serbs Communicate?**

In communication, Serbs and Albanians speak in Serbian (82% of communication), in English (9%), in Albanian (7%) or exceptionally in other languages (2%).
It can be concluded that the language of communication between Kosovo Albanians and Serbs is predominantly Serbian or, less frequently, English and Albanian. Among the young Serbs, only 4% of Serbs communicate with the Albanians in Albanian. This percentage refers to 4% of those young Serbs who in general communicate with the Albanians of any age, and not to the total of young people under the age of 24.

There is a slight difference in the use of English as the language of communication between Serbs and Albanians per age structure (total population 9%, young people 13%).

In Gnjilane/Gjilan region about 55% of the interviewees who communicate with Albanians speak only Serbian, 14.8% speak Albanian, and 22.2% communicate in English. Please note that these percentages refer to those interviewees who have contacts with the Albanians.

Although this fact was not statistically processed, it is interesting to note that young Albanians and Serbs frequently communicate combining Serbian, Albanian and English language. This mode of communication is most vividly described by one of the young interviewees, who described this way of communication with the Albanians as "a little bit of Serbian, a little bit of Albanian, a little bit of English, and a little bit with our hands ... I do not even know if we understood each other at the end, but we say that we did".

It can be concluded that if the Albanians do not speak either Serbian or English, communication between the two largest communities hardly exists.

The trend that the Albanians mainly speak Serbian, whereas the Serbs do not speak Albanian, is still predominant, as it used to be before 1999, changed only in the fact that now young people communicate in English, too.
Language – a Barrier and an Indicator

The attitudes of the interviewees about the ignorance of language and how it affects general communication between people in Kosovo speak a lot about the situation in the Kosovo society. It is obvious that the issue of languages is a great barrier to communication, but one should be aware of the fact that raising the language competences would only partially improve the general communication in Kosovo. The authors of this document believe that language is a very important factor in establishing communication among the citizens of Kosovo, but its importance should not obscure the fact that, apart from language, general social relations between Albanians and Serbs require drastic changes and improvements as well.

Only 19% of the interviewed Serbs would communicate more with the Albanians if they knew Albanian language, while 21% of them stated that knowledge of Albanian language would not increase the intensity of communication. The largest number of interviewees, however, allows this possibility (I probably would communicate more - 60%)

The Albanian community has a clearer attitude regarding the relation between the knowledge of Serbian language and communication with members of the Serbian community. In fact, 37% of Albanians would communicate more if they spoke Serbian, 22% would not communicate more even if they spoke Serbian, while 41% estimate such a possibility as "probable".

Considering the fact that, in both communities, the most common answer, to the question “Would you communicate more with Albanians/Serbs if you spoke their language?”, was “Probably” (60% Serbian and 41% Albanian community), it can be concluded that there is room for social action.

The attitude of young Albanians on this issue is, however, alarming. Even 44% of young people (compared to 22% of the sample among the Albanian community) declare that they would not communicate more with Serbs if they spoke Serbian. This information cannot be treated as a mere attitude of young Albanians towards the Serbian community and as their simple refusal to
communicate with Serbs in Serbian language. It is important to understand that many of them do not actually have any opportunity to be in contact with the Serbian community.

Among the Albanians in North Kosovo, in Serb-majority municipalities, there is a visible correlation between removing the language barriers and increasing the level of communication. Of all the Albanians surveyed in North Kosovo, 50% stated that the Albanians would communicate more with the Serbs, and 50% estimated it as probable.

This fact leads to the conclusion that the non-majority Albanian community in North Kosovo municipalities does not have a tendency towards "ghettoization", which cannot be said for the Serbian community in the predominantly Albanian municipalities (Peć/Pejë region), as well as for the Serbian communities throughout Kosovo. This document does not deal with the causes that led to such a situation, but it is clear that they are intensely related to the essence of conflict, political influences, the objective and subjective sense of vulnerability, the fear of losing identity, etc..

