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Human security in Kosovo
A survey of perceptions



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The Forum for Civic Initiatives (FIQ) is a Kosovar non-governmental organisation promoting the involvement of Kosovar citizens in social and decision-making processes through programmes designed to focus attention on the values and functioning of an open and democratic society.



Saferworld is an independent non-governmental organisation that works with governments and civil society internationally to research, promote and implement new strategies to increase human security and prevent armed violence.

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Executive Summary

This paper investigates perceptions of security, community safety and small arms and light weapons prevalence in Kosovo on the basis of data collected in December 2006 in a Kosovo-wide household survey of 1,153 respondents and a series of focus group discussions. The report analyses the role of different factors including income, age, ethnicity, gender and location in affecting perceptions of security and community safety. The survey has been designed to be repeated regularly in order to track changing perceptions of these issues in Kosovo. The present survey, which is the first in the series, focused on four main areas: community safety and security; perceptions of conflict; perceptions of security providers; and weapons possession and use.

The survey results indicate the degree to which perceptions of safety at present vary among different ethnic groups, with the majority of Kosovo Albanian respondents feeling safer in comparison to Kosovo Serb respondents. However, socio-economic factors such as unemployment and poverty also play an important role. For instance, the survey found that socio-economic factors are more important in driving emigration from Kosovo than feelings of insecurity. Perceptions of community safety are unsurprisingly linked to perceptions of crime rates. Wealth and location were important factors in determining the degree of fear of crime. Wealthier respondents were more afraid that they or a member of their family would become a victim of crime, while some municipalities displayed significantly lower levels of fear of crime than others. Kosovo Serbs reported a higher degree and frequency of crime in comparison to respondents from other ethnic groups, a fact that is likely to be linked to their stronger perceptions of insecurity.

The majority of people surveyed believed that unresolved status of Kosovo could lead to another conflict; however the picture varied across society. Younger people tend to be more positive about conflict resolution by peaceful means than older people, and are also more likely to cite unemployment as a key driver of potential conflict. A majority of respondents believed that conflicts at community level could be resolved peacefully, and while such levels of confidence were not reflected in the Serbian-majority municipalities in Northern Kosovo, a large majority of respondents in Kamenicë/Kamenica, an ethnically mixed municipality with a significant Kosovo Serbian population, felt confident that conflicts at community-level could be resolved peacefully.

One of the principal problems blighting peaceful conflict resolution and progress in security sector reform more generally is the low level of trust placed by people in Kosovo in security providers. Levels of trust in UNMIK Police are very low, and while KFOR is more widely trusted, trust levels remain low. Trust in the judiciary is also low. The survey revealed the Kosovo Police Service (KPS) to be the most widely trusted of security providers, despite the belief of a large number of respondents that it is subject to political influence. Age, ethnicity and gender of respondents play a role in influencing attitudes towards the KPS. For instance, women have more trust in the KPS than men, and young people have more trust in the institution (and the Kosovo Protection Corps) than older people.

The survey also looked at weapons possession, use and factors that might prompt people to surrender weapons. The majority of respondents believe that owning a firearm does not or would not make them or their families safer, and that illegal firearms pose a threat

to the prosperity of Kosovo. There was also a degree of consensus as to why people continued to possess weapons, and what would prompt them to hand them in voluntarily.

According to the survey results, most people consider fear of future conflict or instability to be the main reason why people do not hand in their weapons during weapons amnesties, while tradition also plays a role.

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Acronyms and abbreviations

CPHRMK	Committee for the Protection of Human Rights and Minorities in Kosovo
EU	European Union
FGD	focus group discussion
FIQ	Forum for Civic Initiatives
HHS	household survey
IDP	internally displaced person
IHSOP	Institute for Strategic Research of Public Opinion
ISSR	Internal Security Sector Review
KFOR	Kosovo Force (NATO)
KLA	Kosovo Liberation Army
KPC	Kosovo Protection Corps
KPS	Kosovo Police Service
LPSC	Local Public Safety Committee
MCSC	Municipal Community Safety Council
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NGO	non-governmental organisation
PISG	Provisional Institutions of Self-Government
SALW	small arms and light weapons
SHIK	Kosovo Information Service
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNMIK	United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo

Introduction

This study was undertaken by the Forum for Civic Initiatives and Saferworld between December 2006 and February 2007 in order to assess independently and comprehensively public perceptions of, and attitudes towards, security, community safety and small arms and light weapons (SALW) in Kosovo.

In order to ensure a high degree of accuracy and the possibility for a detailed analysis of the situation, a number of research methods were used including:

- A Kosovo-wide household survey (HHS) conducted by the Forum for Civic Initiatives and the Committee for the Protection of Human Rights of Minorities in Kosovo (CPHRMK), in Albanian and Serbian languages as appropriate.
- Six focus group discussions (FGDs) (with male and female participants); one in Prishtina/Priština, two in Mitrovicë/Mitrovica, one in Gjilan/Gnjilane, one in Obiliq/Obilić and one in Prizren/Prizren. The FGDs have been used to validate the results from the HHS and gain a deeper understanding of citizens' perceptions of the security situation in Kosovo.
- Findings from supplementary focus group discussions undertaken during February and March 2007 have been used to supplement the findings from the original FGDs and the HHS.

The HHS was conducted throughout Kosovo and a representative sample 1,153 respondents was selected to gather the data. The standard error margin at this sample size and population is 2.89 percent at a confidence level of 95 percent (see Annex A for further details). Conducted in December 2006, the data for this study was gathered principally from interviews with heads of households and where appropriate, women (regardless of their position in a household). Because a large majority of heads of household in Kosovo are men, in order to provide an adequate gender balance, women were interviewed in every second and fourth household. In total, 56.1 percent of respondents were male and 43.9 percent were female. Over three quarters were over the age of 35. The age structure is shown in the figure below:

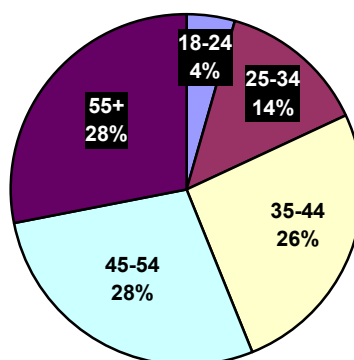


Figure 1: Age categories of respondents
Base number: 1,153

The educational background of the respondents varied, ranging from respondents without any formal education to those with completed university degrees. The most common education background was of completed secondary education (38.9 percent).

79.6 percent of respondents were Kosovo Albanian, 17.5 percent were Kosovo Serb¹, while 2.9 percent belonged to another ethnicity. The urban-rural spread was that of 56.6 percent of the respondents in rural areas, with 43.4 percent in urban areas.

In general, Kosovo Albanian respondents tended to perceive the security situation in a more positive light than Kosovo Serb respondents. Kosovo Serb respondents also tended to have lower levels of trust in security providers, both local and international, although levels of trust were low overall. As was the case with similar surveys in the past,² questions relating to Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) elicited the highest levels of refusal, with more respondents choosing not to answer, or answering 'I don't know', to several of the SALW-related questions than to any other questions, indicating that the issue of SALW possession continues to be a sensitive one for many people in Kosovo. The high proportion of respondents choosing not to answer certain questions should not necessarily be taken as an indication of the fact that respondents have something to hide. It should, however, be borne in mind when attempting to draw general conclusions and find patterns regarding SALW possession and use in Kosovo.

¹ Though exact statistics are not available, Serbs in Kosovo are estimated to currently constitute around 5 percent of the population of Kosovo. However, household research companies in Kosovo tend to include a higher proportion of respondents of Serbian background in their sampling to ensure that opinions of Kosovo Serbs living in very different contexts around Kosovo are adequately represented.

² See for example Sokolová, J. et. al. *SALW Survey of Kosovo*, (SEESAC, 2006)

Community safety and security

The majority of those questioned for this research perceived their neighbourhood to be either 'very safe' (15.6 percent) or 'safe' (48.7 percent). Only 13.4 percent considered their neighbourhood to be 'unsafe' or 'very unsafe'. In contrast to these overall figures, only 4.5 percent of Kosovo Serbs considered their neighbourhood to be either 'very safe' or 'safe'. While a large proportion (43.6 percent) of the Kosovo Serb respondents answered 'neither safe nor unsafe' to this question, nearly half (48 percent) considered their neighbourhood to be either 'unsafe' or 'very unsafe'. This is significantly different to the answers given by Kosovo Albanian, Roma, Bosnian and Ashkali respondents, 77.1 percent of whom considered their neighbourhoods to be 'very safe' or 'safe', and just 6.1 percent felt their neighbourhoods were 'unsafe' or 'very unsafe'.

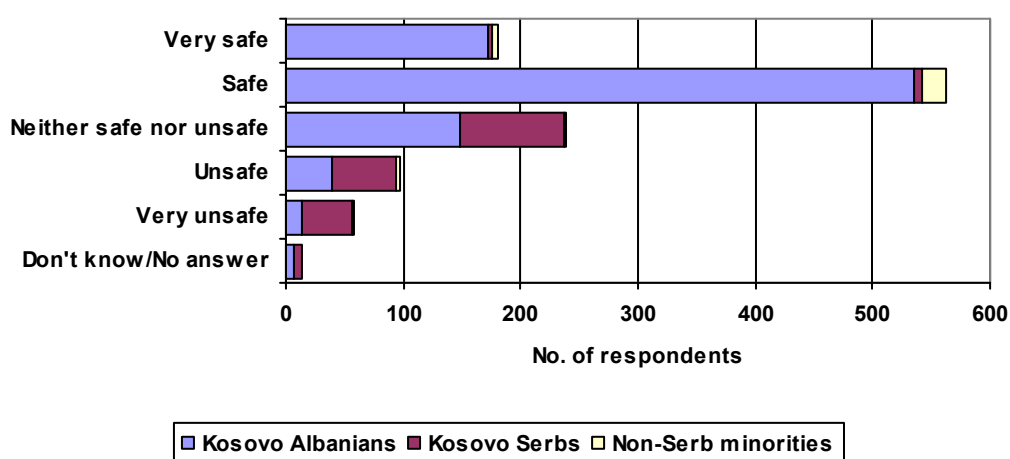


Figure 2: Would you describe your neighbourhood as...?
Base number: 1,153

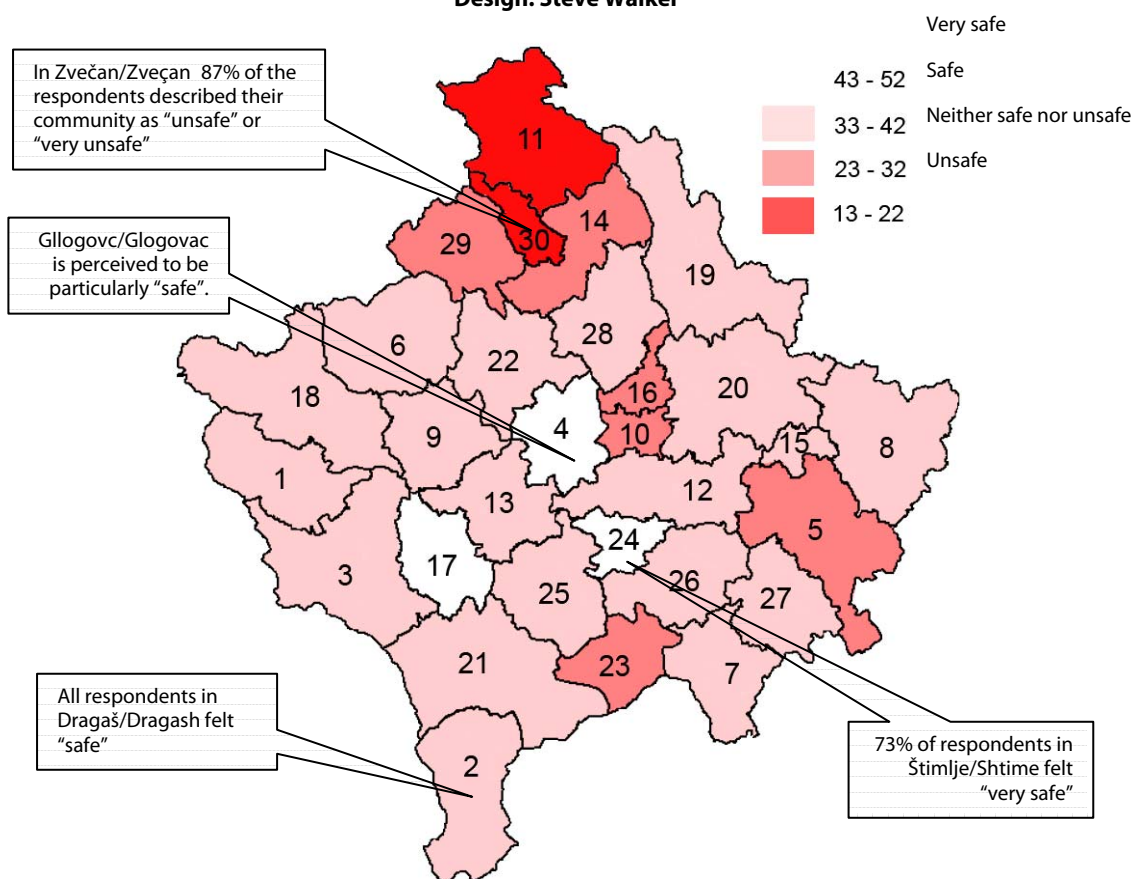
Several municipalities were identified as particularly safe in this survey. All respondents in Dragash/Dragaš, Glllogvc/Glogovac and Rahovec/Orahovac, and over 90 percent of respondents in a further five municipalities³ stated that their neighbourhoods were either 'very safe' or 'safe'. The only area that was perceived to be unsafe by a vast majority of its residents was Zvečan/Zvečan, one of the four Kosovo Serb majority municipalities in Kosovo, with Serbs making up an estimated 72.6 percent of the population.⁴ 25.3 percent of the population are Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) with the majority of these being Kosovo Serb. Just 2.1 percent of the population are Kosovo Albanian, and the majority of these live in three villages which are exclusively inhabited by Kosovo Albanians.⁵

³ Glllogvc/Glogovac, Ferizaj/Uroševac, Malishevë/Mališevo, Shtime/Štimlje, Istog/Istok.

