

## THE IMPACT OF RELIGION ON PREVENTING TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS IN KOSOVO

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**Abstract:** *The article addresses the phenomenon of trafficking with human beings, focusing specifically on the religious component of preventing this phenomenon. To study this phenomenon, it is necessary to study the causes of human trafficking in Kosovo from a religious point of view. Concerning this negative phenomenon which has also spread at a global level, Kosovo, as a new and developing state, has built legal infrastructure for the prevention, protection, treatment and reintegration of victims of human trafficking in Kosovo. The functioning of the above is being carefully considered. The research question is: How does religion impact the prevention of trafficking in human beings in Kosovo? Relevant literature that has dealt with this phenomenon from a religious perspective is used for this theme in the study. To study this phenomenon, knowledge and factual data are used on the history of the development of this phenomenon. Factual data coming from relevant institutions in Kosovo (dealing with this phenomenon in Kosovo) is used to evaluate and measure the effectiveness of preventing human trafficking in Kosovo. The methodology used for the study of the phenomenon will focus on the methods: deductive, historical, statistical, comparative, etc. Secondary data are used for assessments and measurements of the development of the phenomenon, which will be obtained from relevant institutions of Kosovo. From the data and assessments on the development of the phenomenon results will be drawn on the effectiveness of the functioning and impact of the religious system on prevention of trafficking in human beings in Kosovo. We find that religion contributes to the raising of consciousness and morality of the people, and it exposes the ugly activity of trafficking in human beings in Kosovo. Overall, we find that families at risk of trafficking in human beings in Kosovo have a low standard of living, and Social schemes currently operating in Kosovo are not sufficient to cover all social categories that need social assistance.*

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## Presentation

The Republic of Kosovo is a new state in the Balkans and a new country in transition, where the phenomenon of trafficking in human beings has had a great evolution compared to the period of Socialism in the former SFRY<sup>2</sup>.

The population of Kosovo has a culture interspersed by the Orient and Occident<sup>3</sup>. Religious diversity in Kosovar society<sup>4</sup> is considered a cultural asset. Respect for different religious values (by not excluding each other) represents the tolerance of diversity of thoughts, actions, reactions and the common life in general.

Kosovo is dominated by the culture of secularism in daily life, as a culture resulting from centuries-old tradition and modern culture based on new social, technical-technological developments at a global level.

Religious and secular cultures enable the organization of a social, economic and political system based on the free expression of human freedom.

Thus, such a form of culture incorporated in social development makes man more rational, more advanced, and more productive (not held captive by irrational national and religious traditions), more equal and happier.

The co-living of the people of Kosovo is mainly based on legal rules, religious and social norms that regulate the social, political, economic and cultural aspects.

In the conditions of the political and social transition in Kosovo, the development of different processes depends on the country's developmental policies and the psycho-intellectual development of the population.

At this stage of the development and consolidation of modern society, the factors influencing the formation and thinking of the appropriate socio-economic environment are: *economical, educational, cultural, religious, informational, etc.*

Factors that influence the development of the economic environment (political, economic, social, techno-technological) cause inequality and competition in the economic development process.

Freedom to work and freedom in life do not guarantee equality and happiness for all, but they guarantee an equal starting point for all.

The development of processes under these political, social and economic conditions also imposes the way of life and work in Kosovo, thereby developing the relations of productive and service forces and relations in the production-service provision.

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<sup>2</sup> Kosovo had the status of an Autonomous Province within the former SFRY, was the constituent element of the former SFRY.

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.slideshare.net/erletshaq1/aurel-plasari-orient-a-or-shade-from-Occident>

<sup>4</sup> The confessional culture in Kosovo is composed of different religions, such as: the Islamic confession, the Orthodox Christian confession and the Catholic Christian confession..

The ratio of productive-service forces and relationships in production-service are conditioned on meeting the needs of life.

The actors who live in these living conditions are forced to increase their professional capacities for work in order to cope with life's difficulties or to satisfy their desires.

Formal and non-formal education<sup>5</sup>. play an important role in enabling young generations to live.

One of the forms of human education in Kosovo is religious education (formal religious education and non-formal religious education), which influences the preparation of the mental state of youth for life.