**Communication on "Home Turf"**

In this research, we tried to measure the impact of language on the movement of people in Kosovo. That's why we asked the question: "Would you go more often to the predominantly Albanian/Serbian areas, if you spoke their language?" Almost half of the interviewed Serbs (45%) responded that it would not affect the frequency of going to the predominantly Albanian areas, 12% said that it would, and 31% estimate such a possibility as probable.

**Would you go more often to the predominantly Albanian areas, if you spoke their language?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>North Kosovo</th>
<th>Peć/Pejë region</th>
<th>Gnijilane/Gjilan region</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Youth</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>yes</td>
<td>15.8%</td>
<td>5.3%</td>
<td>14.8%</td>
<td><strong>12%</strong></td>
<td><strong>15%</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>no</td>
<td>47.4%</td>
<td>63.2%</td>
<td>25.9%</td>
<td><strong>45%</strong></td>
<td><strong>49%</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>maybe</td>
<td>31.6%</td>
<td>21.1%</td>
<td>40.7%</td>
<td><strong>31%</strong></td>
<td><strong>31%</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don’t have an opinion</td>
<td>5.3%</td>
<td>10.5%</td>
<td>18.5%</td>
<td><strong>11%</strong></td>
<td><strong>7%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There is no apparent difference between the attitudes of young Serbs and a general attitude of the total Serbian community in this regard. Of the total sample of the Serbian community, only 2% of young people are more willing to visit predominantly Albanian areas, provided they have a better knowledge of Albanian language, but there are 4% more of them who refuse to do so even if they spoke Albanian.

The interviewees in the Albanian community showed less resistance to going to the Serbian areas, with regard to the knowledge of the language. The possibility of more frequent visits to the predominantly Serbian areas, provided they have a better knowledge of Serbian language, is rejected by 30% of Albanians, approved by 10%, and 42% allow such a possibility.
On the other hand, among young Albanians interviewed, none declare the will to go in the predominantly Serbian areas, even if they spoke Serbian language (less than 1% of interviewees). 40% clearly reject this option, while 44% of interviewees allow such a possibility.

Only 9% of the Serbs would be willing to pay for private lessons in Albanian, while only 7% of the Albanians would pay for lessons in Serbian. In younger population, the number of interviewees, who would pay for private lessons in Albanian/Serbian, is even smaller (8% of young Serbs and only 4% of young Albanians).

The main reasons for such a small percentage are:

- attitudes towards Serbian/Albanian community
- attitudes of young people towards additional learning
- financial situation
- increasing interest in other languages (English and German)

Formal education does not include learning of either Albanian or Serbian language and, on the other hand, there is no willingness to improve this situation with private courses, so the perspective of multilingualism among young people does not seem optimistic.

The obtained results confirm the great division between Serbs and Albanians, where the lack of language skills and knowledge is a partial cause, but definitely not the only one.

Languages in the Surrounding - More than a School Subject

The professionals believe that the lack of language skills and knowledge is a serious barrier to full integration, and that it could be overcome if Serbian/Albanian language is introduced as a school subject. The situation in the field shows that there is still a great resistance to that within both communities. However, there is still a lot of resistance to this possibility, within both communities.

To the question "whether the students in schools should learn Albanian language as an elective subject," 18% of Serbian interviewees answered "Yes", 39% of the interviewees gave negative answer, and 16% answered "yes, but now is not the time for it." If one compares the overall percentage of affirmative answers with the percentage of the interviewees who think that Albanian language should be introduced in schools (as an elective subject) but that current climate in the society is unfavorable, he will get an interesting result. Namely, there is a total of 34% of positive answers ("Yes" and "Yes, but now is not the time for it ") on one hand, and 39% of explicitly negative answers ("No"), on the other hand. When we add to this 27% of those who do not have an opinion on this issue, it can be concluded that the dominant public discourse, formed through the media and public policy, significantly differs from the results obtained among the citizens from the Serbian community.
With young people, there is a noticeably greater resistance towards the introduction of Albanian language in Serbian schools, but those who support this idea among young people are more numerous than the overall average. The answer "yes, but now is not the time for it" (27% of youth and 16% overall average) speaks of greater acceptance among young people to gain the possibility to choose whether to learn Albanian language.