⁴ OSCE Mission in Kosovo, *Municipal Profile: Zvečan/Zvečan* (June 2006). Available at: http://www.osce.org/documents/mik/2005/12/1209_en.pdf

⁵ Ibid

Figure 3: Perceptions of safety in Kosovo by municipality⁶
Design: Steve Walker



Key to municipalities

- | | | |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Deçan/Deçani | 11. Leposaviq/Leposavić | 21. Prizren/Prizren |
| 2. Dragash/Dragaš | 12. Lipjan/Lipljan | 22. Skenderaj/Srbica |
| 3. Gjakovë/Đakovica | 13. Malishevë/Mališevo | 23. Shtërpçë/Štrpce |
| 4. Gllgovc/Glogovac | 14. Mitrovicë/Kosovska Mitrovica | 24. Shtime/Štimlje |
| 5. Gjilan/Gnjilane | 15. Novobërdë/ Novo Brdo | 25. Suharekë/Suva Reka |
| 6. Istog/Istok | 16. Obiliq/Obilić | 26. Ferizaj/Uroševac |
| 7. Kaçanik/Kaçanik | 17. Rahovec/ Orahovac | 27. Viti/Vitina |
| 8. Kamenicë/Kosovska Kamenica | 18. Pejë/Peć | 28. Vushtrri/Vučitrn |
| 9. Klinë/Klina | 19. Podujevë/Podujevo | 29. Zubin Potok/Zubin Potok |
| 10. Fushë Kosovë/ Kosovo Polje | 20. Prishtinë/Priština | 30. Zvečan/Zvečan |

⁶ The level of perceived safety is determined by grading safety from 5 to 1 (5 being "very safe" and 1 being "very unsafe") and multiplying the grade by the percentage of respondents in a municipality who gave this response. The total perceived safety level in a municipality is then the sum of these scores ("very safe" being a score of 43-52; "safe" 33-42, "neither safe nor unsafe" 23-32 and "unsafe" 13-22). This enables comparison between municipalities as the number of respondents in any municipality does not affect the overall perceived safety level. It also allows for comparison concerning the overall level of perceived safety rather than the number of respondents giving any one answer.

Interestingly, a higher proportion of women (19.2 percent) than men (12.8 percent) perceived their neighbourhood to be 'very safe.'

When asked whether levels of safety in their neighbourhood had changed during the last six months, the majority of respondents (71.7 percent) stated that levels had stayed the same. 13.7 percent felt safety had increased, while 8.8 percent thought safety levels had deteriorated. All but one municipality conformed to this general pattern of considering safety levels as unchanged over the previous 6 months. It was only in Dragash/Dragaš that a large majority of respondents (86.7 percent) stated that they felt the levels of safety in their community had improved. This may be a result of increased police patrols in Dragash/Dragaš following the introduction in March 2006 of a Kosovo Police Service (KPS) Mounted Police Unit.⁷ However, further research is necessary to examine any potential link between the two.

Research for this study suggests that over two-thirds of people intend to remain in Kosovo for the next five years, while just 13.8 percent of respondents stated that they intended to emigrate within such a timeframe, and 17 percent were undecided. There is not a large discrepancy between the numbers of Kosovo Albanians and Kosovo Serbs wishing to remain in Kosovo. Although Kosovo Serbs are often portrayed as intending to leave Kosovo due to concerns about their security, only 6.9 percent gave this as a reason during this research. Instead, unemployment and other socio-economic concerns are perceived as important factors contributing to insecurity and people's desire to emigrate from Kosovo.

While 55.9 percent of Kosovo Serbs stated that they did not intend to emigrate from Kosovo at any stage in the next five years (compared to 70.2 percent of Kosovo Albanians and non-Serb minorities), a further 32.7 percent were undecided. Such indecision could be a result of the remaining uncertainty regarding the future status of Kosovo. This survey is designed to be repeated regularly in order to track changing perceptions of security and so future research will aim to shed further light on the intentions of Kosovo's Serbs in this respect.

There does not appear to be a correlation between those considering emigration from Kosovo and perceptions of community safety. For example, 51.6 percent of those who stated that they intended to emigrate from Kosovo within the next five years also considered that their community was 'safe', with a further 11.9 percent stating that it was 'very safe'. Of those who stated that they wished to emigrate, only 18.3 percent perceived their neighbourhood to be 'unsafe' or 'very unsafe'.

While further research is necessary to corroborate this data, it suggests that a wish to leave Kosovo is not necessarily a result of security concerns, but rather due to other factors. The research suggests that age and degree of economic hardship may be factors influencing people's intention to leave Kosovo. Experience of economic hardship was measured by responses to the question asking what proportion of monthly income do respondents spend on food. The highest percentage (19 percent) of respondents planning to emigrate from Kosovo belonged to the category that indicated greatest level of economic hardship, i.e. those who chose the option 'our family's income is not enough, our family abroad

⁷ KPS Spokesperson, telephone interview, 17 May 2007.

helps us' when asked about the proportion of their monthly income they spend on food.⁸ In contrast, the lowest percentage of those wishing to leave Kosovo (9.1. percent) falls into the category that indicated the greatest level of wealth, where the proportion of monthly income spent on food was 'a quarter.'

The research also suggests that younger people are more likely to plan to emigrate from Kosovo over the next five years than older people. As illustrated in Figure 4 below, a significantly higher proportion of respondents from the age category of 18-24 are planning to emigrate from Kosovo in the next five years than those falling into the age category of 55 and above.

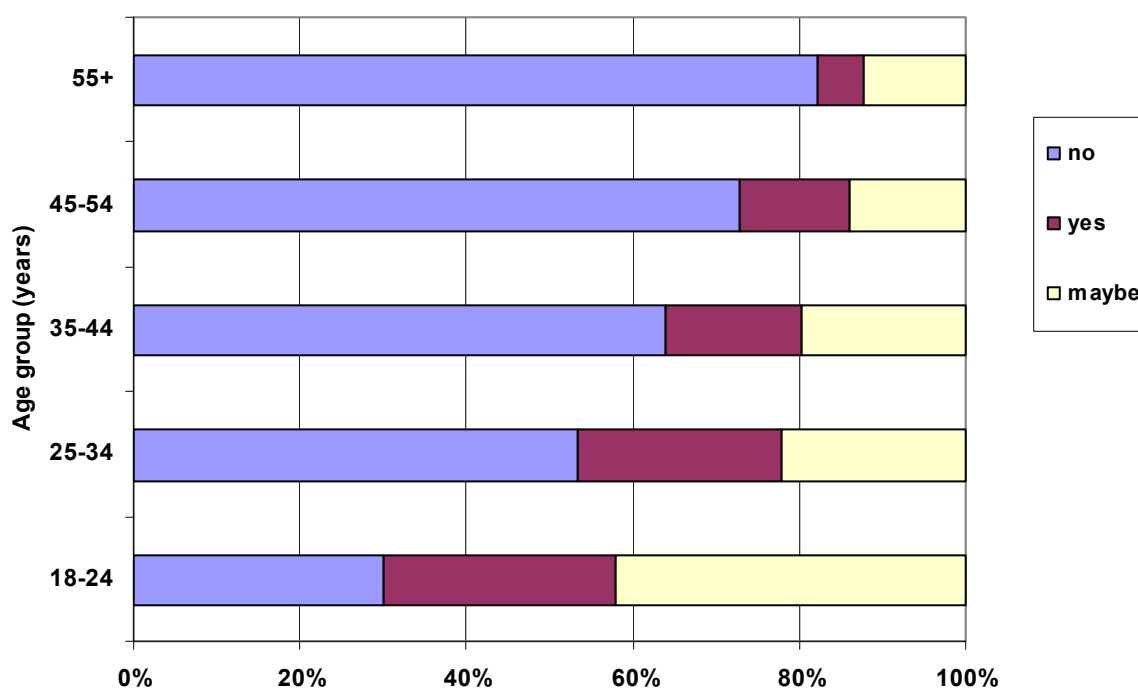


Figure 4: Do you intend to emigrate from Kosovo in the next 5 years?
Base number: 1,153

It is therefore probable that economic hardship and youth are drivers behind the desire to emigrate from Kosovo. This is supported by the estimate that over 63 percent of those aged between 15 and 24 years are unemployed.⁹

Threats to safety and security

Crime

When asked whether they were afraid that they or a member of their family may become a victim of crime, people's responses varied. 34.1 percent stated that they were 'not afraid at all', with the remaining proportion fairly evenly distributed between varying levels of fear. The majority of the 15.9 percent who stated they were 'very afraid' were Kosovo Serbs.

⁸ This response does not indicate only level of economic hardship but also that the respondent may already have a family network abroad, which may make it easier for them to go to a new country. Where this is the case, having family members abroad could be a factor as much as poverty in decisions people make.

⁹ *Kosovo Human Development Report* (UNDP, 2006)

69.8 percent of Kosovo Serbs were 'very afraid' that either they or a family member may become a victim of crime, and a further 26.7 percent were 'quite afraid'. By contrast, a majority of Kosovo Albanian respondents stated that they were either 'not very afraid', or 'not afraid at all'.

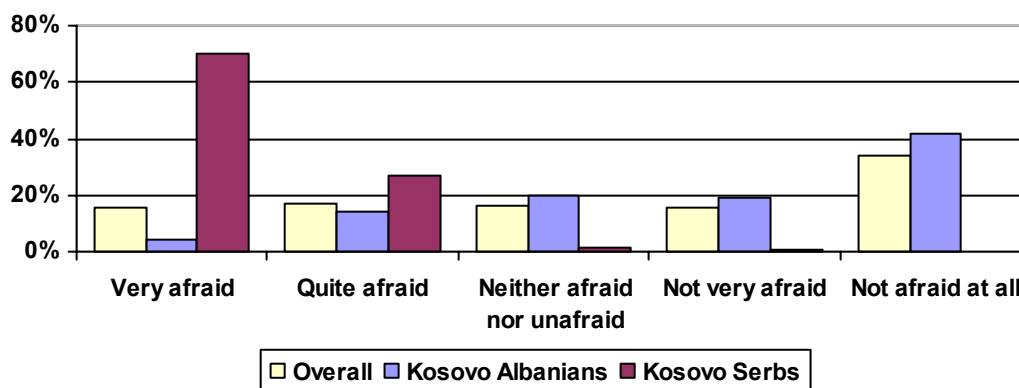
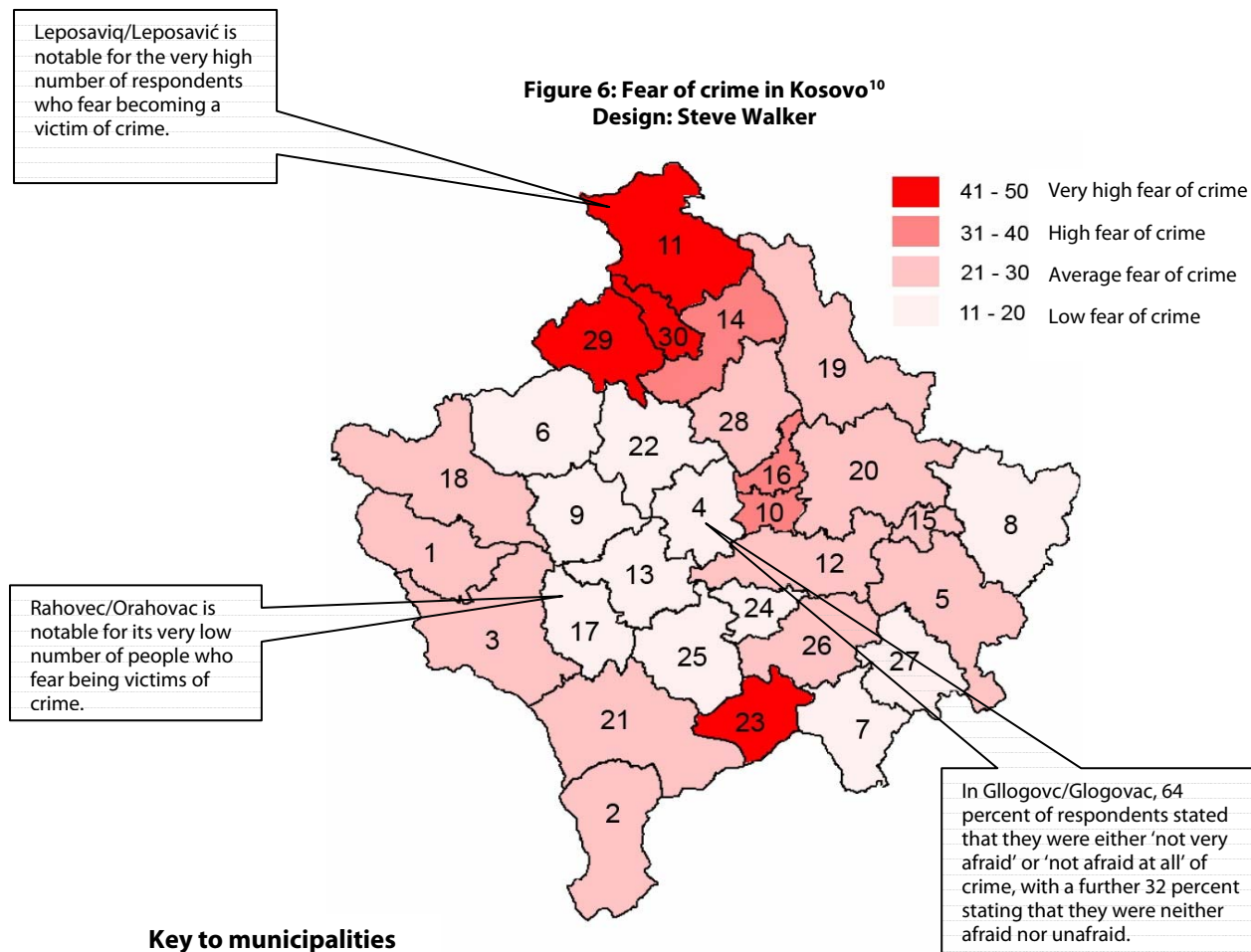