The factors that determine religious education (formal religious education and non-formal education) among youth are: desire, motivation, awareness, reinforcement of knowledge, useful use and practical application of acquired knowledge, divine connection of the human spirit with the World, etc.

Thus, religious education of young people goes towards shaping the human character and their permanent training, increasing the capacity for development of activities against the use of violence, emotional reaction, endurance in difficult conditions, coping with illness and other difficulties of the modern man, etc.

Religious education also goes towards developing awareness of building social relations, embracing their cultures and their civilizations, more developed cooperation of tolerance among people, solidarity, joint initiatives and actions, work shares, cultural and artistic manifestations, sports (competitions, seminars, etc.)

Due to the low economic growth, low population potential<sup>6</sup>, low employment rate<sup>7</sup>, low standard of living in Kosovo<sup>8</sup>, low wages<sup>9</sup>, the most important source of income

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<sup>5</sup> There are several modalities used in the education of young people, different criteria for how education is carried out by type;

a) Formal education (school, institutional, certification)

b) Non-formal education (non-scientific, non-institutional)

c) Informal education (education alongside formal education)

<sup>6</sup> According to estimates by the Kosovo Agency of Statistics in 2011, the population in Kosovo was 1,733,872, while other sources estimate that there are 2,200,000 inhabitants in Kosovo.

<sup>7</sup> Kosovo's unemployment rate is 30.5 percent.

<sup>8</sup> Based on data from the Kosovo Agency of Statistics, it results that during 2017, total consumption in Kosovo was 2,340 million euros; household consumption 7,803 euros; per capita consumption 1,511 euros. Overall consumption in 2017 compared to 2016 had slightly increased by 0.8%, while per capita consumption had increased by 3.5%.

(Most of the household budget is spent on food (40%), followed by housing (29%), while transport and clothing (5%).

The value of remittances amounted to about 600 million euros.

Prices had been steadily rising, damaging the standard of living.

Kosovo imports all products and prices that are in EU countries, while salaries are much lower than in EU countries.

<sup>9</sup> The average wage in Kosovo is around 500 euros (the height of the average wage in Kosovo has been affected by the increase in public sector employees' salaries, which have increased enormously compared to private sector wages).

remains salaries from the public and private sector, profits from personal business, pensions and remittances, extraordinary income, etc.

Low level of domestic and foreign investment, low level of productivity ratio, low level of household development, low level of employment<sup>10</sup>, and other economic and social developments in Kosovo have a significant impact on coping with the standard of living.

Therefore, economic and social developments under the conditions of transition have imposed new developments on raising the standard of living, bringing about migration of the population to Western European countries, development of the informal economy, as well as employment in countries with crisis (countries in war conflict).

Development of the informal economy dates back to ancient centuries of humanity, which is characterized by attributes that transcend rules or laws. The object of the informal economy is usually prohibition of manufacturing or service operations. One of the operations of the informal economy is the trade in human beings, or the slave trade<sup>11</sup>. Slave trade is the most profane of all human activities carried out by traders or human traffickers.

This form of trading is developed on the basis of fraud (for a better life or belief in the idea of freedom), or the violence exercised on the slaves. In the process of trafficking with human beings, religion (church) has also played a special role, because traffickers also became slave users<sup>12</sup>. In the past, the slave trade became one of the most important elements of the world economy, giving significant empowerment to the economies. So, the slave trade gave a push to various colonies around the world.

Harsh exploitation of the slaves by the slave-owners forced the slaves to rebel against them (slave-owners) and demand more freedom, or seek independence, which the slaves had paid for with blood or life.

The purpose of studying the phenomenon of Trafficking with Human Beings (THB) and the role of the impact of religion on it is to become familiar with the development of this phenomenon and identify the causes of the development of the phenomenon, the tendency of the development of the phenomenon, the role of the state institutions in combating this phenomenon, the state policies for dealing with this phenomenon, the way of managing the phenomenon.

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<sup>10</sup> According to the Kosovo Agency of Statistics, out of more than 500,000 active citizens in Kosovo, there are about 350,000 people employed..