The attitude of the Serbian community towards the introduction of Albanian language, as an elective subject in primary and secondary schools, is given in the following table.

If we cross-connect several previously asked questions with these results, we will see that there is a disproportion between desires and needs and public opinion about the introduction of Albanian language in schools. In fact, 5% of Serbs speak Albanian, 71% of them would like to speak Albanian, and only 18% think Albanian language should be introduced as an elective subject.

Regarding the same question, the Albanian community has a more precise attitude. In relation to Serbs, there is a higher percentage of Albanians (both in the total and in the youth category) who support this idea. Similarly, much more of them oppose it (especially among young Albanians - 60%). Here one comes upon a different level of perception of needs to know another language. In addition, it is important to know that the Serbian community perceives the status in Kosovo as an unfinished process.
By analyzing the answers to the question "Why Albanian language should/should not be introduced in Serbian schools", a strong influence of the political climate and national discourses of each community is observed.

In most cases, the answers of the interviewees reflect their national pride, especially in frequent explanations for their negative attitude towards the introduction of Albanian language in schools. Some of the explanations are; "This is Serbia" (mostly in North Kosovo); "Children are taught according to the program of the Republic of Serbia"; "Firstly, the Albanians should start to learn Serbian"; "This condition is temporary", and the like.

As an explanation for their positive attitude, the interviewees said that "It is useful"; "It will be easier to find a job"; "It's a matter of general knowledge", and the like.

The analysis of the open question "How would your community react to the introduction of Albanian language in schools?", shows the varying degrees of integration in Gnjilane/Gjilan region,, the municipalities in North Kosovo and "small enclaves" in the Peć/Pejë region.

Serbs in North Kosovo believe that the introduction of Albanian as an elective subject would be perceived as "bad", "disastrous", "would cause protests", but also "initially would cause protests, but later everyone would accept it."

A smaller number of Serbs from Gnjilane/Gjilan region thinks that their compatriots would react badly to this option. Their answers are: "not so dramatic," "would initially protest," and the like.

The thesis that the Albanian and Serbian communities are "similar in their differences" is confirmed by the similar answers given by people opposing the introduction of Serbian as an elective subject in Albanian schools. Here, the most common answers are "Why the majority should learn the language of the minority?"; "Serbs should speak the language of the country in which they live"; "when they learn Albanian language, the Albanians will start learning Serbian."
One cannot notice from the given responses that the constitution of Kosovo (which guarantees bilingualism) has a significant impact on the formation of views on the language and language rights of both communities.

The interviewees’ responses are mostly based and rely on relations between the two communities, decades of conflict and the influence of media or the environment.

Although the interviewees do not see a direct relationship between the daily politics and attitudes about learning the language, it is clear that the Kosovo society is highly politicized, and thus the question of language and communication is a reflection of this situation.

Here one should notice the dominant role of both politics and media which, by everyday political propaganda, manage to impose political views, interpreting reality in Kosovo in a rather simplified way. Answers such as "This is Serbia" and “They need to learn Serbian" or "We, Albanians, had learned Serbian in their time," clearly represent two aggressive halves of the Kosovo's divided society.

When a young man, who lives in a municipality where there are only 1,000 Serbs and over 100,000 Albanians, says that his life is not affected by his ignorance of Albanian language, that Serbs should not speak Albanian, and that children should not learn Albanian language in school (and such answers are more frequent than some other answers), then nothing else can be concluded but that they form their opinion, as highly politicized individuals, through the media and not form their own experiences.

For all the political failures, officials from Belgrade accuse Pristina and the officials from Pristina accuse Belgrade. When citizens watch and listen to that, they create a picture that their neighbor from a different ethnic group is to be blamed for their bad situation, so why he would learn "his language".