Figure 5: How afraid are you that you or your family may become a victim of crime?
Base number: 1,153

Respondents' fear of crime varied significantly according to the place in which they live. In some municipalities, substantial proportions of respondents feared becoming a victim of crime. The most notable are Leposaviq/Leposavić, Zubin Potok/Zubin Potok, Shtërpcë/Štrpce and Zvečan/Zvečan, where all of those questioned were either 'very afraid' or 'quite afraid' of becoming a victim of crime. The municipalities where the greatest proportion of respondents stated they were either 'not very afraid' or 'not afraid at all' were Rahovec/Orahovac (all respondents), Malishevë/Mališevo (85 percent), Klinë/Klina (84 percent), and Skenderaj/Srbica (83.3 percent).



Key to municipalities

- | | | |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Deçan/Deçani | 11. Leposaviq/Leposavić | 21. Prizren/Prizren |
| 2. Dragash/Dragaš | 12. Lipjan/Lipljan | 22. Skenderaj/Srbica |
| 3. Gjakovë/Đakovica | 13. Malishevë/Mališevo | 23. Shtërpcë/Štrpce |
| 4. Glogovac/Glogovac | 14. Mitrovicë/Kosovska Mitrovica | 24. Shtime/Štimlje |
| 5. Gjilan/Gnjilane | 15. Novobërdë/ Novo Brdo | 25. Suharekë/Suva Reka |
| 6. Istog/Istok | 16. Obiliq/Obilić | 26. Ferizaj/Uroševac |
| 7. Kaçanik/Kaçanik | 17. Rahovec/Orahovac | 27. Viti/Vitina |
| 8. Kamenicë/Kosovska Kamenica | 18. Pejë/Peć | 28. Vushtrri/Vučitrn |
| 9. Klinë/Klina | 19. Podujevë/Podujevo | 29. Zubin Potok/Zubin Potok |
| 10. Fushë Kosovë/ Kosovo Polje | 20. Prishtinë/Priština | 30. Zveçan/Zvečan |

It is interesting to compare rates of reported fear of crime with perceptions of community safety. For example, out of the four municipalities where all respondents stated they were fearful of falling victim to crime, only in Zveçan/Zvečan did a significant proportion of respondents (87 percent) also rate their neighbourhood as 'unsafe' or 'very unsafe'. In contrast, in Leposaviq/Leposavić, Zubin Potok and Shtërpcë/Štrpce, opinions on this matter, while still negative, were less extreme, with answers more evenly split between perceptions of their neighbourhood as 'neither safe nor unsafe', and perceptions of the

¹⁰ The level of fear of crime is determined by grading fear of crime from 5 to 1 (5 being "very afraid" and 1 being "not afraid at all") and multiplying the grade by the percentage of respondents in a municipality who gave this response. The total fear of crime level in a municipality is then the sum of these scores ("very afraid" being a score of 41-50; "quite afraid" 31-40, "neither afraid nor unafraid" 21-30, and "not very afraid" 13-22). This enables comparison between municipalities as the number of respondents in any municipality does not affect the overall perceived safety level. It also allows for comparison concerning the overall level of perceived safety rather than the number of respondents giving any one answer.

neighbourhood as particularly unsafe. Further, when compared with Figure 3 above, it can be seen that Gllgovc/Glogovac and Rahovec/Orahovac, two of the three municipalities that were rated as 'safe' or 'very safe' by all respondents residing there, were among those where the huge majority of respondents were not afraid of falling victim to crime.

However, while 66.7 percent of those questioned in Dragash/Dragaš stated they were either 'not very afraid' or 'not afraid at all' of crime, a total of 26.7 percent reported that they were 'quite afraid' or 'very afraid'. This is interesting, given that all respondents in the municipality considered their neighbourhood to be either 'safe' or 'very safe'. This discrepancy may be explained by the fact that the question regarding fear of crime did not specify the location of the crime, and thus it is quite possible that though all respondents feel safe in their *neighbourhood*, a proportion of these fear that they, or a member of their family, will become a victim of crime outside of their neighbourhood.

Two different contexts in Kosovo: Focus on Zvečan/Zvečan and Gllgovc/Glogovac

To illustrate the differences between different municipalities, it is useful to compare the small municipality of Zvečan/Zvečan in Northern Kosovo, which is predominately inhabited by Kosovo Serbs with a very small Albanian population, with Gllgovc/Glogovac, a relatively large municipality with a predominantly Kosovo Albanian population in central Kosovo. Zvečan/Zvečan has high unemployment (particularly after the Trepca factory was closed in 2000), and low economic development with low capital investment. The economy of Gllgovc/Glogovac is mainly agricultural, with the majority of the population employed in family-owned, non-productive business.

All respondents from Zvečan/Zvečan were "very afraid" or "quite afraid" of being a victim of crime, and 87 percent felt their neighbourhood was either "very unsafe" or "unsafe". In contrast, 64 percent of respondents in Gllgovc/Glogovac were "not afraid" or "not very afraid" of crime.

The two municipalities have roughly similar numbers of KPS officers present per head. When asked who would they call if threatened with violence, an overwhelming majority in both Gllgovc/Glogovac and Zvečan/Zvečan answered "no one" or "relatives, friends or neighbours" (96.0 percent and 82.6 percent respectively) as their first choice. However, for second and third choice, the patterns diverge. In Zvečan/Zvečan, of those who reported a second choice, 78.3 percent would call KFOR, and of those who selected a third choice, 82.6 percent would call UNMIK. Here, the KPS fares very low on both second and third choice. But in Gllgovc/Glogovac, 48 percent would call the KPS second.

The research suggests some correlation between relative wealth and fear of crime: wealthier people were more afraid that they or a member of their family will become a victim of crime. 43.6 percent of respondents belonging to the category that indicates the comparatively greatest level of wealth (proportion of monthly income spent on food is

'less than a quarter'), are 'very afraid'. In contrast, only 7.9 percent of respondents falling into the income category that indicates the comparatively greatest level of poverty ('our family's income is not enough, our family abroad helps us') are 'very afraid'.

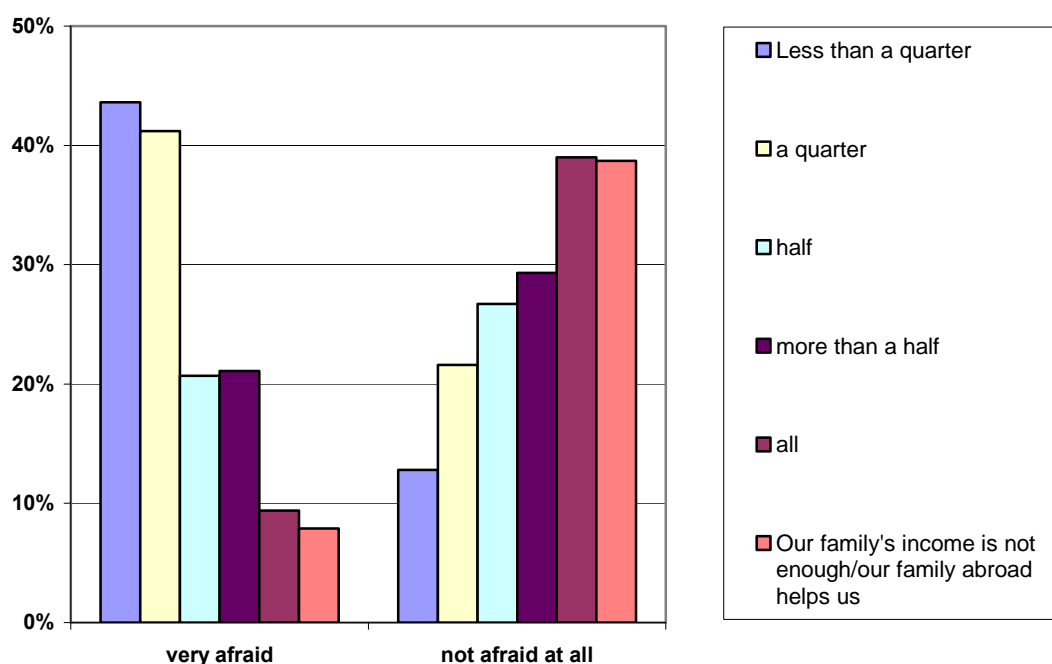


Figure 7: The relationship between fear of crime and wealth
Base number: 363

The research also suggests that those who have received a higher level of education tend to be more afraid that they or their family will be a victim of crime than those who have received no education. 22 percent of those that have completed secondary education are 'very afraid' in comparison to 6.5 percent of those who have no education.

Incidence of crime

In total, 13.1 percent of respondents stated that either they or a member of their family had been a victim of crime at least once in the last six months. 6.0 percent of respondents reported two incidents of crime, and 2.5 percent said that they or their family had been a victim of crime three times in that period. The most common crime reported to the researchers was robbery/theft (9.5 percent of respondents), with a further 2.7 percent reporting an incident of armed robbery/theft and 2.4 percent stating that either they or a member of their family had been subjected to threats in the last six months. Of the 243 incidents of crime reported by HHS respondents, 16.5 percent were SALW-related, and this may be even higher if crimes that may have involved SALW, such as murder or assault, are included. This figure is also corroborated by data gathered by the HHS undertaken for the *SALW Survey of Kosovo* in March 2006, which revealed that 8.1 percent of all crimes reported to the researchers were linked to SALW.¹¹

The research for the present study revealed a perception that robbery and theft were crimes most commonly committed in respondents' communities (according to 36.6 percent of respondents), with just 6.9 percent of respondents stating that they thought

¹¹ Sokolová, J. et. al. op. cit., p 38

SALW-related crimes (such as armed robbery/theft, armed threat and shootings) were committed on a frequent basis in their community.

Kosovo Serbs questioned for this survey reported a higher incidence of almost every type of crime in their communities. It is interesting to note that Kosovo Serb respondents perceive crimes such as threats, assaults and thefts, and particularly SALW-related crimes, to be more frequent than respondents from other groups present in Kosovo. As discussed below, crime is also identified by Kosovo Serbs as one of the top security and safety concerns in their community (see section 'Safety and security concerns' below). Due to an absence of comprehensive and reliable statistical data, it is not possible to state conclusively whether the fact that Kosovo Serb respondents consistently report higher perceptions of crime is in fact a reflection of a higher incidence of crime affecting Kosovo Serbs or a reflection of a greater feeling of overall insecurity and vulnerability.