<sup>11</sup> "It is difficult to conceive of any measure of dignity for someone who has engaged in the slave trade" says the historian James De Wolf Perry.

<sup>12</sup> Nicholas Knisely, bishop of an Episcopal church, says: "The Church was also a direct slave-owner. Some priests owned slaves. Some organizations with religious missionaries that belonged to the Anglican Church owned slaves."

## 1. Methodology

For the views on religion, the descriptive method was used in order to explain the influence of religion in shaping the general education and culture (general, economic and social) of the citizens of Kosovo.

Historical process research has also been used to explain the historical processes of the development of trafficking in human beings in Kosovo to this day.

A secondary analysis of statistical data was performed in order to learn the statistical state of development of trafficking in human beings in Kosovo.

### *Theoretical Treatment of the Impact of Religion on Society*

With regard to the impact of religion on society, many scholars and schools have made theoretical contributions.

Religion dates back to the earliest times of human development, since man began to believe in the power of supernatural deities over the development of phenomena, phenomena in nature and in society.

The word religion is derived from the Latin word meaning "religious" faith. Many definitions have been given regarding religion, some of which are: something sacred, belief in eternity, man's connection with God, and so on.

Religion is a form of belief in supernatural deities in the form of cult, with special codification and content of special rules.

Religion was born as a human need to build understandable and explicable relationships in every human society in the world. It was cultivated as a culture with different forms, which each society had adapted for its own needs.

Each society had made known its own religious values, to which were given social values and ethical content.

All religions contain special symbols, special rules, special methods used by different peoples to rely on a supernatural power that protects them and helps them to avoid the feeling of fear through the preaching of rituals, or ceremonies performed by those believers<sup>13</sup>.

**According to Durkhem**<sup>14</sup>, conclusion on religion is "A religion is a unified system of beliefs and practices which unites all people in a moral community to which they adhere, or believe in a faith, using the same religious temple called the church (a sacred place for the preaching of the faith and for the practice of religion)."

His definitions of religion were between holiness and disbelief, sanctifying objects, animals, using ceremonies and rituals as an obligation for worship, which were used

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<sup>13</sup> Giddens, A. Sociology. (Second edition) p.432

<sup>14</sup> Durkheim (1912/1965) cited Ritzer, G. & Googman, J. D. p.97.

during moments of birth, marriage and death. However, with the development of modern society, he believed that religion is an influence on escape<sup>15</sup>.

**Marx** described religion as an ideology, an anxiety that acts like a narcotic substance to numb the mass, a spirit that extends to people who are in a state of numbness, so to speak, as opium of the masses<sup>16</sup>.

His assessment of religion was like a human alienation, assessing it as something far from the truth, embodying values, as if something religious and not what we possess. He believed that we should not be afraid of God, because we created him ourselves, he also thought that ideological elements, such as as religious beliefs and values, are often used as if something that is not equal to healing and power<sup>17</sup>.

**Weber**, in contrast to Marx and Durkheim, valued religion as a single project, saying that religion in society and in economic life depended on cultures. He made the division by analyzing the countries of the West and the countries of the East. The difference between them is in setting invincible barriers to the industrial development of capitalism as opposed to Western countries. Inhibition of religion has had major impact due to the reason that high stress affects spiritual existence<sup>18</sup>.

It is estimated that **Marx, Durkheim and Weber** while dealing with religion, identified several characteristics, which complement each other. According to Marx, religion interfered, favoring the ruling groups. Weber was convinced that religious influences were unstable and often had a revolutionary effect, affecting social change rather than provoking destabilization. While Durkheim estimated that the role of religion affects the simulation of social cohesion, given that the creation of feelings against groups is created within the community of believers<sup>19</sup>.