It is clear that the language issue is burdened by political conflicts and perceived as a political instrument by the majority of people. Although it can easily be noticed that citizens see the
benefit of the language, in the context of the Kosovo society the results obtained are more often than not blurred and irrational.

**Not Knowing the Language and Resignation**

When we asked the question whether the ignorance of language makes everyday life more difficult, we received, at first glance, surprising answers.

Only 2% of Serbs believe that not knowing the language makes it very difficult, and 31% of them believe that it only partially makes their everyday life more difficult. 42% of the interviewees think that not knowing Albanian does not make their everyday life more difficult, while 25% of them do not think about it.

How should one understand that this attitude is advocated by 67% of Serbs who, in the continuation of the research, make significant remarks to the work of public institutions and respect of language rights, as well as to a huge ignorance of Albanian language in Serbian community?

It can be concluded that the problem of segregation of the Kosovo society is so big that the interviewees perceive this social dysfunction as a given, unchangeable and habitual.
From the previous illustration one can see how the language becomes a barrier, when integration begins to occur. The more one community becomes open to another community, the language becomes a more visible problem and an obstacle (33% say that not knowing the language makes everyday life very difficult or partially difficult in the total sample, out of which 48% in Gnjilane/Gjilan region).

18% of members of the Serbian community gave up some activity because they do not know Albanian language. One should not be deceived by the result of 7% of young Serbs who, for this reason, gave up some activities. The reason for this statistical difference is that young people are less likely to communicate with the institutions of Kosovo in the predominantly Albanian areas.

When interpreting the attitudes of the interviewees from the Serbian community, in relation to giving up on certain activities, it is important to consider the following real circumstances. In fact, as it has been said, the Serbs most often communicate with the institutions of Kosovo. In contact with the administration, the citizens very often agree to compromise in exercising the language rights in order to receive the service as soon as possible or because of the widespread fear of "retaliation" of the administration.

15% of Serbs and 31% of Albanians think that mutual knowledge of languages would reduce ethnic tensions. Of particular interest is the opinion of members of the Albanian community in North Kosovo, who have the most positive attitude to this question (50%), while on the other hand, in the "small enclaves" in the Peć/Pejë region, the Serbs do not see the link between the mutual knowledge of language and ethnic tensions.

These responses may be an indication that Serbs in Kosovo do not see the language as the biggest obstacle in Serbian-Albanian relations, but something else. Serbs recognize the link between language skills and personal security, more than Albanians do, even though the answers "no" and "partial" are in balance.
The Perception of Communication and Language Rights

We can conclude that members of the Serbian community do not have an extreme attitude in refusing to know Albanian language. Regardless of opinion on coexistence in Kosovo, the interviewees overwhelmingly reject the view that the Serbs in Kosovo do not have to learn Albanian language.

As the main benefit of knowing the language, the interviewees see job opportunities and better market positions. The penetration of the Kosovo institutions in the Serbian communities is shown by opinion of the two-thirds majority of interviewees who think that it would be easier for them to find a job if they spoke Albanian. More often than not, in job advertisements, and especially in public institutions, knowledge of Albanian is a great advantage or a prerequisite, which is confirmed by the answers to this question.

The interviewees gave particularly interesting answer regarding the compliance with the Law on Language. None of the questions here shows such a great difference in attitudes between Serbs and Albanians. 62% of Serbs consider that their language rights are too restricted, while 52% of Albanians consider that they are too unrestricted. The reasons should be sought in the fact that due to the non-compliance with the Law on Languages (although it contains some advanced and good solutions), the Serbs feel threatened while the Albanians emphasize that a "costly, unnecessary and unenforceable Law on Languages" exists because of the small number of people who speak Serbian language.

All analyses of the legislation say that Kosovo has advanced language rights. As the huge number of the Serbian community members thinks that their language rights are insufficient, it is clear that the non-implementation of the Law on Languages in practice annulled the good basis for the integration, such as positive legislation in the field of language rights.
We are pointing out to one, until now rarely discussed aspect of the Law on Languages, as seen Too big by the eyes of the Serbian community. Namely, the members of the Serbian community partially or totally agree (average rating of 2.3 on a scale 1 to 3) with the view that, in the case they spoke Albanian, their existing language rights would also be threatened.

