

**RELIGION AS A SOURCE OF PEACE OR CONFLICT
IN BALKAN POLITICS: AN ASSESMENT**

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Abstract

Although scholars converge on the importance of religion in Balkan politics, they disagree on its exact role. Based on the activities of some religious groups in countries like Bosnia and Herzegovina, some observers consider religion to have a divisive and centrifugal effect on the Balkan people. Another line of argument, however, states that religious actors can help prevent or mitigate conflicts in the region. Although further research is necessary for conclusive remarks, this study argues that both sides have validating points to their claims. Data from World Values Survey and other available research on the region affirm the general stance that religion constitutes a significant factor in the lives of Balkan people and politics, and cannot be easily dismissed as irrelevant. The importance attributed to religious institutions and leaders also make them likely candidates for promoting peace in the region. Whether religious leaders and institutions have used their full potential to date or not, however, remain questionable, and needs explanation. Given the complex effect that religion seems to have on Balkan politics, and its rising importance as an explanatory variable in the contemporary IR literature, it is likely to retain its focal position in Balkan studies for the foreseeable future.

Keywords: *Balkan Politics, Religion, Conflict Resolution*

Introduction

Religion as an explanatory variable has found an increasingly interested audience in the international relations literature in recent years (Hatzopoulos and Petito 2003; Pettman 2004; Thomas 2005). The rising interest in religion as an explanatory variable has also brought the linkage between religion and peace on the table. For instance, based on data provided by Minorities at Risk dataset compiled by Ted Robert Gurr et al, Fox and Sandler (2004: 65-8) argue that religious differences can play a key role in the decisions for international political interventions.

Furthermore, unlike earlier literature on religion, which tended to link it with extremism and violence, recent studies question this assumption. According to Cavanaugh (2009: 3), “the ‘myth of religious violence’ is the idea that religion is a transhistorical and transcultural feature of human life, essentially distinct from “secular” features such as politics and economics, which has a peculiarly dangerous

inclination to promote violence.” Therefore, Cavanaugh argues that separating human activities, such as politics into categories, such as ‘secular’ is artificial, and cannot be justified through research (ibid.)

Meanwhile, some authors discuss the possibility of promoting peace in conflict prone regions through religious actors and institutions. While discussing the positive impact of religion on peace, Little and Appleby (2004: 5) describe what they refer to as “religious peacebuilding” as follows:

we use the term religious peacebuilding to describe the range of activities performed by religious actors and institutions for the purpose of resolving and transforming deadly conflict, with the goal of building social relations and political institutions characterized by an ethos of tolerance and nonviolence [emphasis original].

Long before it has become a hotly debated item in the IR literature, religion as a variable has also played a pivotal role in the history of Balkan politics, where scholars often use it interchangeably with ethnicity for individual and group identification. As Abu Nimer and Kadayifci-Orellana (2008: 562) point out, regardless of the cause of conflict, religious traditions and myths have often been abused for use in stereotyping and dehumanizing the “other” . . . As a result, religion, and in the case of Muslims, Islam, becomes an important aspect of conflict generation as well as conflict resolution and peace building in the region.

In fact, while discussing its role in Balkan politics, in order to underline its importance, some observers go so far as to claim that “the real future shaping force in the Balkans . . . will not be ethnicity but religion (Deliso 2007: xii).”

Although scholars working on the Balkans converge on the overall importance of religion in the region, they remain divided on its exact role.¹²³ During 1990s, while the Balkans were torn apart by bloody conflicts like the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and later in Kosovo, primordialist debates stressed ethno-religious differences as a major underlying cause. Similarly, functionalist arguments raised during the same years approached religion as a tool conveniently used by conflicting sides to further their goals (Kaplan 1993; Zimmerman 1996).

In later years, based on the activities of some extremist and/or externally funded religious groups in the region, some observers have come to regard religion to have a divisive and centrifugal effect on the Balkan people. Another line of argument, however, argues that religious actors can help prevent or mitigate conflicts in the Balkans. Proponents of this viewpoint stress that the proximity of local religious actors to public and their intimate knowledge of their everyday needs make them ideal for knitting closer ties between estranged communities. Although further research is necessary for conclusive remarks, this study seeks to underline that both sides seem to have validating points to their claims. It also argues that while the

123 On the role of churches in politics of former Yugoslavia, see Palmer (2000).

possibility of reaching long-term peace in the Balkans through the help of religious actors is real, some of the factors that would make it possible seem to be currently missing.