Among the most popular schools that dominate the study of the impact of religion on socio-economic and social developments are the following:

*The school that serves the Eurocentric Concept - which invokes the superiority of the occident by taking as its basis the "Greek" antiquity, industrialization and enlightenment.*

1. A representative of this theory is Samuel P. Huntington<sup>20</sup> who explains the concept of Eurocentrism, anti-Semitism<sup>21</sup>.
2. *The school that serves the concept of "Ex oriente lux" (Light comes from the East).* Representatives of this concept contradict the concept of development

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<sup>15</sup> Giddens,A.Sociology.(Fifth Edition)p.538

<sup>16</sup> Marx (1843/1970) cituar Ritzer.G & Googman, J.D p.67)

<sup>17</sup> Giddens,A.(Fifth Edition)p.537

<sup>18</sup> Rretrieved.Giddens,A.(Fifth Edition)p.540

<sup>19</sup> Giddens,A.(Second Edition)p.442

<sup>20</sup> Samuel P. Huntington «Clash of civilasations »:1996

<sup>21</sup> Anti-Semitism is hatred prejudice, or discrimination developed against any people for reasons related to their heritage (including not only Jews, Ethiopians, Arabs, Maltese, Syrians, etc.).

with roots in the West. They think that all exact sciences originate from the east (beyond Europe)<sup>22</sup>.

3. *The school that serves the Concept of Universality* - this concept is based on the *theory* developed by William James Durant, who, in his work "The Story of Civilization" (1935–75) tries to explain the history of civilization by not relying on the doctrine of these two blocs, which says that cultures are not fought but merged. So, this concept in focus emphasizes the concept of universality through cultural globalization.
4. *The school that serves the concept of Meta-critique*. Representatives of this concept assume the role of rebuking both schools of thought. Representatives of this school explain the categorization of the World in these two blocks as the military, political and racist doctrine.

These theories have succeeded partly to explain the origin of religious culture, its tendencies to influence society, their impact on social integration and the clashes of civilizations.

Almost all theories on religion are in correlation with each other. They express the common view that religion affects brotherly interconnectedness between people, namely, the interconnection of collective relationships.<sup>23</sup>

Religion is continuously passing down religious guidance from generation to generation, to educate the masses with different religious doctrines.<sup>24</sup>

## 2. Religion in Kosovo

The population of Kosovo belongs mainly to the Islamic confession<sup>25</sup> (95.7%), while the rest belongs to the Catholic Christian confession (2.2% of the Albanian population) and the Orthodox Christian confession (1.5% of the Serbian population).

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<sup>22</sup> **Pro-oriental thinkers** (antieuropic), represented by an American thinker with Palestinian origin Edward Said, his book "Orientalism", published in 1978, Oswald Spengler in his book "Fall of Occident", 1923 Bulgarian thinker Maria Todorova "Imagining the Balkans", 1997, she bases her theory in the Marxist concepts,

<sup>23</sup> <https://www.refworld.org/docid/5b3e0b0019.html> [accessed 16 July 2019].

According to Max Weber, religious institutions influenced the creation of a cultural framework, and as a consequence began the development of institutions such as; economics, jurisprudence, sociology, etc. Durkheim and Weber also believed that religion had an impact on the association of society.

<sup>24</sup> Aldrige.A(2000), Religion in the Contemporary World.p.212-215

<sup>25</sup> Muslims include; Albanians, Bosnian Turks, Gorani, Roma. (Most of the Muslims in Kosovo belong to the sect, but also followers of the Shiite order.;Catholic Christians include; Albanians, Croats, etc. Orthodox Christians include; Serbs and non-Albanians

Religious education offers knowledge in the fields of life, spirituality and society, as well as in the fields of education, politics, sociology, economics, computing, philosophy, arts, architecture, exact sciences that have an impact on human life.

The responsibility for fulfilling one's religious obligations is to develop the religious awareness of religious educators to educate the general mass of people, adopting religious teachings, the appropriate methodology for religion, and using permissible and appropriate religious mechanisms.

Religious rules preach the development of human education for a successful future by: a) educators (parents, teachers, clerics, thinkers), b) religious institutions, etc.

Educators- Parents play an important role in the education of children,<sup>26</sup> while continuing efforts are made by educators (teachers) in school or in society. So, the success of parents, teachers, clerics, and thinkers in the process of creating religious consciousness and the sciences that deny change depends on the power of their ideas to persuade children to contribute to achieving their goals.