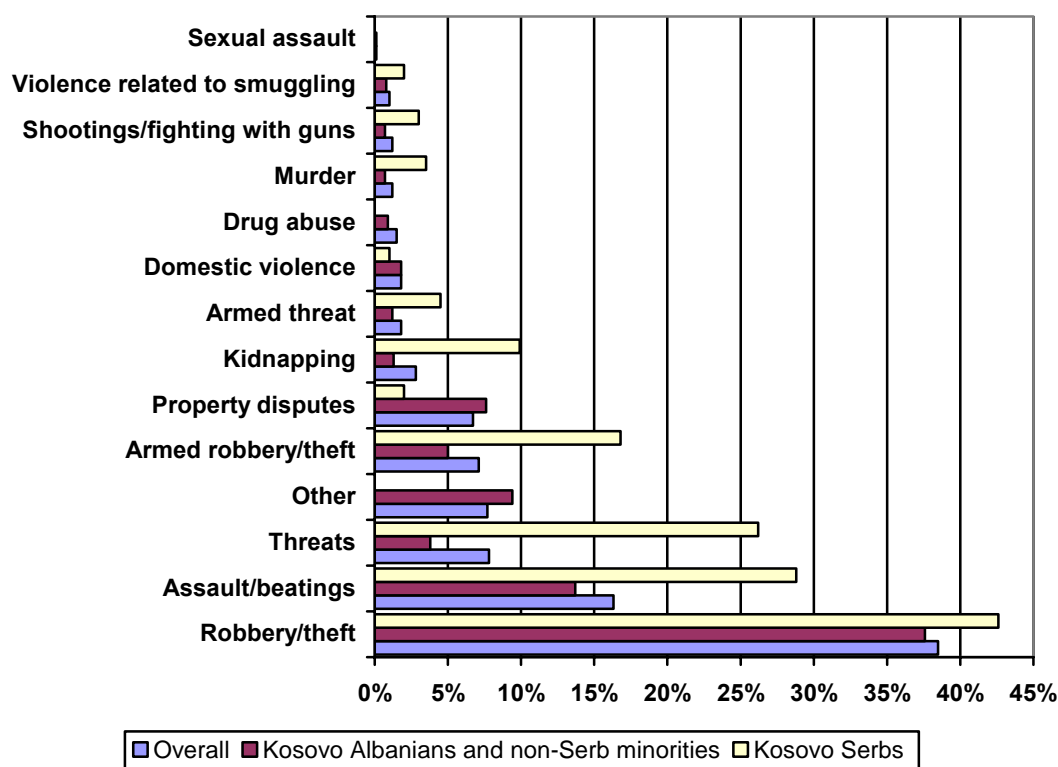


Figure 8: In your opinion, what types of crime occur frequently in your community?
(multiple answers possible)
Base number: 1,153

More male than female respondents perceive 'robbery and theft' (40.2 percent) and 'armed threat' (14.0 percent) to be frequently occurring crimes in their community. 32.0 percent of women perceived 'robbery and theft' and only 8.0 percent perceived 'armed threat' to be frequently occurring crimes.

Instead, more female respondents (5.7 percent) perceived assault/beatings to be a crime frequently occurring in their community than men (4.3 percent). Interestingly, a significantly higher percentage of women (38.3 percent) answered 'I don't know' to this question than did men (28.9 percent), potentially indicating that women are less comfortable discussing the issue of crime and safety in their communities than men.

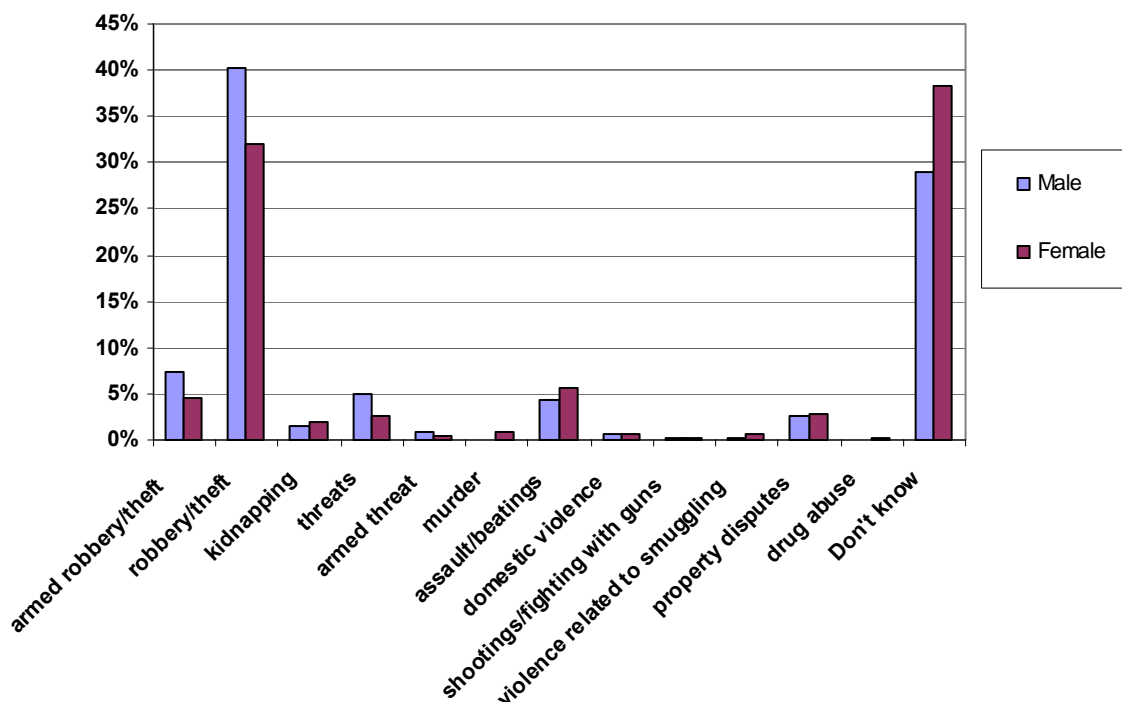


Figure 9: Impact of gender on perceptions of frequently occurring crime (multiple answers possible)
Base number: 1,153

Safety and security concerns

In response to the question, 'In your opinion, what are the top three most serious safety and security issues that your community faces?', traffic problems (20.9 percent), poor inter-ethnic relations (12 percent) and health (10.8 percent) were identified overall as the most pressing concerns. A Kosovo Albanian focus group participant in Gjilan/Gnjilane, an ethnically mixed municipality, stated that "there are no crime threats in my neighbourhood and safety is not a problem. The most visible problem is traffic". However, concerns about levels of crime and poor inter-ethnic relations featured much more prominently among Kosovo Serbs than other respondents.

56.9 percent of Kosovo Serb respondents identified poor inter-ethnic relations as their foremost security concern, followed by 8.4 percent who identified as such high levels of crime and 7.9 percent who identified as such activities of gangs. Further, while weapons-related problems were prioritised by very few Kosovo Albanian respondents, 7.4 percent of Kosovo Serbs interviewed identified this as their most pressing security concern, while 21.8 percent identified it as the second most serious security problem facing their community. This finding is supported by focus group discussions. For example, during a focus group discussion with Kosovo Serbs in North Mitrovicë/Mitrovica, a 22-year-old female participant highlighted 'throwing of bombs and shooting from various types of weapons' to be major security concerns.

While there were no significant differences in the ranking of most concerns by men and women, men were twice as likely as women to consider poor ethnic relations to be the most important security concern, with 15.3 percent of men and 7.7 percent of women identifying this as their top concern.

Changing perceptions of security

When questioned about the effect of Kosovo's final status on their security, respondents offered predictably polarised views. 73.2 percent of Kosovo Albanian respondents and non-Serb minorities believed that it would improve their security 'a little' or 'a lot', and only 7.4 percent considered that their security would decrease as a result. However, this was quite the opposite among Kosovo Serb respondents, only 1 percent of whom believed that final status would result in an improvement to their security, with 78.2 percent instead believing that it would decrease.

Interestingly, even those respondents who expressed an intention to emigrate from Kosovo within the next five years generally thought that the resolution of Kosovo's future status would improve their security. A total of 64.7 percent of those who planned to emigrate considered that their security would improve either 'a little' or 'a lot' with the resolution of Kosovo's final status, and just 12.6 percent thought that it would 'decrease' or 'decrease a lot'. This compares with the 18.8 percent of those respondents who stated that they did not intend to emigrate in the next five years that believed Kosovo's final status would result in a decrease in their safety and security to some degree, and 31.1 percent of those who remained unsure about whether or not they would emigrate.

Following the resolution of Kosovo's final status, UNMIK will gradually be replaced by an EU-led civilian mission. There has been significant disquiet surrounding the performance of UNMIK, and it is interesting therefore that 39.5 percent of those questioned believe that the new international presence will lead to an improvement in their personal security, either 'a little' (22.6 percent) or 'a lot' (16.9 percent). In support of this, in the focus group conducted in North Mitrovicë/Mitrovica, a 24-year-old female student commented, "I believe that there will be some positive changes in relation to economic and agricultural development when the UN presence is replaced by the EU". Almost half of all respondents either thought that the change in international presence would have no affect on their security (22.5 percent) or did not know what affect it might have (22.3 percent), but only 13.8 percent believed that it would lead to a decrease in security. Kosovo Serbs are far less optimistic than are Kosovo Albanians about the introduction of a new EU-led presence in Kosovo: almost half (49.1 percent) believe that their security will decrease when this happens. Though a significant percentage (20.8 percent) think that their security will remain the same, just 3.5 percent think that the transition from UNMIK to the EU will result in a more secure environment for them.

In a few municipalities in particular a significant proportion of respondents felt that the environment would become more insecure with the presence of an EU-led mission in Kosovo. In Shtërpçë/Štrpce, 87.5 percent of respondents thought that the change in mission will lead to deterioration in their security, and 43.4 percent of respondents in Zvečan/Zvečan and 39.1 percent of respondents in Leposaviq/Leposavić also hold this view. All three of these municipalities have a Kosovo Serb majority, but while Zvečan/Zvečan and Leposaviq/Leposavić are in the north of Kosovo, bordering Serbia

proper, Shtërpçë/Štrpce, where most of the Serb population lives in an enclave, is in the south, bordering Former Yugoslav Republic (FYR) of Macedonia.¹²

Moreover, although significant proportions of respondents from these three municipalities felt levels of security would decrease under an EU-led mission, they are also generally negative in their perceptions of UNMIK Police and KFOR. Only in Shtërpçë/Štrpce did a significant number of respondents (31.3 percent) state that they trusted UNMIK Police fully.

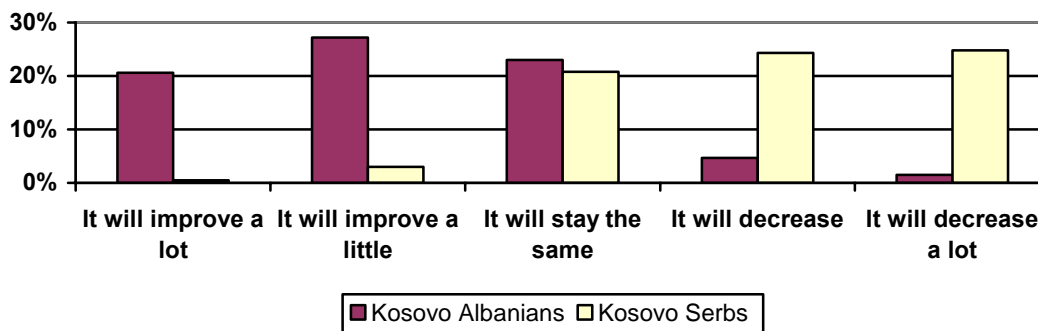


Figure 10: In 2007, UNMIK is due to be replaced by a new EU-led presence. How do you think your security will be affected by this new international presence?
Base number: 1,120

¹² OSCE Mission in Kosovo, *Municipal Profile: Shtërpçë/Štrpce* (May 2006). Available at: http://www.osce.org/documents/mik/2005/12/1203_en.pdf and *Municipal Profile: Leposaviq/Leposavić* (May 2006). Available at: http://www.osce.org/documents/mik/2005/12/1192_en.pdf

Perceptions of conflict

Perceptions of security at a local and community level are often linked to perceptions of conflict in Kosovo as a whole. 36.8 percent of those questioned believe that further violent conflict is either 'likely' or 'very likely' to occur in Kosovo during the next five years. Only 26.4 percent of respondents considered another conflict to be 'not very likely' or 'not likely at all'. A perception that further conflict was possible was more pronounced among Kosovo Serbs, with 52.5 percent of those questioned considering it to be 'likely' or 'very likely'. Nevertheless, a substantial minority – 33.5 percent – of Kosovo Albanians and non-Serb minorities also believe this to be the case. As Figure 11 shows below, the differences between various ethnic groups with regard to the perceived likelihood of future conflict are not as pronounced as with other security-related issues.

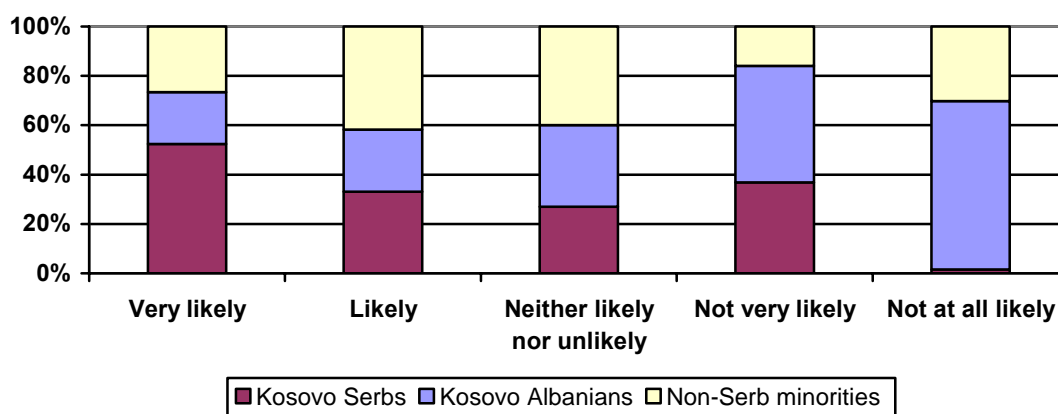


Figure 11: In your opinion, how likely is it that Kosovo will have another violent conflict in the next five years?
Base number: 1,153

Perceptions of how likely it is that Kosovo will have another violent conflict in the next 5 years varied according to the location of the respondents. While many municipalities displayed a wide array of perceptions (such as Mitrovicë/Mitrovica, Prishtina/Priština and Prizren/Prizren), there were particular municipalities that stood out as holding particularly positive or negative perceptions towards the likelihood that Kosovo will return to violent conflict. Figure 12 below illustrates the six municipalities where the highest proportion of respondents stated that they thought it was either 'very likely' or 'not at all likely' that Kosovo would return to violent conflict. Two out of the three municipalities where the highest proportion of respondents felt it was 'very likely' that Kosovo would return to violent conflict are predominantly inhabited by Kosovo Serbs (Zveqan/Zvečan and Zubin Potok/Zubin Potok) and all three of the municipalities where the highest proportion of respondents felt it was 'not likely at all' that Kosovo would return to violent conflict are predominantly inhabited by Kosovo Albanians.