Religion And Balkan People: Some Figures from World Values Survey

Prior to discussing the capabilities and limits of religion as an independent variable on Balkan politics, it is worthwhile to consider the perceptions of the Balkan people on the matter. Data from World Values Survey (WVS) and other available research on the region affirm the general stance that religion constitutes a significant factor in the lives of Balkan people and politics. For instance, according to the WVS data, a total of 40% of the Balkan people consider religion as “very important,” in their lives, which is followed by 28% of people, who regard religion to be a “rather important” factor (see Table 3).

Meanwhile, it is important to note that the importance attributed to a religion in the Balkans may not be a sign of religiosity and/or religious observance on the part of an individual. In a study on Bulgaria, for instance, Broun (2007: 108) points out that less than 2 percent of young people in the 18-29 age range prayed on a regular basis, regardless of their religious affiliation (i.e., of Muslim or Orthodox background).

A simple overview of the relationship between religion and Balkan politics in figures also offer interesting results. Once again, according to the WVS data, a considerable amount of people in Balkans, such as Croatia, Romania or Turkey seem to be convinced that “churches”(religious institutions)“absolutely” influence national politics (See Table 1). Balkan people also express more confidence in their religious institutions than in their parliaments: an average of 26% of the people there has stated that they have “a great deal of confidence” and 34.1% of them have “quite a lot of confidence” in religious institutions. Meanwhile, only 8.2% of the same people seem to have “a great deal of confidence” and 44.5% of them have “quite a lot of confidence” in their parliaments (see Table 4 and Table 5). In the same vein, an average of 3.9% of Balkan people seems to have “a great deal of confidence” and 19.3% of them have “quite a lot of confidence” in political parties (Table 6). In comparison, Table 6 also suggests that 42.7% of the people have explicitly stated that they “do not have very much confidence” and 34.1% of them “do not have any confidence” in political parties.

The WVS data also offer interesting glimpses on the tolerance level of Balkan people toward people of different religious faith. When asked about their preferences concerning neighbors, an average of 27% of them has responded that they would not like to live with neighbors with a different religious faith (Table 7). The worldwide average for this question in the WVS data is 17.8%. Interestingly, and somewhat in tandem with these findings, in countries like Bulgaria, some authors also explain the peaceful coexistence of different religious groups like Orthodox people and Muslims with “the fact that on the whole they still live apart” (Broun 2007: 106).

Peace Through Inter-Religious Dialogue

The importance attributed to religious institutions and leaders as shown in WVS data further reinforce the argument, which assumes them to play a beneficial role in promoting peace in the region. According to Abu Nimer and Kadayifci-Orellana (2008: 567), religious actors, particularly local Muslim clerics are respected in their respective communities in the Balkans, and can play a significant role in establishing ties between estranged ethno-religious groups in conflicted lands. These authors further argue that their local communities consider these religious leaders to be able “to rehumanize the ‘other,’” since the locals perceive them as closer to their community and thus, as more capable to address their daily concerns than another figure (ibid). Similarly, Clark (2010: 674) underlines the greater credibility of local religious leaders in their respective groups in countries like Bosnia and Herzegovina, where political leaders are regarded as far more corrupt. According to this viewpoint,

religious actors are to some extent not merely the guardians of their nation’s religious identity, but also of its national identity . . . Religion, therefore, is about something much deeper than spirituality alone. Hence religious actors . . . are theoretically well equipped to reach people and to thereby gain their trust (Clark 2010: 674).

While discussing the inter-religious relations in Bulgaria, Broun (2007: 123) stresses that “at local level, relations between Orthodox and Muslims are often cordial.” Broun also gives some examples on how local religious communities have helped each other to help repair their churches or mosques, or help overcome intra-communal conflicts (ibid).