Religious institutions- Also, the role of religious institutions has a great influence on: creation of religious awareness, capacity building, acquisition of knowledge, philosophical and scientific way of understanding processes in nature and society, etc. Institutions of religious Sciences<sup>27</sup> proclaim *religion, faith, principles<sup>28</sup>, teachings, methodologies, knowledge* that can serve to make changes and advances in shaping the new Islamic scientific horizon with new religious civilizational goals.

**The first issue** in religion relates to the dominance of the principle of unity and brotherhood, starting from the family, neighborhood, people and humanity, because it considers that peoples living under the influence of the materialist concept are destructive and live under the influence of philosophy of conflicts between individuals, peoples and classes and the society at large.

The concept of religion is an idealistic concept, which aims to create social security and real peace in the future world, while the materialist concept is considered to affect people's psyche as a destructive element; it causes suicides, hostility, bloodshed among peoples<sup>29</sup>.

**The second issue** in religion concerns the *principle of knowledge and the methods of scientific research*.

The religious concept of the doctrine of knowledge rests on the relation of man, of the living world to the deities, or to the rules revealed by God, and respects the divine books, while the materialist conception of knowledge largely rests on the rational empirical and inductive method. The materialist concept starts from the visible world, from the Experiments and from the existing knowledge to know the laws of life and the universe.

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<sup>26</sup> Religion protects the institution of the family .

<sup>27</sup> Religion promotes the pursuit of knowledge, its development and its advancement..

<sup>28</sup> Religion promotes principles; human unity, justice, or of counseling, solidarity, individual and social responsibility, freedom of belief, thought, conscience

<sup>29</sup> Research Methods in Religious Studies - CRC Press



The believer is obliged to observe, explore, and study the Universe in general and human beings in particular, the laws that God has created to regulate their functioning and to apply divine rules with courtesy .

Religion has regulated the rules of conduct based on religious books revealed by God, which guide, give orientations, protect everything that is in accordance with or contrary to what the man deserves and which he/she does not possess, or with any other religious principle.

The believer is allowed to work or trade as much as he/she wants, provided he/she does not harm anyone.

So, the believer can live and adjust family life as he/she wishes, but on the condition that he/she acts in accordance with religious rules and guidelines. He/she can make a marriage contract, but has no right to endanger the honor of the woman, the child, by victimizing them to build a material interest.

Religion favors honest actions, righteous acts, or good acts (charity, help to relatives, etc.), while it punishes or prohibits ugly acts (prohibits amorality, violence, and acts of abhorrence, etc.).

The religion, in its focus, has the protection of morality and justice.

As such, these social categories are treated as reasonable attitudes of individual behavior and society developed in the traditional and modern conditions.

These issues oblige every believer to understand the religious precept so that they can protect, save, and improve themselves as part of all civilized humanity.

Religion prefers building a society in which justice, security, peace, economic and social progress reigns according to the rules God has commanded to apply <sup>30</sup>.

**The third issue** in religion deals with *the research and description of the historical situation (by analyzing the factors of progress, decadence, stagnation and suffering, etc.), the present state and the future state, as a starting point for the continuation of the main issues of religion, which affect such a situation of the individual and of all mankind*<sup>31</sup>.

To accomplish this goal, it is necessary for one to continue to be educated, to be moral, to become aware of and to advance one's ability to add spiritual and material values.

The problems that arise in society mainly stem from man himself, society, state institutions, which often result from deviations in religious education (lack of persuasion, reason, fear, disability, etc.).

As Kosovo is in a phase of political, economic and social transition, its population is facing more difficulties for economic well-being and the standard of well-being.

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<sup>30</sup> Research Methods in Religious Studies - CRC Press

<sup>31</sup> Research Methods in Religious Studies - CRC Press

[https://www.google.com/search?biw=1366&bih=635&ei=U1kXbmYFlmZkwXFi7TwAQ&q=pdf+religions+principles+and+science+research+methods&oq=pdf+religions+principles+and+science+research+methods&gs\\_l=psy-ab.12..33i299i3.39797.99943..101177...2.2..0.325.6626.4j43j2j1.....0....1..gwwiz.....0i71j33i10j33i10i160.DNklpSyB420&ved=0ahUKewj5jbOy1KLkAhWjzKQKHcUFDR44ChDh1QMICg](https://www.google.com/search?biw=1366&bih=635&ei=U1kXbmYFlmZkwXFi7TwAQ&q=pdf+religions+principles+and+science+research+methods&oq=pdf+religions+principles+and+science+research+methods&gs_l=psy-ab.12..33i299i3.39797.99943..101177...2.2..0.325.6626.4j43j2j1.....0....1..gwwiz.....0i71j33i10j33i10i160.DNklpSyB420&ved=0ahUKewj5jbOy1KLkAhWjzKQKHcUFDR44ChDh1QMICg)