It can be concluded that the Serbian community is of the opinion that the institutions in Kosovo provide services in Serbian language (with a lot of objections, which will be discussed below) firstly because otherwise it is impossible to communicate with the Serbs.

**Institutions Fail to Provide Services in Other Official Languages**

The vast majority of the interviewees from the Serbian community had a negative experience in institutions, where there was no official who spoke their language (44% often, 43% rarely 13% never). So, according to these answers, it is more than obvious that the institutions are not ready to provide service in Serbian, because this percentage is unacceptable.

This data are additionally supported by the results obtained at the regional level. In Gnjilane/Gjilan region, where members of the Serbian community most often communicate with the institutions of Kosovo, only 3.7% say it has never occur to them to come to the institution where there is no official who speaks Serbian.

When asked about the reasons why the institutions did not provide services in their native language, members of the Serbian community gave rather coherent answers.

When asked why they could not get quality services in Serbian language, the interviewees from the Serbian community stated that there were not enough officers who spoke Serbian (or some of related languages). It is clear that the perception of citizens of the Serbian community of their language rights as being endangered is largely based not only on non-compliance with the Law on Languages, but also on non-compliance with another law. This is the Law on Civil Servants which stipulates that 10% of employees in public administration must be members of a minority
community. Because this Law is not fully implemented in practice, there is not enough staff to provide services to their compatriots in a language they understand. This document does not deal with the reasons why the Law on Civil Servants is not fully implemented.

Another perception of a number of interviewees in the Serbian community is also very interesting. Namely, more interviewees agree with the view that Albanians who are officials in the institutions of Kosovo know but do not want to speak Serbian, than with the view that they do not know Serbian language.

To better understand the perception of citizens about the language services in the institutions, it is important to take into account the overall attitude towards the institutions. Citizens generally do not have a good opinion of the work of the institutions, so the negative evaluation of the language services is often only a part of the overall negative attitude.

Also, 30% of the Albanians in North Kosovo pointed to the disrespect of language rights and the inability to perform their services in Albanian. During the research, this group of interviewees (Albanians who live in municipalities with Serbian majority) naturally showed a particular type of confusion, because in many institutions in North Kosovo, the process of implementation of the Brussels Agreement is still ongoing, and they function in accordance with that unfinished process.

**Contacts with Institutions - Frequency and Problems**

We tried to cross three questions in order to get the top list of institutions in which the citizens from the Serbian community would first want to see improvements in language services.

Therefore, we asked the interviewees to (1) select three institutions they most frequently communicate with, (2) select three institutions in which they had a problem with the language, and (3) to assess the respect of their language rights in each of the listed institutions.

The citizens of the Serbian community in Kosovo most often communicate with the municipality (23.8%), police (20.3%), public services (post offices 18%, 10.9% KEDS, bus stations 11.2%), and court 7.7%.
Institutions that the interviewees selected as the places where they were deprived of the services in their native (Serbian) language are municipalities (for Serbian interviewees in predominantly Albanian municipalities, or those who go for the services in the predominantly Albanian municipalities) with 21.8%, followed by providers of public services (post offices and mobile operators - 17.2%, bus stations 12.8%, KEDS 5.8%), courts 13.6%, and government services 10.8%, police 10.3%. ...

When assessing the institutions on the basis of their personal experience, the citizens of the Serbian community did not single out any institution. Dissatisfaction with institutions regarding the respect of the Law on Languages was omnipresent with small oscillations between institutions. The average score of all public institutions in Kosovo, which provide services to the citizens of the Serbian community, is 2.42 on a scale of 1 to 5.
Crossing the data on frequency, citizens' needs, problems in providing services by the institutions led to the conclusion that it is important to raise the capacity of (1) municipalities, (2) companies for providing public services (post offices, telecommunications, transportation, banks, water supply, KEDS, etc.) (3) police and (4) courts.