The positive impact of inter-religious dialogue on preventing violent conflict is already observable in certain parts of the Balkans. For instance, in Macedonia, along with political measures, Mojzes (2008: 413) accounts the co-operation of the leaders of main religious groups as significant in preventing the country from falling into the clutches of a bloody civil war. While political negotiations and external actors were the outstanding factors in ending the conflict, the author argues that the atmosphere of dialogue maintained by the major religious leaders have enabled conflicting parties to trust each other (ibid).

Similarly, Johnston and Eastvold (2004:230-231) mention the efforts of an international organization, named as The World Conference of Religions for Peace along with several other international donors to bring together the religious actors representing the major religious groups in Bosnia and Herzegovina after the Dayton agreement to build a common moral understanding between communities. While the resulting collaboration has faced some serious difficulties in taking the initial steps further, the authors state that it has nonetheless received a lot of praise (Johnston and Eastvold 2004: 231).

Limits of Religious Cooperation

Contrary to the viewpoint that inter-religious dialogue can promote peace in the Balkans, pessimists question its significance. Drawing on the example of the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, they point out that religious authorities had almost no influence in ending that conflict (Johnston and Eastvold 2004: 229). Among other factors, those that doubt the impact of religion on peacebuilding also further draw out the potential pitfalls of religious extremism, including its potential to segregate communities living together. Similar to the essentialist arguments that associated religions like Islam with violence in earlier years; religious groups established and/or funded by external actors in the Balkans are oftensuspected to have ties with terrorism, or condone violence.¹²⁴ While discussing radical Islamist groups in the Balkans, a proponent of this view argues that [f]or the Islamists, the desirable future political order is not one of cozy nationstates, but rather a religious commonwealth, a sort of revived Ottoman Empire distinguished by Saudi mosques, Afghan clothes, and fundamentalist mores . . . [I]t is highly likely that, because of their activities, the Balkans will increasingly come to be identified as a spawning ground for terrorists, dotted with no-go areas and concealed urban command centers, together comprising a series of interconnected nodal points in a global network of terrorist and fundamentalist organizations (Deliso 2007: xii).

Another point raised by the critics is the incapability or unwillingness of the religious actors in the region to take the initiative and try to find solutions to the existing problems on their own (Mojzes 2008: 412). While foreign actors have encouraged different ethnic communities to meet in common settings like international conferences to create rapport, not much base seems to be covered in such meetings, and that there is little hope that these steps can lead into more concrete actions (Mojzes 2007: 416). In fact, authors like Johnston and Eastvold (2004: 232) have gone as far as to claim that “[i]n looking ahead even further, it is important to recognize that moves by the West to bring all the religious factions together to smooth over their differences, as a prerequisite to restoring multiethnic harmony, are unlikely to succeed.”

The problem is, despite the positive contributions of religious leaders in some cases, such as those mentioned earlier, they have failed to use their credibility in public to take more decisive steps that lead to longer lasting results in regional peace. Put differently, the critics of religious actors argue that they simply have not done as much as they should to promote peace in the region. For instance, in places like Bosnia and Herzegovina, where reconciliation is still much needed, they point out that religious actors have eschewed taking serious steps to acknowledge any wartime atrocities committed by their respective group, which is considered by many as a vital initial step. To make things worse, some of the clerics have even

124E.g. Nidzara Ahmetasevic “Investigation: Emissaries of Militant Islam Make Headway in Bosnia,” <http://birn.eu.com/en/75/10/2490/>(accessed on 22 October 2012).

adopted extremist stances, which further drive conflicting groups apart (Clark 2010: 676).

On the one hand, some steps were taken in recent years to promote inter-faith cooperation through multi-religious meetings, such as those conducted with Orthodox and Muslim actors in different parts of the Balkans. On the other hand, pessimistic observers have dismissed such attempts as shallow, and unable to propel the participating actors into taking concrete steps for further cooperation. Mojzes (2007: 416) explains this failure with the following observation: “The main reasons for this are the lack of visionary leadership and of a critical mass of educated religious leaders, as well as the inertia that is the result of centuries of suspicion, hatred, wars and oppression.”