This situation has produced many new phenomena in social developments that have not existed before or were not visible, such as trafficking in human beings.

The phenomenon of human trafficking dates back to the earliest periods of humanity, especially from the time of the slave-owning system, but the mode of development of this phenomenon has changed from time to time, depending on the changes that have taken place in the socio-economic system and technical-technological advancement.

Trafficking in human beings nowadays takes place through the following: *the purpose of trafficking, the mode of attraction, the different forms of recruitment, the mode of transportation, the mode and place of housing, etc.*

The process of trafficking in human beings is carried out by the traffickers of the victims of trafficking in order to exploit them for material gain, etc.

The way of attracting the victims of trafficking is mainly through direct and indirect enticement<sup>32</sup>, forcing etc.

The forms of trafficking in human beings by traffickers take place in various forms, such as: *forced labor, beggary, home enslavement or various forms of exploitation.*

The ways of recruiting victims of trafficking are done by: *deceiving them for a better life, scaring and exercising violence against victims, motivating them to get rich, etc.*

The mode of transportation of victims of human trafficking is made in various attractive and compulsory forms.

The method of sheltering and the place of shelter of victims of trafficking is confidential and subject to illegal security measures.

In the Republic of Kosovo this phenomenon is currently being developed, depending on the power of the agents, their availability and state actors (families, religion, institutions, education, police, prosecution, courts, Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare, etc.) that are fighting this phenomenon.

Trafficking in human beings is an illegal act (prohibited by the laws in force), so it is the duty of many state and social actors to combat this phenomenon.

As it was ascertained above, religion does not favor trafficking in human beings, and therefore its task is to combat this phenomenon in accordance with the domestic legal framework and international conventions, with the aim of protecting fundamental human rights<sup>33</sup>.

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<sup>32</sup> The lure through direct contacts, offering victims of human trafficking money and other material goods.

The indirect lure is made by offering victims of human trafficking by electronic means, providing them with false benefits.

<sup>33</sup> *The Universal Declaration of Human Rights*; all people are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They have reason and conscience and must be treated with a spirit of compassion. Under the Palermo protocol and full of trafficking, we only do so when the victim is manipulated and he / she has material benefits and the victim also receives a minimal amount of money. Constitution of Kosovo - Fundamental Freedoms and Rights; In the Republic of Kosovo the fundamental rights and freedoms are protected by the Constitution. *Law no. 02/I-31 on Religious Freedom in Kosovo* - Freedom of religion is one of the fundamental human rights.

The fight of religion against trafficking in human beings contributes to the consolidation of the rule of law and the spiritual and cultural harmony of the citizens of Kosovo.

### **3. History of the Phenomenon of Human Trafficking in Kosovo**

The phenomenon of human trafficking in Kosovo has begun to develop since the early centuries of mankind, especially during the period of the development of the Slave –ownership and Feudal system.

During the period of the Socialist System in the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY), especially in Kosovo, this phenomenon was invisibly developed, while it was evidently developed after 1999 until today. This phenomenon was not addressed at all before 1999.

The change of the organisational concept of the political-economic and social system in Kosovo (the free market economy after 1999) has altered the role and relationship between employees and employers.

Also, under the conditions of the transition economy in Kosovo, the market factors and their legal role in the market have changed. Under these conditions of transition economies, the degree of informality in the economy has increased, the role of the conjuncture of economic activities has changed, factorizing or favoring the phenomenon of slavery as a profitable activity

### **4. Causes of Human Trafficking**

**a) Causes belonging to the group of external factors** that have been identified are the following: policy of the country, poverty, social protection policies and their completion, low level of education, malfunctioning of the law, malfunctioning of the judiciary, low level of information, radicalization etc.