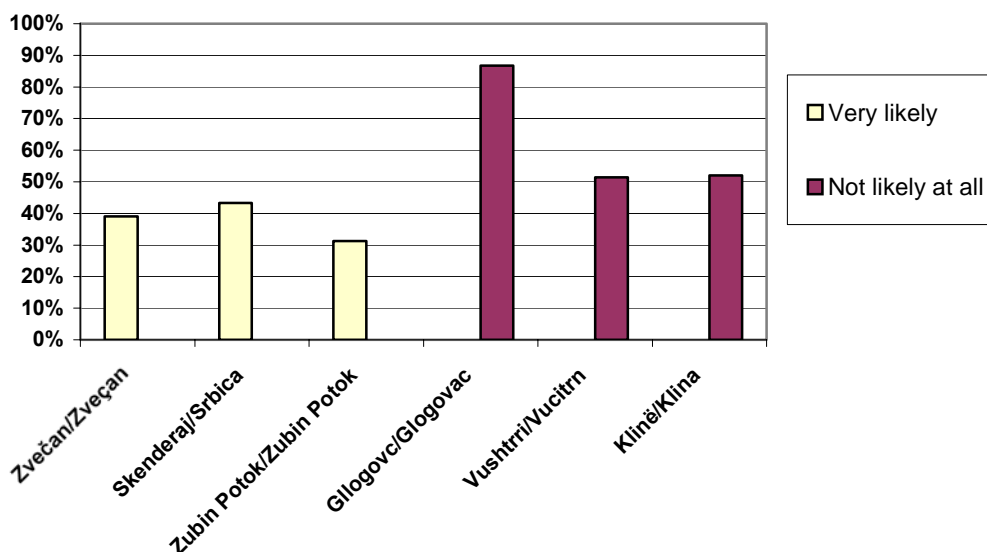


Figure 12: In your opinion, how likely is it that Kosovo will have another violent conflict in the next five years?
Base number: 64

The research also suggests that the older population believe more strongly that Kosovo will have another violent conflict in the next five years than the younger population. 25.5 percent of respondents falling into the 18-24 year-old category felt that it was 'not likely at all' in comparison to 11.8 percent of respondents falling into the 55+ year age category. The research also suggests that younger people are more confident that conflicts in their community can be resolved peacefully than older people. 21.6 percent of respondents falling into the youngest age category of 18-24 were 'very confident' in comparison to 14.6 percent of respondents falling into oldest age category of 55+.

When questioned about potential conflicts within their community, a majority of 62.4 percent of respondents thought that they could be resolved peacefully; only 10.9 percent felt low or no levels of confidence in the capacity of their communities to deal with such conflict. Again, Kosovo Serb respondents expressed much lower levels of confidence in this regard, with only 10.9 percent of respondents stating that they were 'very' or 'quite confident'. For example, in the municipality of Leposaviq/Leposavić, with a significant Serbian majority, only 4.3 percent of survey respondents were very confident, 8.7 percent were quite confident and 39.1 percent were "neither confident nor unconfident". The picture was similar in Zubin Potok/Zubin Potok, where the majority (68.8 percent) of respondents felt "neither confident nor unconfident", 6.3 percent "very confident" and none felt "quite confident". However, in the municipality of Kamenicë/Kamenica, which has an ethnically mixed population, a majority of respondents felt "quite confident" (63.3 percent) and a further 23.3 percent felt "very confident" that conflicts within their community could be resolved peacefully. In this municipality, a large majority of focus group participants in March 2007 considered inter-ethnic relations to be good.

Causes of conflict

Overall, the main factors identified by respondents as most likely to cause future conflict were Kosovo's unresolved status and economic and social issues (unemployment and poverty), with the attitudes of politicians and political statements stressing ethnic separation also figuring (see Figure 13 below).

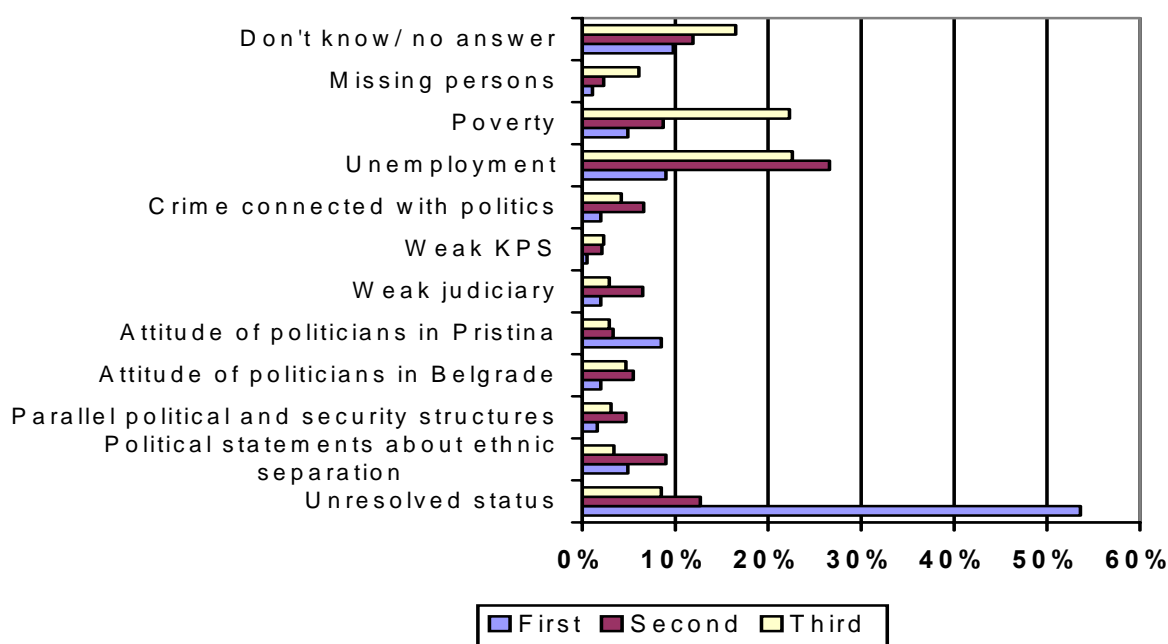


Figure 13: What factors do you think are likely to cause conflict in the future?
Base number: 1,153

There are significant, and telling, differences in perceptions of main potential causes of future conflict between Kosovo Albanians and Kosovo Serbs. 61.2 percent of Kosovo Albanian respondents believed unresolved status of Kosovo was the single most important factor that could lead to future conflict (with a further 20.1 percent naming it as either the second or the third most important factor), while almost 10 percent believed unemployment to be the most significant potential factor leading to future unrest, and a further 54.7 percent named it as either the second or the third most significant potential factor. This contrasts sharply with perceptions of Kosovo Serbs, 20.8 percent of whom named unresolved status as the first most important factor potentially leading to conflict. Nearly a half of Kosovo Serb respondents (46.5 percent) believed that the attitude of politicians in Prishtina/Priština was the single factor most likely to cause future conflict, with a further 24.8 percent believing it was the second or third most likely cause. While no Kosovo Serb respondents believed the attitude of politicians in Belgrade to be the most likely cause, 7.9 percent saw it as the second most important factor, and 15.8 percent thought it was the third most important factor.

However, focus group discussions offer a different perspective on this question. In focus group discussions with Kosovo Serbs in North Mitrovicë/Mitrovica and Obiliq/Obilić, participants identified final status and unemployment as the factors most likely to cause conflict in the future, and did not specifically highlight the attitudes of politicians as a contributory factor. This may be related to the “group think” difficulty associated with conducting focus groups, where the attitudes of one or a few participants may dominate group discussions and discourage other participants from voicing independent views.

It is interesting to note that a higher proportion of respondents falling into the youngest age category (13.8 percent) perceive unemployment to be the most important potential cause of future conflict when compared to the proportion of respondents falling into the

oldest age category of 55+ (8.7 percent). It is likely that this is because unemployment affects particularly young people in Kosovo.

Focus group discussions illustrate this point further. During a discussion held in Northern Mitrovicë/Mitrovica in December 2006, a 32-year-old male participant commented, “it is very likely that conflict could be provoked by a high unemployment rate, since the generation currently graduating from high schools and even universities are finding it very difficult to find jobs”.

Perceptions of security providers

The research suggests that most people in Kosovo have a very low level of trust for UNMIK Police and the judiciary; only 5 percent of respondents 'fully' trust UNMIK Police and 4.4 percent 'fully trust' the judiciary. Kosovo Albanians report a higher degree of trust towards the KPS than towards other security providers, while Kosovo Serbs report a generally low level of trust towards all security providers. For example, a 25-year-old female participant in focus group discussions in Northern Mitrovicë/Mitrovica stated that "the KPS and other security providers do not inspire a lot of confidence among the Serbian people".

The majority of all respondents (49.8 percent) stated that they would call the KPS first if they or their family were threatened with violence. A very low proportion of respondents stated that they would first call KFOR (1.6 percent) and UNMIK police (0.3 percent). Interestingly however, 1.4 percent of respondents stated they would call the Kosovo Protection Corps, though the civilian emergencies body does not have a security provision role. A significant proportion of respondents stated they would protect themselves (19.1 percent) or call family or friends (23.8 percent).¹³

It is interesting to note that a significantly higher proportion of women (55.1 percent) than men (45.6 percent) stated that they would call the KPS first if they or their family were threatened with violence. Conversely, a higher proportion of men (23.3 percent) than women (13.6 percent) stated that they would not call anyone if they or their family were threatened by violence and 'would protect themselves/their family'.

Respondents falling into the youngest age category (18-24) were more trusting of the KPS than respondents falling into the oldest age category (55+). 33.3 percent of the youngest respondents stated they 'fully' trust the KPS. In contrast, only 23.3 percent of respondents over 55 years old fully trusted the KPS. However, only 2 percent of the youngest age group fully trusted UNMIK Police in comparison to 5.9 percent of the oldest age group. Respondents from the youngest age group were also more likely to 'fully' trust the KPC than respondents from the oldest age group, with 43.1 percent of the former and 34.8 percent of the latter expressing 'full' trust in the organisation.

¹³ Respondents were allowed to select more than one answer to this question.

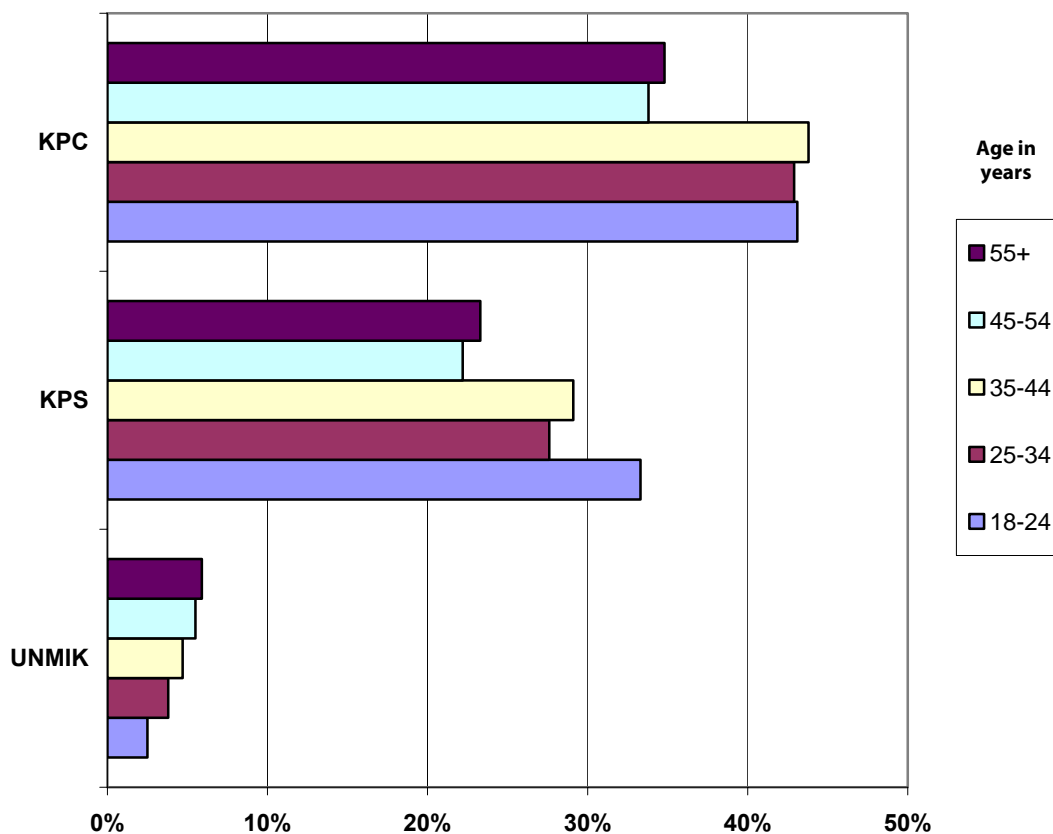


Figure 14: Those who answered 'fully' to the question 'How much do you trust the KPS and UNMIK Police and KPC?'
Base number: 1,153

While the international civilian police, led by UNMIK, retains responsibilities for a limited number of specialised, high-risk police functions and for the investigation of serious crimes such as corruption, in addition to providing monitoring, capacity-building and law enforcement support to its Kosovar counterpart, the KPS is taking the lead role in all other aspects of law enforcement in Kosovo, including border policing, combating fraud and community policing. However, the KPS remains subordinated to the UNMIK Police Commissioner who retains authority over both the international and Kosovar police.