Another potential roadblock facing the efforts of the religious actors is the heterogeneous composition of the communities they are addressing. Due to historical reasons, religious groups like Muslims in the Balkans do not have a united religious identity. In fact, Islam in the Balkans is hardly a homogenous entity (Babuna 2004: 287-288). Countries like Bosnia and Herzegovina, for instance, “exhibits a patchwork of micro micro-identities that are far from homogeneous and cannot be aggregated into simple categories” (Sarajlic 2011: 174). Meanwhile, in countries like Bulgaria, Islam “is highly diversified both ethnically (it includes Turks, Pomaks, Roma and Tatars) and religiously (the Turkish Muslims are divided into Sunnis and Shiites)” (Merdjanova 2006: 5). Often, Muslims from different regions within the same country are biased toward each other on various cultural or other differences (Broun 2007: 108). Therefore, as Oktem (2011: 157) underlines, “[f]or Muslims in the Balkans, ‘being Muslim’ means different things in different places at different times.” Adding further complexity to the picture is the fact that Muslims in the Balkans do not share the same language, which makes intra-religious cooperation across borders more difficult, and can exacerbate inter-ethnic conflicts (Oktem 2011: 160). One of the consequences of the internal fragmentation of major religious communities is the increased tendency to encounter intra-religious conflicts, along with inter-religious rivalry (Bougarel 2007: 97; Mojzes 2007: 55). Numerous divisions within major religious communities in countries like Bosnia and Herzegovina also increases the difficulty of establishing a steady and fruitful inter-religious dialogue. The fact that the religious leaders are unable to speak for the whole community affects their credibility—another crucial factor in using religion for peacebuilding. For instance, an administrative unit called the Islamic Community formally represents the Muslims in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and is in charge of the religious schools and mosques, and other similar units. However, its authority and capacity is often challenged by the other Islamic players in the country (Sarajlic 2011: 177). In post-communist Bulgaria, Merdjanova (2006: 9) similarly points out that the Muslim population have experienced conflict amidst its ranks to pick the Chief Mufti. Merdjanova (2006:9) explains that “[t]he severe contest over the post of the Chief Mufti has led to the establishment of rival Muslim councils, selecting rival chief muftis, and subsequent lawsuits, accompanied by mutual accusations and bitter fights in the media.”

As a result, notwithstanding the tendency to portray all external Islamic actors as a monolithic bloc in popular media, there is little evidence that they act together, or even pursue similar goals. Rather, as Mandaville (2010: 8) states, “contemporary forms of Muslim transnational solidarity express a diverse range of political and normative agendas, and only rarely and in the most extreme cases articulate a vision of the umma as a political unit.”

Another problem associated with the heterogeneity of major religious groups like Muslims in the Balkans is security. Detailed works, such as the one undertaken by Tziampiris (2009), which explores the nature and depth of the threat from religious terrorists in certain countries, such as Bosnia nad Herzegovina already exist. While discussing the impact of religious groups established and/or funded by international actors and their impact on Balkan security, Nazarko (2007: 15) claims that they are poorly controlled by the governments in countries where they operate, thus making them pervious to infiltration of religious extremists, including terrorists.¹²⁵ Nevertheless, authors challenging this view argue that the link between religious groups/networks and the possibility of increasing levels of religious terrorism in the region is probably exaggerated (Oktem 2011: 156).

Inter-Religious Dialogue And External Actors

After the disintegration of Yugoslavia and the fall of communism in the region, the following turbulent years have also witnessed the increasing influence of external actors on religious affairs. As Sarajlic (2001: 174) has put it, “[t]he vacuum that was created by the breakdown of the entire social fabric in the region was filled with activities of external actors and their local proxies.”As stated earlier in this study, external actors have also sought to create inter-ethnic and inter-religious peace by supporting the gathering of religious leaders of major religious communities in the region.

For Balkan Muslims, one of the external actors influencing religious actors and forming new networks is Turkey, which operates both through state institutions, such as the Presidency of Religious Affairs and Turkish Development and Cooperation Agency (TIKA), and socio-religious non-state networks like the Gulen movement, which originated in Turkey (Oktem 2011: 160). Along with Turkey, Middle Eastern countries like Saudi Arabia and Iran have also have remained active in the creation of religious networks. While earlier religious networks often concentrated on providing relief to war struck areas places like Bosnia and Herzegovina, along with proselytizing their version of Islamic teachings, recent years have witnessed the increased involvement of religious networks into politics on both domestic and international level (Sarajlic 2011: 174).