**b) Causes belonging to the group of internal factors** that have been identified are the following: families with financial problems, families with mental problems, divorced parents, children with one parent, domestic violence (abuse), uneducated families, delinquent children etc.

The purpose of this study is to analyze clearly the causes, trends, treatment, and complexity of social protection policies that reduce and alleviate the consequences of this phenomenon and the impact of religion on the chain of this phenomenon.

In order to analyze the phenomenon of trafficking in human beings in Kosovo, I used secondary data, which I obtained from relevant Kosovar institutions, which deal with the professional follow-up of this phenomenon.

## 5. Social Protection Policies for Human Trafficking in Kosovo

Social protection policies in Kosovo have been developed in collaboration with social partners (in coordination with the Office of the State Coordinator in the Republic of Kosovo) responsible for fighting against trafficking in human beings. These partners have developed relevant policies to combat trafficking in human beings, focused at; 1) Prevention of trafficking in human beings, 2) Protection of victims and witnesses, 3) Provision of social services and other necessary services, 4) Reintegration of victims, 5) Investigation and punishment of Trafficking in Human Beings (THB) crimes, 6) Cooperation with relevant international organizations, states and institutions, 7) Updating the Database, 8) Information.

## 6. Results of Trafficking in Human Beings in Kosovo

The situation of trafficking in human beings in Kosovo is explained through the results derived from the Kosovo Police Service during the period 2013-2018.

Thus, the table in Fig. No.1. shows that from 2013 to 2018 there has been a decline in human trafficking, from 52 victims in 2013 to 15 in 2018.

*Fig. No.1. Trafficking in Human Beings in Kosovo 2013-2018.*

Years	No.of identified victims	% e of THB victims	No. of criminal charges	% e criminal charges	No. Of persons suspected for THB	% e of persons suspected for THB
2013	52	0	38	0	88	0
2014	42	8,07	28	7,36	66	7,50
2015	30	5,77	24	6,31	74	8,40
2016	36	6,92	31	8,15	72	8,18
2017	32	6,15	21	5,52	39	4,43
2018	15	2,88	12	3,15	22	2,50

*Source; Kosovo Police Service*

Also, the number of criminal charges in the prosecutor's office has also decreased from 2013 to 38 cases, while in 2018 there were 12 cases.

Even the number of people suspected of trafficking in human beings has decreased from 88 cases in 2013 to 15 cases in 2018.

So, based on the Kosovo Police Service data, we see that the trend of developing this phenomenon in the course of a period of six years(2013-2018) has been drastically reduced each year.

The total number of suspected persons for trafficking in human beings in 2013 was 88 cases, with 52 victims of trafficking in human beings and 38 criminal charges filed,

while in 2018 there were 22 cases suspected of trafficking in human beings, with 15 victims and 12 cases of criminal charges filed.

This discrepancy between the suspected number of cases of trafficking in human beings and the number of identified victims of trafficking in human beings as well as the rise in criminal charges for cases of trafficking in human beings is a result of the qualification of criminal offenses and the way the victims of human trafficking were treated.<sup>34</sup>

According to the US State Department Report on Trafficking in Human Beings in Kosovo<sup>35</sup> for 2019, it appears that Kosovo's state institutions have not adequately tackled Trafficking in Human Beings, despite the drop in rates within the 6-year period (2013-2018). The US State Department considers that the current state of trafficking is still high because the number of convicted traffickers is low.

It is considered that there were few gaps by the investigative authorities during the identification of the number of victims, which have not been reported to the court for investigation and trial.

It has been recommended in the US State Department Report that a Regional Coordinator of Special Prosecutor, specialised prosecutors and judges in this area should be designated to deal specifically with trafficking cases.

In addition, US State department, in its report on trafficking in human beings, recommends that NGO funds be increased, as the Kosovo Government has reduced the funding allocated to these organizations.

The types of human trafficking that are present in the Republic of Kosovo are: exploitation of victims of trafficking for begging, exploitation of victims trafficked for prostitution, exploitation of victims of trafficking for committing unlawful acts, etc.