Almost half of all respondents were unclear about the division of roles between UNMIK Police and the KPS. 45.8 percent of those questioned stated that they were either 'quite unclear' or 'very unclear' about the division of roles and responsibilities between UNMIK Police and the KPS. Results of the focus group discussions also support this point. For example, a 21-year-old male participant in the focus group held in Prishtina/Priština stated that "the biggest problem is that the competencies are not clarified regarding the provision of security and there is a conflict of interest between UNMIK and local institutions".

Kosovo Police Service

The sample size for this study was slightly smaller than that undertaken in March 2006 for the *SALW Survey of Kosovo*¹⁴, but comparison between the surveys is nonetheless informative.

Previous research undertaken by Saferworld and FIQ in 2006 revealed a significant degree of distrust and doubt in the ability and/or willingness of the KPS to tackle crime proactively, especially among Kosovo Serbs, although other ethnic groups were more positive in their attitudes.¹⁵

There is a noticeable increase in perceptions of efficiency of police in the present study. When asked how efficient they considered the police to be, 9.9 percent of respondents answered 'very efficient' and 27.6 percent 'efficient' in March 2006. In research for this study almost half of all respondents (47.9 percent) considered the KPS¹⁶ to be either 'very efficient' or 'efficient'. This figure is largely due to attitudes expressed by Kosovo Albanians, as only 4.0 percent of Kosovo Serbs questioned perceived the KPS to be 'efficient', with a total of 51.5 percent believing them to be either 'inefficient' or 'very inefficient'.

During the focus group discussion in Northern Mitrovicë/Mitrovica, a 25-year-old male Kosovo Serb stated that the KPS do not take measures to improve the security of the Serbian communities and do not perform their duties as they should. In contrast, during a focus group conducted in Prizren/Prizren, a 41-year-old male Kosovo Albanian stated that the KPS was generally efficient and transparent, while a 30-year-old female participant in the focus group conducted in Gjilan/Gnjilane noted that, "The KPS are efficient but need to co-operate with citizens more closely". Another 20-year-old female participant in this same focus group stated that "citizens are not co-operative with the police, the police cannot know everything about a crime if the citizens do not co-operate and share information with them".

The perceptions of efficiency are mirrored by the levels of trust that people appear to place in the KPS. Generally speaking, these are fairly high, with 53.9 percent of respondents stating that they trust the KPS 'very much' or 'fully' and a further 22.5 percent placing an 'average' degree of trust in the institution. However, this varied significantly according to ethnicity, with just 10.4 percent of Kosovo Serbs trusting the KPS 'very much' or 'fully'. Instead, 74.1 percent of Kosovo Serb respondents stated that they trusted the KPS only 'a little' or 'not at all', as illustrated in Figure 15 below.

¹⁴ The sample size for the *SALW Survey of Kosovo* (see p 46 of the *SALW Survey*) was 1,258 while that for this study was 1,153.

¹⁵ See Sokolová, J. et. al., *SALW Survey of Kosovo*, op. cit., pp 45-46 for full discussion.

¹⁶ Note that the *SALW Survey* referred to 'police' while the present study referred to the 'KPS' specifically.

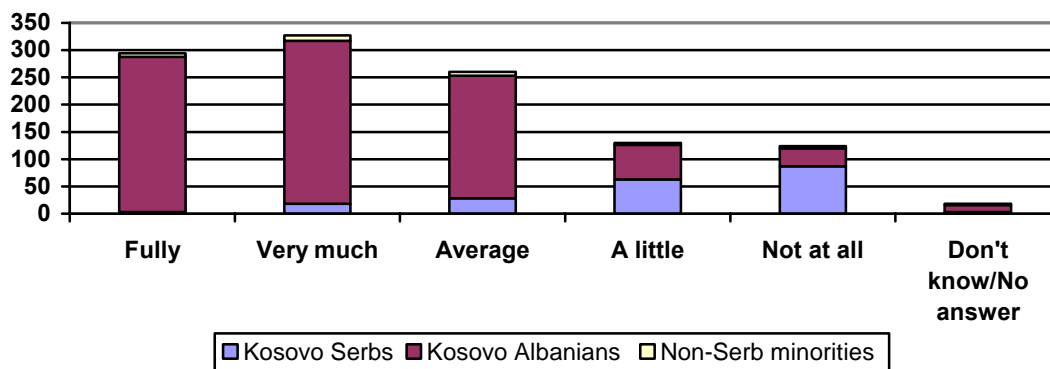


Figure 15: much trust do you have in the KPS?
Base number: 1,153

Perceptions of the trustworthiness of the KPS also varied according to the location of the respondents. While many municipalities displayed a wide array of perceptions (such as Ferizaj/Uroševac, Mitrovicë/Mitrovica, Prishtina/Priština and Obiliq/Obilić), there were certain places that stood out as holding particularly positive or negative viewpoints towards the KPS. Figure 16 below details the locations in Kosovo where the highest proportion of respondents stated that they trusted the KPS either 'fully' or 'very much', and the locations where the highest proportion of respondents had little or no trust in the institution.

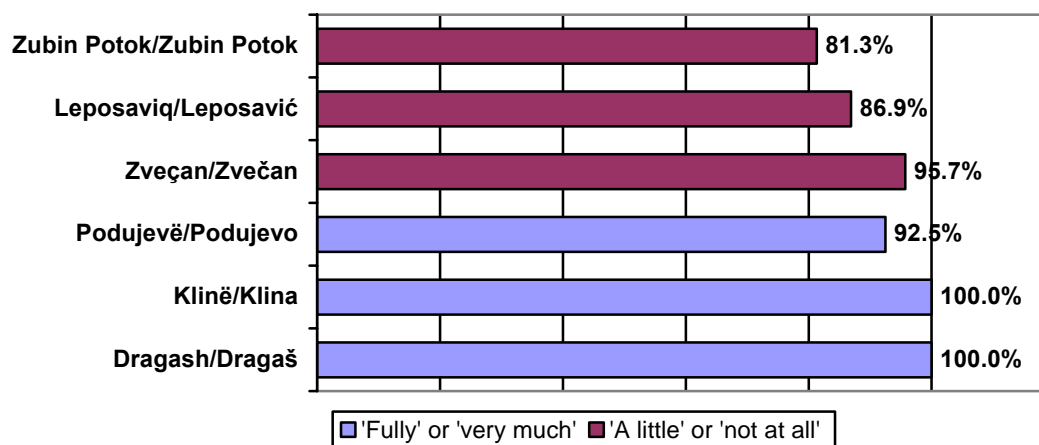


Figure 16: Municipalities where levels of trust in the KPS are at their highest and lowest
Base number: 132

It is interesting to note that the perception that the work of the KPS is subject to some political influence was relatively widespread among respondents: Almost half (47.6 percent) of those questioned thought that the work of the KPS was influenced by political parties to some extent. This view was more prevalent among Kosovo Serbs, reflecting the low levels of trust and confidence in the work of the KPS expressed by respondents from this ethnic group, as discussed above. However, the question did not differentiate

between perceptions of political influence over the work of the police at the municipal level and over the work of KPS as an entire institution.¹⁷

Participants in the focus group held in Prishtina/Priština highlighted a number of situations where crimes had been reported and investigations by the KPS had not been completed or the suspected perpetrator was not questioned by the police or tried in court. Participants felt that this was often related to the KPS protecting certain criminals, for example those with a high social status. Participants highlighted that this has led to a situation where many people feel that the KPS cannot protect them and as a result are afraid to report cases or stand as a witness in court. For example, a 21-year-old male participant stated that “there are crime cases in Kosovo that the police know about but don’t investigate or solve”.

The research suggests that wealthier and more educated people feel that political parties influence the work of the KPS to a significantly greater extent than the younger and less wealthy ones. Only 3.2 percent of respondents with ‘no formal education’ agreed ‘fully’ with the statement that political parties influence the KPS, in comparison with 10.4 percent of the respondents who had ‘completed university’. Only 4.7 percent of respondents falling into the poorest income category agree that political parties influence the KPS, in contrast to 20.5 percent of respondents falling into the wealthiest income category.

There is a predictable correlation between perceptions of efficiency and the levels of trust placed in the KPS. Further, those respondents who perceived the KPS to be inefficient to varying degrees were less inclined to contact them in the event of a violent threat. The respondents who considered the KPS to be either ‘inefficient’ or ‘very inefficient’ were also far more likely to state that they would protect themselves, or contact relatives, friends and neighbours rather than call the KPS in the event of being threatened with violence.

Kosovo Protection Corps¹⁸

The Comprehensive Proposal for the Kosovo Status Settlement expressly provides for the dissolution of the KPC within one year of the conclusion of the transition period. The same provision states that it is the responsibility of the international community to establish a demobilisation and reintegration programme in order to facilitate this.

The KPC was established to facilitate the dissolution of the KLA and many former KLA members were employed in the new civilian emergency institution, which had standards set for it to be multi-ethnic and representative of the different communities in Kosovo.¹⁹ However, in the eyes of many Kosovo Albanians, the KPC remains the successor to the ‘liberation army’, while many Kosovo Serbs continue to view it with suspicion as an ‘enemy force’ (even though it conducts public service works in a variety of different communities).

¹⁷ Focus group discussions conducted for previous research suggest that people tend to associate political influence on the work of the police more with the work of their local police rather than with KPS as an entire institution.

¹⁸ Though the Kosovo Protection Corps does not have security-provision competencies, it does have a civilian emergencies protection role, as such as is treated in this section of the report.

¹⁹ See for example *What’s happened to the KLA?* (International Crisis Group, 2000). Available at: <http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=1582&l=1>; *Wag the dog: The mobilisation and demobilisation of the Kosovo Liberation Army* (Bonn International Centre for Conversion, 2004). Available at: <http://www.bicc.de/publications/briefs/brief20/content.php>

Kosovo Serbs respondents typically hold the Kosovo institutions in lower regard than Kosovo Albanians, but their attitudes towards the KPC are particularly negative. Perhaps unsurprisingly, the Kosovo Serbs interviewed for this research displayed an extremely low level of trust in the KPC, with 86.6 percent stating that they did not trust the institution at all. This contrasted with 79.1 percent of Kosovo Albanian and other non-Serb respondents who stated that they trusted the KPC 'very much' or 'fully'.

There are specific areas of Kosovo where levels of trust in the KPC are particularly low, and conversely, particularly high. All respondents in Dragash/Dragaš and Skenderaj/Srbica, and 96 percent of those in Istog/Istok and Klinë/Klina, stated that they trusted the KPC 'fully' or 'very much'. Conversely, all respondents in Leposaviq/Leposavić, Shtërpçë/Štrpce, Zubin Potok/Zubin Potok and Zvečan/Zvečan said that they had just 'a little' trust in the KPC, or did not trust them at all. Again, there were a few municipalities, such as Mitrovicë/Mitrovica and Prishtina/Priština where a wide range of perceptions were present.

The suspicions about the purpose and aims of the KPC held by many Kosovo Serbs are reflected in the fact that 87.1 percent of Kosovo Serbs questioned for this research thought that the organisation should be disbanded. Just 2.5 percent thought it could perform another function, such as a border patrol or civil protection force. Kosovo Albanians and members of non-Serb minorities were, in contrast, far more likely to consider favourably the option that the KPC should be transformed into an army, with 85.9 percent stating that the KPC's future status should be as an army. Just 0.1 percent thought it should be disbanded.²⁰

These substantially polarised attitudes are also reflected in the perceptions of the KLA's demobilisation. While the research did not seek to identify the public's perceptions of specific links between the KLA and KPC, it did investigate the extent to which people thought that the KLA had been effectively demobilised and reintegrated into civilian life. Though Kosovo Albanians and members of non-Serb minorities were largely optimistic in this regard, 95 percent of Kosovo Serb respondents stated that they 'disagreed' or 'strongly disagreed' with the statement 'the KLA has been effectively demobilised, and former members have now returned to civilian life'.

Information on the municipalities in which levels of trust in the KPC appeared to be significantly high or low largely corresponds with the data regarding perceptions of the KLA's demobilisation. For example, in the four municipalities where all respondents placed minimal or no trust in the KPC, very high proportions of the respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement that 'the KLA has been effectively demobilised, and former members have now returned to civilian life'.