Islamic networks with ties with the external actors not only seek to influence the Muslim population in religious matters, but also seek to play a role in the foreign

¹²⁵ See also Broun(2007) for a detailed discussion of similar concerns among Muslims in Bulgaria.

policies of their respective countries. Sarajlic (2001: 174) goes further and claims that in places like Bosnia and Herzegovina, “the state ceased to be the sole player in the realm of foreign policy.” This condition, in return, has increased the stakes for all players involved.

While international actors have played a definitive role in stopping violent conflicts in the Balkans, they also seem to have inadvertently propelled intra-religious rivalry. For instance, an important factor fuelling the rivalry between the Bosnian Muslim activist groups is the diminishing international funding that was formerly available to the community through the international Islamic players. (Sarajlic 2011: 177). Furthermore, external religious actors sharing the same faith also frequently end up competing with each other to expand/control their existing networks, thus carrying religious rivalry on an international level.

Independent of any history of conflicts between different religious groups, external factors can further exacerbate the widening rift within and between the religious congregations. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, for instance, Muslims remain divided between the Middle Eastern oriented and more conservative interpretations of Islam, and its liberal interpretations represented by the Turkish and European Muslim networks.¹²⁶ To summarize it briefly “The arrival of many other Islamic players, belonging to other schools of thought and practice within Islam, has brought these in conflict with the local Islamic practices and produced conflicts along the interpretative dimension of Islam in Bosnia . . . Essentially, it is a matter of a particular ideological vision outlining the orthodoxy and orthopraxis of Islam in Bosnia (Sarajlic 2011: 176-177).

Internal fragmentation may not be unique to the Balkan Muslims, either. Following the end of communism, the Orthodox Christians have also experienced a split among their ranks between their Byzantine/Russian and Central European religious tradition and teachings. According to Merdjanova (2006:3), in countries like Bulgaria in particular, this condition has caught the Orthodox Church unrehearsed. Aside from its theological or sociological implications, such splits can have important consequences on long-term peace prospects in the region. In fact, some observers consider the consequences of picking conservative or extremist traditions on both sides as a recipe for disaster. For instance, Mojzes (2008: 417) claims that “[i]f the Middle Eastern orientation among the Muslims and Eastern orientation among the Orthodox prevails, the clash of these two civilisations would seem to be inescapable.” Meanwhile, as discussed earlier, external interference of any form to help solve the issue may further complicate the existing picture.

Conclusion

Unlike in international relations, where it has only recently attracted the interest of scholars, religion has always remained a prominent variable for scholars studying

¹²⁶ For similar problems and conditions in Bulgaria, see Broun (2007).

Balkan politics. A perfunctory overview of the role that religious leaders have played in promoting inter-communal peace in the region raises hope for them to play a meaningful role in furthering dialogue between groups. However, as this study has tried to outline in further detail, there are also serious impediments against their taking solid steps for long-lasting results. Nonetheless, given the role religion has played in other multiethnic or conflict prone parts of the world in recent years, there is reason for cautious optimism for the positive role that religious actors can play in the Balkans in the foreseeable future. As things stand, however, the current efforts for peacebuilding through inter-religious cooperation particularly in conflict prone settings are more likely to succeed in some parts of Balkans, such as Bosnia and Herzegovina and Macedonia than others, such as Kosovo (Mojzes 2007: 412).

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Appendix

Table 1: The impact of religious institutions on national politics¹²⁷

		Country/region			
		Total	Croatia	Romania	Turkey
Church(es) influence on national politics	Yes, absolutely	19.9 %	12.0 %	15.8 %	29.5 %
	Yes, think so	41.9 %	57.3 %	37.7 %	32.9 %
	No, I don't think they have	26.3 %	26.4 %	28.9 %	24.2 %
	No, absolutely not	11.9 %	4.3 %	17.5 %	13.3 %
	Total	2929 (100%)	896 (100%)	906 (100%)	1127 (100%)