From the previous study, it was concluded that religion condemns any form of human exploitation that creates suffering. Thus, religion contributes to the education of a man by shaping his ethics. Religion exposes the actions of the traffickers, qualifying them as unconscious and unkind to God.

Whereas, it considers victims of trafficking as suffering persons, who need more compassion and willingness to be helped in order to get them out of the spiraling dependency of trafficking.

Therefore, it can be concluded that religion contributes to the raising of consciousness and morality of the people and it exposes the ugly activity of the THB<sup>36</sup> in Kosovo.

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<sup>34</sup> Another feature that is not included in this data is that when identifying victims or calling them survivors of trafficking violence at the time of recovery they are not treated as if the victim in the investigation process with them after interviewing the police, various organizations and shelters.

<sup>35</sup> Report of United States Department of State, 2018 Trafficking in Persons Report - Kosovo, 28 June 2018, available at: <https://www.refworld.org/docid/5b3e0b0019.html> [accessed 16 July 2019].

<sup>36</sup> THB-Trafficking with Human Beings.

The contribution of religion in combating trafficking in human beings in Kosovo is focused on: prevention of the phenomenon, support and shelter for victims, reintegration of victims into the Kosovar society.<sup>37</sup>

With regard to combating trafficking in human beings in Kosovo, religious organizations have made a special of social policies in the country.

## 7. Conclusions

Religion regards Human Trafficking as a crime. So, religion has *no driving impact* on human trafficking in Kosovo, but the roots of human trafficking lie in *poverty*.

Families at risk of trafficking in human beings in Kosovo have a *low standard of living*, and social schemes currently operating in Kosovo *are not sufficient to cover all social categories* in need of social assistance.

Religious communities in Kosovo show an interest in *social support at the state level for the purpose of continuous improvement*, building partnerships with social partners, establishing mechanisms to adequately protect children who are potential victims of trafficking.

Religious community in Kosovo offers alternative social services to vulnerable populations who are in function of meeting the needs of trafficking victims.

Therefore, it can be concluded that religion contributes to the raising of consciousness and morality of the people and it exposes these ugly activities.

Low quality of the process of *reintegration of victims* of trafficking into society and their empowerment over the long term was evidenced.

According to reports, prosecutors do not seek the highest possible sentences for traffickers due to misperceptions, lack of training, and agreements with traffickers.

So, it is considered that there were few gaps by the investigative authorities during the identification of the number of victims, which have not been reported to the court for investigation and trial.

Regional Coordinator of Special Prosecutor, specialised prosecutors and judges in this area should be designated to deal specifically with trafficking cases.

The NGO funds should also be increased, as the Kosovo Government has reduced the funding allocated to these organizations.

The issue of *co-operation and coordination* of activities to combat trafficking in human beings with neighboring countries is improving.

## 8. Recommendations

Religious community to engage in *the continuous education and shaping of awareness* of all potential factors in society, who may be formally engaged in the ongoing

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<sup>37</sup> Kosovo is a country of three religions and with remarkable inter-religious tolerance.

and uncompromising fight against trafficking in human beings, in particular against child trafficking.

*Special capacity building* in religious institutions to prevent trafficking in human beings, by fulfilling their basic material and spiritual needs.

Continue with the development of *public awareness campaigns* on the dangers of trafficking.

Increase *the focus on raising public and state opinion* on the dangers of child trafficking.

Increase citizens' awareness of *denouncing traffickers* and other perpetrators as opportunities for positive change in our society.

Make *urgent and necessary efforts to reduce the level of poverty* and negative phenomena in society (corruption, nepotism, etc.).

It is necessary to make an *educational reform*, which would affect the level of education by *attending respective religious subjects*.

*Substantial improvements are needed in the organization of social schemes*, depending on the legal needs and competencies that define the responsibilities of religious actors.

Permanently prosecute, judge and punish perpetrators of sex trafficking and labour offenses, including officials involved in trafficking.

Complete identification and strict punishment of organizers, assistants of traffickers and their supporters.

Increase reporting and monitoring measures for the phenomenon of trafficking in human beings.

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