Judiciary²¹

Both the research undertaken for the 2006 *SALW Survey of Kosovo*²² and research conducted by the National Democratic Institute in Kosovo in February 2007²³ revealed

²⁰ Crisis Group maintains that a Kosovo army built "[partly] upon the KPC is a key component of post-independence security structures". *An Army for Kosovo?* (Crisis Group, July 2006), p. i. Available at: <http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=4290&l=1>

²¹ As the judiciary is a vital component in ensuring the rule of law and thus indirectly people's security, it is treated in this section of the report.

²² Sokolová, J. et. al. op. cit., pp 44-45

particularly low levels of trust in the judiciary, reflecting a general lack of faith in the rule of law in Kosovo. The research undertaken for this study supports these findings, with 37.4 percent of respondents reporting that they trusted the judiciary 'not at all' or just 'a little'.

However, a significant proportion of those questioned for this study stated that they trusted the judiciary 'fully' (4.4 percent) or 'very much' (21.9 percent), which is almost double that displayed in the *SALW Survey of Kosovo* (13.8 percent). Once again, the levels of trust towards the judiciary exhibited by the Kosovo Serbs questioned were significantly lower than Kosovo Albanians and non-Serb minorities: only 5.0 percent of Kosovo Serbs questioned trusted the judiciary 'very much' and none 'fully trusted' it, compared with 25.4 percent ('very much') and 5.4 percent ('fully') of Kosovo Albanians and non-Serb minorities questioned.

International security providers

After more than seven years in Kosovo, UNMIK Police do not appear to be widely trusted²⁴, with the majority of people questioned stating that they placed 'average' or lower levels of trust in the institution. Indeed, just 19.7 percent of respondents stated that they trusted UNMIK Police 'fully' or 'very much', and though 34.3 percent placed 'average' levels of trust in the institution, 24.1 percent trusted UNMIK Police only 'a little' and a further 18 percent 'not at all'. Respondents in Dragash/Dragaš were particularly positive, with 86.6 percent placing higher levels of trust in UNMIK Police, whereas trust was particularly low in Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje, Leposaviq/Leposavić and Zvečan/Zvečan.

This study suggests that KFOR is more widely trusted than UNMIK Police. Almost a quarter (23.9 percent) of respondents had full trust in the international military presence, a further 29.7 percent trusted it 'very much', and another 24.9 percent of respondents stated that they had 'average' levels of trust in KFOR. Just 19.3 percent of respondents stated that they trusted KFOR only 'a little' or 'not at all', which marks a significant contrast with the 42.1 percent of respondents who chose these options regarding UNMIK Police. There were areas of Kosovo where KFOR elicited particularly high levels of trust, such as Dragash/Dragaš and Klinë/Klina (all respondents stating that they trusted KFOR 'fully' or 'very much'), and areas where trust levels were particularly low, such as Zvečan/Zvečan.

However, unlike the perception of UNMIK Police, which was relatively consistent regardless of the ethnicity of respondent, trust in KFOR differed significantly according to the ethnicity of the respondent as illustrated in Figure 17 below.

²³ *Insight into public opinion* (National Democratic Institute, February 2007).

²⁴ The bulk of research for this study was undertaken in December 2006, and therefore these results predate the events of 10 February 2007, when two protesters were killed during protests in Prishtina/Priština.

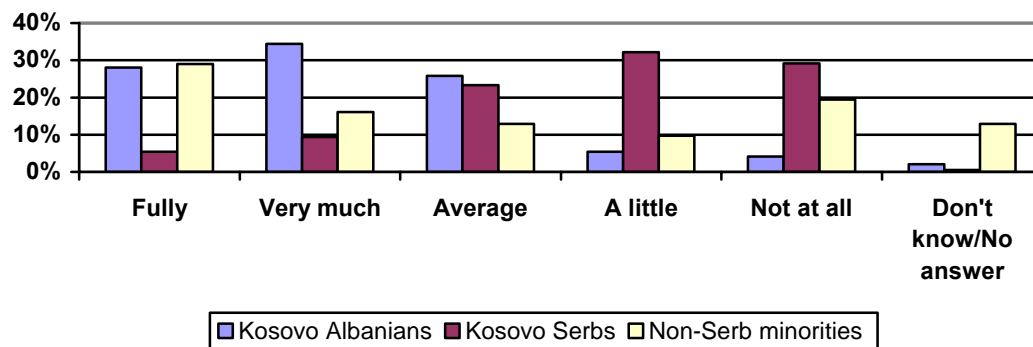


Figure 17: How much trust do you have in KFOR?
Base number: 1,153

The focus group held in Northern Mitrovicë/Mitrovica highlighted the low level of trust that Kosovo Serbs have for KFOR. For example, a 25-year-old female student stated that “KFOR are no help – they only observe and react to the disadvantage of the Serbian community”.

This data is consistent with that collected for the *SALW Survey of Kosovo* in 2006. Interviews undertaken for that study suggest that this low level of trust may be a result of KFOR's perceived inaction during the March 2004 violence which resulted in the deaths of 19 people, and the destruction of mainly Kosovo Serb property.²⁵ However, despite this survey's data demonstrating that Kosovo Serb respondents have little trust in KFOR, the Early Warning Report published by UNDP Kosovo in September 2006 suggests that 83.6 percent of people, including 41.4 percent of Kosovo Serbs, are either 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with the work of KFOR.²⁶ Levels of trust and satisfaction are not necessarily interdependent, but it is interesting nevertheless that these two sets of data reveal such differing attitudes.

Local and international safety and security mechanisms

Various institutions have been established at the municipal and town levels throughout Kosovo to address issues of public safety from a community-oriented perspective. Following a December 2005 UNMIK Regulation, a Municipal Community Safety Council (MCSC) was established in each of the 30 municipalities to address issues of safety and security locally in close partnership with municipal authorities, local communities and the Kosovo Police Service. In addition, around 15 Local Public Safety Committees (LPSCs) have been progressively set up in selected towns and villages inhabited by minority communities with the aim of bringing the police closer to those communities and making it more responsive to the particular needs of their inhabitants. However, while on paper these institutions should reach large numbers of the Kosovo public, in practice this study reveals that public awareness of MCSCs and LPSCs appears to be extremely limited. Just 6.9 percent of those questioned had heard of LPSCs, and only 2.9 percent were aware of the existence of MCSCs. Awareness was particularly low in Dragash/Dragaš,

²⁵ Sokolová, J. et. al. op. cit, p 47

²⁶ *Early Warning Report Number 14* (UNDP and USAID, July – September 2006), p4 and p41. Available at: http://www.ks.undp.org/repository/docs/ewr14_eng.pdf

Rahovec/Orahovac and Zvečan/Zvečan municipalities, where no respondents had heard of LPSCs.²⁷

Focus groups support these findings. A 50-year-old male participant in the focus group conducted in Northern Mitrovicë/Mitrovica stated, “I have not heard that Local Municipal safety organisations are operative and it is quite likely that such institutions only exist on paper”.²⁸

The picture is not uniform throughout Kosovo. Respondents in Skenderaj/Srbica, Zubin Potok/Zubin Potok and Ferizaj/Uroševac were among the most aware, with 20 percent, 18.8 percent and 18.5 percent of respondents in those municipalities respectively aware of what LPSCs are. However, those who had heard of LPSCs did not know whether there was one operating in their area.

Awareness of MCSCs was even lower, even though, unlike the LPSCs, they should be working in every municipality. None questioned in Dragash/Dragaš, Gjakove/Đakovica, Kamenicë/Kamenica, Obiliq/Obilić, Podujeve/Podujevo, Rahovec/Orahovac, Shtërpçë/Štrpce, Vushtri/Vucitrn and Zvečan/Zvečan had heard of MCSCs. Of the 2.9 percent of respondents who had heard of MCSCs, less than half knew of one operating their area; equivalent to 1.3 percent of all those questioned. In Skenderaj/Srbica, Zubin Potok/Zubin Potok and Ferizaj/Uroševac, where awareness of LPSCs was the highest, awareness of MCSCs was much lower, with 10 percent, 6.3 percent and 0 percent respectively aware of MCSCs.

Respondents were similarly unfamiliar with the Kosovo Internal Security Sector Review, a year long process conducted in 2006. A joint venture between UNMIK, UNDP and the PISG, the ISSR aimed at examining Kosovo’s internal security needs and producing recommendations for the development of Kosovo’s security sector in line with these needs. Despite undertaking what the ISSR project team described as a ‘widespread public consultation and public outreach process’,²⁹ which involved town hall meetings, television debates, the distribution of 20,000 leaflets, a total of 1,039 questionnaires and the activities of the travelling ‘Have Your Say Bus’,³⁰ there appears to be a very low level of awareness of the ISSR process. Just one respondent interviewed for this research stated that they had heard of the ISSR, with 96.8 percent stating that they had not.

This extremely low level of awareness for a process with such a large public outreach component is surprising, but could be the result of several factors. First, the research for this survey was conducted six months after the final ISSR public outreach work (which occurred in June 2006), and the public may have forgotten the process by the time of this research. The ISSR team suggests the findings could be explained by the manner of their campaign, which aimed not to gain brand recognition for the ISSR *per se*, but rather to ask members of the public their opinions on security provision in Kosovo. Moreover, evidence

²⁷ At the time of the survey, an LPSC existed in Krushevë/Kruševo, a Gorani community in Dragash/Dragaš municipality, as well as in Hoçë e Madhe/Velika Hoca, a Serbian community in Rahovec/Orahovac municipality, but none had been established in Zvečan/Zvečan municipality.

²⁸ Although an MCSC was, in theory, established for the whole of Mitrovicë/Mitrovica municipality, it is possible that its functioning was impaired by the difficulty in involving the leaders and citizens of both North and South Mitrovicë/Mitrovica.

²⁹ *Internal Security Sector Review Kosovo (ISSR)*, UNDP/ISSR p 3. Available at: http://www.issrkosovo.org/repository/docs/ISSR_report_eng_ver2.pdf

³⁰ For full details of the public consultation and outreach methodology used, see *ibid.* p5, and *Internal Security Sector Review Kosovo – Media Information Campaign* (UNDP/ISSR)

of spoof campaigns based on the ISSR's imagery could imply a wider "popular culture" awareness of the ISSR's aims, if not its acronym. The ISSR team state that they are "very happy" with the public input received during the outreach campaign³¹. Nonetheless, the extremely low level of awareness of all these security-oriented processes and structures represents a challenge to Kosovo's governing institutions in any future public outreach.

Attitudes towards an intelligence service

The current intelligence landscape in Kosovo is characterised by organisations such as the Institute for Strategic Research of Public Opinion (IHSOP) and the Kosovo Information Service (SHIK), whose operations often bear similarities to those of intelligence services but which do not have a legislative mandate to operate, and "parallel structures" with links to Belgrade operating particularly north of the River Ibar. To fill this vacuum in legitimate intelligence gathering, the Comprehensive Proposal for the Kosovo Status Settlement published in February 2007 proposes that Kosovo be endowed with a 'domestic security agency to monitor threats to Kosovo's internal security'.³²

When questioned for this study about how they thought a new and official intelligence service for Kosovo would affect their security, a significant proportion of respondents (26.1 percent) stated that they did not know. Perhaps unsurprisingly, Kosovo Albanians generally thought that a Kosovo intelligence service would improve their security, either 'a little' (31.7 percent) or 'a lot' (28.6 percent). The focus group discussions support this finding. For example, a 22-year-old female participant in the focus group conducted in Prishtina/Priština stated that "Kosovo needs an intelligence service...If Kosovo had an intelligence service it would prevent potential conflicts".

Kosovo Serbs in contrast were pessimistic, with just 4 percent feeling an intelligence service would improve their security "a little" or "a lot", with 28.7 percent believing that it would decrease their security to some degree. However, it should be noted that a significantly larger proportion of Kosovo Serb respondents chose not to answer this question (32.7 percent compared with just 3.3 percent of Kosovo Albanian respondents), and a further 31.7 percent chose the answer 'I don't know'.

Respondents expressed a similar pattern of attitudes with regard to the level of trust they would place in an official intelligence service. Again, Kosovo Serb respondents exhibited a tendency towards limited or no trust, whereas Kosovo Albanians tended to be much more positive.

³¹ Interviews with Izabella Cooper, Communications Adviser for UNDP/ISSR and Michael von Tangen Page, Security Sector Development Advisor for ISSR, 20 April 2007

³² *Comprehensive Proposal for the Kosovo Status Settlement*, pp 50-51. Available at: http://www.unosek.org/docref/Comprehensive_proposal-english.pdf

Weapons possession and use

This survey also looked at attitudes towards weapons possession and use with a view to understanding why people possess weapons and what would prompt people to surrender them. Due to the high sensitivity of this topic in Kosovo society, surveys of perceptions relating to weapons possession do not tend to offer an accurate picture of weapons distribution around Kosovo as respondents display high levels of discomfort or suspicion in discussing this issue. However, they still do offer a useful indication of attitudes held by people in Kosovo and as such the responses people report are in themselves interesting to examine and track over time.

Three-quarters of all respondents to this survey stated they did not know of any incidents in their community in which someone was injured by firearms, ammunition or explosives between July and December 2006. Of those who recalled such incidents, the most (8 percent) attributed them to celebratory shooting, followed by criminal acts (4.3 percent) and property disputes (2.4 percent). However, there is a significant discrepancy between the experiences reported by Kosovo Albanians and Kosovo Serbs. The incidents involving a firearm injury recalled most frequently by Kosovo Serbs were criminal acts (by 13.4 percent of Kosovo Serb respondents). Kosovo Albanians most frequently recalled injuries due to celebratory shooting, with 8.5 percent of Kosovo Albanian respondents reporting this. While over 13 percent of Kosovo Serb respondents recalled someone in their community being injured in the previous six months as a result of a criminal act, only 2.1 percent of Kosovo Albanian respondents reported such an incident.