¹²⁷Unless otherwise stated, all of the tables in this section are constructed from data from World Values Survey collected from the following Balkan countries in indicated years: Albania [1998], Albania [2002], Bosnia and Herzegovina [1998], Bosnia and Herzegovina [2001], Bulgaria [1990], Bulgaria [1997], Bulgaria [1999], Croatia [1996], Croatia [1999], Greece [1999], Macedonia [1998], Macedonia [2001], Montenegro [1996], Montenegro [2001], Romania [1993], Romania [1998], Romania [1999], Serbia [1996], Serbia [2001], Slovenia [1992], Slovenia [1995], Slovenia [1999], Turkey [1990], Turkey [1996], Turkey [2001], Turkey [2001]. Since WVS is global in scale, only available Balkan countries in that survey are selected for the scope of this study. Data collected in various waves of WVS are subject to various limitations and shortcomings, which are discussed in detail on their website. As such, the findings presented here should be taken as preliminary, rather than conclusive in nature. Table based on data from Values Survey Databank, which comprises data collected from the following Balkan countries in indicated years : Albania [1998], Albania [2002], Bosnia and Herzegovina [1998], Bosnia and Herzegovina [2001], Bulgaria [1990], Bulgaria [1997], Bulgaria [1999], Croatia [1996], Croatia [1999], Greece [1999], Macedonia [1998], Macedonia [2001], Montenegro [1996], Montenegro [2001], Romania [1993], Romania [1998], Romania [1999], Serbia [1996], Serbia [2001], Slovenia [1992], Slovenia [1995], Slovenia [1999], Turkey [1990], Turkey [1996], Turkey [2001], Turkey [2001] .

Table 2: Religious Institutions and Government Policy 128:

		Country/region			
		Total	Bulgaria	Romania	Slovenia
Churches speak out on: government policy	No	74.2 %	59.8 %	79.6 %	81.8 %
	Yes	25.8 %	40.2 %	20.4 %	18.2 %
	Total	2708 (100%)	836 (100%)	1010 (100%)	862 (100%)

Table 3: The Importance of Religion for Balkan People 129

		Country/region										
		Total	Albania	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Bulgaria	Croatia	Greece	Romania	Slovenia	Turkey	Macedonia, Republic of	Serbia and Montenegro
Religion important in life	Very important	40.9 %	26.4 %	34.7 %	14.6 %	25.9 %	32.9 %	43.8 %	15.4 %	78.8 %	41.7 %	25.0 %
	Rather important	28.0 %	33.6 %	37.9 %	24.7 %	40.5 %	35.4 %	33.1 %	25.8 %	13.4 %	30.6 %	37.4 %

128Table based on data from Values Survey Databank, which comprises data collected from the following Balkan countries in indicated years: Albania [1998], Albania [2002], Bosnia and Herzegovina [1998], Bosnia and Herzegovina [2001], Bulgaria [1990], Bulgaria [1997], Bulgaria [1999], Croatia [1996], Croatia [1999], Greece [1999], Macedonia [1998], Macedonia [2001], Montenegro [1996], Montenegro [2001], Romania [1993], Romania [1998], Romania [1999], Serbia [1996], Serbia [2001], Slovenia [1992], Slovenia [1995], Slovenia [1999], Turkey [1990], Turkey [1996], Turkey [2001], Turkey [2001].

129Table based on data from Values Survey Databank, which comprises data collected from the following Balkan countries in indicated years : Albania [1998], Albania [2002], Bosnia and Herzegovina [1998], Bosnia and Herzegovina [2001], Bulgaria [1990], Bulgaria [1997], Bulgaria [1999], Croatia [1996], Croatia [1999], Greece [1999], Macedonia [1998], Macedonia [2001], Montenegro [1996], Montenegro [2001], Romania [1993], Romania [1998], Romania [1999], Serbia [1996], Serbia [2001], Slovenia [1992], Slovenia [1995], Slovenia [1999], Turkey [1990], Turkey [1996], Turkey [2001], Turkey [2001] .