It is important to state that the institutions of Kosovo, besides the problem of non-compliance with the Law on Languages, have many other problems. These are often frequent inefficiencies, inadequate personnel structures, lack of resources, problem of systemic corruption, working conditions and others. In this light, but not as an excuse, one should understand that the relation to language services is perceived in the same way.

For this reason, a lot of systematic work, change of attitude towards language, different employment policy, promotion and stimulation of language learning will be necessary.

The acute problem of Kosovo society as a whole is the implementation of the law. In this sense, the Law on Languages is not and cannot be an exception. Greater involvement of the institutions and all those who care about improving the situation in this sphere of life would certainly improve the lives of all Kosovo citizens, coexistence would certainly be on a higher level, but knowledge of languages and respect of language rights would not crucially change today's bad situation.

The Law on Languages is violated on a daily basis with almost publicly accepted excuses that "they do not have sufficient resources, personnel, capacities ..." It is a devastating fact that these obstacles are not removed.

The key conclusion of this research may be that one must make an extra effort in cooperation with the institutions in order to raise language rights and law enforcement to a higher level, but at the same time to work on sensitizing the society and establishing connections between people.

Below, we will give recommendations for improving the state of multilingualism in Kosovo.
RECOMMENDATIONS

Although the issue of respecting language cannot be isolated from the general situation in society, when it comes to interethnic relations, however, we can highlight several recommendations.

- In resolving outstanding political issues between Albanians and Serbs, and Serbia and Kosovo, respect for language rights and concrete measures for mass learning of the language of their surroundings should be included as topics.

- Regardless of the existence of two separate and mutually unrecognized educational systems, one should work to promote good examples of coexistence in schools. In addition, the possibility of introducing a second language of their surroundings as an elective subject should be considered. In this regard, experimental teaching of the second language as an elective should be introduced in schools where currently both Albanian and Serbian children attend classes. One should begin, with special caution and sensibility, with preparations for this step and involve all interested parties (students, parents, school administrators, staff, ministries, etc.).

- As a preparation for the above recommendations, schools should be encouraged to organize in their premises courses of the second language for interested students, after regular teaching classes.

- At this point, it is not advisable to introduce mandatory language learning courses in schools because the resistance could be great and counter-effects could have a negative impact on language rights. Instead one should make an effort to change this image through campaigns and good preparation.

- The Government of Kosovo should adopt and implement a comprehensive strategy on the protection and promotion of language rights, in accordance with the commitments of Kosovo to the European Union in the manner envisaged by the Stabilization and Association Agreement and the EU reports on the progress of Kosovo.

- The role of the Office of the Language Commissioner should be strengthened through the increased independence of this institution. By amending the by-laws, one should enable the imposition and collection of fines to institutions and persons responsible for violating the provisions of the Law on Languages.

- One should conduct an analysis of compliance with the Law on Civil Servants and in particular with Article 11, paragraph 3, referring to the percentage of officers from the ranks of non-majority communities. One should also work on better implementation of this Law.

- The modules of learning the second official language and the language in official use in municipalities should be introduced in the training program for public officials.

- Experts in Albanian, Serbian, Turkish, Bosnian, Roma and other languages should be encouraged to collaborate and publish professional literature. It is especially necessary
to start publishing capital issues such as general and professional dictionaries, spelling rules and grammar books.

- All the efforts of governmental and non-governmental sector, as well as of international organizations dealing with language rights and communication between communities should be well coordinated.

- The promotion of multilingualism in Kosovo should be stimulated. Special attention should be paid to other languages in Kosovo, whether they are official languages, languages in official use in municipalities or other languages spoken in Kosovo.

- The work of institutions, organizations and individuals who contribute to the development of multilingualism in Kosovo with their work should be affirmed through public recognitions, media attention and promotion.
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COMMUNICATION AMONG MEMBERS OF SERBIAN AND ALBANIAN COMMUNITIES IN KOSOVO

the issue of languages