Examining the data for different municipalities, it is striking that over a quarter of respondents in Mitrovicë/Kosovska Mitrovica (25.9 percent) recalled someone being injured by firearms in a criminal act in the period July-December 2006, by far more than most other municipalities. In contrast, only 6.1 percent of respondents in Pejë/Peć recalled such an incident. This would appear to contradict the perception widespread in Kosovo of Pejë/Peć as the place with the highest rates of armed crime. However, the result tallies with perceptions expressed by residents in Pejë/Peć in interviews and focus groups conducted in February 2007, who stated that most of the armed crime and violence that happens in Pejë/Peć does not affect their communities directly as the perpetrators are often from outside (settling disputes) or related to specific criminal groups and their interests.

Almost twice as many people (48.7 percent) believed that possession of firearms would not make them safer than those who believed it would (24.8 percent), with a further 12.8 percent believing it makes no difference. There were no major differences in the perceptions of male and female respondents, with slightly higher proportion of women (28.1 percent) believing the possession of firearm does, or would, make their family safer, compared to 22.3 percent of male respondents, while a higher proportion of males believed it makes no difference (14.7 percent compared to 10.5 percent of females). An equal level of male and female respondents believed that possession of a firearm does not or would not make their families safer.

In contrast to the overall data, the most frequent opinion expressed by Kosovo Serbs (43.6 percent) was that possessing a firearm makes no difference to family safety, while only 13.4 percent expressly stated it does not make their families safer. This tallies with answers given to the question 'Would you acquire a firearm if you were able to?' by Kosovo Serb respondents, with 49 percent of them stating they do not know (while 20.3 percent

answered 'yes' and 13.4 percent answered 'no'). However, almost 70 percent of Kosovo Albanian respondents claimed they would not acquire a firearm if they were able to.

Of those who stated they would acquire a firearm if they were able to, the main reasons reported for this, apart from self-protection, were protection of property or business (11 percent), fear of conflict or war (6.1 percent) and hunting or sport shooting (3.7 percent). The focus groups highlighted that many Kosovo Albanians perceive tradition to be the main reason why people possess arms. For example during the focus group discussion in Gjilan/Gnjilane, a 25-year-old female participant stated that "most of the people who possess weapons do so because of tradition".

A notably higher proportion of respondents in the wealthiest income category selected 'fear of conflict/war' as the main reason that they would choose to own a gun (33.3 percent) than the proportion of respondents in the least-wealthy income category (14.3 percent). It is also interesting to note that a higher proportion of respondents in rural areas selected 'fear of conflict/war' as the main reason that they would choose to own a gun (22 percent) than respondents in urban areas (17.2 percent).

The focus groups highlighted the belief present among both Kosovo Serbs and Kosovo Albanians that their own communities possess fewer arms than "the other" communities and that the weapons possessed in their own communities are legal and for non-threatening reasons such as celebrations, tradition or hunting. For example, during a focus group discussion with Kosovo Serbs in Obiliq/Obilić, a 30-year-old male participant stated that "the Serbian community does not possess weapons, apart from hunting rifles for which they have weapon authorisation cards. Unfortunately this is not the case in Albanian communities who possess a greater number of weapons". During a focus group discussion with Kosovo Albanians in Gjilan/Gnjilane, a 33-year-old female participant stated: "I don't think that the Albanians have many weapons, but the Serbs have a lot. The majority of Albanians have been checked for weapons but the villages inhabited by Serbs have not been checked at all".

On the basis of the perceptions reported to this survey, Kosovo Serbs are much more likely to hear gun shots in their neighbourhoods than anyone else. More than a quarter of Kosovo Serbs interviewed for this survey stated they heard gun shots every day, with nearly 9 percent further stating they heard them several times a day. This contrasts sharply with the data for all of Kosovo, with the largest number of people stating they heard gun shots a few times a year (46 percent).

Consequently it is not surprising that the vast majority of Kosovo Serbs interviewed for this survey believed that illegal firearms posed a threat to the prosperity of Kosovo, with 95.5 percent of them reporting such a belief. The belief was also widely held by the majority of all respondents, with 85 percent expressing such a belief (82.8 percent of Kosovo Albanians thought so).

Weapons collection initiatives

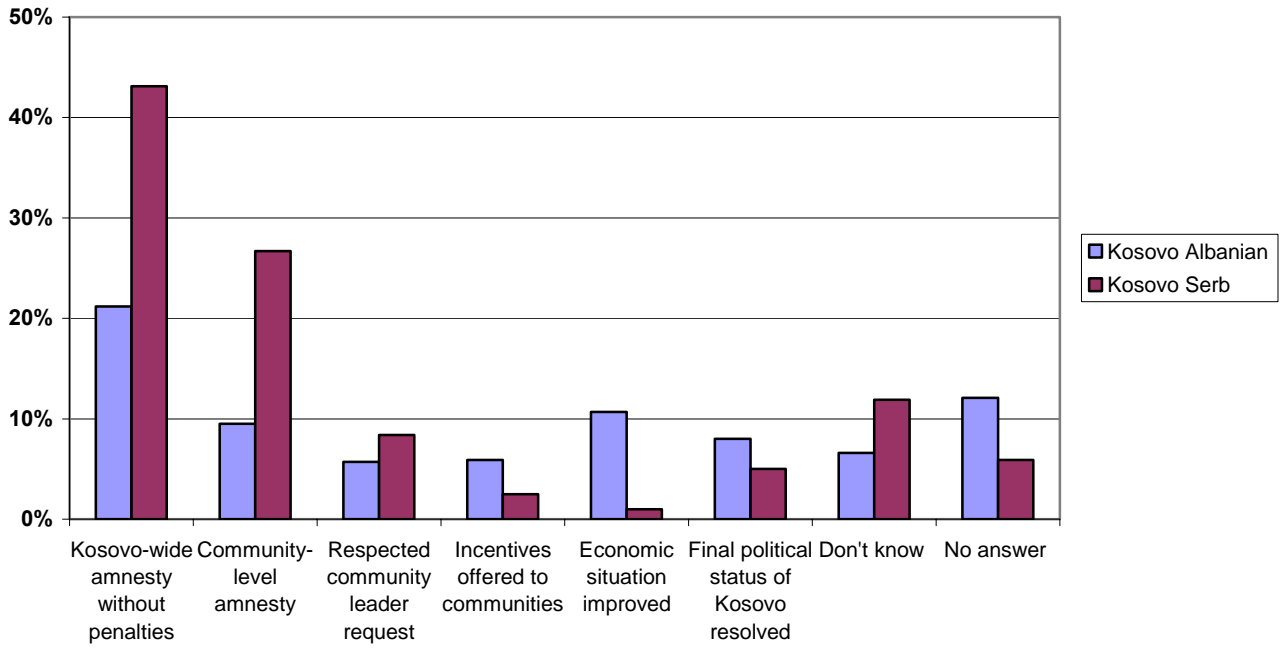
The majority of respondents perceived 'fear of conflict/instability' to be the main reason why people do not hand in their weapons during gun amnesties (28.4 percent). Another 25.5 percent perceived 'tradition' to be the main reason, and 13.2 percent regarded 'mistrust of security providers' to be the main reason. A significantly higher proportion of respondents falling into the oldest age category (55+) perceived 'fear of

conflict/instability' to be the reason why people do not hand in their guns during amnesties (31.1 percent) when compared to the youngest age category of 18-24 year olds (17.6 percent).

A significantly higher proportion of Kosovo Serbs perceived 'fear of conflict/instability' (43.1 percent) and 'mistrust of security providers' (29.1 percent) to be the main reasons why people do not hand in weapons during amnesties when compared to positions reported by Kosovo Albanian respondents (25.7 percent and 9.8 percent respectively). In contrast, more Kosovo Albanians perceived 'tradition' to be the main reason (30.7 percent), with only 5.4 percent of Kosovo Serb respondents identifying this as a reason. This is not surprising given that Kosovo Serbs express a greater fear of future conflict and mistrust of security providers than Kosovo Albanians (See Section 3: Perceptions of security providers), and the emphasis given to 'tradition' by Kosovo Albanians when explaining the reasons why people chose to possess weapons (see findings of focus groups above).

The focus group discussions highlighted that Kosovo Albanians were more likely to believe that the unresolved status of Kosovo was the main reason why people had not handed in their weapons during amnesties, in contrast to Kosovo Serb who perceived mistrust for security providers to be the main reason. For example, a 28-year-old male participant in the focus group held in Prizren/Prizren stated that "nobody will hand in their weapons until the final status is defined".

The majority (25.1 percent) of respondents felt the best way to prompt people in their communities to hand in their illegal weapons would be "if a Kosovo-wide amnesty was proclaimed (without penalties)"; 12 percent felt that "to hold a community-level amnesty" would be the best incentive. All focus groups highlighted that offering an individual and/or community economic incentive would be the best way to prompt people to hand in their illegal weapons. The focus groups highlighted that Kosovo Serbs believed that people were more likely to hand in their weapons through amnesties organised by institutions they trust, exemplified by the comments of a 30-year-old man that "NGOs who have gained people's trust would be best suited to lead this activity". Kosovo Serbs and Kosovo Albanians differed on what would best prompt people to hand in their weapons, as illustrated by Figure 18 below.



**Figure 18: In your opinion, which of the following would best prompt people in your community to hand in their illegal weapons?
Base number: 1,120**

Conclusion

This survey is the first of a series aiming to track trends in perceptions of security and conflict to provide detailed information to assist in responsive policy-making. The findings presented here illustrate several important patterns in perceptions of security and safety held by people in Kosovo.

Crime, including armed crime, is perceived to be relatively common by many respondents, but there are some municipalities where people report minimal fear of crime. Further research into reasons why crime does not appear to be a concern at all in some municipalities while in others fear of crime is high is necessary. Kosovo Serb respondents appear much more afraid of falling victim to crime than members of other communities. While this may be due to crime rates being higher, it is also likely due to a generally greater perception of vulnerability and insecurity within Kosovo Serb communities that is likely to exacerbate fear of crime.

There is clearly much work still to be done on the part of security providers and institutions in Kosovo (both international and local) to improve the public's understanding of institutional competencies and build trust among the population. The Kosovo Police Service seems to have made important progress here. This survey however also indicates that many people feel the police service is open to influence from external actors (such as political parties and community members). International security providers, notably UNMIK Police, do not enjoy high levels of trust by the public, who also tend to consider them to be inefficient. Outreach campaigns by international organisations do not appear to reach the wider public. Institutional structures such as LPSCs and MCSCs that would present an opportunity to bridge the gaps between local communities and central-level security policy-making have as yet failed to raise awareness among their constituencies.

While this survey did not aim to assess the total number of weapons in Kosovo, it did look at perceptions of how often weapons are seen or shots heard in a neighbourhood and of frequency of incidents involving injury by firearm as measures of community safety. Perhaps most striking was the number of firearm-related incidents reported as taking place in the six months to December 2006. However, twice as many respondents felt that owning a firearm would not make them safer than those who believed it would, presenting a potentially useful springboard for future weapons collection initiatives.

The findings on community safety and security demonstrate that insecurity is not a debilitating factor in many people's everyday lives. Certainly, fear of crime and trust in security providers are intimately linked with perceptions of safety. But socio-economic factors also play a major role in defining how secure people feel, and in the long term, particularly once Kosovo's future status has been decided, job creation and poverty reduction will be key to promoting future stability and security.

Annex A: Margin of error

The margin of error is the radius (half) of the 99% confidence interval, or 1.96 standard errors, when $p = 50\%$. As such, it can be calculated directly from the number of poll respondents.

$$\text{Margin of error (95\%)} = 1.96 \times \frac{0.5(1 - 0.5)}{\sqrt{n}}$$

The Human security in Kosovo survey sampled 1,153 respondents. At the 95% confidence interval this means a standard of error of 2.89% on the total.³³

Margin of error (95%) = 0.0289 = 2.89% (meaning that one may be sure that the real proportion in population goes between 47.11% and 52.89%).

To conclude, the margin of error is the 95% confidence interval for a reported percentage of 50% if p moves away from 50%, the confidence interval around p will be smaller. Thus, the margin of error represents an upper bound to the uncertainty; one is at least 95% certain that the “true” percentage is within a margin of error of a reported percentage for any reported percentage.

³³ Exact figures for Kosovo’s population are not available. For calculating the margin of error here, the population was considered to be 2.1 million. Estimates range from 1.8 million to 2.4 million. For discussion of the different estimates for Kosovo’s population, see *Vital Statistics of Kosovo 2002-2003* (Statistical Office of Kosovo, November 2004), p 7, available at:

http://www.ks-gov.net/esk/esk/pdf/english/population/stat_vital_02_03.pdf; *Kosovo and its Population* (Statistical Office of Kosovo, September 2003) p6, available at:

http://www.ks-gov.net/esk/esk/pdf/english/population/Kosovo_population.pdf; and *Demographic, Social and Reproductive Health Situation in Kosovo: A Household Survey* (United Nations Population Fund, July 2003), available at: <http://www.unfpa.org/docs/DHS-2003/English.pdf>