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	Not very important	20.2 %	27.3 %	18.1 %	32.4 %	23.0 %	20.3 %	17.4 %	35.2 %	4.9 %	18.3 %	28.8 %
	Not at all important	10.9 %	12.7 %	9.3 %	28.3 %	10.6 %	11.4 %	5.7 %	23.6 %	2.9 %	9.4 %	8.8 %
	Total	30218 (100%)	1957 (100%)	2376 (100%)	2962 (100%)	2168 (100%)	1124 (100%)	3428 (100%)	2986 (100%)	7525 (100%)	1996 (100%)	3697 (100%)

Table 4: Confidence in Churches in the Balkans¹³⁰

		Country/region										
		Total	Albania	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Bulgaria	Croatia	Greece	Romania	Slovenia	Turkey	Macedonia, Republic of	Serbia and Montenegro
Confidence: Churches	Agree a lot	24.1 %	26.0 %	21.8 %	15.4 %	21.1 %	14.8 %	43.7 %	12.6 %	32.5 %	19.7 %	12.6 %
	Quite a lot	33.2 %	34.1 %	39.1 %	25.3 %	39.5 %	40.0 %	35.0 %	24.8 %	37.8 %	19.5 %	33.1 %
	Not very	26.5 %	26.4 %	29.5 %	30.8 %	29.6 %	32.7 %	17.4 %	38.6 %	13.8 %	37.8 %	35.6 %

¹³⁰Table based on data from Values Survey Databank, which comprises data collected from the following Balkan countries in indicated years : Albania [1998], Albania [2002], Bosnia and Herzegovina [1998], Bosnia and Herzegovina [2001], Bulgaria [1990], Bulgaria [1997], Bulgaria [1999], Croatia [1996], Croatia [1999], Greece [1999], Macedonia [1998], Macedonia [2001], Montenegro [1996], Montenegro [2001], Romania [1993], Romania [1998], Romania [1999], Serbia [1996], Serbia [2001], Slovenia [1992], Slovenia [1995], Slovenia [1999], Turkey [1990], Turkey [1996], Turkey [2001], Turkey [2001] .

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	y mu ch											
	No ne at all	16.2 %	13.5 %	9.6 %	28.5 %	9.8 %	12.6 %	3.9 %	24.0 %	16.0 %	23.1 %	18.7 %
	Tot al	2983 9 (100 %)	1972 (100 %)	2348 (100%)	2932 (100 %)	2147 (100 %)	1123 (100 %)	3422 (100 %)	3011 (100 %)	7367 (100 %)	1957 (100%)	3560 (100%)

Table 5: Confidence in Parliaments in the Balkans¹³¹

		Country/region										
		Tota l	Alba nia	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Bulg aria	Croa tia	Gree ce	Roma nia	Slove nia	Turk ey	Maced onia, Republ ic of	Serbia and Monten egro
Confide nce: Parliam ent	A gre at dea l	8.7 %	8.2 %	7.2 %	8.9 %	7.1 %	2.8 %	3.4 %	5.0 %	16.6 %	2.1 %	8.2 %
	Qu ite a lot	26.3 %	44.5 %	31.1 %	32.0 %	25.9 %	21.5 %	16.4 %	23.7 %	30.9 %	9.0 %	22.1 %
	No t ver y	37.6 %	33.9 %	46.7 %	39.9 %	49.3 %	48.1 %	45.0 %	51.0 %	21.0 %	37.9 %	37.4 %

¹³¹Table based on data from Values Survey Databank, which comprises data collected from the following Balkan countries in indicated years : Albania [1998], Albania [2002], Bosnia and Herzegovina [1998], Bosnia and Herzegovina [2001], Bulgaria [1990], Bulgaria [1997], Bulgaria [1999], Croatia [1996], Croatia [1999], Greece [1999], Macedonia [1998], Macedonia [2001], Montenegro [1996], Montenegro [2001], Romania [1993], Romania [1998], Romania [1999], Serbia [1996], Serbia [2001], Slovenia [1992], Slovenia [1995], Slovenia [1999], Turkey [1990], Turkey [1996], Turkey [2001], Turkey [2001] .

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	mu ch											
	No ne at all	27.4 %	13.4 %	15.0 %	19.2 %	17.7 %	27.6 %	35.2 %	20.3 %	31.5 %	51.0 %	32.3 %
	Tot al	2940 8 (100 %)	1894 (100 %)	2341 (100%)	2936 (100 %)	2113 (100 %)	1119 (100 %)	3329 (100 %)	2955 (100 %)	7295 (100 %)	1971 (100%)	3455 (100%)

Table 6: Confidence in Political Parties in the Balkans¹³²

		Country/region									
		Total	Alba nia	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Bulga ria	Croa tia	Roma nia	Slove nia	Turk ey	Macedo nia, Republi c of	Serbia and Montene gro
Confide nce: The Political Parties	A gre at dea l	3.9 %	2.7 %	4.9 %	4.6 %	3.4 %	2.2 %	2.2 %	6.6 %	1.8 %	1.9 %
	Qui te a lot	19.3 %	23.4 %	25.6 %	24.6 %	19.0 %	11.7 %	11.5 %	22.6 %	8.6 %	17.4 %
	Not ver y mu ch	42.7 %	48.1 %	48.4 %	44.2 %	56.5 %	46.4 %	50.9 %	27.7 %	44.2 %	48.7 %

¹³²Table based on data from Values Survey Databank, which comprises data collected from the following Balkan countries in indicated years : Albania [1998], Albania [2002], Bosnia and Herzegovina [1998], Bosnia and Herzegovina [2001], Bulgaria [1990], Bulgaria [1997], Bulgaria [1999], Croatia [1996], Croatia [1999], Greece [1999], Macedonia [1998], Macedonia [2001], Montenegro [1996], Montenegro [2001], Romania [1993], Romania [1998], Romania [1999], Serbia [1996], Serbia [2001], Slovenia [1992], Slovenia [1995], Slovenia [1999], Turkey [1990], Turkey [1996], Turkey [2001], Turkey [2001].

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	No ne at all	34.1 %	25.7 %	21.1 %	26.6 %	21.1 %	39.7 %	35.4 %	43.1 %	45.4 %	32.0 %
	Tot al	1907 2 (100 (100 (100%) (100%) (100%)	1943 (100 (100 (100%) (100%) (100%)	2360 (100%) (100%) (100%)	978 (100 (100 (100%) (100%) (100%)	1124 (100 (100 (100%) (100%) (100%)	1157 (100 (100 (100%) (100%) (100%)	965 (100 (100 (100%) (100%) (100%)	5138 (100 (100 (100%) (100%) (100%)	1962 (100%) (100%) (100%)	3446 (100%) (100%) (100%)

Table 7: Neighbor Preferences in the Balkans—People of A Different Religion¹³³

		Country/region							
		Total	Albani a	Bosnia and Herzegovin a	Bulgari a	Croati a	Romani a	Sloveni a	Turke y
Neighbour s: People of a different religion	Not mentione d	73.0 %	75.0 %	72.4 %	83.3 %	85.7 %	69.6 %	77.2 %	64.9 %
	Mentione d	27.0 %	25.0 %	27.6 %	16.7 %	14.3 %	30.4 %	22.8 %	35.1 %
	Total	10114 (100% (100%) (100%)	999 (100% (100%) (100%)	1200 (100%) (100%) (100%)	1072 (100%) (100%) (100%)	1196 (100% (100%) (100%)	1239 (100%) (100%) (100%)	1007 (100%) (100%) (100%)	3401 (100% (100%) (100%)

¹³³Table based on data from Values Survey Databank, which comprises data collected from the following Balkan countries in indicated years : Albania [1998], Albania [2002], Bosnia and Herzegovina [1998], Bosnia and Herzegovina [2001], Bulgaria [1990], Bulgaria [1997], Bulgaria [1999], Croatia [1996], Croatia [1999], Greece [1999], Macedonia [1998], Macedonia [2001], Montenegro [1996], Montenegro [2001], Romania [1993], Romania [1998], Romania [1999], Serbia [1996], Serbia [2001], Slovenia [1992], Slovenia [1995], Slovenia [1999], Turkey [1990], Turkey [1996], Turkey [2001], Turkey [2001]. The original question asked in the interviews was: “V39. On this list are various groups of people. Could you please mention any that you would not like to have as neighbors? (Code an answer for each group):People of a different religion.”